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ABSTRACT Author: Rosie Campbell

Not Getting Away With It: addressing violence against sex workers as hate crime in Merseyside

Adopting a participatory approach, this thesis examines Merseyside Police's treatment of violent and other crimes against sex workers as hate crime - through the lens of what is referred to as the 'Merseyside hate crime approach'. The first academic study to do so, it describes the development of the approach and explores the key elements which constitute it. It proposes the approach is a banner encompassing a range of policing and partnership initiatives - not just the inclusion of sex workers in the force's hate crime policy, but including, critically, a wider shift from enforcement to protection-focused policing and improved support for sex worker victims of crime. Based on analysis of data from interviews with 22 sex workers and 39 police officers, it reports support for the approach and the notion that sex workers can be victims of hate crime. It argues that sex workers' experiences of victimisation fit a number of definitions of hate crime, straddling those foregrounding prejudice and those foregrounding the targeting of 'perceived vulnerability'. As such they can be included as a hate crime group and there are tangible benefits for inclusion. However, the thesis asserts there is some way to go in fully integrating sex workers into hate crime procedures in Merseyside. It supports the further development of an inclusive model for understanding hate crime which includes non-established hate crime groups and recognises intersectionality. It argues that the hate crime approach to sex work is progressive - within the UK framework of the quasi-criminalisation of sex work, it offers a rights-based approach to addressing violence against sex workers. Nonetheless, it cautions the approach should not be seen as an end in itself in the regulation of sex work, with international research evidence pointing to decriminalisation as a more conducive framework to address crimes against sex workers.

Not Getting Away With It: addressing violence against sex workers as hate crime in Merseyside

Author: Rosie Campbell

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy

**School of Applied Social Sciences
Durham University
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List of Abbreviations

ASBO	Anti Social Behaviour Order	45
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service	106
ISVA	Independent Sexual Violence Advisor	28
MIT	Major Incident Team	142
NPCC	National Police Chief's Council	49
NUM	National Ugly Mugs	13
SARC	Sexual Assault Referral Centre	161
SCAS	Serious Crimes Analysis Section	13
SMP	Safer Merseyside Partnership	137
UKNSWP	UK Network of Sex Work Projects	13

Declaration

I declare that this is my own work and has not been submitted for the award of a higher degree anywhere else.

Statement of Copyright

The copyright of this thesis rests with the author. No quotation from it should be published without the prior written consent and information derived from it should be acknowledged.

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Dedication

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Chapter One: Introducing the research - the importance of conceptualising violence against sex workers as hate crime

Main objective

This thesis sets out to describe and analyse Merseyside's innovative hate crime¹ approach, doing so through an exploration of the perspectives of both sex workers and police officers. It is the first study to examine the approach and Merseyside Police was the first police force in the UK to name sex workers as a group for whom crimes and other incidents committed against them should be treated as hate crime, a key part of the approach. The thesis also critically examines violence against sex workers in the context of hate crime, with a view to developing a conceptual framework for including sex workers as a hate crime victim group.

Background: why this research?

There is a considerable, national and international, research literature which illustrates levels, types and patterns of victimisation of sex workers. Existing research illustrates that sex workers are more at risk from violent and other crime, including targeted harassment, than are the general public - these risks varying according to working sector, with female street sex workers experiencing the highest levels of crime.

1

There are numerous definitions of hate crime in the academic literature, which are explored in Chapter Two. In 2006, when Merseyside Police adopted the policy of approaching crimes against sex workers as hate crime, the definition within the force's hate crime policy concerned incidents 'whereby the perpetrator's prejudice against any identifiable group is a factor in determining who is victimised' (Merseyside Police 2002: 7). The definition of a hate crime in the current Merseyside Police policy is 'Any hate incident, which constitutes a criminal offence, perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate' (Merseyside Police 2015: 2) and a hate incident is defined as 'Any incident that may or may not constitute a criminal offence, which is perceived by the victim, or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate' (Merseyside Police 2015: 2).

As has been the experience for established hate crime victim groups (for example, black and minority ethnic communities and the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community), research shows that incidents of violent and other crime committed against sex workers are seriously under-reported to police (O'Neill 1995, 2001; Barnard 1993; Campbell 2002; Kinnell 2008; Boff 2012). These findings in the literature thus set up a convincing rationale for conceptualising and researching crime against sex workers specifically as hate crime. Moreover, my desire to do this also emerges from my concrete experiences of researching sex work and of supporting sex workers at a practical and policy level in Merseyside. With this in mind, I begin this chapter by specifically reflecting on the reasons as to why I chose to focus my PhD on treating crimes against sex workers as hate crime in Merseyside and why I was perhaps uniquely placed and qualified to carry out the study. Following on from this, the chapter will summarise both the research aims and the research context, before providing a chapter-by-chapter overview of the thesis.

My PhD grew out of several years of researching sex work in Merseyside² and more widely in the UK; hence, when I commenced this study, I already had considerable experience in this respect, with a track record of publishing findings in national and international journals. The first applied research project on sex work I carried out, in 1995 in Liverpool, catalysed me in wanting to improve services for sex workers in Merseyside in order to meet their diverse needs and enhance their safety, health and rights. I volunteered as an outreach worker for several years within local sex work projects and, moreover, was involved in securing funding for and setting up the Linx sex work project in Liverpool in 1999 – this occurring within a multi-agency strategic partnership context from which a number of innovative initiatives were developed (explored in detail in Chapter Four).

2

Examples include Campbell et al. (1996); Campbell (2002); and Sanders and Campbell (2007).

Hence, before starting the current study, I had been involved in multi-agency strategic responses to sex work in Merseyside for over a decade, advocating always for policies which prevented violence against sex workers, while working with a range of stakeholders, including the police. From that involvement in frontline project work and local policy development, I was inspired to work with others to try and influence *national* policy frameworks to improve service provision for, and the safety of, sex workers.

I became involved with the then EUROPAP national network of sex work projects in the UK, which in 2002 became the UK Network of Sex Work Projects (UKNSWP).³ I was an inaugural board member of UKNSWP, and between 2003 and 2010 (a period when I also held and moved between various posts elsewhere, both within academia and in terms of project development on local sex work projects), I was Chair in a voluntary capacity. My roles in UKNSWP saw me representing the organisation on national policy groups and forums advocating for changes in policy and law which would enhance the safety of sex workers and not criminalise and stigmatise, going on to have a leading role in getting funding from the Home Office and developing a model for a pilot version of the ‘National Ugly Mugs’⁴ (NUM) scheme, established in 2012.⁵ I was involved in co-ordinating submissions for national legislative consultations.

3

UKNSWP was a UK-wide, umbrella, third sector charity to which projects providing frontline support services to sex workers could affiliate. UKNSWP promoted the sharing of good practice in the provision of support services for sex workers and advocated for policies which enhance their health, safety and civil rights and for accessible, quality, holistic sex work support services.

4

‘Ugly Mugs’ schemes are third-party reporting schemes, usually run by local sex work support or advocacy projects, to which sex workers can report individuals who are a danger to sex workers. Legally sanitised alerts can be shared with other sex workers and details about perpetrators can be shared anonymously with the police should sex workers consent. (Sex workers can also be supported in reporting crimes to the police.) ‘National Ugly Mugs’ (NUM) was set up to link local projects and enable the more effective identification of perpetrators of crimes against sex workers and monitor crimes against sex workers in the UK. Projects and sex workers can join as members submit reports and receive alerts. Alerts are circulated nationally, and report data can be shared with the Serious Crimes Analysis Section (SCAS).

5 UKNSWP rebranded as National Ugly Mugs (UKNSWP) in 2016. I am currently joint academic representative on the board of NUM.

I chaired the Safety, Violence and Policing Group (which I had established in 1999 within the EUROPAP network), this provided a UK-wide forum through which projects supporting sex workers strove to: share information about policing practice and its impact on sex worker safety; raise awareness amongst police about the safety and welfare of sex workers; promote good practice about initiatives improving sex worker safety; and provide a voice for sex work projects within national debates about legislation and law enforcement and its effects on the safety and health of sex workers. This group informed and underpinned much critical and policy work in the UK and influenced many researchers and academics working in the area of sex work.

These experiences of straddling academic research, policy advocacy, and service development and delivery have very much informed my methodological and epistemological approach to research on sex work, including in this thesis. The interfaces between praxis, policy and research enrich and inform each other - and crystallise in the participatory action research framework within which my work is located (see Chapter Three for a full account of my methodology).

Whilst government policy under the New-Labour government recognised the issue of violence against female street sex workers, the prevention of such crime and measures to improve the safety of sex workers and bring such perpetrators to justice were not objectives in themselves within the Home Office's report 'A Coordinated Prostitution Strategy', published in 2006, the year the Merseyside hate crime approach was adopted.

The safety of sex workers was part of a wider objective to 'improve the safety and quality of life of communities affected by prostitution, including those directly involved in street sex markets' (Home Office 2006: 1), although with only female street sex workers included. Whilst, in the report a number of initiatives were identified to address crimes against sex workers, the majority of academics who appraised the strategy critiqued it for failing to address adequately sex worker safety, health and welfare (Boynton and Cusick 2006; Sanders 2007; Scoular and O'Neill 2007). Such critiques identified the fundamental problem that various elements of the strategy exacerbated risk for sex workers and did nothing to improve sex workers' confidence in the criminal justice system (Sanders 2007; O'Neill 2007). The strong emphasis on tackling demand, disrupting indoor and street sex work markets, and reducing street prostitution all reinforced a framework of criminalisation.

The extent to which local community safety partnership areas enacted the strategy and utilised the legacy of new laws introduced has varied, with considerable difference in the emphasis placed on the safety of sex workers and measures to address crimes against sex workers. This reflects the 'proliferation of localized models of governance' (Sanders and Campbell 2014: 544) concerning sex work that have emerged in a number of countries, including the UK. For some years the safety of sex workers had been a key objective within local strategies and partnership initiatives in Merseyside (Kilvington et al. 2001; Penfold et al. 2004). Since the early 1990s, there has been a multi-agency approach to sex work in Merseyside (see Chapter Four), with different and changing national policy drivers and local conditions shaping the approach taken (Campbell 2011a; Campbell et al. 1996).

My PhD project has evolved significantly over time in response not only to policy change but also to my role within this process. When I first embarked on my PhD research, I was examining the multi-agency approach to sex work policy in Liverpool generally, its relationship to the specific socio-economic and political dynamics of Liverpool, and tensions between the local approach and national policy. Violence against sex workers had been one element considered in those multi-agency provisions and policies for over a decade. I intermitted my PhD for a protracted period and during that time – from 2005 to 2008 - was working as Project Coordinator of both 'Armistead Street' and 'Portside', the street and off-street sex work support projects in Liverpool, located within what was then the Liverpool Primary Care NHS Trust (now Liverpool Community Health). Whilst in that post, some significant changes in addressing crimes against sex workers were achieved and I was involved in the development of local multi-agency policy on sex work. In the wake of continued concerns about high levels of unreported targeted harassment of, and violent, sexual and other crime committed against, sex workers (including a number of headline murders of women involved in street sex work), Merseyside Police began to develop a new approach to responding to sex workers. Working in partnership with 'Armistead Street', they recognised and sought to address the vulnerability of sex workers to targeted violence, as well as issues of, firstly, under-reporting by sex workers of crime committed against them and, secondly, the adverse impact of police enforcement on sex workers' levels of trust in the police and, consequently, on their safety. In December 2006, Merseyside Police declared that they would treat crimes against sex workers as hate crime. They were the first and, at the time of writing, remain the only force to formally adopt this policy.

In this context of working closely with the police, then, 'Armistead Street' developed a range of innovative initiatives to: build trust between police and sex workers; encourage reporting; and provide quality support,

from report through to court, for sex worker victims of crime. This partnership approach saw an unprecedented number of perpetrators of crimes against sex workers being brought to justice (i.e. formally reported to the police, actively investigated, and brought before the courts and successfully convicted), more so than anywhere else in the UK (Campbell and Stoops 2010). Such outcomes lead to the approach receiving considerable national attention (Home Office 2011: 16; CPS 2012: 51), but no research existed that examined this locally specific perspective to addressing crimes against sex workers.

When I left the Coordinator post at 'Armistead Street' and returned to my PhD study, I made a decision to refocus my thesis specifically on this locally specific perspective, or what can be referred to as the 'Merseyside hate crime approach' – a term I use to communicate the existence of a general ethos in multi-agency work in the area, including but not limited to the emergence and development of Merseyside Police's hate crime policy.⁶ No academic research had been carried out examining the approach and I wanted to document it while it was still in existence; having been involved for over a decade in sex work policy at local and national level, I was all too aware of how innovative and successful policies and initiatives could easily be lost. There was considerable interest in this hate crime approach from policy makers, police forces and projects in other parts of the UK, and I wanted to produce useful research which explored it in detail. Hence this postgraduate research is the first sociological study in the UK to examine the policy of treating crimes against sex workers as hate crime and to claim sex workers as a hate crime victim group.

6

Note that throughout the thesis I will use the term 'Merseyside hate crime approach', or the hate crime approach, to denote this general ethos or approach to addressing violence and other crime against sex workers. Meanwhile, when specifically referring to the police's hate crime policy (or, more accurately, their inclusion of sex workers as a hate crime group within existing policy), I use the term 'Merseyside Police's hate crime policy', or the hate crime policy.

I also wanted to make an original academic contribution, both to scholarship concerning violence against sex workers and to scholarship on hate crime more generally, by carrying out the first piece of research in the UK and - to my knowledge - internationally which explores sex workers' and police officers' views on treating crimes against sex workers as hate crime.

The various, intersecting, roles that I have enacted, both locally and nationally, have placed me in a quite unique position to research the issue of violence against sex workers as hate crime in Merseyside. This history, multiplicity of roles and involvement has shaped my choice of research questions. My approach to interviewing, and my commitment and ability to influence policy through the research process, have all clearly been shaped within this context. This multi-positioned expertise has, moreover, equipped me well in carrying out this research and reflecting on the innovative policies in Merseyside which I - in collaboration with others - had played a role in developing.

As I embarked on my PhD, the notion of making sense of violence against sex workers as hate crime had not been researched or discussed in either the sex work or the hate crime literatures. As I complete my thesis, a small number of theorists have begun to recognise sex workers in hate crime academic debate (Chakraborti and Garland 2015), prompted by Merseyside's approach and my research (Campbell 2014a). Academics examining the regulation of sex work have theorised the causes of violent and other crime against sex workers. Indeed, there is an established and important body of literature which has identified stigmatisation and 'othering', prejudice towards sex workers as leading to social marginalisation, hostility, violence, a denial of rights and a lack of protection, and directly contributing to sex worker victimisation (O'Neill 1997, 2007).

A range of discourses have been identified as playing a role in this 'othering' of sex workers, creating and fostering the cultural attitudes that contribute to conditions for violence against sex workers (Lowman 2000; Kinnell 2008). A considerable body of literature has also demonstrated how criminalisation of sex work heightens the vulnerability of sex workers to violent and other crime and provides adverse conditions for safer working (Kinnell 2008). However, as said above, violence against sex workers has not previously been considered through the lens of hate crime, nor have the policy implications and potential advantages of approaching sex workers as a hate crime group been examined. This research/thesis brings a new way of seeing, understanding and analysing the issues, as well as providing ways forward for policy and practice to better support sex workers.

In the hate crime literature, meanwhile, there is ongoing discussion about the widening of hate crime victim groups beyond established hate crime groups, and the implications of this for the conceptualisation of hate crime and for policy responses to hate crime (Chakraborti and Garland 2009; Garland 2010; Mason-Bish 2010). Some theorists, reflecting on the widening of hate crime victim groups, have cautioned against over-zealous restriction of hate crime status to certain social groups, which risks the creation of victim hierarchies (Chakraborti and Garland 2009, 2012; Mason-Bish 2010) – and, indeed, the experiences of a number of groups, such as members of alternative sub cultures (e.g. Goths) (Garland 2010), are increasingly being recognised through the lens of hate crime. In this context, I wanted to explore whether sex workers are one group who may benefit from inclusion and the 'special protection afforded to the officially recognised minority groups' (Chakraborti and Garland 2009: 16), and whose experiences could contribute to understanding experiences of victimisation for groups outside recognised hate crime groups.

As stated earlier, there has been no research or evaluation to document and assess Merseyside's approach to treating crimes against sex workers as hate crime. Nor – in addition to this – has there been academic research which, more broadly, has considered violence against sex workers specifically as hate crime, something which helped me in making the decision to focus the current research study on the hate crime approach. With this clarified focus, I carried out fieldwork in Liverpool; specifically, I liaised closely with 'Armistead Street', with whom I continued to work with in a sessional outreach capacity. Through this investigation, I built on previous research and evaluation studies that I have been involved in carrying out in Liverpool since 1995, namely on service development and multi-agency responses to sex work, which included the issue of violence against sex workers (Campbell et al. 1996; Campbell 2002; Penfold et al. 2005; Sanders and Campbell 2007). The current research reflects, then, on the development of a hate crime approach to violence against sex workers in Liverpool, in the context of the development of wider multi-agency responses to sex work in the area over the last two decades. The thesis, thus, provides critical analysis and a documentary legacy, one which captures at a particular point in time a model for understanding and responding to crime against sex workers - which is not, for me, an impersonal, theoretical or policy model but rather has been a central part of my own lived experience. I played a part in developing the approach, and, as a researcher and outreach worker, I witnessed and was part of the policy initiatives that preceded it.

Research questions and aims of the research

To address the aforementioned gaps in academic and policy research, the fundamental questions addressed in this thesis are: what does the Merseyside hate crime approach to addressing crimes against sex workers look like? How is it constituted? Do crimes against sex workers fit academic conceptualisations of hate crime? Do sex workers, police officers and service providers and commissioners think sex workers can be victims of hate crime? To what extent are sex workers and police aware of the policy and do they support it? What are the practice and policy benefits of approaching crimes against sex workers as hate crime?

To both reiterate and elaborate upon these themes, then the aims of the research are to:

- Document the approach adopted in Merseyside to crimes against sex workers and identify the various elements which constitute this approach.
- Identify the factors that led to the development of the Merseyside hate crime approach to addressing crimes against sex workers.
- Consider how the hate crime approach adopted in Merseyside is related to the wider historical development of multi-agency/partnership work and policy on sex work (and specifically violence against sex workers) in Liverpool and wide changes in the policing of sex work in Merseyside.
- Critically explore, describe and analyse perspectives of sex workers and police officers towards: issues of violence against sex workers; the relationship between the police and sex workers; sex worker reporting of crimes; justice in the criminal justice system for sex workers; and the policy of treating crimes against sex workers as hate crimes.
- Critically explore how this approach relates to wider national policies/frameworks regarding the wider policing and governance of sex work.

- To develop a conceptual framework for understanding crimes, and targeted harassment, against sex workers as hate crime - building on existing definitions of hate crime to support a widening of hate crime groups and contributing to theoretical analyses of sex work which identify prejudice, 'othering', 'stigmatisation', social exclusion and the criminalisation of sex workers as leading to the victimisation of sex workers.
- Consider what good practice lessons can be learnt from Merseyside's approach to addressing crimes against sex workers.

Researching sex work and hate crime in Merseyside

The site of the study was Liverpool in Merseyside, a major city located in the North West region of Britain. The study site was not anonymised because the research was examining a specific and unique approach only adopted in the Merseyside area.

In order to explore and analyse the views and experiences of sex workers and police officers in relation to crimes against sex workers and the idea of hate crime, I adopted a research method that would enable exploration of the subjective meanings through which participants made sense of their own lives and the policies within which they worked. Hence, qualitative data was collected through in-depth interviewing.

The core fieldwork for this study, carried out between November 2010 and April 2012, constituted one-to-one, semi-structured interviews with current and former sex workers and police officers. 22 current or former sex workers took part in the study, who were contacted via 'Armistead Street' outreach and support project. The majority of participants had been involved in street sex work, but two participants were working as independent escorts at the time of interview; all identified as female,

including one male to female transgender participant. A number of these women were invited to participate because they had experience of reporting crimes committed against them to the police which had progressed to the offenders being taken to court, and thus they were felt to be in a perhaps particularly good position to articulate their experiences of the Merseyside hate crime approach. Meanwhile, 38 Merseyside police officers of various ranks were interviewed, plus one police community support officer (PCSO); the majority of these were still in service. In addition, a focus group was carried out with a group of seven police officers, plus interviews with two police officers from forces outside of Merseyside, one representative from the Crown Prosecution Service in Merseyside, and 14 service providers and commissioners (the latter group to collect supplementary data about developments in service provision) In total, 78 one-to-one interviews were carried out. A comprehensive analysis of the data from the sex worker and police interviews (and the focus group) was carried out using NVIVO 9 and this thesis draws primarily on these findings. (See Chapter Three for a comprehensive outline of the research procedure – including full details around sampling, data collection and data analysis – as well as for discussion of some of the issues associated with doing reflexive, ethical qualitative research with and about sex workers.)

The methodology has adopted an action research approach (Bergold and Thomas 2012; Fals Borda and Rahman 1991; O'Neill 2001; O'Neill and Webster 2005), with me sharing research findings with stakeholder groups in Merseyside to inform policy and service development locally and, in tandem, to inform national policy developments to address crimes against sex workers (see Chapter Three and Chapter Nine for more discussion). As I have described, the research grew from my own direct experience of being involved in policy development on sex work in Liverpool since 1995 in myriad roles. Sex work policy and service provision in Liverpool has been a big part of my life and key players influencing and shaping the approach

along the way are colleagues, service users, partner agencies - and now some are friends. The events we have lived through range from the tragedy and loss of murder, and the emotional impact of supporting women who are survivors of rape and other crimes, through to hopeful moments such as when professionals strove in partnership for change, or when new resources meant new initiatives could be set up, or when there was a glimpse of how justice can be achieved after cases were brought to court and guilty verdicts secured. This research work is informed by these lived experiences - and the insights, struggles, intelligence, advocacy, rights, demands and humour of sex workers in Merseyside. The ethno-mimesis of action research, as described by O'Neill (2001), has, as an experiential process, always been and so remains at the heart of my thesis.

Structure of the thesis

The thesis is split into nine chapters. Following on from the current chapter, and my stated concerns with addressing gaps in the current literatures on sex work and hate crime, Chapter Two offers an in-depth engagement with this wider body of work and serves several purposes. Firstly, it reviews the empirical literature on the level and nature of violent and other crimes committed against sex workers, as well as the different patterns across sectors and patterns relating to offenders who target sex workers. Secondly, it overviews research that identifies frameworks of criminalisation with reference to police enforcement as problematic. Here, it will review literature on varying policing and regulatory approaches to addressing sex work and crimes against sex workers, particularly their impact on sex worker safety and reporting of crime. This includes critiques of the last decade of UK government policies, within which sex worker safety has been, on the whole, marginal and which have left intact - or indeed introduced - policies and laws which have further criminalised the workplaces of sex workers and their clients.

Thirdly, the chapter considers the established theoretical literature on sex work, identifying the historically constructed, and enduring, objectification, 'othering', stigmatisation and social marginalisation of sex workers as directly leading to a discriminatory denial of rights and, moreover, hostility and violence against them – connecting this to discussions in the hate crime literature concerning the role played by cultural ideologies of 'othering' and prejudice. Fourthly, it critiques radical feminist analysis of prostitution, in which prostitution is regarded as being itself a form of violence against women, and points to those feminist analysis which acknowledge diversity in the experiences of people in sex work and duly allows for their agency and varied lived experiences of actual violence and harassment. Fifthly, it focuses on literature in hate crime scholarship which has discussed definitions of 'hate crime'. Conceptualisations of hate crime which emphasise 'othering', discrimination and social marginalisation - particularly, within the influential work of Perry (2001, 2009) - are highlighted as a frame for exploring sex worker experiences of harassment, violence and crime. As are those which include targeting of difference and 'perceived vulnerability' (Chakraborti and Garland 2012). Debates about widening definitions of hate crime to enable the inclusion of non-established groups as hate crime victim groups and the need for an intersectional approach (Mason-Bish 2010) are also touched.

Chapter Three details fully the methods used and methodological as well as ethical approach adopted in this study (as summarised in the previous section).

The remaining chapters draw on, and present analysis of the data, from my empirical study. Chapter Four overviews the history and development of sex work policy in Merseyside between the late 1980s and 2010. It provides context to the 'Merseyside hate crime approach', by exploring the socio-economic, political and policy antecedents to this model and by describing its key elements (the hate crime approach being, I argue, a banner for a number of linked progressive initiatives and practices), drawing on data from police interviews to do so.

Based on empirical data from both police officers and current and former sex workers, Chapter Five then examines the changing relationship between the police and sex workers, and explores attitudes amongst sex workers and police officers towards each other - in respect of the late '80s through to the '90s, and on to the time of my fieldwork in 2010-11. There was strong agreement amongst respondents that the relationship generally between the police and sex workers had changed considerably over the last two decades and that it was a much-improved relationship. The chapter identifies increased trust and confidence in the police, particularly amongst street sex workers, partly linked to a shift from what I call an 'enforcement-focused model' of policing to a 'public protection model' (emphasising sex worker safety) and 'strategic enforcement'. This shift in policing I identify as a key element of the Merseyside hate crime approach.

Chapter Six and Seven are at the heart of this PhD and focus on sex workers' and police officers' awareness of, and views about, the policy of approaching crimes against sex workers as hate crime. Chapter Six details the key themes and findings about Merseyside police officer perspectives on sex work and hate crime, which emerged from analysis of the police interview data and also draws on police policy documents relating to hate crime.

A key finding has been that the majority of officers interviewed support Merseyside's approach, with the strong presence of a discourse of 'sex workers as a vulnerable group facing targeted victimisation' in police narratives. Chapter Seven, meanwhile, details the key themes and findings about current and former sex worker perspectives on sex work and hate crime. While a considerable body of research has explored sex workers' experience of violence, no study has directly asked sex workers if they think people doing sex work can be victims of hate crime - nor if they personally have been victims of hate crime due to their sex worker status. My research addresses this absence, although with a small sample of predominantly female street sex workers; and the chapter outlines sex worker awareness, understanding and views of Merseyside Police's hate crime policy. It presents the data which shows that the overwhelming majority of sex workers interviewed supported the policy, felt sex workers could be victims of hate crime and that they themselves had experienced hate crime on the basis of being a sex worker. Predominant themes within sex worker narratives here is that they are targeted not only because of stigma and hostility, but because offenders perceive them as 'easy targets'; their understandings of hate crime straddled both definitions foregrounding discrimination and those foregrounding difference and 'perceived vulnerability'. Current and former sex worker narratives also illustrate the need for a conceptualisation of hate crime which allows for the intersectionality of other forms of hate crime. Participants described being targeted as sex workers but also, simultaneous to this, on the basis of other factors - for instance, their 'race', homelessness or problematic drug use.

Chapter Eight details how, as part of the Merseyside hate crime approach, improvements have been made in the provision of support for sex worker victims of sexual violence and in the achievement of better outcomes from the criminal justice system – specifically including through the creation of the specialist role of Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) for sex workers (the first of its kind in the UK) and a sex-worker-friendly specialist police rape unit. It summarises cases that have come to court since 2006, when Merseyside began to achieve unprecedented numbers of convictions for rapes and sexual assaults perpetrated against sex workers; and it highlights the experiences of some of the sex workers who were behind those headlines as victims in the criminal justice system and police officers who have investigated these crimes.

Finally, Chapter Nine reflects on the findings of the previous chapters and asserts that sex workers' experiences of harassment and crime fit various academic definitions of hate crime victimisation: including established ones stressing 'othering', social hierarchies, and define hate crimes as expressions of power and prejudice (Perry 2001; Sheffield 1995; Hall 2005). Connecting established theories about sex worker 'othering', extensive empirical research evidence on the victimisation of sex workers with established theoretical conceptualisation of hate crime this thesis offers new thinking about broadening definitions of hate crime. It argues that treating crimes against sex workers as hate crime recognises the documented cultural and historical issues of discrimination against sex workers, which has directly shaped sex workers' experiences of crime, violence, policing and the criminal justice.

The chapter concludes that the hate crime approach in Merseyside has contributed to achieving some positive outcomes in terms of police-sex work community relations and criminal justice outcomes, has been recognised at a national level as effective practice in addressing crimes against sex workers (Home Office 2011; ACPO 2011; CPS 2012) and has influenced both national police hate crime and national policing sex work guidance (NPCC 2016; College of Policing 2014). The approach can thus play, it is argued, an important part in a move towards less enforcement-focused policies on sex work, incorporating an emphasis on the safety of sex workers and a public protection focus. Yet, whilst it can make progressive achievements, I conclude by arguing that such an approach can only go so far in a framework of criminalisation, and that decriminalisation is necessary to further enhance the rights and safety of sex workers. As a piece of action research the concluding chapter also reflects on a number of impacts of the PhD research.

Chapter Two: Literature review - sex work, violence, policing and hate crime

Introduction

There are five main areas of research literature on sex work that this chapter will focus on and which set the context for this PhD study. Firstly, it will overview studies which have examined sex workers' experiences of work related violence and the level and nature of violence against sex workers, touching on the existing research that looks at those who commit crimes against sex workers. These studies continue to find that sex workers in many sectors experience targeted violence and other crime, and that this is a global issue (Deering et al. 2014). These empirical research studies, grounded in the complex lived realities of sex workers (O'Neill 2001), illustrate differences across sectors in terms of prevalence and forms of work-related victimisation.

Secondly, I will review the literature on regulation and policing of sex work in the UK. This has highlighted how a regulatory policy framework of criminalisation impacts on and undermines sex work safety creating conditions which promote rather than prevent their victimisation in the UK. Research shows a high level of under-reporting of violent and other crime experienced by sex workers to the police, reflecting the experience of other hate crime groups (Hall 2015). Criminalisation is identified as a key contributory factor to under-reporting, with the adversarial relationship and lack of trust in the police it creates, which contributes to perpetrators' perceptions of sex workers as easy targets and a belief they will 'get away with' crimes against them.

Thirdly, there is an established body of academic sex work literature which has explored the historical and contemporary stigmatisation, 'othering', and social exclusion of sex workers, sustained by a range of discourses. These contribute to prejudice and violence against sex workers, and denial of their rights including equal access to public protection. I connect the sex work literature on violence and 'othering' to the hate crime literature in which traditionally defined hate crime groups are defined as such because they are historically constructed by cultural ideologies of prejudice and stigmatisation which contribute to their hate crime victimisation.

Fourthly, theoretical debates about sex work within feminist theory have included debates about the relationship between sex work and violence. Feminist theorists are divided over their analysis of sex work, with some radical feminists taking a clear position that sex work is in itself violence against women; others challenge that approach. I will briefly summarise these arguments, establishing that my thesis rejects the view that sex work is violence against women and argues that policy efforts should be focused on preventing and addressing actual violence as experienced in diverse ways by sex workers.

Finally, this chapter will summarise academic debates about defining hate crime, identifying definitions which I utilise to apply to sex workers' experiences of targeted violent crime and harassment. I also overview contemporary debates in the hate crime literature about widening recognised hate crime groups and about the intersectional nature of hate crime.

Levels and nature of violence against sex workers

Whilst it is important to note that most commercial sex interactions go without harassment and violence (Brewis and Linstead 2000; Lowman and Atkinson 2006; Brooks-Gordon 2006; Kinnell 2008), research indicates that sex workers are more at risk from targeted harassment and violence than the general public and many other occupational groups - these risks varying according to sex working sectors, with significantly higher levels of violence against street sex workers. Globally, the targeting of sex workers by violent offenders has been established. A significant systematic review of research evidence carried out by Deering et al. (2014), reviewing 28 studies, reported that workplace violence over a lifetime was recorded by 45 to 75% of sex workers (with 32% to 55% experiencing violence in the last year). They describe the burden of violence endured by sex workers as extremely high. Their review called for violence against sex workers to be made a public health priority, nationally and internationally. Sanders and Campbell (2015) argue that within this global context it is important to unpack the nuances of which groups of sex workers experience violence, at what level and in what forms, to appropriately develop policies and policing partnership models and to inform broader theoretical understandings of who is vulnerable and who is 'perceived' to be vulnerable. As discussed, in the next section the literature demonstrates that the legal, environmental and organisational context in which sex work takes places contributes to levels of vulnerability.

Violence and female street sex work

A range of studies in the UK (Barnard 1993; Edwards 1988; O'Neill 1994, 1995, 2001; McKeganey and Barnard, 1996; May et al 2001; Church et al. 2001; Hester and Westmorland 2004) have demonstrated that female street sex workers experience particularly high levels of work-related harassment and violence. Neville's (2012) analysis of data about fatal and non-fatal attacks against sex workers in England concluded that street sex work was the most dangerous. Levels of assault and victimisation of street sex workers have also been identified globally (Deering et al. 2014; Shannon et al. 2008, 2009; Lowman 2000).

UK research has highlighted a range of violence and crime including verbal abuse and threats, range of physical assaults (i.e. having eggs, stones, bleach and other items thrown; having dogs set on them; being punched, slapped, kicked, strangled and beaten; being assaulted with iron bars, bottles, knives and other weapons), being threatened with knives and guns, robbery, rape and sexual assault, abduction and murder. This work-related violence is committed by a range of perpetrators: for example, men who present as clients, vigilantes, youths, passersby, partners, coercive drug dealers and police, amongst others (Hester and Westmorland 2004; Kinnell 2006, 2008; May et al. 2000; O'Neill 1997; O'Neill and Campbell 2001). McKeganey and Barnard (1996) referred to 'everyday violence' to capture the name calling which they observed street sex workers experiencing as part of a spectrum of violence to physical assault, rape and murder.

A study of street sex work, which was based on evaluation findings from the thirteen initiatives funded by the Home Office Tackling Crime Reduction

Programme (Hester and Westmarland 2004), found that 45% of 140 women involved in street sex work in Liverpool, Manchester, Stoke, Hull, Kirklees and Hackney had been victims of physical violence; 53% had even feared for their lives at least once, while 53% had been raped or sexually assaulted.

A high level of violence against street sex workers is reflected in Merseyside-based research (Campbell et al. 1996; Campbell 2002; Campbell and Stoops 2008). Amongst 70 street sex workers in Merseyside (Campbell 2002), 79% had been attacked in the course of their work, while 40% had been attacked during the last month. The most commonly reported form of violence experienced was physical assault (54%), robbery (49%), sexual assault (43%), rape (36%), threatened with a weapon (43%), physically assaulted with a weapon (34%) and 13% had been abducted. The most common perpetrators of reported violence were 'clients', with 70% of respondents reporting ever experiencing violence from 'punters/clients', followed by 'passers by' (33%), 'partner/boyfriend' (31%), the police (24%; highlighting issues about police misconduct), and 17% identified violence from other sex workers.

There are few multi-sited studies which compare indoor and street sex work in the UK. One of these, comparing street and off-street sex work in three cities, found that controlling for all variables (including drug use, city, duration of time in prostitution, age started), street work was less safe than off-street work (Church et al. 2001). 81% of street workers reported ever experiencing client violence (with 50% in the last 6 months), compared to 48% and 26% respectively of indoor sex workers. Street sex workers in Glasgow were six times more likely to have experienced recent violence than those working indoors in Edinburgh. Being slapped punched or kicked were the forms of violence reported most frequently by street sex workers, with 47% reporting such violence compared to 17% for indoor workers. 39%

of street workers reported being threatened with a physical violence, 37% robbery, 28% attempted rape, 27% being beaten and 25% held against their will. Other client violence reported by street sex workers included threatened with a weapon, vaginal rape, and strangulation, kidnap, forced oral sex, attempted kidnap, and slashed or stabbed. All forms of violence, except anal rape, were reported at higher levels by street sex workers.

Connolly (2014) analysed 961 reports submitted to National Ugly mugs between July 2012-July 2014. The majority (93%) were from female sex workers, with 60% of the reports submitted by street sex workers, 24% independents, 7% people working in brothels, saunas or parlours and 3% agency escorts. The most commonly reported form of serious crime was violence with 44% of all reports including violence; 98% involved female sex workers. Robbery and attempted robbery were the second most prevalent forms of serious crime, reported in 20% of reports. 17% of reports were rapes (94% were reported by female sex workers). Incidents of sexual assault (6%), attempted rape (5%) and fraud (3%) were less prevalent, with less than 6% of NUM reports including these crimes. 77% of all violence reported was by street sex workers, 11% by private or independent escorts and 6% the brothels, saunas and parlours sector. Of the rapes reported to the scheme 71% were reported by street sex workers, 14% by independent and 4% agency escorts and only 3% by parlour workers. This study suggests that street sex workers are more likely to be targeted by perpetrators committing violence, rape and robbery than sex workers in other sectors; escorts are more likely to be targeted than those working in the establishment sector (brothel, parlour sauna), with independent escorts reporting higher levels of crime than agency escorts.

Violence and off-street sex work

A number of studies examining the different characteristics and prevalence of violence between sex markets have found that indoor sex work is generally safer than street-based markets (with off-street sex workers reporting lower levels of violence) and illustrate the varying patterns of victimisation in different sectors of off-street markets (Day 2007; Kinnell 1993, 2006, 2008; Sanders 2005; Sanders and Campbell 2007; Scott et al. 2005; Whittaker and Hart 1996).

As previously described, Church et al's (2001) three city study found indoor sex workers were less likely to ever have experienced violence in their work and to have experienced it in the last six months. Their analysis found that these differences were due to the location of work and not other factors such as drug use. Jeal and Salisbury (2007) in a comparative study of health needs of street and parlour workers reported that 6% of parlours workers had experienced violence compared to 21% of street-based sex workers. Sanders and Campbell (2007), drawing on research with indoor sex workers in Birmingham and Merseyside, reported that parlour and flat workers did not report high levels of physical and sexual assault, with a majority reporting no experiences of violence in the course of their work: 76% of the Birmingham-based workers and 79% of the Merseyside-based workers. The crimes indoor sex workers most commonly reported included robbery, non- negotiated sexual acts, attempts to remove or removal of condoms, and being financially 'ripped off'.

Research has illustrated how the structure and organisation of indoor sex work can reduce risk relative to street sex work (Sanders and Campbell 2007; Whittaker and Hart 1996; Lowman 2000; Scott et al. 2005; O'Doherty 2011; Kinnell 2006, 2008), e.g. the presence and role of others including receptionists, security staff, CCTV, panic buttons, security doors,

establishment and agency procedures for taking and recording client details, and other screening practices; most of these are usually not present in street environments. Sanders and Campbell (2007) have argued that the lower levels of violence indoors compared to street sex work was partially dependent on organisational and environmental measures taken to address safety within premises and other working practices; the indoor setting provided opportunities to introduce a range of measures to try and reduce and 'design out violence' - although they and others found the extent to which these are in place varies within the sector. Pitcher, (2014) in her study of female, male and transgender sex workers in indoor settings in the UK found that participants reported variable management practices; some have policies and practices that created 'a safe and supportive working environment' whereas others had 'less favourable working conditions or, in some instances, exploitative practices' which they had encountered. O'Doherty (2011) reported that in indoor settings vulnerability to violence depends on: type of venue, structure of work, the degree of independence of the sex workers and degree of control that sex workers have over services provided.

Researchers have flagged up that indoor sex workers, particularly those working in flats who are lone workers, can be targeted by perpetrators carrying out robbery (Kinnell 2006, 2008). Kinnell (2006) analysing a decade of London ugly mugs reports found whilst sexual violence was less commonly reported by indoor female sex workers they were nearly three times more likely to report robberies with violence than street workers and over twice as likely to report other property crime; 81% percent of all indoor robberies involved violence, and many robberies were perpetrated by assailants known to have targeted other indoor premises. She suggested that indoor premises had become targets for robbery because it was expected that such premises will hold considerable sums of cash and offenders do not expect the victims to contact the police.

Escorting, independently via the internet or as part of an agency, is a significant sector of the UK male and female sex industry, but is the sector about which there is least research, generally and in relation to violence and safety. Some recent research studies have examined this sector of the sex industry in the UK and they are beginning to give a more detailed picture of the experiences of violent and other crime in the sector. In an online survey of escorts, Jenkins (2009) found that 15.7% of women and only 6.7% of men had experienced violence or dangerous incidents, indicating lower levels of violence against escorts; yet, in comparison, 40.9% of transgendered escorts had experienced violence or dangerous incidents. This showed significant levels of such incidents for transgender sex workers. The issue of intersectionality of transphobic violence and anti-sex-worker violence and compounded victimisation, I argue, could be further illuminated by locating sex work within a hate crime framework.

O'Doherty (2011) surveyed violence and other forms of victimisation amongst off-street sex workers in Vancouver (64% had worked in massage parlours, 67% escorted and 72% had worked independently from their own home). She found 63% of respondents had not experienced any sex-work-related victimisation, arguing this problematises the claim that violence is in some way inherent to sex work. Thirty six percent had experienced a client refusing to pay the pre agreed amount, making this the most common form of victimisation, 33% had experienced a client refusing to wear a condom, 33% had experienced threats at least once, 33% had experienced theft or robbery. 16% had been threatened with a weapon, 24% had been hit at least once, and 17% had been sexually assaulted. Escorts and independents reported more violence than parlour workers.

Sanders et al. (2015), in the largest UK survey to date of 240 internet-based sex workers (mainly independent escorts), found nearly half of respondents

(47%) reported they had experienced crime in their sex work. The most common crimes experienced were threatening or harassing texts, calls, emails (36%); verbal abuse (30%); and removal of condoms. This study suggests that internet-based sex workers do experience less crime than street-based sex workers but blackmail, stalking, harassment by text and email is a significant issue for sex workers and becoming more common.

It is important to note that there is a body of research which shows that sex workers are not passive in the face of the risks of violence. The majority of sex workers develop a range of protective strategies (Sanders 2001; 2005) and skills to manage and negotiate the risks involved in selling sex and to avoid, prevent and minimise their experience of violence; these strategies have been identified as being part of occupational culture (O'Neill 1994; Pitcher 2014). The wide range of strategies (such as screening clients, collaborative working) cannot be described here, but it is important to note that research has found that at all stages of commercial sexual encounters, particularly early interactions and negotiations with clients, it is important sex workers are enabled to put in place protective strategies and try to shape the commercial sex interaction and to 'set the agenda' (Barnard 1993). However, as we will see, criminalisation of sex workers and their clients has been identified as undermining many strategies, and the reporting of crime, will be explored later in this chapter.

Perpetrators of violence against sex workers and sex worker murder

As illustrated, research has found that violence and other crimes committed against sex workers are committed by a range of perpetrators including clients, men who present as clients, passers by, vigilantes, groups of youths, drug dealers, abusive partners, other sex workers and the police (Brooks-Gordon 2006; Benson 1998; McKeganey and Barnard 1995; Hester and Westmorland 2004; Kinnell, 1993, 2006, 2008).

The work of Lowman (2000) and Kinnell (2006) has been significant in flagging up that a large proportion of 'client violence' has been committed by men who have no intention of paying for sexual services but use the 'client guise' to gain access to sex workers. This thesis accepts this distinction. Neville (2012) found that 89% of sex workers in her sample were attacked by strangers, and in 79% of these cases a transaction had been agreed; hence the majority of attackers used the client guise to approach the sex workers they attacked. Without this distinction there is a risk that all who pay for sexual services are represented as violent towards sex workers. Research examining samples of men who pay for sexual services indicate that it is a minority who commit crimes against sex workers. In a study of men arrested for kerb crawling in London, Brooks-Gordon (1999) found that under 6% had a criminal record, and only eight out of over a thousand were found to have convictions for sexual or other violence. Kinnell (2006; 2008) has argued that a small proportion of clients carry out a disproportionately number of attacks against sex workers, identifying serial offenders who had repeatedly attacked sex workers; her analysis found a group of offenders who had previously attacked other sex workers/premises or were known to the police. Those who attack sex workers tend to be repeat offenders and convicted murderers of sex workers frequently have a past history of violence against sex workers and others, with a pattern of escalating offending behavior (Brooks-Gordon 2006; Kinnell 2002, 2006; Salfati et al. 2008).

Neville (2012) analysed police data from 92 sex worker murders, 89 non-sex worker murders, and 237 non-fatal attacks on sex workers from across the UK. Compared to men who commit non-sex worker murders, sex worker murderers were more likely to have a criminal record, and to have a high level of property crimes, fraud and public disorder. Whilst non-sex-worker murderers tended to have a history of violent personal offences,

it was this high level of property crime, as well as the 'sheer range of criminal activities', which Neville found distinguished sex worker murders from men who committed non-sex-worker murders. She found men who commit murder and non-fatal attacks against sex workers 'are very criminogenic with long histories of violent and property offences suggesting that a number of men may escalate the seriousness of their attacks against this victim group over time, progressing from rapes and assaults to murder' (: 278). Most were not known to victims yet their offending backgrounds meant they were likely to be on police databases. Neville's analysis (2012) concurred with previous studies that had found a higher level of violence and sexual aggression in cases of sex worker murder and non-fatal assaults against sex workers.

Ignanski (2002) argued that often crimes against established hate crime groups only tend to get some national policy and media attention when there are high profile murders. This is another experience sex workers share with formally recognised hate crime groups. Kinnell (2006) analysed 84 murders of sex workers in the UK between January 1990 and May 2004. 83 victims were female, with one male. 82% were street workers. Only one indoor sex worker was murdered at a premises where other people were present; eight other indoor workers were found dead in the homes of the perpetrators or their own premises, indicating lone off-street workers (compared to those working in groups) were more vulnerable to murder, with risks for off-street sex workers much lower than for street sex workers. The heightened vulnerability of sex workers, particularly street-based, to murder has been illustrated by other researchers (Lowman 2000; Lowman and Fraser 1996; Salfati et al. 2008).

This data shows that for many years the particular vulnerability of female street sex workers to murder compared to their indoor workers was clear. Yet since 2013 there has been a shifting trend in the data regarding victims sector of work, with the proportion of off-street sex workers amongst those murdered having increased. As of March 2016, the 'National Ugly Mugs' database identified 155 sex workers murders between 1990 and March 2016. Between 2013 and March 2016, there have been 15 murders. 47% of these victims were indoor sex workers, 33% were street, 20% not known. This compares to 71% street, 24% indoor, and 5% (street and indoor) for the 21 sex worker murders recorded in the NUM database for January 2007 to December 2012.

Another distinctive trend is the increase in the proportion of migrant sex workers murdered. Amongst the 15 women murdered, 11 of these (73%) were migrant sex workers, all but one of who worked indoors. This compared to 0% of the 21 people murdered between January 2007 and December 2012. Whilst there is limited research which explores migrants' experiences of sex-work-related crime in the UK, Mai (2009) found for migrant sex workers 'stigmatisation of sex work and lack of legal immigration documentation' makes migrants more vulnerable to violence and abuse. Campbell (2015) has argued this victimisation of migrant people is not only linked to an increase in the presence of migrants working in the UK sex industry but may indicate an intersection of hostility to migrants and hostility to sex workers, with dangerous offenders targeting what they see as the enhanced vulnerability of migrants.

We will now look at studies which connect violence against sex workers, and the varying levels of victimisation across and within sectors, to the legal context in which sex work takes place.

Criminalisation, regulation and policing of sex work in the UK: contributing to violence

Problematic regulatory framework

Currently governed by law that makes many of the activities surrounding the sale, organisation and purchase of sex illegal (Kingston 2010), the UK governance of sex work has been criticised by the majority of academics who have examined it. It has been criticised as outdated, un-policeable, piecemeal, discriminatory and shaped by outmoded conceptualisations of gender and sexuality (Sanders 2009a; Scoular and O'Neill 2007; Hubbard 1999, 2006; Self 2003), failing to target forms of exploitation, eroding sex worker safety, and compounding the vulnerability of sex workers and their social exclusion (Kinnell 2008; Campbell and Kinnell 2001; Benson 1998; O'Neill 2007).

It has been argued that the logic of current sex work law has remained 'essentially unaltered' (Hubbard 2006: 2) since the Wolfenden Report of 1957 (Self 2003) made strong distinctions between the role of the police in policing sex work in public, whilst leaving the private domain behind closed doors to consenting adults. This paved the way for laws of soliciting, kerb crawling and brothel keeping based on an ethos of the need to maintain public order and civility (Sanders and Soothill 2011). Regulation in the 21st century has continued to be influenced by the need to maintain public order and a moral discourse that the sex industry was a damaging, unwanted aspect of modern society (Kantola and Squires 2004) - hence the laws to penalise third parties such as controllers, coercers, brothel keepers and others who seek to encourage, control and exploit the prostitution of others. Scoular and O'Neill (2007) identify a growing discourse shaped by a radical feminist conceptualisation of sex work as a form of violence against women, accompanied by the conflation of sex work with trafficking, as increasingly dominant in sex work policy discourse.

Hubbard (2006) and many other theorists have noted this 'creates a paradoxical situation' in the selling and purchase of sexual services (between consenting adults). It is not illegal but it is difficult for sex workers to work without breaking a number of laws, or working in environments which are criminalised (with current brothel keeping legislation which means a location becomes a brothel if more than one person works within it), a model which Lowman refers to as 'quasi criminalisation' (2000).

There is a considerable body of literature critiquing policies and legislative changes introduced by the 'New Labour' government, including the Home Office (2014) consultation document 'Paying the Price' and the associated 'Co-ordinated National Strategy' which formed national strategy until 2010 when a Conservative-Liberal Democratic coalition came into government. 'The Criminal Justice and Immigration Bill' (2008) 'Tackling the Demand for Prostitution: a Review' and the 'Policing & Crime Act' (2010) were all introduced under the former labour government and have been criticised by academics (Brooks-Gordon 2010).

Some critiques posited these policies perpetuated a 'new moral authoritarianism' (Phoenix and Oerton 2005) - maintaining the criminalisation of street sex workers and making them responsible for an unacceptable social phenomenon, without serious governmental efforts to address routes in for the socially excluded women involved (Melrose 2007), despite an emergent discourse of 'victimhood'. Regulations has have been characterised as taking a welfare/control approach to policing individual women (Scoular and O'Neill 2007) through criminal justice tools such as Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBO) (Sagar 2007, 2008) and Engagement and Support Orders (Carline and Scoular 2015).

The policing of street sex work through the deployment of criminal justice agencies to enforce sanctions and encourage 'exit' has meant that a discourse of the 'deserving and undeserving' victim has been used to enable resources and interventions for those who are seen to be trying to 'exit' and seen the withdrawal of resources for those 'choosing' 'risky lifestyles' by engaging in sex work, who experience criminal justice penalties and repressive policing. Such approaches are seen as 'essentially exclusionary' (O'Neil 2007), with no progressive change in terms of citizenship for sex workers as hegemonic regulatory framework is perpetuated.

Theorists have particularly critiqued moves to further criminalise 'demand' i.e. customers of sex workers. The national strategy (Home Office 2006) supported initiatives to target the clients of street sex workers using kerb crawling legislation, kerb crawler rehabilitation programmes and other penalties. Such policies have been heavily criticised for further criminalising and stigmatising sex workers and their clients, having questionable effect (Sanders 2009b; Campbell and Stoor 2001), taking focus away from violent 'customers', and violating the civil liberties of men who purchase sexual services (Brooks-Gordon 2006). Whilst the 'Tackling Demand for Prostitution Review' which emerged from the strategy did not lead to the introduction of blanket criminalisation of clients, the offence of paying for the sexual services of a prostitute subject to force, threats, coercion or deception was introduced by the 'Policing & Crime Act' (2009) as by Section 14 in 53a of the Sex Offences Act under the former Labour government. Brooks-Gordon (2010) expresses concern that Section 14 could be broadly interpreted and the law applied in a broad bush manner, not targeting the trafficking offences its supporters claim it was designed to address and potentially violating the civil liberties of clients of sex workers.

Much of the criminalisation agenda over the past decade, across Europe and beyond, has favoured what has come to be known as the 'Swedish approach' (Sanders and Campbell 2014), with a focus on making it a crime to pay for sexual services from adults. It has been heavily critiqued by sex work researchers and sex worker/human rights organisations (Amnesty 2016), who have posited a raft of criticisms including that it will make sex workers less safe, heighten human rights abuses of the most vulnerable sex workers, and further stigmatise sex workers and the purchase of sex (Levy 2014; Levy and Jakobssen 2014; Kulick 2003).

One dominant theme in this critical literature is how the legislative changes did not improve the safety, health and rights of sex workers themselves, leaving a criminalised framework intact and producing more adverse circumstances (Boyton and Cusick 2006; Goodyear and Cusick 2007), similarly. It is important to note a large body of research evidence documenting the detrimental impacts of criminalisation on HIV prevention, health promotion, and support services for sex workers globally, calling for decriminalisation (Deering et al. 2014; Shannon et al. 2008; Scambler and Paoli 2008; Beyrer 2015; UN AIDS 2014; World Health Organisation 2014).

Enforcing criminalisation: policing sex work in the UK

Hubbard (2006) describes the policing of sex work in the UK as 'out of touch and out of time'. He argues the dominant modes of policing are based on outdated legislation and are increasingly criticised for failing to deliver any change (despite considerable police resources being invested) and failing to address sex worker safety, including by sex worker rights groups on the grounds of human rights.

Researchers have documented how the policing of sex work across the UK varies (Pitcher et al. 2006), with policing taking 'complex and spatially varied forms where the morality of individual officers coalesce with wider understandings of vice laws' (Hubbard 2006: 122). Private (police) and public (legal) moralities combine to create an uneven geography of prostitution (Hubbard 1999), with variable policing within and between forces, with laws enacted unevenly and inconsistently. Local and national studies of the policing of street sex work have found, historically, policing responses are uncoordinated within force areas, and that this policing is ineffectual (with patterns of dispersal and displacement) and a low priority (Benson and Matthews 1995) - with many officers seeing sex work as inevitable and prostitution laws and policing strategies having limited legitimacy amongst officers (Brooks-Gordon 2006). Studies highlight that that whilst, at a local level, unwritten 'rules of engagement' develop (Brooks-Gordon 2006; Sharpe 1998; Hubbard and Sanders 2003), there remains a difficult relationship between sex workers and the police within a criminalised framework, with limited confidence and trust amongst sex workers in the police (Kinnell 2006; Sharpe 1998).

While responses differ across the UK, the police role has been identified as primarily that of enforcing the law (May et al. 2000), with the overriding factor shaping policing of street sex work being 'the level of public complaint about sex work' (Hubbard 2006), often prompting periodic 'crackdowns' in which sex workers and/or their clients are cautioned or arrested (Hester and Westmarland 2004). The influence of community complaints with community groups demanding removal of street sex work from their streets has been identified as a major driver in local and national approaches to street sex work in the UK (Pitcher et al. 2006; Hubbard 1999). The 'othering' discourse of sex workers as 'urban blight' in a context of regeneration and gentrification of neighbourhoods has been identified as a powerful driver in the policing and regulation of sex work (Hubbard et al. 2007).

There has been intense criticism of this enforcement approach to street sex work in the academic literature; it is identified as creating a carousel effect with women and their clients arrested, fined and sanctioned (often leading to displacement), with very few resources or solutions to addressing why street sex work occurs (Hubbard 2006; Benson and Matthews 1995b) and heightening danger for sex workers. The impacts of enforcement on sex worker safety and their relationship with the police is well documented (Kinnell 2008; Brooks-Gordon 2006) and will be explored in the next section.

Whilst some commentators (see Matthews 2005) argue there has been a reduction in the enforcement of prostitution laws with the reduction of 'vice' squads since the 1990s, many researchers argue enforcing legislation and new penalties continue to be a key part of policing sex work, with more repressive and draconian approaches adopted in some areas. Some of these are informed by a 'zero tolerance' approach to street sex work (Sanders 2001; Hubbard 2006), with the use of newer powers such as Anti-Social Behaviour Orders and other civil powers to police street sex work, plus disruption tactics, police raids (Boff 2012) and Brothel Closure Orders in relation to indoor premises.

Some UK studies looking at policing of sex work have commented on unprofessional police behaviour (Scambler and Scambler 1995; Campbell et al. 1996; Sharpe 1998). However, no study in the UK has commented on police corruption, misconduct and abuse of position (this is touched on in my thesis). Yet, this dynamic in the relationship between the police and sex workers has been identified as a serious issue in other global contexts, where criminalisation creates vulnerability to police violence, extortion and other misconduct and abuses by the police (Arnott and Crago 2008; Crago 2009; Sherman et al. 2015).

The picture regarding the regulation and of policing sex work in the UK is complex but a general overview shows that the criminalisation agenda is one which has significantly influenced policing strategies, historically and continuing to do so (Sanders 2009b). Yet, there has been some notable changes in discourse and national approach, with the Coalition and (since May 2015) the Conservative government, the latter of which emphasises that policing should be driven by local issues, with local multi-agency partnerships taking a lead with safety and support for sex workers considered (Home Office 2011). The Coalition government's 'Review of Effective Practice' supported a more devolved approach, with no central government guidance; it emphasised local partnerships creating their own solutions as part of their wider conservative localism agenda. The most current guidance for policing comes from the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) 'National Policing Sex Work Guidance', published in February 2016: this denotes a shift in approach, with an emphasis on sex worker safety being a key priority for police forces. This guidance is critical of enforcement-focused approaches as not sustaining change and detrimental to sex worker safety, stating that 'enforcement does not resolve the issue, but rather displaces it, making sex workers more vulnerable' (NPCC 2016: 10). This indicates the support at senior police officer level for progressive policing and a critique of prostitution legislation and traditional enforcement approaches which senior offices have a history of speaking out about (Hubbard 2006).

With much evidence that punitive policing strategies have little value, fail to offer long term and balanced solutions, and face increasing opposition and criticism, shifts to more progressive policing have been identified (Hubbard 2006). Researchers (Pitcher et al. 2006) have noted new forms of policing that have emerged based on a multi-agency, collaborative approach which consider sex worker safety. Some research has captured approaches of some partnership areas which have considered alternative modes to

enforcement in which the police have participated. Hester and Westmorland's (2004) overview of Home Office funded crime reduction programme initiatives included two community liaison and mediation approaches, which were found to have some effect in reducing problems identified by residents in relation to street sex work; such approaches were found to be more effective than enforcement models. Some researchers described police forces working within formal multi-agency partnerships, working collaboratively, to build trust amongst sex workers and develop policies that consider sex work safety and encourage reporting (Pitcher et al. 2006). Some have identified the appointment of non-arresting police sex work liaison officers as contributing to developing more positive relationships between sex workers and the police (O'Neill and Campbell 2002). Others have examined police and multi-agency participation in local 'Ugly Mugs' schemes, identifying the value of 'Ugly Mugs' for encouraging reporting to the police and supporting convictions (Kinnell, 1993, 2008; Penfold et al. 1994; O'Neill and Campbell 2002; Laing 2013 et al; UKNSWP 2011). Hester and Westmorland (2004) found that a number of areas attempting to address violence against sex workers through 'Ugly Mugs'; they reported more effective schemes, including the one in Merseyside, were supporting successful prosecution. Penfold et al. (1994) found the same scheme was increasing reporting to the police, and incidents reported to the scheme had aided investigations and prosecution; in addition, the scheme had facilitated effective partnership work between the project and the police. A 'National Ugly Mugs' (NUM) scheme was established in 2012; the majority of local schemes are affiliated to this central national scheme which interfaces with police forces locally and nationally via the Serious Crimes Analysis Section (SCAS) within the National Policing Agency (Laing et al. 2013). The new NPCC (2016) national police guidance states that all forces should support NUM.

Some research has examined the designation of spaces for street sex work (Hubbard 2007) and how police forces have worked within a multi-agency context and supported policies to manage sex work 'strategically' (Campbell 2014a), minimising enforcement of prostitution laws and focusing enforcement on violence and exploitation. Examples include the policy of developing managed areas for street sex work (Sanders and Sehmbi 2015; Van Doorninck and Campbell 2006). Sanders and Sembi (2015) carried out an evaluation of the formal pilot of a managed area for street sex work in Leeds, where street sex workers were permitted to work within a specified area and a set of agreed rules without enforcement of the soliciting legislation. This study found that the managed area with the move away from criminalisation and the introduction of a police sex work liaison officer had lead to improvement in trust amongst sex workers in the police and a demonstrable increase in reporting of crimes to the police by street sex workers. Sanders and Brown (forthcoming) have also looked at the *policing* of the managed area in Leeds, through the narratives of police and other stake holders in which 'various conceptualisations of vulnerability' are presented and identified as shaping policing. Cooper's (2016) study highlights a considerable degree of toleration and local legal regulation of indoor parlour sex work in one area of Lancashire.

These studies have captured alternative approaches to the regulation and policing of sex work in the UK, presenting alternatives to what have been dominant enforcement models. This thesis will describe another such approach. These are at odds with the national legal framework of criminalisation, but have synergy with the new national policing guidance (National Police Chiefs Council 2016).

An overview of research on the policing of sex work shows that the legal framework of criminalisation and national and local government policies - often foregrounding public order, the removal of nuisance and incivility, and increasingly trafficking - have meant the police role has often been as enforcer of the law. Yet, it also shows that the policing of sex work is not monolithic across the UK. Research has highlighted how, within the current legal framework, the policing of prostitution, including the extent to which prostitution laws are enforced and the extent to which police introduce initiatives to address sex worker safety, vary across police forces and multi-agency partnership areas (Pitcher et al. 2006; Hubbard 2006). I will argue in this thesis that this variation is across a spectrum from 'enforcement-focused policing' to 'public- protection-focused policing' (Campbell 2011b) in which sex worker safety and protection is prioritised, with the Merseyside hate crime approach (see Chapter One) located at the protection end of the spectrum. Sanders and Campbell (2014) noted that in some countries with criminalisation there have been 'some policy initiatives at a local level that indicate a shift towards more protection rather than enforcement-based approaches' (: 542).

Criminalisation's damaging impact on sex worker safety

Research literature examining laws which criminalise many activities associated with sex work in the UK such as soliciting (and previously kerb crawling legislation), brothel keeping law, and controlling prostitution for gain, show that the enforcement of these perpetuate sex worker victimisation and have detrimental impacts on sex worker safety. They do this by exacerbating sex worker risk of violence, limiting the extent to which safety measures can be put in place, alienating sex workers from potentially protective policing and acting as a barrier to reporting, so 'creating the conditions for predation' (Bowen 2015) and limiting access to support and justice (Hubbard 2006; Self 2003; Brooks-Gordon 2006; Kinnell 2008; Sanders and Campbell 2006).

Research and practice in the UK for nearly three decades has found that the higher levels of vulnerability for street-based sex workers to a range of targeted crime and harassment is linked to the criminalisation model of regulation in the UK that seeks to remove sex workers from the streets (Scoular and O'Neill 2007). Studies show the primary focus of local and national sex work policy and policing has been the policing of street sex work which a focus on policies which aim to remove, reduce or curtail visible street sex work (Hubbard et al. 2007; Scoular et al. 2007), with street sex workers subject to the enforcement of criminal law more than other sectors. The Street Offences Act 1959 has been the key piece of legislation used in relation to street sex (until 2010, when this was amended in the Policing and Crime Act 2010). The Sexual Offences Act 1985 introduced the offence of kerb crawling; with the 2010 Policing and Crime Act, there is now one offence of soliciting utilised against both street sex workers and their customers. A number of other criminal justice measures used such as anti-social behaviour orders and conditional cautioning have been identified as having many of the same detrimental impacts on sex worker safety as using the soliciting legislation (Sagar 2007; Scoular and Carline 2014).

Research shows that enforcement of soliciting and kerb legislation erodes safety strategies employed by street sex workers (Sanders 2011), including the crucial early interactions and negotiation (McKeganey and Barnard 1996; Barnard 1993). Numerous studies have noted that fear of police caution or arrest means women have reduced time for negotiation with clients and to put in place safety strategies.

Limiting women's ability to screen out potential violent, dangerous clients relates to the illegality of soliciting ... restricts the amount of time that can be spent negotiating such issues as safer sex but also importantly weighing up the potential personal risks of getting into the car or going into a dimly lit alleyway. (Barnard: 693).

A number of studies have found enforcement of soliciting and previous kerb crawling legislation leads to dispersal or displacement of street sex work to less familiar, more isolated, clandestine locations which heightens danger (May et al. 2001; Barnard 1993; Campbell and Stoor 2001). Kinnell (2006) describes kerb crawling and soliciting legislation as dangerous for sex workers, increasing their vulnerability to violence and even provoking violence by 'legitimizing attitudes of hostility towards sex workers' (Kinnell 2006: 232). Here she summarises the effects of displacement:

Control policies which displace sex workers from familiar areas, reduce negotiation time, reduce contact with known, regular clients, and which increase levels of client anger towards them, increase sex workers' vulnerability, decrease their ability to limit their own risks, decrease contact with helping agencies, and decrease the likelihood of co-operation between sex workers, clients, and police over investigation of serious crimes (Kinnell 2006: 164)

As discussed earlier in this chapter, there is evidence that indoor workers working in groups are safer due to environmental protective factors and organisational aspects of indoor settings, including the presence of others.

Yet current brothel keeping law acts as a deterrent to safer working, as indoor sex workers who work in premises with more than one worker, or a third party present specifically to improve safety (Sanders and Campbell 2007), are working in an illegal context. There is evidence that the laws relating to brothel-keeping or controlling for gain are used against receptionists and women working with others for safety (Carline 2011; English Collective of Prostitutes 2011; Pitcher 2015). This can also result in sex workers being reluctant to report violence against them, for fear of the potential repercussions for themselves or others they work with (Sanders et al. 2009). Kinnell (2008) found that group working reduces the risk of sexual violence, but the criminalisation of sex workers working together ensures that attacks which do occur, especially in the course of robberies, frequently go unreported to the police, contributing to their continuance and escalation.

Criminalisation, under-reporting and violence against sex workers

A key finding of the research on sex work and violence is that incidents of violent and other crime committed against sex workers are seriously under-reported to police (Kinnell 1993, 2006, 2008; Campbell 2002; Campbell and Kinnell 2001; Boff 2012) and the criminalisation of sex work has been identified as a major structural factor contributing to under-reporting. Church et al (2001) found that amongst their sample of street and off-street sex workers only 34% of sex workers who had experienced client violence had reported it to the police. Kinnell (2006) reported that of reports made to the London 'Ugly Mugs' scheme, only 15% of incidents reported by street sex workers had been reported to the police and 38% of incidents reported by indoor workers. Connelly's (2014) analysis of 'National Ugly Mugs' reports found that whilst sex workers' consent to share anonymous information to the police was high (above 90%), the rates for full reporting much lower across all crime types 'varying between 25% (for attempted rape) and 37% (for rape)'.

Later data from NUM shows enduring high levels of under-reporting, by March 2016 only 26 per cent of the 1350 sex workers who had reported serious crimes to NUM since its establishment were willing to report to the police (Feis-Bryce 2016). Sanders et al. (2015) found that 49% of internet-based sex workers were either 'unconfident' or 'very unconfident' that the police will take crimes against them seriously, indicating reluctance to report amongst a group of sex workers working legally but within a stigmatised profession.

A range of reasons have been identified for this under-reporting with a lack of confidence in the police being the spine connecting many of the factors identified including. These include; a belief that it is pointless because the police will take no action (May 2001; Wilcock 1998), that they will not give a sympathetic reaction and will judge sex workers (Campbell 2002; Kinnell 2006), that the police will blame sex workers themselves as they have 'chosen' to sex work (May et al. 1999) or a belief that they will not be taken seriously as sex workers (and in some cases - particularly on the streets, with high levels of problematic drug use - as drug users), a belief that crimes will be treated as an occupational hazard. Personal experiences of previous unsatisfactory response from the police has been identified as a reason in UK studies (O'Neill and Campbell 2002). In research with street sex workers in Merseyside (Campbell 2002) found respondent gave a range of reasons the most frequently mentioned reasons were; the police never do anything 61%, would not take it seriously 58%, 'they might judge' 44% and 'you can't trust the police' 44%. Fear of being charged and arrested with soliciting or outstanding warrants is a key reason identified for street sex workers in many studies (May 2001; Campbell 2002).

Deering et al. (2014) found that in many countries violence against sex workers is often not registered as crime by the police and in some cases is carried out by the police themselves, this deters sex workers from reporting any crime committed against them. Sherman et al's. (2015) research in Baltimore, US found an enforcement approach in which verbal abuse from police, police committing physical and sexual abuse of sex workers, police involved in soliciting sex workers as paying clients on and off street was prevalent, creating a context in which sex workers did not report and their experiences of violent and other crimes were silenced.

Some studies of street sex work have highlighted that some sex workers will not report because they are disempowered and have internalised the notion that violence is an 'occupational hazard' and 'part of the job' (Barnard 1993; Miller and Schwartz 1995) connected this to the cultural stigmatisation and devaluing of sex workers which had been reinforced by experiences of the criminal justice system when no action had been taken and sex workers were not treated as 'reputable citizens' (: 19).

Anxiety about arrest and prosecution, of themselves or others they work with, in the case of people working in premises where more than one person works (which could be defined as brothels within law) is a prominent reason (Sanders 2009c). Boff (2012) found under-reporting was a serious issue in London, amongst off-street sex workers, fearful of police prosecution and closure of premises where they work. There have been a number of cases where indoor sex workers have contacted the police about a crime and then found that themselves or others connected to their work place are under investigation (Pitcher 2014). Such possibilities deter sex workers from reporting crimes against them, and can mean off-street sex workers are alienated from the protective services of the police, reluctant to approach them for help should they need it. (Benoit and Millar 2001: 54).

O'Doherty (2011) found reasons for not reporting amongst indoor sex workers also included; embarrassment, not thinking it was serious enough, believing no one would care and fearing they would lose their job for parlour workers.

Studies have shown the fear of public identification making authorities (including the police), family and friends aware of sex working and further stigmatisation (Campbell 2002; Benson 1998) is a barrier for sex workers in all sectors, as are anxieties about how they will be treated in the criminal justice system. Fear of reprisals from perpetrators and their associates is also a factor (Campbell 2002)

Research has also highlighted specific issues for male sex workers whose experiences are rarely recognised in policy and service provision with few agencies including the police with initiatives to remove barriers to reporting and access support for them (Bryce et al. 2015).

Research has also highlighted that identified barriers to reporting are further heightened for migrant sex workers who may have a greater mistrust and fear of the police and statutory authorities this is particularly so for those who are undocumented or have irregular legal status and may fear deportation (Mai 2009).

The 'National Ugly Mugs' scheme has close contact with police for areas. An analysis of NUM reports (Feis-Bryce 2016) found that the force areas which have the lowest proportion of reports that have been reported to the police were in police forces where there had been the most active enforcement and disruption-based policing approaches, those areas with the highest proportion of reports were delivering approaches which were not prioritising enforcement but initiatives to encourage reporting of crimes by sex workers.

This literature shows that criminalisation generates many of the factors leading to under-reporting, it mitigates against the reporting of violent and other crimes to the police. It suggest many sex workers lack confidence and trust in an agency who have the role of; enforcing the soliciting and kerb crawling legation, arresting sex workers, and their clients, as well as enforcing other prostitution law such as brothel keeping legislation. The problematic relationship between sex workers and the police within a framework of quasi-criminalisation is very important (Lowman 2000). Kinnell (2006) and Campbell and Kinnell (2001) identified the dual role of enforcing prostitution related laws and also policing violence against sex workers as problematic and far from optimal for encouraging reporting and addressing violence against sex workers. Kinnell (2006) illustrated a number of situation in which police may prioritise dealing with enforcement rather than encouraging reporting and offering public protection. Campbell has argued that the crux of the problematic relationship between sex workers and the police is that for sex workers the state organisation who can protect you are also the organisation responsible for enforcing the laws on sex work and can potentially arrest you and others you work with (Campbell 2011). Lowman (2000: 1007, 1008) argued that the quasi-criminalisation of sex work is a system which 'helps to perpetuate violence against prostitution' one of the ways it does this is alienating sex worker from the protective service potential of the police' and creating an 'adversarial relationship' between the police and sex workers:

Criminal law sanctions encourage an adversarial relationship between prostitutes and the police. Why would a prostitute turn to a potential adversary for help? This is not to say the police are never helpful or that prostitutes never turn to the police – some do, which is why a growing number of men are being convicted for assaulting prostitutes. (: 1008)

Kinnell stresses that policing of sex work operates against the reporting and investigation of crimes against sex workers:

Police need the cooperation of clients, sex workers, and their associates, if those who attack sex workers are to be brought to justice, but several recent cases suggest that reducing the public nuisance of street prostitution continues to be the main police priority, even when a murder investigation is taking place. Therefore, while the physical environment of sex work, especially street work, facilitates attacks, the judicial environment militates against their investigation, leaving offenders free to repeat and to escalate the violence. (Kinnell 2006: 161)

Research on rape and sexual assault shows that sex offenders carefully select the people and contexts in which they attack to limit the chances of them being punished for their offence (Burrows 2013). Barnard (1993) noted that 'prostitutes are easy target for men who have violent inclinations' (: 702) who make an assessment that there will be no reprisal for their crimes.

Kinnell (2008) argues that many perpetrators who target sex workers are very much aware of sex workers reluctance to report and target sex workers with a belief they are more likely to 'get away with' their crimes (Kinnell, 2008) creating what Bowen (2015) has referred to as the 'conditions for predation'. Analysis (Feis-Bryce 2016) of reports made to the 'National Ugly Mugs' scheme has found regular occurrence in the narratives of perpetrators which illustrates their belief that sex workers will not report and if they do that the police will not take them seriously. Similarly Neville (2012) in her analysis of police data on cases of sex worker murder and non-fatal attacks found that within suspects statements there were indications that offenders believed sex workers (and drug users) would be seen as less credible than other members of society; 'No one will believe a methadone addict working girl like you over someone like me' (: 236) was an extract from the statement of one suspect.

Kinnell is uncompromising in her argument that the criminalisation of sex work in the UK directly shapes violence experienced by sex workers:

Violence against sex workers is intimately related to hostile legislation, law enforcement, and public attitudes.... (2006: 163)

In this sub section summary we have seen the research shows that criminalisation has a range of detrimental impacts on sex workers safety. Fundamentally criminalisation creates a difficult adversarial relationship between the police and sex workers, a context in which it is hard to create the trust and confidence needed for sex workers to report crimes committed against them and to cooperate in the investigation of crimes. The research literature shows a concerning level of under-reporting of violence against sex workers which means that many perpetrators are not identified, apprehended, investigated and brought to justice, perpetuating and condoning violence (Kinnell 2008).

I argue in this thesis that this pattern of under-reporting amongst sex workers is something they share with other hate crime groups (Williams and Robinson 2004; Garland and Chakraborti 2007), as evidenced in this chapter, much harassment and crime they experience is under-reported to police, due to lack of trust and confidence amongst sex workers in the police generated by an adversarial relationship between sex workers and the police created by criminalisation. My thesis will argue that a key aim of the hate crime approach in Merseyside has been to challenge this, it has aimed to improve the relationship between sex workers and the police, proactively encourage reporting by sex workers and attempting to reduce criminalisation,

Sanders (2011) proposed that the relationship between sex work and violence is shaped by three key elements which allows for differences in the research evidence on the levels of violence between sectors and across different jurisdictions. Firstly, the environment /spaces in which sex work takes place, this acknowledges the different locational and organisational factors which shape safety across sectors as discussed earlier. Secondly, the relationship to the state, i.e. where a particular form of sex work sits in the regulatory systems, it's legal status, how and the extent to which it is criminalised and those laws enforced. Thirdly, stigma and social status and the literature on the positioning of sex workers as an excluded marginal out group which experiences 'othering', which is now explored.

'Othering', stigma and the discourse of disposability

There is a considerable consensus, not only in the UK literature, but the global sex work literature, that sex work has been historically stigmatised and this stigmatisation is enduring. This stigmatisation has been a central part of the 'othering' and objectification of sex workers (Pheterson 1993; Roberts 1994; O'Neill 1997, 2001, 2007; Hubbard 1999; Lowman 2000). This literature has argued that such 'othering' contributes to social exclusion, social outcast status, generates hostility, denial of full citizenship, rights and lack of protection from victimisation, contributing to violence and vulnerabilities (Abel and Fitzgerald 2010a; O'Neill 2007; Lowman 2000; Kinnell, 2008; Roberts 1994). Stigma and 'othering' has a wide range of real effects on the lived realities of sex workers.

Roberts (1992, 1994), in her historical studies of sex work, directly linked what she called 'whore stigma', the treatment of sex workers as a lower class of women to violence against sex workers, and the historical tendency of the police to dismiss such violence:

A prostitute is raped by a client she does not bother to report the crime to the police, because in their eyes the rape of a hooker isn't a crime: 'You're a whore, what do you expect?' is their attitude... we see the whore-stigma operating at its most blatant, enshrined and even eroticized by serial killers, law makers and a gullible, apathetic public. Prostitutes experience the whore stigma on a daily basis, in their denial of their human rights by the police and the legal harassment. (Roberts 1994: 9)

Numerous feminist theorist and researchers in the sex work field have noted that female sex workers are placed on the bad woman side of the good woman/bad woman, Madonna/whore dichotomy, violating 'fundamental expectations as to how women ought to act' (McKeganey and Barnard 1996: 80). Pheterson (1993) has argued that female sex workers are constructed as women who violate rules for female sexuality and chastity and as such are assumed to invite violence, which is justified by this social construction. In relation to rape, this dichotomy dismisses sex workers' experiences of rape: sex worker rape is less serious than the rape of a good woman. Miller and Schwartz (1995) argue that one reason for high levels of sexual violence against street sex workers are 'rape myths' that uniquely come together around sex workers because they have violated particular gendered notions of sexuality. The main rape myths that they identify sex workers being subject to are: sex workers cannot be raped (they are public sexual property and once you have been paid consent is given and they are a category of devalued women); no harm is really done when sex workers are raped because they are sexually experienced women; and sex workers have precipitated the rape because they are out alone and selling sex. These, they argue, fuel sexual violence against sex workers and minimise sex worker experiences of rape.

For Scott et al. (2005), violence against sex workers of all genders is understood as acting as a form of socio-political management, enforcing certain social norms, particularly punishing behaviour viewed as conflicting with particular gendered or sexual normative regimes and promoting or enforcing a particular vision of social order.

There is a long history of the 'othering' of sex workers as a despoiled dirty, amoral, outsider group. O'Connell Davidson (1998) identifies various discourses which construct the prostitute as 'other' and place sex workers as outsiders in communities of 'respectable' women and men. Academics have documented the historical 'othering', stigmatisation and social out-group status through a range of historically shifting discourses.

Walkowitz (1980) and Spongberg (1997) document the construction of sex workers as the source of venereal disease, 'pollutants' and agents of social contagion in Victorian societies. Walkowitz (1980), looking at prostitution in Victorian England, maps how the Contagious Diseases Act constructed sex workers as a different category of woman separating them out from working class communities. This was against the backdrop of wider cultural discourses in which working-class women's bodies were constructed as sites of dangerous sexuality. Spongberg (1997) has argued that from the 1830s the female body was medicalised and constructed as both a sexed and diseased body; control of women's bodies was required and sex workers were identified as a source of contagion and needing particular control and regulation. New versions of stigmatising discourses have been identified in recent decades including the scapegoating and construction of sex workers as vectors for HIV transmission (Scambler et al. 1990).

Lowman has identified a 'discourse of disposability' (2000) in media and public opinion on street sex work, which objectifies sex workers and shapes

cultural attitudes towards them. He defines this as prevalent in 'media descriptions of the ongoing attempts of politicians, police and residents groups to 'get rid' of street prostitution from residential areas.' (: 988). He argues that this discourse has 'contributed to a sharp increase in murders of street prostitutes after 1980' (: 988). Lowman's concept emerged from an analysis of murders of (mostly street) sex workers in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada from 1964 to 1998, including the policy context surrounding these and an analysis of local news coverage. He describes how concern and action from the authorities was slow to build and this inequitable treatment was because sex workers were seen as 'throwaway people'. In this discourse, there was an emphasis on 'getting rid' of street sex work; neighbourhood groups referred to street sex workers as 'scumbags', posting warnings for street sex workers to 'move out or face the consequences', and creating:

A social milieu in which violence against prostitutes could flourish. The same exclusionary discourse continues to be broadcast today amidst stories of disappearing women. (: 1003)

Lowman argues that the increase in sex worker murders from the mid-1980s, which were the extreme end of a continuum of violence, could partly be explained by the public discourse on sex work which emphasised 'getting rid of sex work'. Lowman links violence against sex workers to wider misogyny and violence against women but does point out that perpetrators are likely to more readily rationalise violence against sex workers:

In the light of these cases, violence against prostitutes ought to be understood as part of a continuum of violence against women more generally. Nevertheless, it is likely that some men are more easily able to rationalize violence against a prostitute than against other women because of prostitutes' moral-political marginalization. (Lowman 2000: 1006)

He concludes that that 'prohibition and stigmatization of prostitution are the main obstacles to creating safer working conditions for prostitutes' (: 1007)

Kinnell (2006, 2008) illustrates the presence of this discourse in media, public and policy debates in the UK, linking this to the high levels of violence and murder rates, particularly amongst street sex workers. She identifies vociferous anti-prostitution statements from police, politicians, local council officers, residents groups and others as commonplace in the UK, using the language of cleansing, cleaning up, eliminating, eradicating, wiping out, declaring war and effectively 'equating sex workers with rubbish' (Kinnell 2006: 148) and creating a 'perception of sex workers as social pollutants' (: 149), reinforcing a 'rhetoric of abhorrence' (: 164). Kinnell argues such discourse promotes and condones the victimisation of sex workers, including extreme acts of violence, via a process of cultural disinhibition:

Murderers who claim to believe they are cleansing society by killing sex workers may or may not be lying, but either way, they are appealing for clemency on the basis that their fellow citizens also want rid of prostitution, but are not as direct in their methods ... In all scenarios, perpetrators may be encouraged to commit these acts, or at least disinhibited from committing them, by beliefs that sex workers deserve punishment, that they will not report crimes to the police; police will not accord such crimes much priority, and perhaps, that acts which are normally considered crimes are not crimes if committed against a sex worker. (:141-142)

Indeed, Neville (2012), in her analysis of police data from sex worker murders and non-fatal assaults, highlighted comments made in suspects' statements that show their beliefs that their victims were 'morally contaminated' (: 234) in some way, either because they were sex workers or drug users and, as such, deserved violence. Statements that highlighted included the following from two different offenders (: 236)

It's alright, you are only a dirty crack head whore...

You fucking stupid fucking whore ... [and then after the attack] you deserved it

Some theorists have argued that within policies of urban regeneration and renewal, sex workers have been objectified through a discourse of 'urban

blight' (Hubbard 1999; Scoular et al. 2007), and this has been utilised to impose particular forms of order and policing on urban streets. Hubbard (1999) has illustrated how street sex work has been positioned as incompatible with gentrification and in many towns and cities sex workers have been denied legitimacy to access public space where they have had a presence for many years, experiencing 'spatial exclusion' (Hubbard et al. 2007: 204). They have been ignored and rarely consulted and included in such policies, with more powerful interest groups dominating, and often equated with the 'detritus' that some residents in areas associated with street sex work (Hubbard et al. 2009).

Some theorists illustrate how men who pay for sexual services in the UK have also increasingly become subject to a stigmatising discourse of disrespectability which vilifies men who pay for sexual services (Sanders 2008; Sanders and Campbell 2008). The kerb crawler is described as 'a modern folk devil' (Sanders 2008: 12), with national and local initiatives to name and shame men who pay for sex, increased use of kerb crawling and soliciting legislation, and lobbying for laws to make it a crime to pay for sexual services with an adult. Some areas have adopted 'John Schools' or 'kerb crawler rehabilitation programmes' to educate, shame and demonise men who pay for sexual services (Campbell and Stoor 2001; Sanders 2009b), contributing to wider social stigma and shame attached to sex work.

A range of contemporary studies highlight how stigma continues to be one of the main problems for sex workers. In his study (Mai 2009), the largest study of migrant sex workers in the UK, the main problem identified by migrants was the stigmatisation of sex work and this had a negative impact on their private and public lives. Sanders et al. (2015) found that stigma

associated with sex work was the main problem identified by internet-based sex workers which meant for some having to pretend and lie about their job and living in fear of being identified by people they knew or the authorities.

Mai (2009) found that, for migrant sex workers, 'stigmatisation of sex work and lack of legal immigration documentation' makes migrants more vulnerable to violence and abuse.

Existing research presents a strong evidence-based case that criminalisation of sex workers and their clients in the UK creates, rather than deters, violent and other crime against sex workers. It also demonstrates how the stigmatisation and 'othering' of sex work creates a cultural context which disinhibits and condones rather than challenges or prevents violence against sex workers. The disproportionate burden of violence and harassment sex workers face, globally and in the UK, is a marker of their social exclusion, denial of full citizenship (Campbell and O'Neill 2000) and a regulatory framework of criminalisation which, in myriad ways, heightens vulnerability and creates a legal framework severely restricting the development of approaches which would create safer working environments and practices.

The existence of enduring stigmatisation and 'othering' of sex workers documented in the literature and their links to violence is central to this thesis. 'Othering', stigmatisation and criminalisation create the structural and cultural conditions for violence against sex workers and the targeting of sex workers who experience a range of violence and other crimes committed against them, i.e. as this thesis will argue, they are victims of

hate crime. There is overwhelming established evidence that sex workers are stigmatised and 'othered'. 'Othering' has been identified as a component of discrimination faced by minority groups who experience hate crime (as will be discussed in the last section of this chapter); this is one of the main reasons why sex workers' experiences of crime fit hate crime definitions. As we have seen, the term 'whore stigma' (Roberts 1994) was coined over 20 years ago to describe historically shaped cultural attitudes which demonise, denigrate and objectify sex workers and deny them full legal and social rights; 'whorephobia' is a term used by sex worker activists to describe discrimination, prejudice and hostility towards sex workers (Schaffauser 2010; ICRSE 2014). Yet, targeted hostility, harassment and violence against sex workers had not been considered within the context of mainstream academic and policy hate crime debates and constructs.

Feminist theory and violence against sex workers: diverse lived realities

A considerable body of empirical research of women's experiences have been carried out within the context of feminist research methods and/or theory and has debated the relationship of sex work to violence.

A considerable section of the academic radical feminist international literature on sex work posits that prostitution itself is violence against women (Barry 1985; Jeffreys 2007; Stark and Whinsant 2004), it is a key site of patriarchal control and objectification of women. The notion that sex work is legitimate labour is rejected, the terminology of sex work and sex workers is rejected as legitimising the exploitation of women, with the preferred use of the terminology prostitution and 'prostituted' women. Prostitution is understood to directly harm women involved and all women by reinforcing male power to purchase women's bodies. Farley's research has emphasised the direct harms to women involved, with damaging

physical and psychological impacts, her work has claimed high levels of post-traumatic stress amongst sex workers globally (Farley et al. 2003). The analysis contests the notion that women can choose to work in prostitution. Jeffrey's (1997) argues that choice in prostitution is problematic it is the 'language of sexual liberalism' (: 129) which is used to conceal men's right to sexual access to women's bodies, she critiques the sex worker right movement or 'pro prostitution prostitutes rights organisations' (Jeffreys 1997: 161) for colluding with the patriarchal interests of controllers and buyers. For Jeffreys and many radical feminist theorists, women do not choose or have choice in sex work but are forced, controlled and trafficked by exploitative individuals and the structural sexism of patriarchy. Indeed prostitution alongside pornography, stripping and others forms of adult entertainment are part of the global, industrialised, patriarchal sex trade industry which profits from the abuse, rape and exploitation of women (Jeffreys 2009). Prostitution is seen as inextricably linked to trafficking and is a form of sexual slavery (Barry 1985). Prostitution is approached as an institution which reinforces patriarchal beliefs that men are; entitled to sexual access to women (Farley et al. 1998), superior to women and legitimate sexual aggressors.

As sex work is deemed a form of sexual violence customers or 'buyers' or 'men who use prostitutes' are defined as exploitative abusers and have been equated with sex offenders (Macleod et al. 2008). Many proponents of this position support the criminalisation of clients of sex workers by supporting legislation to make it a crime to pay for sexual services. Regulatory models of decriminalisation and legalisation of sex worker are critiqued as legitimising sexual exploitation, abuse and trafficking when the primary policy goals should be eradicating sex work, punishing exploiters and buyers and supporting sex workers to exit. This aim of prohibiting or abolishing sex work has lead to the terms prohibitionist or abolitionist to describe this analysis of sex work.

A review of the literature finds a range of recurrent criticisms of abolitionism a key one being that it is deterministic, reductionist and simplistic reducing an analysis of sex work to a monolithic notion of patriarchy and gender relations. Scoular and O'Neill (2008) identify abolitionism as 'over determining gendered power dynamics' and argue for a more complex understanding of the structures and processes that combine to shape sex work. Bell (1994) also argues abolitionism restricts a more complete analysis of the sex industry and locating 'the prostitute' as a powerless victim controlled only by men and male coercers silences the voices of women, refuses to acknowledge women's agency and results in the reproduction of 'the prostitute body' as passive and powerless. Varying experiences of sex work, and those sex workers who claim some degree of choice are dismissed, silenced and invisible within this abolitionism which is at odds with the international empirical research literature on sex work which shows differences between sectors and diversity of experiences of sex workers in terms of socio-economic backgrounds, routes in, working conditions, work related violence, control and agency (Monto 2004; Vanwesenbeeck 2001; Harcourt and Donovan 2005; Weitzer 2010).

Connell Davidson (1998) asserts that people in sex work have varying degrees of choice and control within their work, for those sex workers with higher levels of choice 'circumstances not only allow them to exercise a great deal more choice than can be exercised at the base of the hierarchy, but also as much choice as many wage workers exercise (O'Connell Davidson 1998: 105).

Roberts (1994) argues anti-prostitution feminism is at odds with the feminist demand *that women have control over* their own bodies and have sexual freedom as it denies their right to sell sexual services should they choose to. A number of commentators have noted that radical feminists have

formed 'uneasy' alliances with the religious right and reinforce a 'conservative' traditional view of sexuality (Brooks Gordon, 2010, Weitzer 2010).

Male and transgender sex work is invisible within the abolitionist portrayal of sex work (Whowell 2010; Smith 2012), failing within its analysis to provide an adequate explanation of male and transgender sex work (Smith, 2012) and in terms of violence ignores male and transgender sex workers' experiences of violence which is highly problematic in terms of inclusive policies (Whowell 2010).

Some social theorists and researchers have challenged the validity, accuracy and rationality of describing all sex work as violence against women. O'Connell Davidson (1998) has challenged radical feminists equation of prostitution with rape and violence, this lack of differentiation disregards men and women's interactions and the meanings they attach, denying the possibility of consent in commercial sex.

This conflation of sex work and violence fails 'to distinguish between acts to which sex workers consent and acts through which they do not and may be physically harmed or dead, thus denying an obligation to prevent or reduce the latter kind of violence' (Kinnell 2008: 29). Violence in abolitionism means: 'The commodification of women's bodies through charging for sexual acts or performances' not 'beatings rapes and murders inflicted on sex workers' (Kinnell 2008: 32). This ignores the realities and dynamics of actual violence against sex workers. Kinnell (2008) argues for policies which focus on addressing actual violence and exploitation as experienced and defined by the lived realities of sex workers:

Rather than wasting police and social welfare resources trying to impose a state-sanctioned sexual ideology, I believe social policy should focus on the violence that sex workers themselves perceive as unacceptable, and

on the people who commit that violence, recognising the violence that is posed by some but not all clients and the dangers posed by other individuals groups or institutions. (: 32)

Sanders and Campbell (2007) argue that violence against sex workers should be a high priority on the policy agenda, not because sex work is inherently violence against women but because policy makers could learn from the experiences of sex workers in different settings to enact practical policies to reduce violent crimes committed against sex workers. My thesis rejects the claim that sex work is in itself violence against women as flawed theoretically, empirically and at a policy level, as defining all sex work as violence can make little practical progress in addressing violent crimes against sex workers. In relation to the Merseyside hate crime approach, it has not treated sex work in itself as violence against women but has focused on actual violence, as experienced and defined by sex workers themselves; this is one of the reasons for the progress it has made (Campbell 2014a).

O'Neill (2001) provides a feminist socio-cultural analysis of prostitution which 'gives voice to the utter complexity of the lives of women involved in sex work' (: 73). She sought to utilise renewed methodologies and women's narratives to explore the broader social and cultural processes which shape sex work. She describes approaches women's experiences of sex work as varied and complex. She argues that empirical research which enables sex workers to speak for themselves finds women involved in sex work narrate their multiple realities and standpoints. These lived realities include both an awareness of hegemonic gender relations and economic structures and at the same time resistances to these. My thesis is informed by such a social cultural intersectional feminist analysis (Hill-Collins 2000), which locates sex work and sex worker experiences within the complex intersection of gender, race, nationality, class, sexual identify and other structural axis (O'Neill and

Campbell 2011). This allows for sex worker agency allowing space for the myriad diversity of sex worker experiences (of all gender identities) of the sex industry and positionality in other social structures. Scoular and O'Neill (2008) call for a more inclusive model of social justice for sex workers based on rights, redistribution and which acknowledges the 'structures and processes of the global capitalist economy (: 23).

The International Committee for the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe (2014) advocate an intersectional understanding of sex work and violence against sex workers. They utilise the term structural violence not just to refer to violence but a range of human rights abuses. They define structural violence as:

A form of violence resulting from and perpetuated by broader social arrangements, such as historically rooted social structures and relationships, political organisation and the logic of the economic system based on unequal distribution of power. (: 1)

Structural violence is seen as 'a multi-faceted form of power' affecting all sex workers shaping sex work laws and the social environment in which sex work takes place, which silences sex worker voices and perpetuating discrimination. Utilising a intersection framework they recognise how different forms of oppression including gender, ethnicity, legal status, sexual orientation or other social characteristics can intersect, shaping sex workers' experience differentially, acknowledging diversity, 'some sub-communities of sex workers, like male and transgender sex workers, migrant sex workers, sex workers living with HIV, or sex workers who use drugs, are particularly vulnerable to multiple forms of exclusion and discrimination' (: 2). They argue structural violence can be addressed via community building and collective mobilisation, challenging stigma against sex workers, advocacy for legal reform, supporting sex workers access to justice, engaging with representatives of institutions, forging alliances with

other oppressed communities and engaging with workers' movements and trade unions.

ICRSE are part of the global sex worker rights movement, a sex workers rights discourse has taken shape over the last two decades which counteracts abolitionists arguments and approaches. Sex work is understood as a form of labour and advocacy is focused on laws and policies regulating sex work which seek to enhance the labour and wider human rights of all sex workers including rights to self determination, non-discrimination, freedom from violence, coercion and exploitation (Bindman and Doezema 1997; Kempadoo and Doezema 1998). My research is informed by a human rights approach to sex work and sex work policy, including policies aiming to address violence against sex workers.

I concur with Pitcher (2015) that the 'recognition of sex work as a form of labour does not preclude considerations of exploitation or interrelated issues such as labour market segregation and relative power and disadvantage' (: 2) and could produce more effective policy 'through highlighting diverse experiences within the industry, drawing parallels with other forms of work and identifying ways to facilitate safer and more supportive working environments' (: 1).

The weight of evidence of the damaging impacts of criminalisation discussed in this chapter leads me to support arguments for removing the illegal status from adult sex and regulate it similar ways to other industries and hence support a regulatory framework of decriminalisation which could better 'protect sex workers human rights and reduce the harms perpetrated against them' (Pitcher 2015: 2) and provide a framework which would

improve the relationship between sex workers and the police (Armstrong 2016a) and be more conducive for challenging stigmatisation and 'othering'.

Hate crime: definitions, inclusivity and intersectionality

The origins of the concept of hate crime has been located in the civil rights campaigns of minority groups in United States in the 1960s and 1970s (Grattet and Jennes 2003). With the term 'hate crime' more commonly used amongst UK hate crime academics and practitioners from the 1990s, following some key high profile hate murders (notably that of Stephen Lawrence in 1993), hate crime came to the fore (Rowe 2004) and prompted more effective policy responses such as national hate crime guidance (Chakraborti 2010).

There is over a decade of literature debating definitions of hate crime. Theorists have commented that there is limited agreement about what constitutes hate crime (Garland 2010; Hall 2005); 'it remains a contested area of study and policy' (Chakraborti 2015: 3) with no one framework defining the concept. A number of influential definitions of hate crime have emerged. Some theorists define hate crimes as expressions of power, prejudice and discrimination (Perry 2001; Sheffield 1995). Hate crimes are understood as an extension of the prejudice and discrimination which have historically been experienced by a range of minority groups. Earlier debates about hate crime were centred on the experiences of black and minority ethnic groups and were expanded to other groups facing discrimination, including religious groups and the gay community with the recognition of homophobic hate crime; more recently other groups have been accepted as hate crime groups.

Sheffield defines hate violence as:

... motivated by social and political factors and is bolstered by belief systems which [attempt to] legitimate such violence ... such violence is not a series of isolated incidents but rather the consequences of a political culture which allocates rights, privileges and prestige according to biological or social characteristics. (1995: 438)

Going further than some early definitions of hate crime which had focused on membership minority ethnic groups, her definition can include groups targeted due to social characteristics. Perry's definition (2001, 2009), which stresses the structural antecedents of hate crime, has been particularly influential (Chakraborti 2015); she defines hate crime as involving:

... acts of violence and intimidation, usually directed towards already stigmatised and marginalised groups. It is a mechanism of power and oppression, intended to reaffirm the precarious hierarchies that characterise a given social order. It attempts to re-create simultaneously the threatened (real or imagined) hegemony of the perpetrators group and the 'appropriate' subordinate identity of the 'victims' group. It is a means of marking both the Self and Other in such a way as to re-establish their 'proper' relative positions, as given and reproduced by broader ideologies and patterns of social and political inequality. (Perry 2001: 10)

In these definitions, hate crimes are expressions of discrimination and message crimes which impact the whole community or group to which the victim belongs, intimidating them by 'creating fear, hostility and suspicion' (: 10).

Hate crimes are perpetuated to maintain society's hierarchical power relations, with the more powerful victimising the less, in order to maintain their privileged position. Hate-motivated violence reinforces power relations of dominance and subordination, and is:

...used to sustain the privilege of the dominant group and to police the boundaries of the group by reminding the Other of his or her place. Perpetrators thus recreate their own masculinity or whiteness, for example, while punishing the victims for their deviant identity performance. (Perry 2009:71)

Perpetrators of hate crime are reasserting a 'hegemonic identity', controlling and policing the behaviour of other groups who are subject to 'othering' discourses and discriminatory social practices; their actions are culturally condoned by, for example, racism (Ray and Smith 2001) and homophobia. Such definitions of how hate crime do not treat hate crime perpetrators as a group totally separate from the mainstream but rather as 'reflecting broader social and cultural attitudes, values and practices, that reproduce and maintain this inequality' (Garland 2010: 42). Hate theorists such as Jack Levin (2002) have argued that hate perpetrators generally are not members of organised hate groups and their actions are condoned by the inaction, or sympathy, of the wider community.

Gerstenfeld (2004) have argued that hate crime is targeted crime, aimed at group affiliation of the victim, but in law generally only certain groups are protected by law typically race, religion and ethnicity but may also include. Hate crimes are situations in which the perpetrator does not know the victim as an individual at all; they are picked out solely on the victim's group membership. He and other theorists have noted the problematic nature of the word 'hate', as 'hate crimes' do not need to be motivated by hate to be classified as hate crime in policy and academic definitions (Gerstenfeld 2013).

Another key element foregrounded in a range of definitions is that of 'difference', with hate crime being defined as motivated almost entirely or in part by a person's 'difference' (Levin and McDevitt 1993). Garland has argued structural definitions such as Perry's do not account for groups who are deliberately singled out because of their actual or perceived difference; this difference can be due to affiliation of a particular group. He argued definitions of hate crime needs also to include fear or 'hatred of difference' (Garland 2010: 54). Garland made the case that Goths and people in alternative subcultures with a strong sense of identity could be a hate crime

group; whilst they had not experienced a long history of struggle for equality, they have experienced high levels of hate-motivated harassment and violence generated by 'fear or difference, and the despised other' (: 53). Sophie Lancaster was murdered in Baccup, Lancashire in 2007 and her boyfriend Robert Maltby was seriously assaulted; both were Goths. He located these assaults within a wider local and national pattern of targeted victimisation of Goths. Garland posits that Perry's definition did not encompass all hate crime and the structural definition does not adequately take in fundamental aspect of hate crime, i.e. that victims are targeted because of who they are; it is their membership of a despised social outgroup that sparks abuse and assaults against them.

He argues such harassment is therefore less to do with keeping the victim in their subordinate place within the social structure but 'is motivated by a more base and unthinking instinct: the fear or hatred or difference' (: 54). The Sophie Lancaster Foundation, established by Sophie's mother, has campaigned to include Goths and other groups in the remit of hate crime legislation (Chakraborti and Garland 2014). Since 2013, Greater Manchester Police has included sub-cultural groups in their hate crime policy.

Official UK definitions have recognised notions of prejudice as a motivating factor. The 2005 ACPO guidance on hate crime, in place when the Merseyside policy was introduced, gave primacy to the perception of the victim or any other person as being the defining factor in hate crime:

Any hate incident, which constitutes a criminal offence, perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by hate or prejudice (ACPO 2005: 9)

The guidance states that it is the 'perception of the victim or any other person is the defining factor in determining whether something is a hate crime a hate incident' (: 9), asserting that 'The prejudice or hate perceived can be based on any identifying factor including disability, age, faith, sexual orientation, gender identity and race' (: 9).

New national guidance for the police on hate crime was issued in 2014 by the College of Policing, specifying the five monitored hate crime groups as listed in the national Home Office action plan (2012). It notes that there is academic debate about defining hate crime: 'there is no criminological consensus on the definition or even the validity of the concept of hate crime, but it is important that this policy has a framework' (: 2).

It employs a new 'common definition' (i.e. common in the sense of cutting across all monitored groups) of hate crime and hate incidents which drops the word hate, retains the word prejudice and introduces the word hostility, defining hate crimes or incidents as:

Any crime or incident where the perpetrator's hostility or prejudice against an identifiable group of people is a factor in determining who is victimised. (College of Policing 2014: 7)

The guidance differentiates between monitored hate crime and non-monitored hate crime, and specifies that local force areas could include other groups beyond the monitored groups:

There are, however, many other groups in society who have been targeted with hostility and crime.... It is essential that the focus on the monitored strands is not used to deny the existence of other hate crimes. ... Agencies and partnerships are free to extend their own policy response to include the hostilities that they believe are prevalent in their area or that are causing the greatest concern to the community. (College of Policing 2014: 7)

Three cases studies for this are given, relating to Goths and the murder of Sophie Lancaster, Caste crimes, and attacks on street sex workers. This

latter example specifically relates to Merseyside and was included in the document as a direct outcome of the work in Merseyside and this research (this will be discussed in Chapter Nine when considering the contribution of this thesis).

In the hate crime literature there have been discussions about the widening of hate crime victim groups and the implications of this for the conceptualisation of hate crime and for hate crime practice (Chakraborti and Garland 2009; Garland 2010; Mason-Bish 2010). Chakraborti (2010) argues that hate crime needs to be redefined because there are high levels of hate crime that underlie the ongoing marginalisation of certain vulnerable groups and existing policy has not addressed these.

He points to other groups whose experiences of victimisation may constitute hate crime and groups already recognised as such whose experiences need further understanding:

... we know far too little about the collective experiences of the homeless, the elderly, members of youth subcultures and other groups whose policy and scholarly frameworks, nor have we paid anything like enough attention to the targeting of disabled and transgender people, despite these groups being recognised 'beneficiaries' of most official discourses on hate crime. (: 7)

A number of challenges for less established hate crime groups have been highlighted. Chakraborti and Garland (2012) refer to a number of groups, for whom claims are now being made for recognition as hate crime groups, who have 'typically been seen as "undesirables", criminogenic or less worthy than other more "legitimate" or credible victim groups...[and consequently] excluded from view' (: 503). This, they argue, contributes to a hierarchy amongst groups who experience hate crime, creating distinctions between deserving and undeserving victims. James (2014) discusses the contradictions presented in treating Gypsies and Travellers as a hate crime group - a group, who in policy are often approached as a problem group.

She argues that the role police have in policing 'unauthorised encampments' and the 'lifestyles' of Gypsies and Travellers, and the fact that they are not one of the groups for whom there are sentencing enhancements, means that that 'policing agencies are unlikely to embrace such a wobbly concept' (: 217) as the widened definition of hate crime. She argues Gypsies and Travellers are likely to be approached as a problem 'rather than a community in need of some protection' (: 217).

Some theorists who have reflected on the widening of hate crime victim groups, whilst recognising the need for some limits, have cautioned that restricting hate crime status to certain groups, there lies the risk of creating victim hierarchies (Chakraborti and Garland 2009; Mason-Bish 2010).

Mason-Bish (2010) warns against common sense assumptions that can be used to 'automatically exclude particular groups of victims' and calls for further consideration of what message that conveys to those excluded from policy frameworks. She argues at a policy level advocacy groups working with victims of hate-based violence have wanted groups included in hate crime because they have felt that the police and criminal justice system were not taking victims seriously; inclusion in hate crime was 'a quest for recognition' and about getting practical change. Hate crime was a useful banner under which to frame these claims and to highlight the similarities between different forms of victimisation' (: 60). Yet, at the same time, she argues that policy has been distinguished by the need to define a list of victims and this has meant victim hierarchies have developed: 'Hate crime policy creates a perceived victim hierarchy whereby some victims are deemed worthy of inclusion and others are left out.' (Mason-Bish-2010: 62) This has implications for inclusion. For example, she found that disability campaigners felt disability was at the bottom of the hierarchical list for campaigners, and, she argued, that as new groups of victims are added,

these concerns of preferential treatment may grow and could create a 'competition for suffering between victim groups' (63).

Chakraborti and Garland (2012) also have argued that hate crime has been associated with particular victim strands and sets of motivation, approached through 'singular constructions of identity, and that this leads to a divisive approach to understanding hate crime'. In similar vein, Mason-Bish argues that hate crime policy to date has been associated with simplistic notions of victimhood, with victims separated by crude titles such as race, religion and disability. There has been a tendency to create 'victim silos' (2015), when in reality there are diverse identities that cross diversity strands. She argues hate crime policy has been unable to deal with complex victimisation and this does not help to understand the unique harm a victim may feel.

She argues one of the reasons gender and age have been particularly contested within hate crime debate and policy is that they are seen as complex and this complex nature was seen as reason for their exclusion from formal monitored hate crime groups. She also argues that an intersectional understanding of hate crime which allows for multiple systems of oppression and which 'circumvents traditional notions of primary identity characteristics and understand the fluidity of identity and the multiple ways in which prejudice and violence might be experienced' (Mason-Bish 2015: 25). Research and policy needs to;

explore the lived experience of the victim and to tease out the unique harms and risks that people face... have increased awareness about the risks faced by people who inhabit more 'complex' identities, greater community engagement and the ability to record data to take account of this (: 25).

Chakraborti and Garland argue for a 'reconceptualisation' of hate crime using vulnerability and 'difference', rather than identity and group membership; this 'would allow for a more inclusive conceptual framework which would move beyond one dimensional interpretations of identity and would extend recognition to 'hidden victims of hate crime' and allow them to

access 'a more extensive range of support services' (2012: 501). They name as examples such groups as homeless people, elderly and isolated victims, people with mental health issues or drug and alcohol dependency, members of alternative sub cultures such as Goths, foreign nationals, refugees, asylum seekers and migrant workers and sex workers. They propose that recognition of 'perceived vulnerability and 'difference' can create a more inclusive framework. Structural definitions such as Perry's miss out hate crimes which are not committed because of perpetrators entrenched prejudice but actions taking place in 'the context of highly individualized trigger situations' and this unintentionally 'marginalizes a range of experiences that could and should be considered alongside the more familiar aspects of hate crime discourse' (: 503)

Chakraborti and Garland moreover argue that hate crime framework needs to take onboard the 'intersectional nature of identity' (2012: 504) within and across hate crime groups. They argue generalisations tend to be made about the hate crime experiences of particular groups, but there is a need to understand the diversity and specificities of hate crime for example within Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender and Queer community (LGBTQ) and BME (Black and minority ethnic) communities, who have varying vulnerabilities and experiences. Hate crime conceptualisations need to recognise people have range of identity characteristics which interact, such as identity around ethnicity, disability, age, class, mental health, material deprivation. Vulnerability hate crime stems from a broader range of social factors than singular conceptions of identity allow and hence should be factored into contemporary conceptual frameworks (: 504). For Chakaroborti and Garland, then, a vulnerability-based approach means one which 'acknowledges the heightened level of risk posed to certain groups or individuals that can arise through a complex interplay of factors, including hate, prejudice, hostility, unfamiliarity, discomfort or simply opportunism or convenience' (: 506).

In the context of disability hate crime, Roulstone et al. (2011) have cautioned that the concept of vulnerability is inherently paternalistic, has been employed in a way that treats disabled people as in need of adult safeguarding, and has 'arguably weakened the impetus to introducing hate crime provisions and legal justice for disabled people (: 351).

Mindful of such criticism of vulnerability, Chakaroborti and Garland accept the possibility of problematic employment of vulnerability discourses but stress that the insistence on the concept of 'perceived vulnerability' is critical here as it emphasises that perpetrators see 'their target: as weak, defenceless, powerless, with a limited capacity to resist' (2012: 507) and target this vulnerability. Hence, it is not the person's identity in itself that makes people vulnerable to hate crime but the perpetrator's perceptions:

It is not someone's identity pursue that makes them a vulnerable target in the eyes of the perpetrator but rather the way in which that identity intersects with other aspects of their self and with other situational factors and contexts. As such conceiving of hate crime through the lens of perceived vulnerability and 'difference' gives effect to the realities of targeted victimization, and in so doing allows us to transcend the homogenisations all to prevalent within scholarly and policy domains. (: 510).

They stress 'perceived victimisation' should not be understood as meaning hate crime against groups perceived as vulnerable is inevitable or that they are passive victims and point to Walklate's (2011) work on resilience amongst victim groups.

Researchers are now utilising an intersectional approach to understand the differential experiences of hate crime within and across hate crime groups to develop more nuanced understandings of hate crime victimisation. Meyer (2010) compares the perceptions of hate crime and hate crime experience with poor and working-class LGBT people of colour with the perceptions of white, middle-class LGBT people in New York. Exploring the sociological

components of hate crime, he highlights intersectional differences across these groups and posits the social position of LGBT people plays an instrumental role in structuring how they evaluate the severity of hate-motivated violence. With little research internationally comparing victimisation between hate crime groups with different identities, Williams and Tregidga (2014) examined the psychological and physical impacts of hate crime across seven victim types, providing 'the first multi-victim-type analysis of hate crime, showing that impacts are not homogenous across victim groups' (: 1).

They compared experiences across disability, race/ethnicity, religion/belief, sexual orientation, transgender status/gender identity, age, and gender (the latter two not being protected characteristics in law in the UK) and argued that their findings give 'empirical credibility' (: 1) to a number of hate crimes who have felt on the margins of hate crime. They found significant differences between hate victim types in relation to experiences of psychological impacts and physical reaction; and victims of transgender hate crimes were significantly more likely 'to suffer psychological impacts and react physically compared to all other victim-types' (:11).

There is clearly a move towards conceptualisations of hate crime which allow for the intersection of a range of forms of hate crime (Mason-Bish 2010), acknowledge those who 'occupy multiple positions of culturally defined inferiority' (Chakraborti 2010: 6), and encourage research which explores the multiple, diverse experiences of hate crime. This thesis embraces such an inclusive and intersectional approach to hate crime.

Chapter Three: Research methodology

Introduction

My study aims, in its research questions, to bridge a gap between scholarship and policy development. The principles of participatory action research (PAR) and feminist research, particularly their goal of contributing to social change, have informed my approach to research (Pain 2014; Kingdon et al. 2010). Whilst this approach has not been based on a deep co-production model (a signifying feature of what can perhaps be called 'classic PAR'), in that I did not work with sex workers as peer researchers, nevertheless I did draw strongly on PAR principles to guide the project, with some degree of sex worker involvement and the aim of action research outcomes. More specifically, then, I undertook the study with the intention of contributing to social change by informing sex work policy development in Merseyside and the UK. This chapter hence begins with an outline of the key principles central to both PAR and feminist approaches and the synergy between them, and describes how they have shaped my study and its methodological assumptions (O'Neill 1996, 2001; O'Neill and Campbell 2002, 2004; Fals Borda and Rahman 1991).

The chapter then proceeds to discuss the specific methods I have used, this principally comprising in-depth semi-structured interviews, before describing how I accessed the study sites, where I was able to draw on existing collaborative partnerships with local stakeholders in order to identify and reach suitable people for interviewing: primarily current and former sex workers and police officers as my main point of interest, but also some health and social care providers/commissioners. I then detail the sampling procedure, including here a socio-demographic summary of the composition of my samples, before discussing some of the ethical considerations involved in conducting sensitive research such as mine.

This is followed by an outline of my data analysis, in which I describe utilising the computer software NVIVO9 to take a grounded theory approach. Finally, I provide a brief reflexive account of the multiple and intersecting professional roles I have experienced over the last 20 years in Merseyside and consider how this has shaped the research topic, design and process – this then leading us, thematically and literally, into the chapter's conclusion.

Guiding principles: feminist research methodology and Participatory Action Research (PAR)

Feminist research

There is now an established theoretical and practice body of literature exploring feminist research methodology, which grew out of a critique of orthodox androcentric research and a concern with the processes via which sociological knowledge is formulated (see, for example, Spender 1981). Feminist social theorists have emphasised that knowledge is socially constructed, the product of social and cultural relations, with gender relations playing a key role; as, traditionally, women have been excluded as both producers and subjects of sociological knowledge this has resulted in the production of partial or limited knowledge about women's lives and about society generally (Acker, Barry and Esseveld 1983; Stanley 1990). Feminist researchers, however, have had some success over the last three decades and there is now a considerable body of sociological work focused on women (Maynard 1990).

Feminist sociologists have suggested certain themes and principles which underlie feminist research; yet, as feminist theory is not a unified body of thought, similarly there is no one feminist methodology (Reinharz 1993).

However, whilst there is debate about what constitutes feminist methodology (Harding 1987), there does emerge a reoccurring concern with highlighting the centrality of women's *experiences* (Elshtain 1981). This focus on experience has produced research that contributes to change for women, by challenging hierarchy and facilitating empowerment and self-reflexivity.

McRobbie (2000) argues that an important achievement of feminist research has been its reveal of women's hidden experiences, both past and present. The potential for such research has been of particular significance in making visible the experiences of women involved in sex work; as social marginalisation, stigma and criminalisation means many sex workers may not publically identify as sex workers, their voices and perspectives are often invisible or their views and experiences are misrepresented (Van der Meulen 2011). (This is the case for female, but also for male and transgender, sex workers, highlighting the importance of inclusive, nuanced analyses of sex work which recognise the power of gender but also its intersectionality with other socio-economic and cultural dimensions.)

Women's lived experiences provide the raw material for theory construction, with theory grounded in research and a symbiotic relationship emerging between the two (Stanley and Wise 1983). This relationship is underpinned by an epistemology which recognises subjectivity as valid. For me, however, those feminists who adopt essentialist notions of one female identity or subjectivity fail to reflect the diversity of women's experiences; and, in the case of sex work research, claims that the experience of one particular group of sex workers represents all sex workers are similarly problematic. My own research has striven to recognise the multiplicity and diversity of sex workers' experiences and identities. As Shaver (2005) and Benoit et al. (2005) have emphasised, however, obtaining a representative sample of sex workers is hard to achieve due to the diversity of people in the sex industry and the sex industry itself. Rigorous sociological research practices are, therefore, important to act as checks and balances against claims and generalisations

by researchers who should be, firstly, explicit about the specific sample of sex workers their findings are based on, and, secondly, reflexive about their own, subjective, analysis of sex work.

The key principles of feminist research that I have sought to embed in this research are:

- i) A commitment to bringing about change for women which improves their position in society that takes women interests into account and has a role in improving women's lives (Duelli-Klein 1983).
- ii) The reduction of hierarchy in the research process.
- iii) An emphasis on ethical research which does not harm participants or exploit their experiences .
- iv) An effort to democratise the research process, with aspirations to share knowledge and skills between researcher and researched, with subjects as active participants in the research process (Lather 1988). Here, there is often crossover and synergy with participatory action research, with an emphasis on community involvement and utilising the process and findings to shape and inform practice and policy for change and social justice.
- v) A dedication to seeking social justice. This principle has been central to this study, with an expressed commitment to carry out research to inform sex work policy and to improve policy and service provision responses to violence against sex work, as well as to produce knowledge about Merseyside's hate crime approach (see Chapter One) – an approach which has enabled some sex workers to access professional and appropriate victim support and achieve justice for crimes committed against them (including quality police investigations).
- vi) A striving for critical reflexivity as central to this research. Seale (1998) has described reflexivity as the process through which researchers contemplate their own actions and values when carrying out and writing up research. In feminist research, this has been borne out of a critique of positivism and rigid concepts of objectivity within social research. Stanley and Wise (1983, 1993),

as part of their critique, argue that objectivity divorces sociological knowledge from the social conditions in which this knowledge is produced, creating 'hygienic' research in which the researcher is absent: '[I]n which no problems occur, no emotions are involved, is "research as it is described" and not "research as it is experienced"' (Stanley and Wise 1983: 153; see also Stanley 1990).

Feminist researchers have been one of the key groups who have argued that the researcher is always part of the social relations in which particular findings are produced, and, moreover, that their beliefs and values will shape the research. Ultimately, it is the argument that personal, subjective experience is political and important and should be recognised as such when doing research. Feminist researchers have argued the researcher needs to be located on the same critical plane as the researched to reduce the hierarchical dichotomy between the subject and the object in research (Harding 1987), and practice consciously reflecting on their role in the research process, identifying their involvement and emotional responses (Kelly 1988). As the research product is always filtered through the consciousness of the researcher, so it is argued that the researcher must openly examine their beliefs, values and emotions, and, furthermore, value and utilise them in their research.

McRobbie (2000) however, challenges the assumption that the feminist researcher will necessarily understand other women because of their 'shared' oppression; feminists may have valuable personal experience but they cannot assume this will be the same as those they are researching. The recognition of subjectivity and power dynamics in the research process, is, therefore, of vital importance, as is a striving to reduce hierarchy (as mentioned above). And these, alongside other principles of feminist methodology (such as enabling empowerment and contributing to social change), are areas where there is overlap with the concerns of participatory action research – to which we now turn our attention.

Participatory Action Research (PAR)

The current study has been guided by principles of participatory action research (PAR), particularly the principle of doing research which contributes to social change and informs progressive policy for marginalised groups. O'Neill (1994, 2001: 47-50) describes how PAR originated in the Global South, shaped by the politics of development and Marxism, with Paulo Fréire and Fals Borda as early advocates. Officially launched at the Cartagena World Symposium in 1977, PAR drew and built on interpretations of the works of Marx (with an emphasis on understanding the world in order to change it), as well as those of neo-Marxist theorist Gramsci - with an emphasis on producing 'critical knowledge' through mutual recognition, and, in this context of collaboration, developing not only greater knowledge and understanding but also *solutions*. Hence, PAR is a methodological approach which encompasses research, political action and critical theory, existing with the aim of developing purposeful knowledge that can help to bring about change; it is a dialogical response to possibilities for social transformation in collaboration with marginalised peoples (O'Neill 2001: 187).

Bergold and Thomas (2012) note a resurgence and increased importance being placed on participatory research in recent years, especially within qualitative research, identifying PAR as an approach that poses research-related questions in radical ways and can take qualitative research in new directions, enriching its development. In common with feminist methodology, PAR is not associated with a particular set of specific methods, but puts emphasis on 'process orientation' (Bergold and Thomas 2012), principles, and action.

My own particular relationship to participatory action research has a history that predates the PhD. One of my first involvements with PAR methodology was as co-researcher on a project conducted in the West Midlands in the late 1990s (O'Neill and Campbell 2002), when this approach was used to consult a range of stakeholder groups about sex work in the town of Walsall and find shared ways forward. Here, we identified PAR as being rooted in the principles of: transformation/social change; inclusion; participation; valuing all local voices; and partnership working that is community driven and sustainable. My direct involvement in this methodology was to leave a deep impression on me, particularly regarding its effectiveness for fostering a research process, and producing knowledge, that can contribute to policy change (O'Neill and Campbell 2006).

The emphasis of PAR on research as a tool for practical knowledge that can bring about change (Minkler 2004; Whyte 1991) has been central, then, to the ethos and purpose of the current study, with my research seeking 'to bring together action and reflection, theory and practice, in participation with others, in the pursuit of practical solutions to issues of pressing concern to people' (Brydon-Miller, Greenwood and Maguire 2003: 10–11). Moreover, my study has been motivated by the ideal that the participatory research process, results, and outcomes engaged in should have 'tangible benefits for the community involved' (Van der Meulen 2011: 374). In this spirit, I have striven to 'give back' to the community the results of my research (Flaskerud and Anderson 1999), producing a summary of findings independently of the PhD, one for sex workers and one for professionals working in the police or other agencies (see later in this chapter for exact details of the composition of my research samples and of the sampling procedure). Prior to this, interim findings were fed back in a number of ways to inform local and national practice and policy, with me sometimes being an actor for social change in the context of local and national multi-agency groups.

Van der Meulen (2011) describes how, when she came to do her PhD research, she was already an activist, a sex work ally, and a labour organiser, and, as such, was well aware of sex worker criticism of academic and feminist research. She turned to PAR as a research methodology which could be useful to the sex worker community, and pointed to the recent legacy of a number of UK and Canadian studies in which academic researchers work with sex workers - including my past work with Maggie O'Neill (O'Neill and Campbell 2006). Like Van der Meulen, my research now has been a joining of my academic and research interests with my policy, political and activist commitments, driven on the basis that 'the synergy' can be 'enriching' (2011: 375). Indeed, the synergy can quite concretely aid the research process, as I received a great deal of support and cooperation with my study from sex workers in Liverpool (see Chapter One, and also my reflexive account later in the current chapter, for related discussion).

PAR is, then, very much concerned with process as well as outcomes. It is a methodology which is not simply about doing 'research for research' sake (and getting publications and building careers for academics); it is about working with communities and exchanging knowledge, in ethical and inclusive and equitable ways in order to achieve change throughout the process. PAR is described by O'Neill and Webster (2005: 6) as a tool for 'mobilizing people's participation' via four elements: collective research; valuing all voices through democratic principles; producing and exchanging new knowledge; and action interventionism with change as part of the process.

It is these elements of PAR - of mobilising participation and working in collaboration to promote change (namely, for me, progressive change for women working in sex work) - that has been at the core of my PhD research and characterises my methodology as feminist and participatory-action-

focused. As previously stated, the research has seen me working closely in partnership with local services, consulting sex workers and agencies in the development of research tools and in elements of the dissemination of findings locally. Indeed, as described in Chapter One, I was personally involved in the Merseyside hate crime approach and in developing and delivering services for sex workers and multi-agency policy on sex work in the local area when I embarked on my PhD. The collaborative nature of the research is outlined later in 'Accessing my research sites', after I first provide an account of the particular research methods that were used.

A method for understanding experiences of hate crime and policy: in-depth interviewing

As I have been concerned to allow my research participants to speak for themselves (particularly important in respect of sex workers who - as I argue throughout this thesis - are conventionally denied a voice), and to explore in detail not only views and opinions but experiences too and the meanings which are attached to these, it was felt that utilising a method of one-to-one, in-depth, interviewing was the most appropriate option. (As will be seen, I also deployed, to a lesser extent, focus group methods and a review of relevant policy documents, both which have acted to supplement my analysis).

Interviewing as a participatory process

In-depth interviews were the primary method used to collect the qualitative data on which this thesis is based. In total, 78 interviews were carried out, these being with current and former sex workers and police officers, as well as with health and social care providers/commissioners. Interviews were designed to enable individual participants to talk in depth about their experiences of, and attitudes and views towards, the hate crime approach to addressing violence against sex workers in Merseyside.

Van der Meulen (2011) notes how material gathered from in-depth interviews might help to inform policy recommendations. It was thus important for local stakeholders to be able to participate in the interview design process. Given my participatory approach I consulted with current and former sex workers and police officers regarding the general areas for the interview guides and their specific wording, this consultation was with four sex workers and three police officers, all of whom went on to take part in the interviews then developed a draft version of each and took it back to these people for further comment. With the sex workers (who were recruited via the local sex worker support project; see the section 'Accessing my research sites' for details), I did this informally, one-to-one, sometimes at the project base and, in a couple of cases, in their own homes. I had meetings with four officers to discuss areas to cover and the best language to use; I then sent a draft guide for comment to a number of officers and subsequently made some changes.

As said, I choose qualitative in-depth interviewing to explore people's experiences of, and perceptions, views and feelings about, the hate crime approach in Merseyside. My interviewing style was influenced by the work of feminist researchers, including Oakley (1981) who argues the social science interview has typically been presented as distinct from normal social interaction, a clinical research tool, with subjectivity and emotion removed, and the interviewer detached from the 'subject matter' to avoid 'interviewer bias'. Rapport must be achieved but not involvement. Yet, as feminist researchers argue, bias is introduced when the interview is taken out of ordinary everyday relations and becomes a constructed and artificial relationship. Whilst working with an interview guide to remind me of key topics to discuss with people, I adopted a more naturalistic approach, treating the interview as a conversation, a two-way process, with active and supportive listening. As Stanley and Wise (1983) note, the traditional model is 'unnatural',

and so is likely to produce unauthentic responses. As Oakley refers to in relation to her research, the issues being discussed were, on occasion at least, personal and intimate; there was a two-way sharing. As all the women I interviewed knew I had been involved in supporting a lot of sex workers through crimes committed against them (and a wide range of other issues), they would often ask my opinion or point to experiences they knew I was aware of. This was also the case with many of the police officers who knew about my research, service provision and policy work, and they would refer to a wide range of situations and cases of which we were both aware or had been involved with, some involving high levels of pressure, distress and trauma for victims and professionals alike.

Liz Kelly (1988), who interviewed women about their experiences of sexual violence, rejects objective aloofness and a refusal to enter into dialogue, stressing how artificial and unnatural such an approach would have been for her considering that many of her interviewees were speaking about very intimate and traumatic experiences: 'It is difficult for me to envisage being detached when I remember how shaken many women were during or after my interviews' (Kelly 1988:11). This was also the case for my service user interviews, with me discussing violence against sex workers with women, an approach which was informal, acknowledged and valued feelings, and allowed for sharing personal experiences and involvements. As well as being very much felt to be ethically sound, this approach worked to acknowledge '.... the condition under which people come to know each other and to admit others into their lives' (Oakley 1981). As a researcher discussing experiences of violence, I had to be sensitive to the impact for interviewees of recalling and retelling events that may have painful associations and risk re-traumatising them.

I approached interviews as an interaction which, if practised in a democratic way, can provide a vehicle for participants - particularly people from socially marginalised groups - to have a voice and for their perspectives to be heard and documented. Within the feminist research tradition, whilst the researcher is an active participant in the interview-as-conversation, one becomes very much aware that the interview can act as a vehicle for women's voices and experiences that have been silenced, hidden or distorted, listening to women, letting them speak for themselves. Similarly O'Neill (2001, 2009) argues that PAR is a counter to some of the abuses of research that marginalised groups have faced and can play a beneficial role for such groups who often lack a voice, whose concerns can easily slip off policy agendas and for whom social exclusion fosters a culture of silence.

Additional methods

Literature and policy document review

I carried out a review of the academic literature on sex work and violence, and also of the relevant literature on hate crime. I also reviewed a range of local Merseyside and national policy documents that relate to sex work and hate crime.

Focus groups

Although it was originally the intention of my research to conduct several focus groups as a method for accessing the views and experiences of both sex workers and police officers, I subsequently made a decision to predominantly carry out one-to-one interviews for this task and instead use focus groups as a supplementary method – more specifically, limiting this to one session with Merseyside Police (discussed in more detail shortly). This decision was made for a number of reasons. Firstly, it became clear that it was practically very difficult to get people – whether sex worker or police

officer - together in focus groups due to the demands of their occupations and lifestyles. Secondly, I found that police officers were more willing to speak openly about police attitudes and practice in one-to-one interviews. Also feedback from discussions with a number of police officers during the planning stage of the study was that if focus groups contained officers of mixed ranks, this could present the problem of officers of lower ranks deferring to senior officers or feeling restricted in their contributions. Thirdly, the issues being discussed with sex workers were very personal and, as I began to conduct one-to-one interviews with them, this quickly felt a more appropriate method than a group interview scenario. (It is worth mentioning that this was an issue which was discussed with the NHS research ethics committee at the ethics committee meeting before the study commenced. They did approve focus group interviews with sex workers should I wish to utilise this method, but flagged up the need to consider carefully how steps could be taken to ensure participants would respect confidentiality on sensitive matters.)

Focus groups are defined by (1997) as group interviews in which a moderator guides the interview while a small group discusses the topic that the interviewer raises. Morgan identifies three key defining features of focus groups: firstly, they are foremost a qualitative research method, a way of gathering data; secondly, consequently, they are focused for a well-defined purpose; and thirdly, they use group discussion to generate this data. During discussion in a focus group, a lot can be captured about the range of experiences and opinions within the group.

Only one focus group was carried out and this was at the start of the research fieldwork, with a group of seven police officers - five male and two female. All had held specific roles or involvements relating to the policing of sex work and I had prior working relationships with them. They included a detective superintendent, a detective inspector, an inspector, two detective

sergeants, a constable and a detective constable. The focus group was utilised as an opportunity to not only collect original data about participants' understanding, experiences, views/opinions and beliefs about Merseyside's approach to addressing sex work (particularly violence against sex workers), but also to identify key themes which could be incorporated into a final police interview guide. This was carried out at the Armistead Centre and was co-facilitated by the 'Armistead Street' project's appointed Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA), who supported with welcoming and signing in participants (see my discussion in the 'Accessing my research sites' section for more detail on the role played by the ISVA in my research). All participants received a participant information sheet (see Appendix One) and signed consent sheets (Appendix Two); a focus group guide was developed prior to the interview (see Appendix Three), which I utilised to guide the focus group discussion. The focus group lasted two hours and was recorded.

Accessing my research sites: building on established relationships and collaboration

As discussed in Chapter One, I had strong and established links at a strategic and operational level with professional stakeholder groups such as the police and health and social care organisations and was able to draw on these to facilitate this research. Whilst I had good links in Liverpool, it was, however, necessary to formally meet with representatives from these organisations, to outline the research and receive their input and formal support. I held a number of meetings with key people from agencies whose cooperation needed to be formally gained to enable the fieldwork to commence - namely, Merseyside Police, the Armistead Centre (and their 'Armistead Street' sex work support project), and Liverpool Community NHS Trust.

Working with 'Armistead Street'

I was employed as the co-ordinator of the 'Armistead Street' sex work support project between 2006 and 2008, and remained employed as a sessional outreach worker with the Armistead Centre during the research period. I carried out ongoing consultation with managers and staff about my research, having obtained the organisation's formal support in the early stages of the study. The Centre Manager offered full support and cooperation, including providing me with permission to utilise rooms for interviews and focus groups if required, as well as writing me formal letters of support on request for ethics committee submissions and potential research participants across stakeholder groups. I worked in close collaboration with the support project in order to contact service users as potential participants.

In recognition of the sensitive matters that this research touched on for women, the methodology was designed specifically so that participants could rapidly access any support if needed (see the section 'Brief reflexive account' later in the chapter, for more discussion). I worked with project staff to let service users know about the research and invite their participation: the staff verbally informed service users about the research and also distributed an information leaflet (see Appendix One); if anyone expressed an interest in taking part, I then arranged to talk with them, to further explain about the research and what taking part entailed. (As I was still carrying out monthly street outreach, I could also – where appropriate – let service users know about the research myself, and hand out information leaflets and arrange times for interviews.)

Specifically my methodology involved liaising closely with the aforementioned ISVA, a member of staff on the project specially trained to work with sex workers who have been victims of rape and other sexual offences and crimes. I met with her on numerous occasions to get her input - for example, in developing the draft service user interview guide. She was my key contact for the project and took an active role in passing on information about the study to women she worked with and making arrangements for interviews.

A major advantage of working closely with the ISVA was that any participants expressing a wish for further, or additional support, could be rapidly referred to her who could then begin to discuss those support needs further. It is important to stress that I already knew many of the 'Armistead Street' service users and, in many cases, I had for some years. This meant I had good relationships with them involving a high degree of trust. And the ISVA was in turn able to both influence and share the research outcomes and findings.

Working with Merseyside Police

The research had the formal support of Merseyside Police, with who I had long-established experience of working in partnership; they were very much aware of my previous research on sex work in Merseyside, as well as my work with 'Armistead Street' and with the UK Network of Sex Work Projects (UKNSWP). For this study, I was in regular contact with the force strategic lead on prostitution, a Detective Superintendent, who liaised with his senior managers and then provided a formal letter of support for the research, both for the purposes of strengthening applications to ethics committees and for circulating to officers with whom I was seeking interviews (indeed, he facilitated a number of police contacts). More generally, I was involved regularly in liaising with potential research participants in the police and other agencies to explain the research and arrange participation.

The force strategic lead also oversaw the Unity specialist rape team, which this study found had made efforts to be sex-worker-friendly since its establishment, and we had worked collaboratively on sex work policy in Liverpool and national initiatives and continued to during the research. Merseyside Police supported the case for a 'National Ugly Mugs' (NUM) scheme and also supported UKNSWP in their work advocating for such a scheme; the force strategic lead was particularly active in the development of NUM, going on to support a pilot project, and representing Merseyside Police on the NUM advisory group.

There is no doubt that these links, the trust gained over a long period of time and my reputation as an established researcher and practitioner were highly advantageous to me in gaining the formal support and cooperation of Merseyside police officers, including the Chief Constable. Similarly Brooks-Gordon (2006), whose research - on men who pay for sex and the policing of kerb crawling - involved police participation, describes how the recommendation of her as a bona fide academic researcher by a senior officer enabled access to participants and was crucial for her research going ahead.

Defining my research sample

A total of 78 interviews have been carried out, 76 with Merseyside-based participants. Out of this 76, 39 of the interviews were with Merseyside police officers (serving and retired, including one PCSO); these were carried out in private rooms at either the police station where the officer was based or at the Armistead Centre. 22 interviews, meanwhile, were with 'Armistead Street' service users who were current or former sex workers; the majority of these were carried out in a private counselling or drop-in room at the Armistead Centre (with five carried out at the service user's current residence, be that their rented home or hostel).

One interview was also carried out with a representative from the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). Finally, fourteen interviews were with health and social care service providers/commissioners; these were carried in private rooms at either the offices where they were based or, again, at the Armistead Centre.

In addition, interviews were carried out with two non-Merseyside-based respondents. The first of these interviews was with the Staff Officer for the former Deputy Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police, who went on to be Deputy Commissioner at the Met who held the ACPO Lead for Prostitution. This Staff Officer Inspector coordinated the development of a new Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) strategy on prostitution directed by the ACPO Lead. The second interview, meanwhile, was carried out with the Police Superintendent seconded to the hate crime programme at the Ministry of Justice, who was the ACPO Lead on hate crime at the time of interview.

Two separate research participant information leaflets were produced (see Appendix One), based on whether the interviewee was from the 'Armistead Street' service user group or instead represented an agency (this latter group incorporating both police officers and interviewees who were health and social care providers/commissioners).

All participants were given a copy of the appropriate leaflet and consent form prior to interview. In a similar vein, three separate interview guides were designed for the different participant groups: one for service users, one for police officers, and one for health and social care providers and commissioners (see Appendix Four).

All participants - both in terms of service users and agencies - were over eighteen.

The sample of 'Armistead Street' service users invited to take part in interviews was selected to reflect a range of ages, length of time working, ethnicity, experiences of reporting to the police, investigation of crimes committed against them, and outcomes at court. The sample was selected following discussion with the ISVA and other outreach staff to identify a group of women whose experiences varied across these factors⁷. The project staff and I discussed if there were any current health or safeguarding issues for the women which would make interviewing unsuitable in terms of the distress it would likely cause for the participant and only approached those women who were deemed 'appropriate' in this respect. Amongst the final group, the majority were street sex workers (both current and former) with three service users, meanwhile, working indoors. (It is important to note that due to the nature of the support project and its remit, service users were predominantly current or former street workers in the main; at the time of the research, 'Armistead Street' was no longer commissioned to provide outreach to indoor sex workers.)

The agency representatives (police, health and social care providers/commissioners) invited to take part were approached because, in their professional role, they have been involved in policies or interventions or in providing services to support women involved in sex work who had experienced violence.

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When current and former sex workers are quoted in this thesis, their quotation will be followed by SU, to indicate that they are a *service user* of the 'Armistead Street' sex work project. This is then followed by a number, e.g., SU1 (corresponding to the details provided about the sample in Appendix Five). Likewise, when I state service users in the thesis, I am referring to the current and former sex workers who accessed 'Armistead Street'.

As there is limited research in the UK which includes interviews with police officers involved in the regulation of sex work, the research intentionally focused on interviewing this group⁸. The sample selection involved identifying specific officers who had played a key role in developing the Merseyside hate crime approach; I was aware of these through my policy work and former role as Project Coordinator at 'Armistead Street'. Another group of officers who were involved in policing sex work in Liverpool in some way were identified and invited to participate, comprised of a range of ranks and roles at the time of interview. Some of these were identified through snowball sampling; for example, a Sergeant responsible for supervising a team of constables involved in policing current street sex work could identify and provide contacts for officers new to the force in order to provide new officer perspectives. Similarly, some officers suggested others of long service coming up to retirement who, over decades, had held a range of roles in policing sex work.

Fourteen other professionals, who were health service providers or commissioners, were also interviewed. As data gathered from these interviews has not been formally analysed, instead serving to provide background information, only a small number of quotations from this group have been utilised in the analysis. A pragmatic decision was made that, with a large amount of data across various stakeholder groups, I would focus on data derived from interviewing the police and current and former sex workers ('Armistead Street' service users).

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When police officers are quoted in this thesis, their quotation will be followed by a P, to indicate *police*, followed by a randomly selected numerical code (which is *not* linked to the sample details provided in Appendix Six, for reasons of anonymity).

Socio-demographic summary of the research sample

Current and former sex worker participants (service users)

All 22 participants were women, including one transgender woman. In terms of ethnicity, seventeen participants (77%) described their ethnicity as 'White British', while the remaining five described themselves as 'White Irish Traveler', 'Black British dual heritage', 'White and Black British Caribbean', 'mixed race', and 'mixed race Irish and Barbadian', respectively. The age range of participants was 26-48 years, with a mean age of 36 years.

The number of years that women had been involved in sex work covered a span of three months to 29 years. Fifteen participants (68%) were currently sex working while seven (32%) had exited sex work at the time of interview. Amongst those currently sex working, twelve (80%) were street sex working at the time of interview, and two (13%) were escorting, with a further participant seeing two regular clients at home. Of those who had were exited at the time of interview, five (80%) had worked the street, one (10%) had worked the street but prior to that had managed a massage parlor, and one (10%) had worked both on the street and from home via online ads. (See Appendix Five for a summary table with further information about current and former sex worker participants).

With regard to the matter of problematic drug and alcohol use amongst the participants: 59% identified former problematic class A drug use; 32% identified current problematic alcohol or class A drug use; 23% identified current problematic alcohol use; and 9% current problematic class A drugs use. (Only one participant (4.5%) had no current or historical experience of problematic substance use.) Again, as argued earlier in relation to the over-representation of street workers in this study, the sample has necessarily been shaped by the nature of the 'Armistead Street' project and the

services it provides – including support for problematic drug and alcohol use. Nevertheless, a twenty-year-plus body of research studies in the UK shows high rates of problematic class A drug use and alcohol problems amongst street sex workers in the UK, suggesting that the sample was, in this respect, not atypical of women working in this sector.

It is important, in outlining the sample's composition, to reiterate that this study is the first in the UK on sex work and hate crime, and it has explored this topic amongst a specific group of sex workers in Liverpool. Of the cases of crimes against sex workers brought before the courts in Merseyside, the majority up until 2013 had involved street sex worker victims, and this fact (alongside the nature of 'Armistead Street' service provision, as per my earlier points) has shaped my sample. Clearly there is a need for further research with sex workers in other parts of the UK and internationally, as well as in the context of indoor and internet-based sex work sectors, about their understanding of crimes they have experienced and the idea of hate crime. As Van der Meulen (2011) and Shaver (2005) have argued, researchers should be clear about their sample and its 'limits', and not generalise to the wider sex worker population from a specific sample (for more discussion, see the next section). However, whilst claims cannot be made for wider populations on the basis of my research, my findings do hold significance in illustrating in some depth the experiences, views and feelings expressed by a particular sample of sex workers responding to a particular local policy model. These experiences whilst context-specific, nonetheless having resonance and relevance for policy more widely because, even though there are differences across contexts (and the sample is mostly street workers), there are also points of commonality. They also signify the start of research which enters into dialogue with sex workers about hate crime, and clearly there is need for research which involves other and more diverse groups of sex workers in terms of, other locations, sectors, gender identities ethnicity and nationality.

Police force participants

39 interviews were carried out with serving or retired Merseyside police officers and a police community support officer. Four had retired and, of these, two had returned to work in the force in specific roles. Years of service within the police ranged between participants from three to 36 years, with the mean length of service being 18.5 years.

32 interviewees (82%) were officers who originated from Merseyside, with seven of them (18%) originating from outside Merseyside (including Wales, Lancashire, London and the North East). All were White British, with one identifying as White British Jewish. Eight (21%) were women, with 31 (79%) being men. Participants' ages ranged from 25 to 61, with an average age of 42.5 years.

Ranks ranged from constable to chief constable: there was one police community support officer, five constables, eight detective constables, one retired detective constables, four sergeants, five detective sergeants, five neighborhood inspectors, one retired inspector, three detective inspectors, one superintendent, one detective superintendent, two detective chief superintendents, one retired chief superintendent, and the Chief Constable.

Amongst these participants, some were officers who had (or who had had) specific roles relating to sex work, and included those who had been involved strategically and operationally in establishing and developing the hate crime approach in Merseyside at different stages⁹; meanwhile, others were officers who had more generic roles, within which policing sex work formed only a small or occasional part of their duties. (For further details of the police sample, see Appendix Six). I have not included a summary of the other agency interviewees because (as mentioned earlier) data from this group were not analysed in the same manner as that which came from the police.

Ethical issues in sex worker research: my experiences

It is vital researchers of sex work consider the ethical implications of all aspects of their research, especially as the social marginalisation of sex workers in many countries can heighten their vulnerability to unethical and exploitative research practices - as, indeed, several sex work researchers practising a participatory approach have stressed (O'Neill et al. 2004; Shaver 2005; Van der Meulen 2011). O'Neill (1996), for instance, questions the ethics of sex work researchers who return to academia and focus on publishing careers with little or no activity to ensure benefits for sex workers. Similarly, Metzenrath (1998: 11) directly criticises researchers who make their careers 'on the backs of sex workers' and states that 'for far too long researchers have been using sex workers as guinea pigs without any benefit accruing to sex workers as the result of research'. Van der Meulen (2011), meanwhile, identifies a number of ways the content of research has been unethical and problematic for sex workers. She argues that

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In order to protect the anonymity of police participants, only limited information has been provided. For example, it has not been possible to provide detail about the various involvements of each participant in relation to sex work at different chronological points or their specific roles at the time of interview. It is, I think, important to note that the very large majority would have been happy to be identified, but the policy of the research methodology was to anonymise participants.

conventional sex work research has pathologised women in the sex industry; one form of such pathologisation concerns the way some radical feminist researchers have presented all sex workers as being devoid of choice, agency or subjectivity and always victims of male violence. Such approaches can make sex workers wary of academic researchers, as can the existence of 'histories of exploitative research methods and ulterior motives' (: 372). Van der Meulen thus reflects on the need for wider advocacy amongst sex worker rights organisations, and for participatory models of research which include sex workers in the research process, as vital to reducing exploitation and misrepresentation.

For Shaver (2005), an ethical as well as methodological challenge is posed when researching sex worker populations in finding a representative sample; as the size of sex worker populations is unknown, this difficulty is increased. Agustin (2007) has noted how research with sex workers accessing support services are biased in excluding those who do not access services. She and others have also noted how populations that are more visible, such as street sex workers, are subsequently over-sampled (e.g. Van de Meulen 2011), with less research focusing on indoor sex work populations. Indeed, studies of female street sex work populations are over-represented in the UK research literature, and some researchers have taken findings from these studies and generalised them to the wider sex worker population (Pitcher 2015). The predominance of street sex work reflects how this has until recently been the main focus of local and national policies, due to its visibility and its impact on residential communities, and more recent concerns about the welfare of the women involved. Shaver argues that sex workers are often represented as a homogeneous population, with (as per some radical feminist positions) sex workers represented as victims of exploitation, despite a growing body of research showing varied experiences. There are, of course, UK studies of indoor female sectors, male and trans sex work; and with the growth of internet-

based sex work and increased awareness of queer sex work (Smith et al. 2015), research exploring such experiences are emerging (Sanders et al. 2015). Yet as a proportion of the overall body of literature, this is still small. I am clear about the limits to my sex worker sample, with its composition of women who were predominantly current or former street sex workers.

Shaver (2005) argues that ensuring privacy and confidentiality for a hidden, stigmatised and sometimes illegal population is 'paramount'. She urges researchers to create harm reduction guidelines to protect sex workers, as part of what she calls 'participant-centred approach builds in respect for human dignity as well as respect for vulnerable persons' (Shaver 2005: 314).

Principles such as confidentiality, anonymity, voluntary participation and informed consent, transparency, full information for participants about methods and use of data, avoidance of harm to participants, and openness about conflicts of interest are also reflected in the ethical statements of Economic and Social Research Council (2012), British Sociological Association (2002), Social Research Association, and British Society of Criminology. These were considered in the planning and carrying out of my research, as I now detail.

Ethics committee applications and approval

There are challenges and complexities in securing ethical approval for social researchers. I had been involved in making applications to research ethics committees within the NHS framework for nearly two decades. Haggerty (2004) has noted the challenge of 'ethics creep', with an increase in the regulatory activities researchers are subject to; research ethics committees have 'unintentionally expanded their mandate to include a hosts of groups and practices that were undoubtedly not intended in original research ethics formulations' (: 392). He argues these have split the relationship between following the rules of the ethical process and acting ethically within the complex and messy reality of doing research. With participatory action research methods, research tools such as focus group guides, interview guides, and participant information sheets will often be produced *as part of* the project not before. When ethics committees request copies of such documents, the principles of PAR have to be carefully outlined and example tools provided, even while making it clear these will not be the final tools. Yet having to go through an application to ethics committees is an important process. It makes the researcher accountable, provides independent review and scrutiny, supports and informs thinking through the key ethical issues that are encountered in carrying out research on sex work, and ensures that research planning and implementation at all stages considers impacts on participants and builds in practice to reduce the likelihood of harm and to protect participants. ESRC (2012) advises research proposals with human participants and research involving more than minimal risk should be reviewed and approved by a research ethics committee which operates in line with the ESRC Framework for Research Ethics. In this vein, my research proposal underwent particular and considerable ethical scrutiny, as I had to apply for approval from three different committees.

In addition to a requirement to obtain ethical approval from Durham University School of Applied Social Sciences Ethics Committee, the research - planned to include, as it did, NHS service users and staff – required NHS ethical approval in line with national and local NHS ethical approval procedures. Two applications to NHS ethics committees were necessary: NHS Integrated Research Assessment System and Liverpool and Sefton Primary Care Trust's Research Ethics Committees. Approval was obtained from all three (see the table in Appendix Seven for details of the application procedures).

Confidentiality, anonymity and consent

ESRC (2012) is clear that information 'supplied by research participants and the anonymity of respondents must be respected' (: 3). Confidentiality and anonymity were important issues for all participants in this study. This was heightened in the case of people involved in sex work, as many sex workers do not publicly identify as sex workers, whether to some agencies, other authorities, or friends and family members. Hence, many participants in the service user group will have been keen to have their anonymity protected and the confidentiality of the experiences and information they shared ensured.

Prior to seeking written consent, I explained that the study was being conducted in a manner that protects confidentiality and in which participants remain anonymous to the extent permitted by law (i.e. under the statutory obligations of the agency the researcher is working within, such as 'Armistead Street', it may be judged that, for the safety of the participant or others, confidentiality will have to be breached). I explained that, in the case of 'Armistead Street' service users, I would not record - in any written or electronic documents - names or other identifying details of participants. The only document related to the research that would contain service user

personal data is the consent form (Appendix Two), which was kept in a locked filing cabinet.

Written consent was obtained from all participants for both interview and focus group participants prior to participation. Two separate consent forms were designed for this purpose: one for 'Armistead Street' service users and one for agency participants. That participation was on a voluntary basis was made clear to all participants (including the 'Armistead Street' service user group), verbally and in the form of a 'participant information' leaflet. This leaflet also clearly stated that whether or not service users choose to take part in the study, the care they received from 'Armistead Street' would not be affected.

Service user interviews were recorded with a digital voice recorder, with participant consent (consent was given in all cases). All data collected here was recorded anonymously, with no personal identifiers for individual participants being recorded in interview transcripts. (During the process of transcription, which was carried partly by myself and partly by a transcription company authorised by the university, any identifiers such as names, addresses or other details that may have been inadvertently referred to which could identify a person were not transcribed. Moreover, I had not requested such personal details in the interviews. This acted as a safeguard so that each participant's anonymity and confidentiality was not breached by research participation.) Any quotations from service users used in the thesis or publications, similarly, have been anonymised, and participants gave written consent for their use.

For the focus group and interviews with representatives from organisations and agencies, personal identifiers such as names were not recorded on interview transcripts and codes were instead used. I have attributed quotes utilised in the thesis to the professional role/rank and not to a specific

individual. I consulted with each professional participating, regarding how they want to be referenced, i.e. how their job role should be referred to in my research. This included some professionals with a work role so specific that it makes them identifiable. I also consulted with the participants about how their affiliation should be noted. The specific job title of a participant has only been used if consent has been given by the participant.

For all interviews recorded (and the focus group), digital audio recorded/files were downloaded from the digital recorder within two days; the digital recordings were then be stored on a password-protected computer. Until being downloaded, the recording device was kept in a locked filing cabinet in my office. The recording was deleted from the recording device immediately after downloading. The digital file was then transcribed within a maximum of eight weeks from the interview and deleted from the computer within 12 weeks of the interview. Anonymised transcripts were stored on the computer (again, password protected).

Analysing experiences of hate crime and policy: a grounded theory approach

QSR NVivo version 9 was used for analysis of both the interview data and the police focus group data. NVivo is designed for social scientists, to aid in the analysis of qualitative unstructured information. I went through a thorough process of classifying and sorting qualitative data contained in interview and focus group transcripts, identifying themes to inform evidence-based conclusions. This software was designed based on the principles of grounded theory. Grounded theory as a methodology was originally developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) to aid in the development of techniques of the analysis of research data not produced by statistical procedures or other forms of quantification, i.e. qualitative data. Strauss and Corbin define grounded theory as:

one that is inductively derived from the study of the phenomenon it represents. That is, it is discovered, developed and provisionally verified through systematic data collection and analysis of data pertaining to that phenomenon. Therefore data collection, analysis and theory stand in reciprocal relationship with each other (1990: 23).

Unlike scientific theory, in which the researcher starts with a theory and then tests it to prove or disprove it, the researcher starts with an area of study and theory emerges from the data findings.

For Strauss and Corbin (1990), well-constructed grounded theory should: be based on the 'everyday realities' of the area of study; make sense to the communities or individuals who were studied as well as researchers; and allow for variation and apply to various contexts but should specify the conditions under which it applies. On this last point, see my earlier discussion of the sex workers sample, where I consider related issues. Strauss and Corbin describe the first stage of producing grounded theory as identifying the research question, then carrying out the research; they then concentrate on the analysis phase, with detailed procedures for the open coding process whereby data is 'broken down, conceptualized, and put together in new ways' (1990: 57). Here, the researcher goes through a process of breaking data down into discrete parts, closely examined, and compared for similarities and differences. With the researcher breaking down and conceptualising data, 'taking apart an observation, a sentence, a paragraph and giving each discrete incident, idea, or event, a name, something that stands for or represents a phenomenon' (: 63), similar phenomenon is given the same name i.e. coded consistently. Strauss and Corbin explain that many conceptual labels can be identified; some of these can be grouped in categories.

NVIVO provides a personal computer tool for coding qualitative data - what Bazeley and Jackson (2013) refer to as 'qualitative computing', developing categories and assisting in the development of grounded theoretical models.¹⁰ They note that most researchers employing NVIVO will only use a small part of its functionalities. To clarify, I utilised it for: creating an NVIVO project with data records, records of thinking about the data and nodes to store the data; creating an NVIVO database, for coding and developing a coding system; using coding and queries to analyse the data; and deploying tools for visualising the data.

I went through the process of importing all interview and the focus group transcripts into NVIVO and produced two projects within the program: a police one and a service user one. Having read through and indeed transcribed many of the interviews, I was already familiar with some key themes that emerged from interview guides and participant responses and had written these down to create an initial coding framework within NVIVO, with core nodes for coding data within them for each data set. I worked through each interview transcript, one at a time, coding data under these core nodes, adding new core nodes where required and creating sub-nodes for nodes where there was large amounts of rich data - amongst which sub-themes emerged. This was a lengthy process due to the large number of data-intensive interviews carried out.

I created two coding trees for two different sets of data, a coding tree for the service user interview data and a coding tree for the police interview and focus group data. My appendices contain two tables.

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Bazeley and Jackson (2013) provide a useful source of practical guidance on qualitative data analysis which can be used to: manage data to organise and keep track of the various records that make up qualitative research (in this case, interview transcripts); organise and produce conceptual knowledge and have quick access to the evidence supporting it; being able to ask queries of the data; being able to visualise the data via a number of functions; and being able to produce reports from the data.

The first table is for my service user interview data, showing all my top-level nodes (which I have organised under six overarching categories); it also includes examples of sub nodes where applicable (see Appendix 8.1). The six overarching themes within which I have categorised top-level nodes include:

- Participant socio-demographics and the sex industry;
- Sex worker experiences and views: crimes against sex workers;
- Reporting crime;
- Policing sex work and the relationship between sex workers and the police;
- Hate crime: views and experiences;
- Improving sex worker safety and project support;
- Ensuring justice.

The second summary nodes table shows all my top-level nodes for the police interview data, with examples of sub nodes where this applies (see Appendix 8.2). The seven overarching themes within which I have categorised top-level nodes include:

- Policing approaches to sex work in the past;
- Transition to current policing approaches;
- Current policing of sex work and the relationship between sex workers and the police;
- Views on whether there has been change and why;
- Hate crime;
- Ensuring justice;
- Further changes needed and ongoing challenges.

A brief reflexive account: being researcher/outreach worker/policy influencer

The centrality of reflexivity within participatory action research and feminist research principles (Mruck and Bruer 2003; Bergold and Thomas 2012) leads me to provide a reflexive account of my multiplicity of interacting roles over the last 20 years in Merseyside, as a sex work researcher, outreach worker and someone involved in establishing and managing support services for sex workers and multi-agency responses to sex work in Liverpool. Here, I consider some of the methodological and ethical challenges and opportunities that my particular background and set of skills and experiences have afforded me in terms of the current study; in a sense, then, the following serves as a continuation of my earlier discussion of the ethical issues of sex work research but with a specific emphasis on the matter of my positionality. It is as a complement to the reflexive material included in Chapter One, where I have told the story about how this research grew out of many years involvement in research, service provision and policy development in Merseyside¹¹ and nationally, and accounts for why I am carrying out this research and its importance for me. In fact, rarely has there been a time between 1995 and 2013 I have not been involved in sex work policy in Liverpool. I was involved for 13 years in outreach and directly managed 'Armistead Street' and 'Portside' sex work projects in Liverpool between 2005 and 2008 ('Armistead Street' being the service commissioned after the Linx Project closed), working as a sessional outreach worker after leaving that post until 2012. 16 years on from when I

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I first carried out action research in Liverpool in 1995 (Campbell et al. 1996), with the resulting research report recommending further development of support services for sex workers. Within the spirit of action research, I then worked with the social programmes manager of Safer Merseyside Partnership to secure funding for a holistic sex work project and the Linx Project was established. I continued to support Linx in various ways, including identifying opportunities on the national policy scene to enhance their work, e.g. developing the bid for the Home Office's 'Tackling Prostitution: What Works?' funding stream, which secured funding for an number of innovative safety initiatives (see Chapter Four for more details.)

first got involved in action research in Liverpool and now carrying out my PhD research, I have found it hard to separate out my roles as researcher, sessional outreach worker, former Coordinator of 'Armistead Street', and advocate within partnership structures. Indeed, having these multiple, overlapping roles did present challenges but I felt this brought many more positives than disadvantages. It meant I had lots of experience of working with sex workers, lots of trust as an outreach worker and project coordinator of a respected project, connections across organisations involved in sex work policy and amongst practitioners in sex work projects. Sitting on the boundaries between these roles, guided by the varying practice guidance on obligations brings a certain discipline: I could not be a researcher who was reckless towards sex worker welfare and confidentiality, not if I wanted to continue to be involved in outreach and service provision in Liverpool or anywhere else in the UK. To carry out abstract research of little relevance to policy would seem like a missed opportunity to feed the views of two key groups of people enacting and experiencing the impact of policy on sex work, i.e. sex workers and police; and it would violate my own code of using social research to understand and shape social relations, structures and policy, with a commitment to social change with benefits for marginalised and stigmatised groups.

Being a practitioner in the study site: challenges and opportunities

Coy (2006) discusses the tensions she encountered when carrying out her doctoral research focused on sex workers' experiences of the care system, whilst employed as an outreach worker and the ongoing reflexive progress.. She argues that this meant:

The processes of access, maintaining follow up support and the vulnerability of women who disclosed experiences of care (but were primarily in need of professional intervention), were qualitatively different to those faced by external researchers. The research was supplemented by my knowledge of the women and yet was also hindered by my concern for the women as their support provider first and foremost (: 419).

Of particular concern to Coy were the ethical requirements for researchers about the rights of participants to confidentiality and protection. The key principle which guided her design and implementation was prioritising women's welfare and this, she argues, meant the research was 'lent an added dimension by my dual role' (: 419). This was also a key barometer for my research practice. Coy was working more regularly within the project where she was employed during the course of her research, doing both outreach and follow up support work. Meanwhile, I had less regular contact with service users during my research, doing sessional street outreach for one or two sessions a month and I was not providing any follow-up support. Nevertheless, my duty of care to participants was the overriding consideration:

Built into the design of the research were pathways to support for 'service user' participants, should the research in any way trigger issues for them. All the women were offered support from the ISVA or the wider Armistead support team; as described, I consulted with support workers prior to interview to seek their professional advice on individual women's participation and whether there were any current issues that in their view would mean participation would create stress, anxiety or be detrimental to the service user's health and well-being. This sensitivity to support needs, and knowing how to enable access to such support, is a positive of the researcher/practitioner approach (Coy 2006: 428).

The interviews with women for the research often did not feel like isolated encounters, but rather like ongoing conversations and dialogue which I had with women on outreach or previously in one-to-one work. Continued conversation focused on particular experiences and reflecting in more depth on profound experiences the women had had, particularly of the police, crimes committed against them, and – for those whose cases had made it

as far - the court process. The interview gave time and context for the women to share and reflect jointly on experiences; as many of them knew I had been around and involved at the time of some of the events they were now narrating, they would naturally say such things as: 'You remember, Rosie, what he did to women'; 'You remember what a bastard that policeman was'; and 'You remember how lovely that policewoman was'. For me, there is no other approach that shares reflection yet with a conscious focus on women's experiences and voices. Coy notes how often interviews for her became extensions of personal support work, where the women led the conversation but she encouraged them to reflect on experiences. She draws on Birch and Millar's (2000) interpretation of the interviewer as having a therapeutic impact through empathetic listening and witnessing disclosures and effecting participants to develop new understandings of themselves. Yet this does not reflect the two-way process - or '*dialogic interaction*' (Bochner 2001: 426) - in which I as, interviewer, learned so much more about women's experiences and feelings, and, in turn, my own feelings and thoughts about violence against sex workers and policing responses - what Coy noted as a step in the reconstruction of self.

This dialogic interaction has a two-way emotional impact which has been described and captured by O'Neill's (2001) concept of 'politics of feeling', this encompassing the researcher's emotional identification with and compassion for participants and recognising the dual subjectivity of researcher and researched:

Immersion and identification enables researchers to better understand the lived experiences, feelings, meanings of the group(s) they are working with. ...Engaging with (or mediating) the critical tension between experience, feeling, emotion and materiality – constructive rationality can help us to better understand the 'micrology' of women's lives within the meta conditions/ structures of our lives. This can in turn help us to better understand the individual/society relationship, and the wider sexual, socio-economic, cultural and political implications (O'Neill et al. 2002: 81).

This links back to my case for an interviewing style which allows for the subjective and the emotional, to be recognised, heard and acted upon via policy informed interventions (see section on 'In-depth interviewing').

Coy (2006) noted the cultural capital she had as a practitioner/researcher: knowledge of the language; knowledge about aspects of women's lives; knowledge of, and a presence in, the street community which non-practitioner, external researchers did not have access to. In terms as my positioning as a professional who had been involved in policy development and service delivery in Merseyside for over a decade, this cultural capital was advantageous in that it has given me 'insider' knowledge of some of the historical and current policy drivers and has enabled me to have access to, and cooperation from, a range of professionals, organisations and individuals which would have taken longer to negotiate for an external researcher.

Conclusion: negotiating the boundaries between research, outreach, policy development and change?

The methodological approach was informed by my long history in the this field and in Merseyside, the cultural capital, relationships and trust I had built up with sex workers and stakeholders including the Police and my own commitment to feminist and participatory action research, to making a difference and connecting research to policy and social justice. It is also informed by the rigorous ethical approach I take to research and was required of me in this study, given the three ethical review processes.

This chapter has described how, in adopting a participatory action research methodology shaped by feminist principles, methodologically my research has sought to bridge a gap between otherwise disparate areas relating to the lived experiences of sex workers: scholarship on sex work and hate

crime in Merseyside; sex worker service provision locally; and both local policy development and national policy advocacy. I conclude now by reiterating that whilst negotiating this interface can be challenging, it can also be enriching and have benefits. It enables one to be directly informed by developments at the frontline, to ground concepts in practice and lived experiences - a long established principle for action research. An approach to policy development which incorporates empirical evidence from the field, involving academics carrying out applied research, is one that encourages documentation of policy initiatives and stakeholder reflection on new and innovative practice and policy developments. Having links with and involvement in local, regional and national networks also enables sharing of lessons learned, informs local innovation and can inform national strategy debates. Such networking was vital for the development of the Merseyside hate crime approach and the various innovative strands this has entailed. Moreover, had I and other key individuals not been as active in national networks, we may not have identified opportunities for funding for innovative initiatives that formed part of the approach. Also the benefits and lessons from enacting hate crime policies that include sex workers may have taken longer to be included in national policy documents and have impact beyond Merseyside (see Chapter Nine for a discussion of the local national impacts of this research and the Merseyside approach).

In Chapter Four, we now consider in more detail – informed by my research findings - the historical background to the development of multi-agency sex work policy in Merseyside, as the specific antecedents to the hate crime approach, including the elements which constitute Merseyside Police's policy of approaching crimes against sex workers as hate crime.

Chapter Four: Contextualising the Merseyside hate crime approach - key periods and strands

Introduction

This chapter identifies the historical factors leading to the emergence of what I refer to as the 'Merseyside hate crime approach' – this approach's fully fledged 'arrival' perhaps best symbolised in Merseyside Police's extension of their existing hate crime policy, in December 2006, to specifically include sex workers as a victim group. To trace the history and development of the hate crime approach, I draw on research literature and policy documents, as well as findings from police interviews. A number of local officers were interviewed who, at a strategic or operational level, had an active role in developing and implementing the force's extended policy on hate crime, or were involved in wider efforts to address violence against sex workers. Detailing the significant role played by local sex work outreach and support projects, often involving partnership work with the police, is a central aim of this chapter too. I was Project Coordinator of both the 'Armistead Street' and 'Portside' projects in the 18 months preceding the inclusion of sex workers in hate crime policy;¹² and, in this capacity, my colleagues and I were able to contribute towards both this formal change in policing practice and procedure and the development of a number of other, community-based, initiatives which I argue also constitute elements of the Merseyside hate crime approach.

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As discussed in Chapters One and Three, I was involved as a researcher, activist and outreach worker in the development of multi-agency policy on sex work in Merseyside from 1995 to 2013.

In previous research output (Campbell 2011a), I have highlighted how, for over 15 years, local multi-agency policy on sex work in Merseyside has included initiatives to address the safety of sex workers. It is, hence, a contention of this chapter that Merseyside's hate crime approach did not emerge overnight. There were, to be sure, some immediate catalysts to the approach (which are described later in this chapter), but it was also shaped by the specific historical, socio-economic and sex work policy context of Liverpool - a context that 'contained' factors facilitating, if never guaranteeing, a concern with the welfare, rather than the criminalisation and punishment, of sex workers. In this earlier work, I identified four key periods of sex work policy between 1980 and 2011 (Campbell 2011a) - including, latterly, the period during which Merseyside Police's hate crime policy was extended to include sex workers. These were as follows:

- Hardship, heroin, HIV and the rise of 'harm reduction': 1980-1995
- Community action, community safety, regeneration and research: 1995-2003
- Crucial debates around safety - murder and 'managed areas': 2003-2005
- Naming it as hate crime - the public protection of sex workers: 2005-2011

The first half of this chapter, then, provides an account of each of these key periods, before, in the second half, looking to outline and reiterate the key strands that do, I argue, together comprise the hate crime approach.

Hardship, heroin, HIV and the rise of 'harm reduction': 1980-1995

In the 1980s, Liverpool was hit hard by recession; the city experienced some of the highest unemployment rates in the UK and, on many indices of socio-economic deprivation, had some of the poorest wards in the UK. Sykes et al. (2013) comment that 'Liverpool was seen by some as a "beaten city" – the "shock city" of the post-industrial age' (: 2). In the early years of that decade, the relatively wide-spread emergence in the Merseyside area of heroin use and addiction (Parker and Newcombe 1987; Parker et al.

1987; Parker et al. 1988; Pearson 1987), and the rise of drug-related crime associated with it, were part of the social problems that local communities were experiencing. Merseyside was one of the first parts of the UK to experience the 'heroin epidemic' - with the national peak being identified as between 1992 and 2000 (Morgan 2014) - and where the impact of heroin addiction was particularly felt and visible (Parker et al. 1987; Parker and Newcombe 1987). In 1994, amongst fourteen regional health authorities, Mersey had the second highest number of notified drug addicts in England (Jones 1995). Indeed, the emergence of problematic heroin use and dependency amongst many socially deprived communities in Merseyside over the course of the 1980s was quickly followed by crack cocaine, with Liverpool being one of the first UK cities to report significant crack cocaine use, both amongst its drug-using community and amongst women involved in street sex work.

The impact of class A drugs in the UK was being felt at the same time that awareness about AIDS and HIV was growing. Sex workers and intravenous drug users were constructed as 'high risk groups' in the discourses surrounding HIV/AIDS in the 1980s (Scambler et al. 1990). Liverpool was at the forefront of pioneering a 'harm-reduction' approach to drug use and HIV prevention, informed by principles of public health and community involvement. Critically, sex workers were recognised and included in that work and in emergent service provision in Liverpool (Ashton and Seymour 1988). This harm-reduction approach was somewhat at odds with the national policies on drugs. Liverpool set up one of the first community-based syringe exchanges which was part of a regional centre for drug users, with harm-reduction advice and information available, along with anonymous HIV testing and safer sex supplies.

Reviewing available data in the UK, EUROPAP reported that drug use patterns amongst street sex work communities in UK cities varied in terms of the numbers using Class A drugs, with studies of injecting drug use in UK sex workers suggesting a range of between 8% and 71% according to the city in which they worked (EUROPAP 1994). Research in Liverpool, in 1989, found that Liverpool was placed at the top end of this range; a survey of street sex workers in the city in the late 1980s found that 69% of the sample had used illicit drugs and 41% were injecting (Regional Drugs/HIV Monitoring Unit 1989). The Maryland Centre (part of the aforementioned regional health authority centre) established, under its harm-reduction and HIV-prevention umbrella, a project for street sex workers in September 1987 that adopted an outreach approach (L. Matthews 1993). This approach was based on building trust and relationships by developing accessible, user-friendly services, responsive to women's emergent issues and needs, and taking these out onto the street (Ashton and Seymour 1988). Lyn Matthews was appointed to take on the outreach role and, for four and a half years, she, along with colleagues, pioneered one of the first HIV-prevention, harm-reduction-focused projects for sex workers in the UK (which emerged alongside projects in Birmingham, Edinburgh and London). It was one of the first projects to highlight problematic crack cocaine use amongst street sex workers in the UK, with first reports of crack use appearing in 1987 (L. Matthews 1993); and it also highlighted how the enforcement of soliciting legislation contributed to risk-taking practices amongst street sex workers in terms of safety and health (L. Matthews 1990). As one of the first cities in the UK, then, to pioneer a dedicated harm-reduction outreach service for sex workers, it contributed to the research and practice literature on models of support for sex workers. This marked the start of 15 years of policy approaches to sex work in Liverpool, where the practical harm-reduction needs of people involved in sex work were identified and health and local authorities were key in funding support services for sex workers, primarily via HIV, broader sexual health promotion

or drugs budgets. Hence, in this we can see that Liverpool has a history of innovative outreach and support service development, and that, as far back as the late '80s, the seeds were being sown for subsequent (harm reduction) project work in the 2000s. However, it is first the 1990s and matters of community – specifically, community action and notions of community safety – to which we must first turn our attention for understanding how street sex work in particular has been constructed in policy and public debate.

Community action, community safety, regeneration and research: 1995-2003

The salience of local residents groups and community involvement in crime and disorder policy at a national level was reflected in a shift in debates on street prostitution in the UK in the 1990s (Hubbard 1999). Running alongside this greater influence of communities from the mid-1990s was the 'regeneration' movement. Liverpool, having been one of the most socially deprived cities in the UK in the 1980s and 1990s, began to undergo regeneration (Sykes et al. 2013). Having the mixed blessing of being one of the poorest cities in the European Union, Liverpool gained Objective 1 status in 1994 (Boland 2000), which stayed in place until 2006; this meant it had access to considerable European structural funds, receiving £700 million funding that year (1994) and £928 in 2000. A tension in Liverpool, as in a number of cities in the UK, was between the desire to regenerate areas physically and socially which often meant displacing marginalised groups, whilst also addressing the needs of some of those groups who often constituted some of the most stigmatised communities in the city - such as people with drug and alcohol problems and street sex workers (Campbell et al. 1996).

These shifts saw a focus on the impact of sex work on communities and, in tandem (in some areas), community activism against on prostitution. In research with colleagues from around this time (see below for more details), I found this was reflected in sex work policy in Liverpool with the formation of dedicated partnership forums to address prostitution in local communities, with community groups as influential stakeholders (Campbell et al. 1996). In the early-to-mid 1990s, the Abercromby area was the main site of street sex work in the city, and it was in a period of flux in terms of the makeup of its residents which had for a long time been constituted by a transient population of people in privately rented accommodation, a large number of students, and a settled community who enjoyed the centrality of the location, the architecture, the social mix and community activity. These groups were being joined now by new residents who were attracted by the low house prices attached to the attractive, large, Georgian properties typical of the area. With this emerging gentrification of Abercromby, residents' voices, now accompanied by the voices of new residents with particular aspirations for the area, reached a crescendo.

However, whilst, in common with other communities in the UK, Liverpool became involved in community activism to address street prostitution, this was not simply a case of anti-prostitution protest (Campbell et al. 1996) as was being seen in some parts of the country (R. Matthews 1992, 1993). In Liverpool, community responses to street sex work were diverse. There were anti-prostitution voices amongst some long-term residents who had 'had enough' of street sex work (which they felt symbolised the 'neglect' of their area) and new residents (such as in the Abercromby case) who had not 'lived with' street sex workers and who were demanding the removal of such 'social incivilities'. These residents had limited empathy and concern for street sex workers; yet there was also a sense of 'tolerance' amongst those residents who identified the area as historically a site of street sex work, defended sex worker rights and wanted the welfare and safety of sex

workers included in local policies (Campbell et al. 1996). Despite these differences, the various groups were on the whole willing to engage in dialogue and contribute to research and consultation initiatives.

In the early-to-mid 1990s, some local authorities in the UK recognised that a coordinated, multi-agency approach was crucial to dealing with the multi-faceted issues related to prostitution (O'Neill 1990), and began establishing forums to bring together different agencies. Amongst other cities, such as Nottingham, Sheffield and Wolverhampton, Liverpool had been involved in forums which specifically addressed prostitution (Campbell et al. 1996). These forums provided an opportunity for the development of policy and the initiation of action. Some such forums had been initiated and administrated by the local authority; this was the case in Liverpool, where, in 1989, Liverpool City Council established the Abercromby Working Party, in response to community concerns relating to prostitution.

Regenerating neighbourhoods: street prostitution in inner city Liverpool

In 1995, along with colleagues, I was commissioned – by the local authority, via the Abercromby Working Party - to lead a community-based action research project on street prostitution in the area (referred to above). Significantly, the research was funded by not only the council but two regeneration bodies: Liverpool City Challenge and Liverpool City Centre Partnership. Here, the issue of street sex work was tied to the issue of regeneration. Also worthy of note is the fact that the research was commissioned a year after Julie Findley, aged 23, was murdered, and so can be seen as having emerged partially in response to this. The body of Julie, who had been involved in street sex work in Liverpool, was found in a field next to a bypass in the Rainford area of Merseyside; she had been strangled.¹³

As this chapter will later highlight, the murders of sex workers have played a role in policy change, including in terms of the hate crime approach.)

The overall aim of the research was to gather information which would enable the City Council to gain a better understanding of the extent and nature of street prostitution, and to consult with stakeholder groups involved and affected by street sex work - including sex workers, their clients, residents and agencies/ service providers - in order to inform local policy and service provision. The support needs and safety of sex workers were part of our terms of reference. Notably, we were specifically tasked with assessing the 'viability of seeking to establish "tolerance zones" or other approaches to prostitution' (Campbell et al. 1996: 1). Our findings reflected the emergent interest groups and concerns of the mid-to-late 1990s in Liverpool in relation to street sex work; providing a snap shot of the situation in the city at this time, they highlighted that, whilst street sex work was still taking place in Abercromby, there had been dispersal to other areas (such as Crown Street, close to the University of Liverpool campus; Gildart and Devon Streets; and residential areas in Kensington, Edge Lane and Sheil Road) as a consequence of policing – this dispersal being a phenomena which could be an ongoing process (Campbell et al. 1996).

Our research (Campbell et al. 1996) found that the Abercromby Working Party had initiated and coordinated some environmental initiatives which had, to a certain extent, worked to reduce some of the nuisance reported by residents as being caused by prostitution. Moreover, it had been an important forum for constructive discussion concerning prostitution within the Abercromby area. However, there was no coherent city-wide strategic approach (Campbell et al. 1996; Kilvington et al. 2001). The report thus recommended a city-wide approach to street sex work and other sectors which recognised 'the multifarious nature of prostitution and the diversity of lifestyles of those involved' (Campbell et al. 1996: 2).

In relation to the issue of crimes against sex workers, the research found - reflecting findings from studies in other areas of the UK at the time (e.g. McKeganey and Barnard 1996; O'Neill 1995) - that female street sex workers experienced a range of crimes in the course of their work, with high levels of robbery, assault, rape and other sexual assault; it also found that there was a range of perpetrators and that most crimes remained unreported to the police, with sex workers having little trust that reports would be taken seriously (Campbell et al. 1996). At this point, Merseyside Police's approach was one of periodically responding to residents' complaints and enforcing the soliciting (and to a lesser extent the kerb crawling) legislation, with limited coordination across policing areas and no significant initiatives to proactively address crimes against sex workers. Police were aware of outreach initiatives but partnership work was limited, although at a senior level there was support for harm reduction work and a recognition of the need to improve sex worker safety (Campbell et al. 1996).

A wide range of other recommendations were made by us (Campbell et al. 1996) and the key ones included: funding additional support to meet unmet holistic - safety, welfare and exit - needs of sex workers; specific initiatives to address the safety of sex workers and increase reporting of crimes and offences committed against them; introduction of the role of a non-arresting, police sex work liaison officer; alternatives to enforcement and fining; calls for the council to advocate for changes in the law to enable safer working (e.g. redefinition of what counts as a brothel); and models of mediation and conciliation to constructively involve residents and respond to their concerns.

Our research (Campbell et al. 1996) found the policy of developing a geographical, non-residential area where street prostitution was managed had considerable support, but we recommended further consultation before such a policy was pursued, to ensure that the safety of sex workers was central in the management of such an area and that the police could provide adequate support (the later section about the managed area debate in Liverpool shows how this re-emerged as a policy Liverpool wanted to pilot).

Following on from this action research, and with the emergence of statutory community safety partnerships, further formal strategy was developed, with some of our recommendations being enacted.

Safety in the context of 'crime and disorder': Merseyside Prostitution Forum

1998 saw the introduction of the Crime and Disorder Act, which represented part of a key shift in sex work policy in the UK, with the emergence of what has been described as the emergence of network-based governance (Newman 2003). Responsible authorities in local areas were required, under this act, to work together to produce and implement a strategy for the reduction of crime and disorder in their area; this led to the establishment of local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs). Under the act, strategies had to be based on analyses of levels of crime in an area and involve consultation with local communities. In a number of areas, street sex work was identified as a crime and disorder issue (generally where street sex work existed) and hence taken up by some CDRPs. This meant that rather than health authorities being the lead funders of sex work support projects, they became one of a range of partners sitting within community safety partnerships, lead often by council community safety departments involved in support commissioning. However, due to the multi-faceted issues associated with sex work, it did not always fit comfortably

with community safety structures, particularly those with a strong crime and disorder focus where the matter of sex work was viewed through an 'offending' lens rather than an 'inclusive community safety' lens (including on issues of sex worker safety and welfare), (Rogers and Benson 2002). Drug and Alcohol Action Teams (DAATs) played a more prominent role in such partnerships and project commissioning for projects (Pitcher 2006; Hunter and May 2004).

Overall, the establishment of multi-agency forums/initiatives in response to sex work have been identified as vital in developing effective policies to address the multi-faceted issues related to street sex work, including fostering understanding and trust, and developing an agreed strategic framework and coordination of interventions (Pitcher et al. 2006; O'Neill and Campbell 2002). Safer Merseyside Partnership (SMP) was established and acknowledged prostitution as a community safety issue for residential communities and those working in sex work. SMP took forward the strategic work in Liverpool on sex work, including taking a lead in implementing key recommendations of the aforementioned community action research project (Campbell et al. 1996):

In response to these recommendations the Safer Mersey Partnership, a multi agency community safety partnership forum, recently implemented a series of measures to provide a coherent strategy for approaching "the problem of prostitution" in the city. While it is too early to see if the situation for sex workers is improved the Partnership has already introduced a prostitution strategy group to mediate different agencies and has funded a new project. (Kilvington et al. 2001: 88)

Merseyside Prostitution Forum (MPF) was established in 1999 under the auspices of SMP. The extent to which 'community safety' was a holistic agenda, which incorporated the safety of both communities affected by street sex work and sex workers themselves, varied across the UK (Pitcher et al. 2006). Certainly in Liverpool the safety of sex workers was central to work on prostitution in the late '90s (Kilvington et al. 2001). The philosophy

of the forum between 2000 and 2004 was encapsulated in the following terms:

- Adapting a pragmatic non-judgmental approach to adult prostitution, focusing not on eradicating prostitution but alleviating the problems associated with prostitution for sex workers and communities affected by prostitution.
- Recognising that the needs and views of all groups involved and affected by prostitution should be represented on and considered within the work of the forum.
- Working towards a safer community for all those who are affected by and/or are involved in commercial sex.

The forum aimed to act as a multi-agency body to develop a Merseyside-wide coordinated response to issues related to sex work. One of its aims was to develop initiatives to improve the safety, welfare and health of sex workers and also provide options for those who wished to move out of prostitution. Again, MPF took forward some of the key recommendations from Campbell et al. (1996), in developing a number of initiatives relating to sex worker safety and the improvement of police and sex work liaison (Kilvington et al. 2001: 88). This included establishing, for the first time in Merseyside, a dedicated sex work liaison role, involving a police officer liaising with sex workers on issues of safety and reporting, a role which went on to form one of the elements of the hate crime approach. The officer incumbent in this role supported the third sector organisation NACRO in securing funding to establish a new sex work support project to address the gaps in support service provision – namely, the Linx Project.¹⁴

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The bid was developed by me and a Senior Officer from NACRO's Social Programmes Unit (who also became Chair of Merseyside Prostitution Forum). The university where I was based supported my ongoing involvement in partnership to implement recommendations in the spirit of action research.

Enter the Linx Project: innovations in the safety agenda

The funding obtained from local grant sources enabled the establishment of the Linx Project, a dedicated street sex work outreach and support service managed by NACRO within the Safer Merseyside Partnership Social Programmes Unit. The unit formed part of the work of SMP and focused on community safety and social exclusion, working with such issues as drugs misuse and domestic violence, as well as housing, a 'racial attacks and harassment' hate crime project. The Linx Project commenced in November 1999 and aimed to provide holistic, non-judgemental support and advice to sex workers in Merseyside by developing safety initiatives and access to health and welfare services, alongside training initiatives for those who wanted to exit sex work.¹⁵

The development of the Linx Project indicated a shift away from a project focused on issues of sexual health and drugs, to a more holistic model which assimilated a harm-reduction approach but incorporated new elements. To elaborate: within community safety partnerships in many areas of the UK, the health agenda was maintained but diluted, exacerbated by the loss of ring fenced HIV monies. This saw a shift in approach to the funding and objectives of sex work outreach and support projects, with many such projects having to look beyond sexual health funding to new funding schemes such as drug treatment, and community regeneration and safety. These national changes were reflected in sex work support project commissioning and provision within Liverpool; the Linx Project, then, whilst informed by a remaining concern with harm reduction

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For the first few months of the project, the Maryland Centre still delivered targeted outreach to street sex workers, but in early 2000 this service ceased. The sexual health promotion and harm reduction functions delivered by Maryland became assimilated into the Linx Project service delivery, with an element of the service commissioned by Public Health.

was funded by a range of sources and formally commissioned to deliver support around safety, domestic abuse, housing and exit support for those who wanted this (Campbell 2002).

An evaluation which I conducted of Linx found that the project was attempting to deliver services informed by good practice, carrying out 'innovative work of significant local and national importance in the areas of sex worker safety (particularly 'Ugly Mugs' practice) and community mediation and liaison approaches to addressing community concerns about prostitution' (Campbell 2002: 67).

Working in partnership: developments in, and beyond, the Linx Project in addressing sex worker safety

In 2000, the Linx Project received one of 11 grants awarded to initiatives throughout the UK for multi-agency projects on prostitution; it had been supported in the development of its successful bid to the Home Office's Crime Reduction Programme (CRP) by the Merseyside Prostitution Forum. Through this work, the profile of Liverpool's approach to street sex work was raised at a national level. Some of the funding was for an enhancement of the 'Ugly Mugs' scheme (see Chapters One and Three for details of the scheme), which built on the work of Linx. The funding enabled the establishment of 'Trax', a database designed to store and enable analysis of 'Ugly Mugs' data so that this data could be systematically recorded and used to aid investigations, this also involved the design of a more structured 'Ugly Mugs' report form which resulted from consultation between the Linx Project and Merseyside Police. The funding also had enabled the purchasing of a more rapid alerting system, called Ring Master, based on a community safety system that shop owners in Liverpool could join. This system enabled individual sex workers (street and off-street) and organisations working with sex workers to register; they would be alerted

(even more quickly so if signing up for mobile text alerts) when details of a violent attacker in the area were added by Linx who still coordinated the scheme (Penfold et al. 2004). This was, at the time, one of only two local 'Ugly Mugs' third-party reporting schemes for sex workers in the UK that were linked to a database, and the only Ring Master system. Hester and Westmarland (2004), who coordinated the national evaluation of CRP-funded initiatives, noted a range of successful outcomes from the scheme, including two successful prosecutions brought against two violent offenders where 'Ugly Mugs' information was used:

These were the first convictions of violent clients known to the Linx Project since it started in 1999. The Linx Project was able to provide corroborating evidence in each case via the 'Ugly Mugs' file ... Both cases were aided by the support offered to the women via the Linx Project staff who accompanied women to identify parades and courts and liaised between them and the police. (Hester and Westmorland 2004: 90).

The innovating work of 'Ugly Mugs' continued in Merseyside, and, as I will later argue, the features of the now-enhanced scheme, as an aspect of the ever-emerging specialist support for sex worker victims of crime (specifically, its 'Crime and Disorder Associated With Prostitution' initiative), became a core strand of the hate crime approach (see the section 'Key strands of 'the hate crime approach'').

The second strand of the Linx developments that were funded by the CRP was the employment of a full-time Community Mediation and Liaison Officer, based within Linx and working closely with residents' groups to respond to their concerns but also to involve them in educative and partnership forums. As discussed earlier, street sex work had become further dispersed due to policing, and communities beyond Abercromby were impacted. This work with residents was purposefully planned to be delivered within a framework of mediation and community development and was further supported by the residents' subgroup of Merseyside Prostitution Forum. Hester and Westmorland (2014) found that mediation and

community development approaches funded by the Home Office program, one in Liverpool and one in Stoke-on-Trent, were more successful than ‘police-enforcement-only’ responses to residential concerns. The initiative shows how, at a strategic level, alternative approaches to enforcement were being explored in Merseyside with the support of residents’ groups.

Transition and a turning point?

During this period, Merseyside Police had a very active role in the partnership forums, with senior officers represented at strategic level and a range of officers involved in operational groups. Their police sex work liaison officer, based in Community Relations, had a close working relationship with the Linx Project and ‘Portside’¹⁶ and acted as an intermediary with a range of other police departments. This was a dedicated role put into place following research recommendations. Analysis of interview data from my current research, involving officers who worked on prostitution policy at this time, found that officers described this period as a *turning point*, a time where there was much closer, ongoing and formalised partnership work with sex work support projects. More specifically, respondents working in community policing and Merseyside Police’s Major Incident Team (MIT) reported that, following a number of sex worker murders (see the next section) there was a strong partnership established for the first time between MIT and Linx.

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The ‘Portside’ project was commissioned to provide a sexual health outreach service for people living, working and socialising in the Dock Road area of Liverpool, but included a wider remit of an outreach service for indoor sex workers in Liverpool and Sefton (Campbell and Van Nooijen 2004). This was a NHS community-based project managed within the Armistead Centre – the latter of which, as will be discussed in this chapter, went on to deliver the ‘Armistead Street’ project after Linx had closed.

My research has found, then, that some police officers during this period were engaging with sex work as a social issue which required a multi-agency approach. They were questioning the effectiveness of previous enforcement-based interventions, having seen them achieve only dispersal in relation to sex work and seeing no improvements in the addressing of crimes against sex workers across all sectors.

Crucial debates around safety - murder and 'managed areas': 2003-2005

As a number of hate crime scholars and practitioners have noted, action and change in hate crime policing practice has often been prompted by tragedy (Ginnasi 2011), with a number of hate-motivated murders catching the media's attention and being identified as 'clear cut examples of different forms of hate crime' (Garland 2010: 40). Similarly, in the story of sex work and hate crime in Merseyside, I argue murder has sadly played a role (Campbell 2014a). Liaison between sex work support projects and the police had been strengthened via the Linx Project and 'Portside'. Merseyside Police's Major Incident Team (MIT) investigated a number of sex worker murders in the late '90s and early '00s, and forged close relations with Linx in an effort to build trust in the police amongst sex workers.¹⁷ The former Head of MIT, who took part in the research, described how he made a decision for the first time to sign off an action which meant that during specific murder investigations MIT, officers would also investigate serious physical and sexual assaults that were brought to the attention of the investigating team; this was much welcomed by Linx and other partners and there were a number of successful outcomes.

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The murders investigated during that period included Susan Kelly and Victoria Gerard, both killed in 2000.

In June 2003, tragedy further acted as an impetus for policy review in Liverpool, when Hanane Parry, aged 19 (Figure 1), and Pauline Stephen, aged 25 (Figure 2), were murdered by Mark Horner, aged 29. Having made contact with them separately on the street, Horner persuaded Hanane and, later, Pauline to return to his house under the pretence of doing business, where instead he killed them, cut up their bodies and dumped the remains in bin bags in alleyways.¹⁸



Figure 1. Hanane Parry. Source: *The Leader*, 30th December 2010.



Figure 2. Pauline Stephen. Source: *BBC News*, 22nd July 2003.

Their murders triggered public and political debate about how sex work should be managed in Liverpool and reignited ongoing policy discussions about what the city could do to keep street sex workers safe and provide

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Hanane and Pauline's murders meant that, between 1988 and 2003, seven women working in street sex work had been murdered in Merseyside: Linda Donaldson in 1988 (unsolved); Julie Finley in 1994 (unsolved); Sharon Lynch in 1997 (the case was solved then, on appeal, the conviction was found to be unsafe, so the case remains unsolved); Susan Kelly in 2000 (unsolved); and Victoria Gerard 2000 (solved). There were further murders in 2004 and 2005, involving Chantelle Taylor (solved) and Anne Marie Foy (unsolved).

them with support, while at the same time reducing the impact of sex work on residential communities. The Linx Project and police worked closely together throughout the investigation of these murders. Their murders triggered a call by the Liberal-Democrat-led Liverpool City Council for the legalisation of sex work; a council vote supported this.

The council also commissioned a consultation on a managed area for street sex work¹⁹ in Liverpool, and the largest local consultation on managed areas in the UK ensued. The Centre for Public Health, at Liverpool John Moores University, carried out the research in 2004, reviewing policy information relating to this approach and consulting key stakeholders about their views on sex work. This found majority support for such a policy across stakeholder groups, including residents, street sex workers, police and projects, with 83% of all groups in favour of a managed area (Clark et al. 2004; Bellis et al. 2007). This consultation coincided with the former Labour government's consultation on prostitution, 'Paying the Price' (Home Office 2004). Liverpool were one of a group of local authorities who contributed to consultation and lobbied the Home Office to enable local areas to pilot managed areas. They shared the research report with the review team and attended a meeting with several other councils, asking for the option for councils to pilot managed areas to be recommended by the review. However, the strategy which emerged, 'A Co-ordinated Strategy on Prostitution' (Home Office 2006), rejected managed areas and did not support their piloting.

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In the consultation (Clark et al. 2004), a managed area was described as a non-residential area where street sex workers would be able to make contact with clients; neither party would face arrest within the area. The area would be, however, policed for sex worker safety. Mobile outreach and support services would be provided to provide access to health, welfare and exit support, and the area would have good lighting and CCTV. Street sex work, thus, would be proactively managed, reducing the nuisance and impact for residents and providing a safer environment for sex workers.

The dominant discourse in this national strategy (as summarised in Chapter Three) stressed 'tackling demand', i.e. enforcement-based strategies which primarily focused on targeting men who pay for sex, 'routes out' and 'ensuring justice'. Despite this, Liverpool's approach from 2005 onwards has, in contrast, reflected a more proportionate policing approach, including: little appetite for enforcement initiatives, particularly in non-residential areas; targeting enforcement activity in residential areas only after a staged mediation and diversion approach; encouraging street sex workers to work in specific areas; enforcing brothel keeping legislation and other laws in situations where there was concern around exploitation and abuse; a strong and pioneering commitment to addressing violence against sex workers; and continued commitment to harm reduction, as well as 'routes out' as part of holistic support. Essentially, the consultation findings and advocacy for the piloting of a managed area in Liverpool demonstrated that many stakeholders in the city wanted to try approaches which involved a degree of decriminalisation and a move away from enforcement of the soliciting legislation, with the scope for local authorities to become involved in the legal regulation of sex work.

Naming it as hate crime - the public protection of sex workers: 2005-2011

An organisational shift: partnership working between Liverpool 'City Safe' Sex Work Forum, 'Armistead Street' and the police

The Safer Merseyside Partnership was rebranded and Liverpool's community safety partnership became Liverpool City Safe Partnership, which took responsibility for the multi-agency forum on sex work in Liverpool. Liverpool 'City Safe' Sex Work Forum emerged in 2005 (replacing Merseyside Prostitution Forum), focused on Liverpool rather than aiming to encompass the four other Merseyside Crime and Disorder

Reduction Partnerships of Wirral, St Helens, Knowlsey and Sefton. The Linx Project had closed in 2004 due to both funding and internal difficulties, and a new sex work project, 'Armistead Street', was established in July 2005, managed in Liverpool Primary Care Trust and funded by Liverpool Drug Action Team and Drugs Intervention Programme. The established off-street sex work outreach project 'Portside' was by then already managed within Liverpool Primary Care NHS Trust, and so 'Portside' and 'Armistead Street' were now located together. I became Coordinator of both projects in August 2005.

These projects offered non-judgemental, confidential, outreach and support services (underpinned by a holistic, health and social care philosophy) to sex workers in Liverpool. 'Armistead Street' specifically delivered provisions through outreach, drop-in and one-to-one case work, and worked closely with a wide range of partner agencies. It provided a range of services including: harm-reduction information and advice; free condoms; needle exchange; court support; liaison with the police; support for victims of rape and sexual assault; safety information and advice; plus specialist support regarding pregnancy, domestic abuse, and housing; fast track assessment and access to drug treatment services, including methadone scripting and detox and rehabilitation; referral to a wide range of health; and welfare services and a specialist, easy-access primary health care clinic with community-based GP and sexual health partners. It also inherited the aforementioned 'Ugly Mugs' scheme.

'Armistead Street' also worked with councillors to develop a bid to secure ESF funding for a 'Routes Out' project, established in November 2007, to support women who wanted to exit sex work, with access to specialist confidence building and training, employment advice and support and counselling. A third sector partner, Merseyside Social Partnership, delivered this; staff were based within the Armistead Centre and the teams worked closely together.

A key part of 'Armistead Street' involved pro-active partnership work with the police at a neighbourhood level and with a range of non-uniformed units; sex worker safety, and encouraging sex workers to report crimes against them, was pushed to the forefront, including in the form of the 'Ugly Mugs' scheme. 'Armistead Street' worked with a range of policing units to promote 'Ugly Mugs' and a number of specific cases were reported, including one of a sex worker rape. At this time the role of sex worker liaison officer, previously enacted by a Sergeant in Community Relations was no longer in place. The Detective Sergeant coordinating this particular investigation within North Liverpool CID responded to the need for police sex work liaison officers, advocating two female officers join him in sharing the role. The police's Community Relations department provided funding for high-quality personal attack alarms for distribution to sex workers by the project. Here, multi-agency partners came together via the 'City Safe' Sex Work Forum.

This history of sex work policy in Merseyside, as outlined in this chapter, has shown, I argue, the development of multi-agency approaches which: acknowledge the safety and welfare of sex workers; demonstrate a willingness to challenge national policies; and show a commitment to partnership working with the police and an openness to innovation. Taken together, this not only reflects a commitment to partnership working but also sets the backdrop for the emergence of the Merseyside hate crime approach. Sadly, however, further murders featured in the move to the formal adoption of the approach. Table 1 provides a time line of the multi-agency partnership forums and project milestones prior to, and including, the establishment of the hate crime approach, and which mark the development of sex work policy in Liverpool.

Table 1: Timeline of key sex work partnership and project milestone dates in Liverpool

Date	Key Event
September 1987	Maryland Centre's sex work outreach project established
1989	Abercromby Working Group established
August 1994	Julie Findley murdered
1995-1996	Abercromby prostitution action research project, 'Street Prostitution in Inner City Liverpool'
1999	'Portside' project: sexual health outreach project for indoor sex workers in Liverpool and Sefton established
1999	Merseyside Prostitution Forum established
November 1999	The Linx Project opens (within NACRO, third sector)
1999	Maryland Centre closes
2000	The Linx Project awarded grant from Home Office Crime Reduction Programme, 'Tackling Prostitution: What Works?'
2000	Murders of Susan Kelly and Vicky Gerard
June 2003	Murders of Hanane Parry and Pauline Stephen
2003-2004	Liverpool City Council fund John Moores University to carry out a consultation of a managed area for street sex work (Clark et al. 2004)
March 2004	Murder of Chantelle Taylor (Birkenhead, Wirral)
March 2004	The Linx Project closes
2005	Merseyside Prostitution Forum becomes Liverpool Sex Work Forum
June 2005	'Armistead Street' project established (Liverpool Primary Care NHS Trust/became Liverpool Community Health)
September 2005	Anne Marie Foy murdered
October-December 2005	Murders of Tania Nicol, Gemma Adams, Anneli Alderton, Annette Nicholls and Paula Clennell in Ipswich
December 2006	Hate crime policy extended to include sex workers, and formalisation of police sex work liaison officers
December 2006	Home Office award funding to 'Armistead Street' for delivery of first specialist Independent Sexual Violence Advisor for Sex Workers
2007	Specialist rape and sexual assault unit, Unity Team, established in Merseyside Police
2007	SAFE Place Merseyside established (Sexual Assault Referral Centre)
2009	'Portside' project closed

As I will now outline, between 2005 and 2011, there was strong partnership work between the police and sex work support projects, with a further move to a policing approach which used enforcement *strategically*, shifted focus to public protection of sex workers, and utilised the hate crime framework it had begun to develop to aid in the protection of sex workers and improve the policing of crimes against sex workers.

Cases of hate crime in Merseyside in the mid-2000s: a time of growing awareness

Whilst on outreach in August 2005, when 'Armistead Street' had only recently started, a fellow outreach worker and I spotted a graffiti image of the serial murderer Peter Sutcliffe, accompanied by the text 'Warning: Sutcliffe Operates in this Area' (see Figure 3), stencilled on walls in an area where women solicited. We were later informed by a resident, who was a member of the 'City Safe' Sex Work Forum, of another similar stencil. We liaised with police contacts in Community Relations, who said this would be treated as hate crime graffiti; as such, it was rapidly removed by Liverpool City Council. This was the first time I was aware of that a hate crime procedure had been applied to a sex-work-related matter.



Figure 3. Sex work hate crime graffiti - Peter Sutcliffe stencil. Source: photograph taken by author on mobile camera 'phone.

On 15th September 2005, only weeks after this incident, Anne Marie Foy, aged 46 and a mum, grandma and service user, was murdered.²⁰ She was found in bushes metres from the pavement where women solicit; she had been beaten and strangled.



Figure 4. Anne Marie Foy. Photo source: *BBC News*, 14th June 2011.

'Armistead Street' and the Major Incident Team worked closely during the murder investigation. Prior to Anne Marie's murder, 'Armistead Street' had begun rebuilding and creating new partnerships with a number of police units (for example CID, neighbourhood policing areas, and Community Relations, the latter of which dealt with diversity matters) in relation to issues of crime against sex workers and the wider policing of sex work in the city. 'Armistead Street' found there was continued lack of trust in the police, and a reluctance to formally report, by a substantial section of sex workers - highlighted by previous victimisation and still high levels of unreported crime. Anne Marie's murder, however, led to increased formalisation of this partnership work.

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A suspect was charged in June 2011. His trial took place in January 2012 and a 'not guilty' verdict was given, so this case officially remains unsolved.

Anne Marie's murder created local political and public media debate about sex work and the safety of sex workers. At the time she was murdered, a group of writers of the Everyman Theatre were developing a play, 'Unprotected', about street sex work in Liverpool; this now incorporated material about Anne Marie, alongside Hanane and Pauline and their families. It went on to win an Amnesty International Award at the Edinburgh Fringe and was broadcast on Radio 4 (Amnesty International UK 2006).

Understanding murder as a reason for changes in policing

Reflecting upon changes in the policing of sex work (which will be detailed in Chapter Five), my analysis of interviews with police officers revealed over 18 specific reasons that officers identified as representing contributory factors here (with the majority of officers typically identifying more than one reason each). Moreover, the main reasons that were cited support the analysis provided in this thesis more generally. They include: the advocacy of the 'Armistead Street' sex work project and improved police/project partnership work; the impact of murders (in terms of mobilising and inspiring officers who have been involved in investigation and forcing policy review); police champions in senior positions; changes in policing rape and sexual assault with the introduction of the Unity Team and SAFE Place Merseyside (SARC) becoming established in 2007; wider changes in policing diversity, with a new focus on hate crime and the establishment of SIGMA hate crime units (2007); and creation of the aforementioned role of Independent Sexual Violence Advisor. (Each of these will be described in more detail in the next section as key constituents of the Merseyside approach.)

Other factors mentioned as changing the policing of sex work included a more victim-focused approach and improvements in victim care generally; some respondents pointed to how the police are now assessed on the basis of victim feedback, with a citizen-focused system in place, via which all victims are contacted and asked for their feedback. General improvements in professional standards procedures and further general professionalisation of the police were also cited, alongside changes in intelligence systems, a shift to intelligence-led policing, changes in investigative practices and evidence gathering, plus generational change and the recruitment of officers with less prejudicial attitudes. Several officers expressed the view that new recruits entering the force and younger officers brought a new approach, and some of the older officers who held dated attitudes were now retired. The culture and history of Liverpool as a place of social justice, of resistance to central government, and of fostering a police culture of innovation and 'doing things differently', were identified by a smaller number of officers.

As noted, police respondents in my study identified the murders of sex workers as one of the most significant reasons for the change in Merseyside Police's approach to sex work. These murders, along with other cases of rape and serious sexual offences, were identified as a key catalyst in changing the policing of sex work in Merseyside by those respondents in my study policing at a strategic level. They saw these as leading to issues of 'sex worker safety' and 'protection' becoming more a priority and to changing the attitudes of individual officers; for example:

There's been some high profile murder investigations as well involving sex workers, and I think through the work that Merseyside Police and other Forces have done, there's a greater understanding of their vulnerability. And, as a result, I think we're a bit more professional in our approach in dealing with them as victims. I know looking at crime statistics, there is an increase in reporting to the police of offending and therefore the proof's in the pudding - that they are more trusting of the police as an organisation. (P711)

As well as being identified as watershed moments for policy change, sex worker murders were described as acting as a catalyst for shaping personal, attitudinal change and a reason for supporting initiatives regarding violence against sex workers as hate crime. A number of officers described how their involvement in investigating the murders of sex workers and other crimes against sex workers impacted on them and at a personal level changed their attitude to sex workers and so their approach to policing sex work. A number of detectives involved in sex workers murder cases went on to advocate for changes in the policing of crimes against sex workers, including in terms of hate crime policy. Indeed, the Chief Superintendent who oversaw the memorandum that first specified the policy specifically including sex workers in hate crime policy had been a senior investigator in a number of sex worker murders. Another officer who was the strategic lead on sex work, at the time of the research, described the impact of murder on his approach and the changes murders had prompted:

My first real involvement was on the Julie Finley murder in 1994. Julie was killed in August in 1994 and I still see her mum and dad. Then I worked on the murder of Susan Kelly in 2000 and there was a big change between 1994 when Julie Findley was killed and 2000. In 1994, we recognised that we weren't getting information from the sex workers because they didn't trust us because it was all about enforcement. We realised that as Merseyside Police that we needed to be more trusted. So there was more of an effort made that time and, latterly, with Anne Marie Foys' murder in 2005. And, by that stage, I think there was a much closer relationship between Armistead and Merseyside Police. (P848)

Following Anne Marie's murder, 'Armistead Street' continued to advocate for, and develop, a number of initiatives with Merseyside Police to address crimes against sex workers. In February 2006, a Detective Sergeant liaised directly with the project regarding a sex work rape case that had been reported both directly to the police and to Armistead's 'Ugly Mugs'. (The woman had previously made another 'Ugly Mugs' report about the same offender.) The perpetrator had threatened a 16-year-old girl (not involved in sex work) with a knife at a bus stop; he was apprehended and his DNA

matched that in the sex worker rape case. This case went to court later that year and a guilty conviction was secured. The officers involved had worked closely with 'Armistead Street' throughout and valued highly the project's input in keeping the woman engaged during the investigation, leading up to and including the trial itself. The woman had been homeless and living in a bush during much of the investigation and had for some years experienced heroin addiction. The Detective Sergeant also liaised with the project over the death (by overdose) of another sex worker and became an unofficial liaison point with whom the project could seek direction and raise concerns. Having had ongoing communication with the project, he was responsive to the needs of service users and worked to identify (specifically female) officers who would act as front line liaison officers. We see now how sex worker murders were catalysts to the formal introduction of hate crime policy concerning sex workers in Merseyside – and the crystallisation of a hate crime approach.

'We will not tolerate violence against sex workers': the emergence of formal hate crime policy

After Anne Marie Foy's murder in September 2015, the Area Commander for Liverpool North started reviewing police policy on dealing with crimes against sex workers. He had been consulting with the sex work liaison officers on the ground involved in work with 'Armistead Street'. A policy was produced entitled 'Sex Workers in Merseyside – Review of Process' (2006). This was already being drafted and going through channels for authorisation when, in early December 2006, the horrifying murders of five women in Ipswich took place. The policy was signed off on 15th December 2006, this being supported by the 'City Safe' Sex Work Forum. This is the key written documentation of policy changes regarding crimes against sex workers, including thinking of these in terms of hate crime. The memorandum states that, following review, the Area Commander had put in

place 'additional procedures' in the Liverpool North basic command unit; these related to missing persons, victims of assaults/crime, reassurance and intelligence. It was under the victims of assault/crime section that a hate crime policy in relation to sex workers is stated:

If any sex worker is the victim of an assault, or other crime that would appear to be motivated by the fact that they are a sex worker, such incidents are recorded as a hate crime and follow the area strategy in dealing with such cases. (Merseyside Police 2006: 2)

In terms of policing procedure, this meant that:

The case is allocated in accordance with the Area Crime Screening and Allocation Policy, that the area Hate Crime Coordinator is notified and that a dedicated Detective Sergeant will be notified to review the initial report, confirm appropriate allocation, be available for advice/guidance and then review again prior to finalisation. (Merseyside Police 2006: 2)

At the time that Merseyside Police adopted a policy of approaching crimes against sex workers as hate crime, the definition of 'hate crime' within their existing hate crime policy was broad, concerning incidents 'whereby the perpetrator's prejudice against any identifiable group is a factor in determining who is victimised' (Merseyside Police 2002: 7). The memorandum demonstrates a clear commitment by Merseyside Police to investigating crimes against sex workers 'appropriately and any emerging trends/patterns will be identified and escalated/dealt with accordingly' (Merseyside Police 2006: 2). Sex worker murders in Liverpool and Ipswich were hence direct catalysts to Merseyside's expansion of its hate crime policy.

Additional procedures were also introduced relating to missing sex workers.

Making direct reference to Ipswich, the memorandum stated

In view of the current situation in Suffolk I have instructed that any sex worker reported as missing, if not already classified as high risk owing to the circumstances of the report will automatically be included in that category, resulting in implementation of the minimum actions defined within the force area policy and that incident will be brought to the attention of the Area Duty CID Senior Officer for Review. (Merseyside Police 2006: 1)

It reported that monthly multi-agency meetings about sexually exploited children and young people in the area had been instituted and the Commander had advised all other areas to feed into quarterly pan-Merseyside meetings chaired by the Public Protection Unit.

The memorandum also informed senior officers about the close liaison with 'Armistead Street' that had been lead by the Detective Sergeant mentioned earlier in this chapter. As a result of this document, the sex work liaison role was formalised, with the Sergeant and two female officers (who also both had experience of investigating crimes against sex workers) officially sharing the role. They had a range of duties including attending the sex work drop-in at 'Armistead Street' and making themselves available to service users should they wish to report any crimes or have any other queries.

The memorandum also referred to a draft leaflet for sex workers, offering reassurance to sex workers and stressing their right to report crimes and have them taken seriously and policed professionally. This had been produced by the Race and Homophobic Crime Coordinator within Community Relations, and a representative from this department attended the forum and liaised with 'Armistead Street'; the leaflet was subsequently approved for circulation. A senior detective officer, who was key in developing these proposals in research interview, reflected:

Out of all the vulnerable groups subject to hate crime sex workers are probably the most likely to be victims ... so treating as hate crime and linking it into a focused team who can build up relationships with Armistead is the way forward ... pushing it through as hate crime, you have to have the support and realisation of all, or there is no point having a policy in place. It had built up over time and there were a lot of people involved ... I have to be honest and say if we put something in place, we have usually learned from mistakes or a realisation we could have done an awful lot better... we think of cases in the past where sex worker rapes have collapsed ... What shows crystal clear is we are achieving the convictions after long court cases, which to be honest would not have happened 10 years ago. (P246)

To flag up the extended policy and promote it across the force, Chief Constable Bernard Hogan-Howe made a public video statement in early December 2006. This was broadcast on the Merseyside Police intranet and was groundbreaking in declaring that a major police force would treat crimes against sex work as hate crime:

From a policing perspective dealing with prostitution is a difficult balancing act ... Sex workers are members of the community who are vulnerable to attack. ...we will not tolerate violence against sex workers. ... in turn they should have the confidence to report crimes with the knowledge that they will be taken seriously by us. ...Merseyside Police are determined to bring all perpetrators of hate crime to justice. We were the first force in the country to recognise and respond to attacks against sex workers as a form of hate crime ... The challenge is to build the trust of those vulnerable to attack to report offences and information to us. I am proud of the partnership that has developed between Merseyside Police and 'Armistead Street' in addressing this issue and the significant results it has achieved.

This broadcast, together with the aforementioned memorandum, is important because reference to sex workers as a group included in hate crime policy was not made in a formal written Merseyside Police strategy document until the (2012) 'Sex Work Strategy'; sex workers were later specifically referred to in the force's 'Hate Crime Policy and Procedure' (2015) (this will be discussed in Chapter Six).

Key strands of the hate crime approach

My argument in this chapter has been that the Merseyside hate crime approach has developed as a consequence of a number of events and initiatives largely specific to the historical, socio-economic and sex work policy context of Liverpool. These factors have thus been explored in the terms of *key periods* in local sex work policy history. I will now, in this second part of the chapter, summarise the *key strands* which have constituted the Merseyside hate crime approach, which are identified as follows.

Formal recognition in hate crime policy

As described, 2006 saw the inclusion of 'sex workers' as a group in hate crime policy and procedure. With changes in policing minority groups, hate crime grew in prominence as an issue across the Merseyside force. The extended hate crime policy itself that was operationalised in policing sex work had the effect of increased oversight and monitoring of crimes against sex workers, increasing the status of crimes against sex workers, and signalling that reports of crime should be taken seriously and responded to professionally. Hate crime units (called SIGMA units) were launched in 2007 in each operational command unit area for the force to deal with suspected hate crimes. From then until 2010, there was a close relationship between SIGMA North (which includes Liverpool City Centre and the areas where street sex work takes place) and 'Armistead Street', SIGMA North led on coordinating, monitoring and investigating crimes against sex workers. When a crime is classed as a hate crime, there is now, in part due to this work, a specific force procedure for oversight, monitoring and victim care and follow up which needs to be adhered to and which should enhance the quality of policing response - and guard against officers not taking seriously reports of crime or not investigating thoroughly. (These practical benefits of enabling crimes against sex workers to be treated as hate crime are explored further in Chapter Six.)

A general shift in policing minorities and the introduction of diversity police following the MacPherson Report (1999) was identified by my research participants as being one of the key reasons why policing of sex work generally had improved and why hate crime policy had been adopted (twelve officers interviewed mentioned this); such policy was achieving improvements for other communities and hence provided a framework for an improved response for sex workers. This strand was identified as commencing with the work of Community Relations on diversity and community engagement, and as continuing with SIGMA hate crime units which explicitly included sex workers. This work was seen as directly challenging prejudice and poor attitudes towards sex workers and as forging partnership work with sex work projects:

There were a lot of other things going on in policing at the time. The success of the SIGMA (hate crime) teams was important. The systems were in place to make it easy for people to report from the work with LGBT community. That helped when sex workers were being encouraged to come forward - we could learn from that. We had the people and the resources to deal with it. And from that perspective, it was a good system and it worked. (P857)

Enhanced specialist victim support: ISVA and SARC

In November 2006, 'Armistead Street', with Home Office and local community safety partnership funding, established the first specialist ISVA dedicated to working with sex workers. This meant that the project had a specially trained member of staff to liaise with the police on reports and cases, to support victims through report to court, and to coordinate 'Ugly Mugs'. My research has found that this has been a vital element of the Merseyside approach for engaging victims, including at a national level; the post has been recognised as good practice and adopted in a number of areas of the UK (Blair 2011; CPS 2012). Sex worker victims of crime experienced a victim-centred approach jointly from the police and project (with enhanced specialist support available in the project). The ISVA liaised closely with police investigating cases and also worked with police

colleagues on a number of initiatives - for example, the ISVA was permitted to attend police training so they could be present with a police officer at video interviews.

There was also improved care for all victims of rape and sexual assault in Merseyside with the establishment, in 2007, of a high-quality sexual assault referral centre (or SARC), located across the road from 'Armistead Street' and managed in the same NHS Community Trust. The Centre was sex-worker-friendly, with all staff having received training from the ISVA who also worked as a part-time crisis worker within SARC in the initial years. (The nationally innovative role of ISVA and its part in improving sex worker victim support and its wider contribution to the hate crime approach, including in terms of criminal justice outcomes, is examined in detail in Chapter Eight, as is the role of SARC.)

Improved policing of rape and sexual assault: the Unity Team

My research has found that wider changes to policing rape and sexual offences have been important in increased reporting of such crimes by sex workers and in improvements in the investigation and prosecution of such crime. A key role has been played here by the specialist (rape and sexual offences) Unity Team, and I would argue this team's involvement is indeed a significant element of the Merseyside hate crime approach. Since it was established in 2007, the unit, alongside the then newly established SARC, has provided a sex-worker-friendly service reaching out to sex workers. Sexual Offences Liaison Officers (SOLOs)²¹ from the Unity Team wanted to make sex workers aware of their services and provide friendly faces so took time to make contact with sex workers in a sensitive manner and inform

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SOLOs have a specific role within the Unity Team, supporting victims of rape and sexual assault. This is different from the role of sex work liaison officer who, not part of Unity, work with sex workers on many issues and not just rape and sexual assault.

them of the unit. Additionally, there was a CPS prosecutor co-located with the Unity Team who had expertise in sex worker cases, and who was committed to improving outcomes in the justice system for sex workers. Officers in the Unity Team developed close partnership work with the 'Armistead Street' team, working strategically and in relation to the specificities of individual cases, as and when they were needed. (The role of the Unity Team is examined in more detail in Chapter Eight, where it is demonstrated that current and former sex workers who had contact with the team overwhelmingly provided a positive narrative about the treatment they had received.)

Projects and police as partners

Close liaison and partnership between 'Armistead Street' and police, with engagement of officers across a range of units, has thus been a very important aspect of the Merseyside approach. The two parties have worked together on a number of initiatives to improve the reporting and investigation of crimes by sex workers to improve evidence gathering as well as at early stages of investigations. As we have seen, this partnership work has involved SIGMA hate crime units, the Unity Team, neighbourhood police in areas where street sex work takes place, the Major Incident Team, CID, and various officers in dedicated liaison roles.

The role of SIGMA North unit (covering the main areas where street sex work takes place) was particularly important from the time of its establishment up until 2009, with the unit's Sergeant being a lead on a number of successful investigations and also having a coordinating role regarding crimes reported by sex workers being investigated by other areas or units.

However, my research also found that in recent years SIGMA has had a less active role (the reasons for this will be explored further in Chapter Six), while close partnership work with the Unity Team has been sustained.

The advocacy work of 'Armistead Street' has been an important aspect of this partnership. Many police participants (n=16) pointed to the advocacy of sex work projects, and their willingness to work with but also challenge the police, as a critical factor in creating changes in policing - with the work of both the Linx Project in the late 1990s/early 2000s and Armistead (since 2005) being thus acknowledged.

Officers described how the police had gained a better understanding of sex worker experiences through the work such projects were doing - and hence were being lead to see the detrimental impact of some policing initiatives, alongside the opportunities to develop new approaches that are afforded by working in partnership. Officers valued highly the practical work projects did, such as offering an intermediary service, encouraging sex workers to trust the police, the work done to encourage the reporting of crimes (including through 'Ugly Mugs') and the work to support victims as they went through the criminal justice system (this is specifically explored further in Chapter Eight). This was seen as vital for changing both sex worker and police attitudes; the following quotes typified police views in this respect:

It's changed because of Armistead and Linx before because they've made the girls realise that they are important and their own feelings about themselves has come to the fore, or whether they trust us because of the likes of Armistead, Linx and yourself and ISVA. (P684)

I didn't know that there were people like in Armistead, doing the work that they did. That showed to me an approach of care and compassion that shifted my approach to sex workers. So if there was a catalyst there I would say it was Armistead. (P255)

Joint working in the context of 'Ugly Mugs' was described as particularly significant alongside other initiatives to build confidence and encourage reporting.

Building confidence to report: enhanced 'Ugly Mugs' and sex work liaison officers

An enhanced version of the 'Ugly Mugs' scheme, with improved links to police intelligence, has been important in shaping the Merseyside approach. Research has identified the value of 'Ugly Mugs' schemes for increasing sex workers awareness of dangerous people (Barnard 2003; Kinnell 1993, 2008; Penfold et al. 1994; Campbell 2002; Campbell and Stoops 2010). UKNSWP (2007, 2011) identified local 'Ugly Mugs' schemes as aiming to improve the safety of sex workers and reduce crimes committed against them by: alerting them to dangerous individuals; recording and monitoring levels of violence against sex workers; enabling third-party reporting of crimes against sex workers; assisting sex workers in reporting crimes against them to the police; improving liaison between sex workers, the police and sex work support projects; and aiding investigations and prosecution. (Third-party reporting schemes for established hate crime groups have also been important in improving the reporting and investigation of hate crime and the relationships between such groups and the police (Wong and Christmann 2008).

As this chapter has shown, Merseyside has had, for some years, a quality 'Ugly Mugs' scheme; following the expansion of local hate crime policy, the interface with police intelligence was further improved with now a single point of contact for the scheme. 'Armistead Street' worked with detectives from a number of units (including MIT and SIGMA) to review the 'Ugly Mugs' reporting form and procedure; this involved to ensuring that best practice was used to capture information to alert sex workers and aid investigators, and that the form was structured in a way which was sensitive to the experiential process of reporting for victims themselves. Moreover, henceforth the form and procedure were to be reviewed regularly.

The ISVA and I analysed the Armistead 'Ugly Mugs' scheme data for April 2005 to March 2008 (Campbell and Stoops 2008), when 191 reports were made to the scheme. The key finding was that during this period there was a year-on-year increase in sex workers reporting to the scheme who also consented to make a formal report to police - this rose from 12% in 2005-2006, to 39% in 2006-2007 and 49% in 2007-2008. Also during this period, the percentage of people making reports to the scheme who then refused consent to share information with the police in any form (either anonymously or as a formal report containing personal details) decreased significantly. Additionally, there was evidence that Merseyside Police were a proactive force in encouraging reporting amongst sex workers. Such efforts were undertaken in tandem with 'Ugly Mugs' in a number of ways, and included appointing police sex work liaison officers in December 2006 (a role which had, to some extent, existed for a number of years already but never in a formalised capacity). They also included establishing a force strategic lead in sex work and enhancing 'Ugly Mugs' third-party reporting in the force area, as well as formally supporting the UK Network of Sex Work Projects in developing their 'UKNSWP National Good Practice Guidance on 'Ugly Mugs' (2009) and advocating for a 'National 'Ugly Mugs' (NUM) scheme; they were also a member of the Home-Office-funded NUM pilot scheme advisory group in 2010-2012, as were 'Armistead Street'. Hence, much of the good practice developed in Merseyside informed national good practice in terms of 'Ugly Mugs'.

Merseyside Police proactively built trust and confidence in order to encourage reporting. This was achieved in a number of ways in tandem with 'Ugly Mugs'; these included having a force strategic lead and appointing police sex work liaison officers. Police sex work liaison officers, a role that had been in place some years earlier, were formalised from

December 2006, with officers experienced in supporting victims of crime in minority communities or investigating rape and sexual assault.

As discussed, specific units were also tasked to build relationships with the sex work project and sex workers directly these included SIGMA North officers, Community Relations, and neighbourhood offices who had a role in policing areas where street sex work occurred.

One important aspect of these efforts at confidence building by Merseyside Police was via the media. The police worked with 'Armistead Street' to create joint media messages identifying sex workers as part of the community and stressing that crimes against them would be taken seriously and offenders would be prosecuted. Merseyside Police have, more recently, continued to look for opportunities to get this message across, including through local newspaper and television coverage of positive outcomes from previous cases and via 'Ugly Mugs' newsletters for sex workers distributed by 'Armistead Street'. The force strategic lead stressed the importance of utilising such media as a preventative measure:

We work very closely with the press office in Merseyside and they understand the benefit of us being able to tell the community about the successes that we have had in particular cases. And if you look at the publicity that surrounded, for example, Matthew Byrne - he was such a high profile figure within Merseyside, it was front page of the Echo when he was arrested. And investigated the incident around Davis, Kelly and other high profile offenders who have attacked sex workers and have got lengthy sentences imposed against them when they have been convicted or have pleaded guilty at court. It is a good opportunity for us to say then this is what we are doing. It is also good that the wider community know that there are no groups within society who are, if you like, off limits, who anyone can attack - everyone needs to know that if there is an attack on a sex worker it will be taken seriously. (P848)

High-level police support

My research has found high-level police support and a commitment to tackling crime against sex workers from a number of senior police officers, including the Chief Constable; these officers have championed what I refer to as a public protection ethos. I argue this ethos is a key feature of the Merseyside approach and has been vital for its success. As described earlier, when Merseyside's hate crime policy was first extended to include sex workers, the then Chief Constable addressed the force and public in a statement supporting this move. He subsequently left the force but the new Chief Constable continued to support the policy and made a public statement to this end on 17th December 2010, the 'International Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers'. This statement reinforced the policy and stressed the rights of sex workers, of all genders (importantly now recognising male sex workers), to be provided with protection by the police; an extract is below:

In 2006, Merseyside Police was the first police force in the country to treat crimes against sex workers as 'hate crime'. Since then we have continued to work with support networks both nationally and locally, in particular with the 'UK Network of Sex Work Projects' and with outreach staff and the Independent Sexual Violence Advisor from Armistead (Street) to build trust and confidence amongst members of that community. The partnership has seen unprecedented benefits in relation to protecting vulnerable people, with increases in conviction rates and some dangerous individuals who would otherwise have posed a significant risk to sex workers, being brought to justice. Indeed, in 2010 alone we have seen ten men convicted of rape and have a number of ongoing cases scheduled for hearings before the courts. ... Sex work is a challenging issue for some communities and the police, but what is clear is that our duty of 'public protection', includes sex workers. People involved in sex work are members of our community. They are daughters, mothers, sisters, sons and brothers. Sex workers have the right to protection from violence. ... We encourage people involved in sex work to come forward and report crimes committed against them. We will take you seriously and treat you with respect.

Indeed, one of the reasons for the change in policy and improved policing of crimes against sex workers mentioned most frequently by the police officers interviewed was the championing undertaken by key officers, as well as the high-level support of the two aforementioned Chief Constables. They stressed that, as well as these senior officers having impact as 'leaders modernising policing', their actions were potent in a hierarchical 'disciplined' force where officers defer to the direction of their seniors.

All the elements described in this chapter had high-level police support and this support in itself has been vital in reinforcing and promoting the expanded hate crime policy amongst officers of all ranks. The location of the force strategic lead on sex work in public protection has also been particularly important.

Public protection ethos and strategic enforcement

Merseyside Police appointed a force strategic lead for sex work, a Superintendent in Public Protection who was, from his appointment in 2006 until his retirement in 2015, very proactive in the role, locally and nationally, consistently stressing the public protection agenda. This enduring emphasis on public protection of sex workers and sex worker safety as a priority is emblematic of Merseyside's approach. As part of this approach, emphasis has been placed on a proportionate policing response, with limited strategic enforcement of the prostitution laws, i.e. 'public-protection-focused policing' (Campbell 2011b).

One of the lesser-discussed elements in media coverage, but one that has been critical to the approach, is that of strategic enforcement. Merseyside Police committed to only enforcing the soliciting legislation as a last option and as part of a staged approach, with diversion and mediation as preferred approaches, and with such enforcement to be used only in areas of residential impact. They worked with the 'Armistead Street' create an 'area of lesser chance of arrest', where sex workers could work between certain times within certain rules. This made a crucial contribution to changing the relationship between sex workers (particularly those on the street) and the police.

Indeed, a key finding of my research is that there has been a significant change in the attitude of the police towards sex workers more generally, with sex workers reporting a more caring, respectful and professional attitude towards them from officers. This changing relationship, underpinned by the shift from enforcement-focused policing to public-protection-focused policing, is discussed in detail in Chapter Five.

Conclusions

In conclusion, my findings suggest that that multiple interrelated factors combined to bring about the changes that saw the creation of a hate crime approach to crimes against sex workers in Merseyside. I have argued in this chapter that the hate crime approach surely emerged from a range of catalytic events and (re)actions. However, this chapter has also taken a longer-term view and acknowledged a historical legacy of events shaped by a range of individuals, practitioners and policy actors that in turn shaped sex work policy in Liverpool.

I argue it is important for understanding the construction and implementation of the hate crime approach to make visible both these historical developments and the more recent catalysts to change. In terms of learning for policy makers and practitioners in other geographical areas, there are clear, specific lessons that can be learnt from the more recent initiatives and elements that constitute the multi-pronged model which was the hate crime approach at the time I carried out my PhD research fieldwork. Learning from Merseyside, with its various good practice roles and models, can be utilised to help inform local policy discussion and enable fast track to change for parties wishing to pursue similar approaches in those areas. Yet it is also important to acknowledge the wider historical development of sex work policy in Liverpool, and the fact that change in Merseyside did not happen overnight but rather was shaped by a specific social, cultural, political and economic context as well as by specific people and sets of relationships.

The next chapter draws upon analysis of my interview data with sex workers and police officers, and focuses on the changing relationship between sex workers and the police in the development of Merseyside's approach to policing sex work. I argue that this changing relationship has been foundational in the successful implementation of hate crime approach. It is hard to envisage how an increase in reporting, and prosecution of crimes against sex workers, could have been achieved without a shift in policing away from enforcement and criminalisation, to efforts to address sex worker safety within a public protection ethos - one of the key strands of the hate crime approach I identified in this current chapter.

Chapter Five: The changing relationship between sex workers and the police - from 'enforcement' to 'public protection'

Introduction

This chapter reflects specifically on changes in the relationship between sex workers and the police, and in the overall policing of street sex work, in Merseyside over the past 25 years, with a focus on street sex workers' experiences. This includes an examination of *attitudes*, both historical and current – namely, police officer attitudes towards sex workers, and sex worker attitudes concerning the police, as articulated by my research respondents. The chapter predominantly draws on interview data with current and former sex workers and police officers, and illustrates a timeline of progressive change from the late 1980s to the early 2010s. In this chapter, analysis of the sex worker and police officer narratives are combined under themes because of the interrelated nature of their stories.

Three of the officers I interviewed for this research made direct reference to the popular TV police series 'Life on Mars', which depicted a male police officer transported back in time from 2006 to 1973, to a police culture of corruption, verbal abuse, rough tactics and violence - anathema to the officer himself and the police culture and practices of the 2000s of which he was a product. Officers referred to this to symbolise a police culture that had existed in the '70s, '80s and early '90s which they saw as having been transformed, or at least substantively eroded, by changes in policing diversity after the MacPherson Report (1999). Many hate crime theorists, particularly those researching BME groups, have identified Stephen Lawrence's murder, and the MacPherson enquiry which ensued, as a watershed moment (Hall et al. 2011; Hall 2005) for shifting forward the policing of racist and other hate crime. Officers I interviewed also saw

changes in the policing of rape and sexual assault and changes in professional standards as significant movers to a more progressive police culture. Current policing was characterised by those interviewed as more professional, victim-centred, and sensitive to and respectful of the policing needs of a range of minority groups in the community who had in the past enjoyed a difficult relationship with the police - including sex workers. Hate crime theorists have argued that, historically, hate crimes have not been treated seriously (Sibbit 1997); the distrust and dissatisfaction existing amongst those minority groups vulnerable to hate crime regarding police response which has typically lead to a disinclination to report incidences, is well-documented (Hall 2005, 2014; Hall et al. 2011). This chapter evidences that sex workers in Merseyside have shared, in common with other established hate crime groups nationally (such as BME groups and the LGBTQ community), a past experience of policing in which officer responses and attitudes were frequently shaped by prejudice. This history has required a radical shift in local policing in an effort gain trust and confidence amongst sex workers and put in place the protections they have previously not received. Researchers have documented how the policing of street sex work in many areas of the UK has been characterised by the enforcement of soliciting legislation which has been highly problematic in terms of sex worker safety and community relations between sex workers and the police (McLeod 1982; Edwards 1988; O'Neill 1997, 2001; Campbell 1996; Brooks-Gordon 2006; Hubbard 2006).

Importantly, the chapter will illustrate how in Merseyside there has been a shift from *enforcement-focused* policing, with an adversarial relationship between sex workers and the police, to a more *public-protection-focused* approach to policing, within which the safety of sex workers is a much higher priority, with sex workers now treated as a hate crime group.

As described in Chapter Four, this shift did not happen overnight but, rather, took place gradually over two decades, shaped and accompanied by a number of social, political and policy factors – factors that, together with an ethos of public protection, comprise ‘the hate crime approach’ that is the topic of this thesis.

Context: the bad old days of enforcement – cycle of arrest; dispersal; and responding to residential complaints in the 1980s and 1990s

A key factor shaping the relationship between the police and sex workers in the 1980s and 1990s was the emphasis on the enforcement of soliciting legislation in the policing of street sex work. Street sex workers saw cautioning and arresting as a key feature of Merseyside’s approach to policing street sex work at this time, with the police perceived as having a role primarily as law enforcers. This created a difficult, adversarial relationship with the police, with the typical police officer being described by sex workers as ‘someone you avoided, who were out to arrest you and stop you working’. Out of the 22 street sex workers I interviewed, and whose experiences I draw on for this chapter, half had started sex working during this period: three in the ‘80s and eight in the ‘90s. (The other half had started working in more recent years: five between 2000 and 2004, five between 2005 and 2010, and one in 2011. Meanwhile, all eight of the ‘90s respondents had also sex worked in the ‘00s, some of them having done so intermittently.) These women described what they saw as being much higher levels of cautioning and arresting in the past, referring to more frequent police operations or ‘purges’:

The police used to be really bad when I first started working, like more strict about nicking you for working. I remember one time I’d been arrested like forty-seven times in like eight weeks or something like that for prostitution... “Get in the van, you’re nicked”! I was walking down to the shop once with my friend’s daughter in a pram and the bizzies come and tried to arrest me for prostitution, for going to a corner shop. (SU11)

The police were very intolerant to us at that time. You know, they'd see you, they nick ya, you know. ... So we'd be pushed from pillar to post, you know, "Go and stand there" but where ever we stood we got nicked. ... one particular day I got nicked twice in one day, might even have been a third time, you know. ... they'd have, what do you call them? Purges. They'd warn the girls, "We're doing a purge the next couple of nights, so if you're seen then we're going to nick you", and they did nick us. (SU4)

Several women described the 'revolving door' cycle of arrest, charge, court, and then sex working to pay their fines:

Oh god, don't ask me about court. I've been there millions and millions of times. I used to get nicked three or four times a night! It was a revolving door. (SU10)

This approach of intermittent operations often triggered by a build-up of community complaints and generally targeting sex workers and their clients less so, was confirmed by police officer data - as was the recognition that this lead to the cycle of arrest mentioned above, as well to dispersal (see Chapter Four and below). In common with other studies addressing the policing of street sex work in the 1990s and early 2000s (e.g., Benson and Matthews 1995b), I found police officers described this 'turnstile' or carousel justice as ineffective but something they did as part of their duty to enforce the law:

I've been involved in some of the area operations when complaints were received, generally from members of the public, or sometimes members of the public would complain to say their local MP... generally the answer was we would target the girls in various ways, we'd just go in and in a two or three month period lock an enormous number of the working girls up for CPL ... sometimes they would have an operation, but not many, to actually target the punters themselves. There was nothing in place to break the cycle of whether they were doing it to feed their kids or whether they were doing it to buy drugs. (P544)

An officer who worked the street sex work areas of the city in the early and mid-'90s summarised the enforcement-based approach and described it as a 'conveyor belt':

You'd arrest the girls, you'd take them to the station, there'd be a quick turnaround doing all the paperwork and they'd be charged. And invariably, the following night, you'd see the same girls out on the streets again. ... So it was primarily focused upon the girls as opposed to the males. If you saw the guys, you'd warn them, scare them out of the area ... It was like a conveyer belt. There's no way other to describe it. (P592)

Some sex workers and officers linked this cycle to a culture in which arrests of street sex workers for soliciting were perceived as an 'easy' option for the police:

We reckoned they come out, they arrest us, because we were easy targets and could bump up their arrests for the month. (SU4)

It's easy to arrest a street sex worker who is working really, isn't it? Because you see her and it's just an easy job because they deal with themselves. You know, they had proformas so there was no 'War and Peace' files - it was a matter of jump in a van. Most would comply, have a bit of a complaint, they'd finger print themselves... if they weren't wanted they were out and you arrested someone else. Very easy targets. (P777)

Several women described this familiar process, explaining how this meant they got to know some of the officers, which could (on a relatively positive note) change the relationship to a friendlier one; for example:

They knew if you got nicked, you could do half of it for them. You'd go in the police station, they take you to a little room, and they'd go, "I'll run and get the paper work", and you'd be half way through doing the prints yourself by the time they get back, and you'd get a lift back .. You know, they were alright and I'll tell you why - it was always the same ones you were dealing with (SU1)

Some officers expressed a view that street sex work became more heavily policed locally in the 1990s, in response to residential complaints in the regenerating Abercromby area; here, intensive enforcement operations focused on arresting street sex workers who were perceived as 'the problem', this then leading to a highly problematic relationship between the police and sex workers:

The earlier part of the '90s, local neighbours were starting to sort of grab my arm as I was walking along the street and saying, "Can't you do something about this?" We brought in a thing called Operation Scorpion at that time ... it was focused basically on arresting the girls. In our ignorance ... we literally did arrest every prostitute that we saw soliciting or loitering. So much so that when they saw the police cars, they would physically run away and try and hide. (P623)

The Abercromby thing changed it because you seemed to have ... the gentrification of the area and people ... complained about them and they got shifted around and so they moved to new areas. (P255)

Research from that time stated that 'if a generalisation was to be made regarding the policing of prostitution it would be that it was responsive i.e. the police respond to residents complaints about the "nuisance" caused by prostitution' (Campbell et al. 1996: 128).

Whilst it was acknowledged by the majority of officers that sex workers had been, until recently, subject to arrest and actively criminalised for soliciting, there was a parallel discourse amongst some of these officers concerning how they themselves had viewed the seriousness (or not) of sex work as a criminal activity with them claiming that either they had tended not to arrest sex workers for soliciting or else had used discretion; and when they had done their job to enforce the law (as directed in the past) this had not been with great conviction:

My professional outlook was always that our job in the police was to enforce the law as we were required to... but I have always had bigger fish to fry - it was not, you know, the crime of the century. The only time I have felt strongly about the industry was, you know, where people were exploited. What floated my boat was the serious criminal, so arresting them was, you know, I did what I had to do - if there was an operation on and I was involved, then I did my job. (P613)

Sharpe (1998) observed amongst police in Humberside in the '90s 'a deep disillusionment' with the policing of street sex work (: 133), and prostitution and kerb crawling were considered low-priority crimes. Benson and Matthews (1995b) based on a national survey of 'vice squads' found that street prostitution was 'very close to the bottom of a national scale of police priorities, while work in the vice squad is not generally seen as 'proper' police work' (: 407). Brooks-Gordon (2006) found the laws and approach to policing street prostitution had little legitimacy amongst many police officers in her research conducted in London.

An uneasy relationship: police stigmatisation and 'othering' of sex workers in the 1980s and 1990s – knowing the 'rules of the game'

Those interviewees who had worked in the 1980s and 1990s described the relationship between sex workers and the police at this time as being poor. One of the key things that sex workers identified as creating a relationship of mistrust, and indeed of hostility, was the prevalence of negative attitudes amongst police officers concerning sex workers.

Perpetuating stigma

Prejudice appears to have been a distinguishing feature of police attitudes towards sex workers, according to the narratives of some sex workers describing their experiences in that period. Police incivility, with the use of derogatory, insulting and offensive language, was described as commonplace. Indeed, sex worker narratives suggest that such behaviour was at a level that could be described as culturally endemic up to the mid-to-late 1990s. Some police officer narratives confirmed this normalisation of derogatory attitudes and language during the '80s and early '90s, while data from my police interviews more widely also suggests such attitudes and behaviour became increasingly unacceptable and were challenged in the late '90s and over the course of the '00s.

Sex workers described some police as treating them with derision, looking down on them, treating them as 'scum of the earth', 'dirty', 'dregs of society' - in effect reinforcing stigma and stigmatising discourses:

When I first started they were telling you, you were dirty - "Get off the streets" ... Yeah the way they talked, the way they acted, the way they fucking described us - call us dirt, call us all the names under the sun. (SU10)

Some sex workers described unprofessional behaviour towards sex workers in the form of judgemental attitudes and bullying as common:

It was quite widespread to be honest and I think the sex workers were just looked at as pieces of shit back then. When I started they (the police) were just bad bullies. (SU17)

Some sex workers who worked in the '80s and early '90s felt wider cultural attitudes around sex work, drug use, HIV and hepatitis shaped police attitudes towards them, and their treatment of sex workers as 'dirty HIV whores', in this period. This was described as being directly expressed in their language and actions:

I remember I got locked up once and they came into me cell wearing forensics suits over their uniforms. I said, "What are you wearing them for?" They said, "We've been told you're a hepatitis risk". Yet they weren't touching me, I had no open wounds. You know, it just shows you how they were with all that stigma that was around at that time, 'til people got an understanding of it. (SU20)

They were bastards ... They didn't like us, they hated dealing with us, like they could catch something off us ... it was obvious ... they'd cover you with your coat between the finger and their thumbs and guide you to the van. It was during the time when AIDS was first publicised and they must have thought because we were junkies and prostitutes, that we all had AIDS and you could catch it. You could see the hatred on them, you know scowling, a look of distaste. They didn't like to touch us if we did a runner. ...I'd end up in tight handcuffs with my wrists bruised or cut so it just wasn't worth it. I'd seen it happen to other girls. (SU4)

Police respondents, in turn, acknowledged the existence of negative attitudes amongst officers in the past, with some interviewees feeling these attitudes endured into the early 2000s amongst certain members of the force:

...I think, for a variety reasons, sex workers were viewed as an annoyance, in the food chain of life, they were right down there. You know, heroin addicts, burglars, sex workers ... criminals that we don't want to touch and "We don't like to know you. We don't like what you do, therefore we're going to put you in this pigeonhole" drug addiction was clearly an issue, so there was that as well ... Scum is probably the word, I can imagine that would be used, although I've not heard it used, but I've heard it used in other contexts. And I'm pigeonholing, you know because there was a broad spectrum of views. (P666)

This suggests how the stigmatisation and 'othering' (Lowman 2000; O'Neill 2001, 1997; Pheterson 1984) of sex workers was reinforced through policing itself. Such behaviour and language as described in my interviews could be classed today as not only unprofessional but, in some cases, criminal (see next sub section); indeed, I would argue they often constituted hate crimes against sex workers, generated by hostility, prejudice and an abuse of power in which officers assumed they would 'get away with it'. Incivility appears to have been particularly prevalent, unchecked and perhaps normalised in Merseyside police culture in the 1980s and into the '90s. It seems to have been particularly heightened during the HIV panic of the former decade, when discourses of sex workers as vectors of disease were in frenzied circulation, continuing a history of more general images of the sex worker as 'dirty and infectious' (as described by a range of theorists, e.g. Walkowitz 1980; Spongberg 1997; Scambler et al. 1990). Three of the women in fact, directly connected this 'HIV discourse' with police attitudes to and treatment of sex workers in the 1980s and '90s.

Unprofessional behaviour and misconduct

In a number of interviews sex workers (unprompted by me) referred to a spectrum of unprofessional behaviour. This began with incivility and humiliation (including abusive and discriminatory language, as described), and extended to officers as paying clients, bribery for sexual services, harassment, assault, sexual assault and rape. Many of these would constitute not only police internal disciplinary matters but criminal offences. When asked about the attitudes of the police in the '90s, one woman immediately raised the issue of sexualisation and sexual harassment and behaviour which would now be deemed unprofessional and as misconduct in public office:

Perverts some of them, I think they used to drive around more because girls used to wear more lower cut dresses and they would be perving at their tits. Nine out of ten times, you'd do it just to get off with it. You've got a low cut dress on, you've got a pair of tits, they open the window, you put your hands on the window like that (gestures) so that they can see your cleavage. So they are not going to nick you - they are more than likely to let you go and it worked nine out of ten times ... Other times, they'd say get in the back of the car and show us your tits or you're getting nicked. I used to have it by the same two police officers every single time they were on shift when they worked together. (SU11)

One former sex worker described police behaviour she encountered in Netherfield Road (an area in which she started in 1999 and worked to the late 2000s):

This policeman, used to stop me, used to get me in his car and say, "You're lovely looking, you" and all that kind of stuff. All underhand stuff that shouldn't have been happening. I knew of girls where police had stopped them and said, "I won't arrest you if you give me a blow job". It was quite pervy really. He used to offer me sweets and stuff. I used to sit in his car, and the way I was then was, "Keep him on side", do you know what I mean?... Not professional at all. (SU17)

One woman described an incident of police abuse she had experienced in the 1990s; she had made a complaint but this was not withheld:

I got sexually abused by a policeman as well. He says to me, "What are we going to do with you now?" I said "Don't mess me about, I've been doing this for a long time. Do you want to do business? That's fine but I'm not doing it instead of being nicked but I'll do business with you if you want to pay". And he went "Lets just have a feel of that little mutt" and he stuck his arm down me like that (indicated his hand moving to her crotch) and I froze and I suddenly realised what he was doing and I pushed him back and I ran. I complained about that and got nowhere again. (SU1)

Two respondents referred to experiencing violent behaviour from the police:

But some could be violent, you know, grab you by the arm or the neck and tug you in the back of the van, you know what I mean? That was a long time ago but since then, they've booked up and the old ones have gone... we started getting new ones now who go by the book and so you gradually get to know them. (SU10)

The only time when they arrested me when it was that policewoman and that police fella, and, god, I'll just never forget it and how nasty they was. And I tried to put a complaint in and it went nowhere ... she actually slapped me, the bizzie woman ... They never believe you though because they think, "She's off her cake". But she did slap me, you know, coz it was years ago. ... it was the only time that has happened, the others have just been fine. (SU16)

In my study several women referred to police as clients. Some made a distinction between police as clients with whom they consented to provide sexual services for payment, and coercive police using their position to get sex. Yet, all who raised this did see police officers paying for sexual services as questionable and unprofessional, especially if done when on duty - even while they did distinguish this behaviour from that of the verbally, physically and sexually abusive officers who coerced sex workers:

Tell you the truth, I had two police men who were regulars. One I knew worked at St Annes Street because I got arrested one night and saw him in there and he couldn't look at me. I think he was terrified that I would say something but I wouldn't say nothing. (SU7)

Five officers interviewed made reference to police officers who had acted unprofessionally and been either a paying client of local sex workers or had extorted or bribed sex workers:

There was an officer I knew when I worked somewhere else in the city – who since was sacked because of it – who was having relationships with some of the sex workers. (P592)

I had some other contacts later on in my career when I worked for the professional standards department, where we had somebody who turned out to be from a non-Home-Office police force, who, shall we say, got involved in the parlour industry for free sex - you know, using his position. (P613)

Several officers highlighted the existence of a wider problematic police culture in the past which incorporated sexist and racist banter in which anti-sex-worker attitudes were perpetuated. One officer described this commonplace use of objectifying language as part of ‘canteen culture’:

“Cows” was a common phrase used. It was just a label you put to distinguish certain people, you know - it was just another name for prostitutes. You know, instead of saying prostitute, you’d say cow. Instead of saying criminal, we’d say buck. Well, it was a real cultural thing. Obviously, for a long time, they used to call it the canteen culture ... young police officers just joining were very impressionable. It changed generally probably again about 10 years ago - there was a real change in police attitudes and challenging attitudes, making the police more accountable. And a big thing on diversity. (P241)

These findings graphically illustrate how a framework of criminalisation of street sex work, with a policy of proactive enforcement in which sex workers are viewed as criminals/offenders, provides a context in which police incivility, harassment, blackmail and misconduct can often go unchallenged.

Pragmatic relationships of mutual understanding

While the past relationship between sex workers and the police can be characterised by the occurrence of largely (sometimes, very) negative experiences, both groups of respondents also described a scenario of coexistence, with each group recognising the role of the other and the tacit ‘rules of the game’. Some police participants described a ‘mixed’ set of attitudes, with some officers having been more derogatory and unprofessional than others:

I think there was a variety of attitudes amongst colleagues, if I'm going to be honest. They didn't like being stopped by the police in case they were arrested and a lot of times they were arrested. So the relationship was mixed between us. (P711)

There were certain individuals who might have had a dislike for sex workers, so using the fact that there are offences around sex workers, they policed them and, obviously, some of them (officers) had poor attitudes towards them. And that turned a lot of the girls against police, you know ... the girls knew the ones who were stopping for a chat and "How are you, what do you know?" So it was a very mixed approach, and a lot of attitudes and behaviours were certainly wrong but it wasn't throughout my section, in my opinion. (P156)

Sex workers also described this mix of attitudes, reflecting that, in their experience, not all officers had been 'nasty'; some had shown concern for their welfare, and there was a general view that there were now more respectful officers than in the past:

This one policewoman and this police fella, they were so nasty, I'll never forget it for the rest of my life. They were saying to me, "Don't come all innocent with us, X, we know that you act all fucking quiet and all innocent". That's how they were talking to me, like that, like a piece of shit, you know what I mean?..Not all the police were like that. I've met some really nice police officers who are genuinely concerned and they will stop and say, "Are you ok?" "Are there any weirdos around?" (SU16)

Some officers made reference to how, during enforcement activity (involving, as it did, regularly policing a given area), they got to know the women; several described how a relationship of 'mutual understanding' developed:

It was a mutual understanding and we were quite friendly with the girls, because, you know, we used to speak to them and they used to give a lot of information as well, about what was going on in the area. At the time we had quite a high number of street robberies and, you know, they'd identified people that they weren't happy with and they'd try and provide information. And it was one of those situations where they knew that we had a job to do, and so most of them accepted that they were going to be arrested and, you know, we tried to do it as amicably as possible. (P532)

Some sex workers also described a relationship of familiarity and mutual understanding that sex workers and police developed within the enforcement framework, each knowing the procedure, and, again, the 'rules of the game', that they should adhere to. Another officer, when asked what the relationship was between sex workers and the police, referred to the following:

It was an understanding. It was as though it was a game at that particular time because everybody knew what the score was. You'd go round, literally you'd do a circuit, and you'd say to the girls, "This is your warning. I want you off this particular street corner". And they'd always say, "Just one more and I'll get off". And that was the understanding. (P592)

Women tended to differentiate between arresting officers who were reasonable and those who were unreasonable. Reasonable officers were professional about arresting, not offensive and, in some cases, tried to be as quick as possible in processing the charge; they were also fairer in not arresting every time:

Some were alright - some would try and get me in and out so I could go back to work. I've had them pick me up, charge me and then drop me off where they picked me up but say, "Don't stay out here too long". (SU18)

It was more likely than not operations were going on. And I remember there was one police officer, he did not like working girls and would arrest you every time, well there was two actually. I remember going to McDonalds one day and I was not working, I was homeless, and I had a short skirt on and I was going down Sheil Road to McDonalds and I got arrested ... He must have arrested me every time I saw him. (SU19)

As part of this mutual understanding of the unwritten rules of the game, sex workers described strategies they used to manage or handle the police, to hopefully reduce the chance of arrest or of being moved on, or to get out of a difficult situation. Characterised by positive engagement – including shows of respect and deference and use of humour - some sex workers spoke about still using such strategies today:

So you do get some who are real nasty but you get some who'll treat you how you treat them as well, which is fair enough. If you show them a little bit of respect and a bit of consideration and don't insult their intelligence then they won't insult yours. It's a two-way thing. I handled the police by being just honest - if they asked me something, just tell them what they wanted to know really. (SU16)

You learn how to handle them because I'm old school, you see. Too streetwise, Rosie. I have been since the first day I started. I'm too much streetwise - I know the score, I know the record and I know how it plays. (SU10)

Dealing with and reporting crimes against sex workers in the 1980s and 1990s

Sex worker respondents described the dominant policing approach prior to and into the late 1990s and very early 2000s as one which they perceived as not having sex worker safety and welfare as a priority concern. Several studies have highlighted significant under-reporting of crime by sex workers over the last two decades in the UK, highlighting a range of enduring reasons for this including: lack of trust and confidence in the police (a belief that there is no point as the police will not treat the report seriously or will treat it as an occupational hazard); and fear – whether of judgemental attitudes, arrest, prosecution, closure of premises, public identification or reprisals (Benson 1998; Kinnell 2006; Boff 2012).

In my study, sex workers reported that whilst there was minority of officers who asked about their safety and welfare, generally policing prior to the mid-2000s did not focus on sex worker safety; and, in line with findings in the literature, reports of crimes against sex workers were perceived by sex workers as not being taken seriously.

They were always out and I don't mean looking out for us, because where were they when we got beat up and stones thrown at us? But they seem to be around when they want to nick someone, you know what I mean? (SU11)

Sex workers who worked in the '80s and '90s stated that they would not have reported crimes committed against them to police because they did not trust the police, feared arrest and believed that the majority of officers would not take seriously reports of crimes committed against them. The first quotation is a continuation of the service user narrative referred to earlier:

That's how they were talking to me, like that, like a piece of shit, you know what I mean? ... At the end of the day, imagine if a girl's been attacked and raped and that's the bizzies' attitude ... No, it won't be taken seriously when you've got them kind of people dealing with it. (SU16)

Oh no, never in a million years did we report! Who could we report it to? The bizzies that were coming round being bastards anyway? Who's going to listen to you? You're just a prostitute, you deserve to get eggs thrown at you, you deserve to get beat up! "Shouldn't fucking be a prostitute then, should you?" (SU1)

One woman recounted what happened when she did report a rape in the 1980s; her experience illustrates the distrust of the police amongst sex workers and some police attitudes to sex worker rape:

...he leaned over and grabbed me into the car and took me down to Sefton Park. He grabbed me by the throat and said, "Shut the fuck up" and he raped me ... It was two weeks later, I was talking to the police - they was going to arrest me. I said, "Oh yeah, you can arrest us but what about the bloke who raped me? I can't even come and talk to you". Well, they were all ears then, they were interested...they took an interview from me ... I was thinking, "What the hell have I done, what have I let myself in for here?" Because I felt like I was the criminal and I thought I had done wrong. I thought I would be arrested that night for working as a prostitute, that particular night when I got raped. That's the way they were coming across to me. ... it was the way they were asking, the way they were looking at me. Looking at me with that look of distaste again. (SU4)

She received no ongoing support from the police or other agencies during the investigation and court case. Another service user described the response she got from police in the late 1990s when she was raped:

I got raped one night and there was a police van coming, driving down the road and I was crying my eyes out and I jumped in front of the van and I was screaming to them, "Please help me!" He went "If you don't get away from the van now, I'll arrest you", he was actually saying that to me, (as) the guy was actually running across the road into the car park! If he had of took me seriously, he would have seen the guy. And that was the first time I'd actually pulled an officer up to complain about a rape and when I saw him do that it put me off. I thought, "These aren't people that I can approach, because I'm a prostitute and they're bizzies in uniform" - they look at us like we're scum. And, you know, if he'd of done his job and listened to me, he could have caught that guy that raped me... I've counted how many times I've been raped and it's over 22 times and that's not including the beatings ... I was just too scared to report it because of the attitude of the police. So that's what stopped me reporting. (SU18)

Many police officers interviewed were of the view that, in the past, some officers had operated with a number of negative beliefs about sex workers, particularly regarding rape, i.e. that rape claims were made by disgruntled sex workers who had not been paid, or, again, dismissing sex worker experiences as an 'occupational hazard':

We certainly never used to get girls complaining. No one was ever convicted of raping a street worker because the attitude was, "Well, they're not reliable, they don't tell us anything, she's not really been raped, she just hasn't been paid." Hello, she's not consented!! (P684)

There was a lot of poor attitudes towards the girls and especially in relation to reporting offences. Often the joke was when a girl was, you know, saying that she had been raped, it was "Are you sure it wasn't more of a case of him making off without payment type of situation?" In this day and age, if you would even say that you would be looking at discipline, you know, so we have had a sea change. And I've got to say that wasn't sort of throughout, but there were certain individuals who might have had a disliking for sex workers. (P156)

An officer spoke openly about how he had been encouraged to dissuade a sex worker from reporting a rape. He was uncomfortable with this, and, separately, went onto be involved in investigating a sex worker murder, which further influenced him to have strong belief that sex workers needed protection from the police.

My research found a group of police officers - whose careers had tended to be, but were not exclusively, in CID - who were very critical of the historical approach of not taking seriously crimes against sex workers, and some of whom had worked on sex worker assaults, rape or murder investigations. For some, these cases had impacted on them and some had gone on to champion new professional progressive approaches to policing crimes against sex workers in their operational or strategic work. Indeed, such contributions have been one of the factors which brought about change in the policing of sex work and crimes against sex workers (see Chapter Four).

Current police attitudes concerning sex workers: towards ‘public protection’ and change

Memories of the historical treatment from, and past negative attitudes of, some police officers have weighed heavily on women who experienced policing pre-2000. Yet from the late 1990s, a range of changes in policing and multi-agency strategy on sex work in Merseyside (summarised in Chapter Three) began to take place, these forming part of the antecedents to the hate crime approach, and the shift to a public-protection-focused model of policing. In this connection, evidence from my interview data overwhelmingly suggests that the relationship between the police and sex workers, particularly street sex workers, had changed by the time of my fieldwork in 2010/2011, and for the better.

A shift away from enforcement

The majority of current and former sex workers were of the opinion that a progressive change had occurred in terms of the policing of sex work. The key elements to change identified by the women included a reduction in enforcement, with less cautioning and arresting for soliciting, toleration in

some areas, and moving on from residential areas through negotiation (which was seen as a fairer approach to enforcement of soliciting laws). A less judgemental attitude towards sex workers, with a more respectful, professional approach was also cited, as was a greater concern for their safety and welfare, with reports of crimes against sex workers now being (felt to be) taken more seriously.

This was experienced as a particularly dramatic change for women who had worked in the 1980s and 1990s, and is encapsulated in a quotation from a woman who had street sex worked Liverpool in the period 1984 to 1994, before exiting and returning in 2006 (working up to January 2011). She had reported a rape, supported by 'Armistead Street' and the Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) since her return to working; her experience contrasted drastically with treatment she had received in the late '80s:

When I went back out again I just done Crown Street area, never got nicked once. Every time I saw the police, I was hiding in the bushes and one of the girls was just standing there, and I said, "What are you doing? You'll get nicked". She said, "No, they don't nick you now. They warn you first and if you're still here in half an hour, they even given us a half hour window so we could get a client and go home" ... The police weren't on our case all the time. We're standing on Crown street - it is not a residential area, the police were happy, the girls were happy and the clients were happy. They stop and have a chat and see how you were and you could have a laugh with them then. You could talk to them ... with the rape case it was so different than before - they were so nice to me, no matter what was going on. (SU4)

Respondents who could compare recent policing with earlier years commented that there was less police cautioning and arrest of sex workers, while those who had only worked in the last four years recounted few experiences of arrest:

When I saw a change was when I come back working. I'd been in Newhall Prison and I was no fixed abode. I'd done my detox in prison and I came out and I come back to Liverpool and I started working again and everything had changed. There was like a tolerated area in Crown Street (SU17)

A participant who had only worked between 2008 and the interview in 2011 described her experience of the police:

I always thought the police were alright going out sex working because they'd always ask you "Are you alright?" If they didn't want you there they'd tell you. You had five minutes to move on or, "You're going to get arrested". But I've never had no bad experience with the police due to sex working. (SU21)

The following quotations from women illustrate the change in the level of enforcement of the soliciting laws:

I haven't been nicked in like three years because they just don't bother no more. (SU10)

It's different than it was then. They just check how you are and leave you alone... when I first started and they were like that all the time, you had to make you're money but they'd move you on. That's when I got cautioned. I was only young - I was 19 when I first started. Now they're not like that. So you're not on your toes as much, looking for the police. (SU12)

A police officer with a lead role in sex work policy development stressed the public protection focus of the approach:

Even (in) the mid-2000s, I think there were still officers who acted in isolation and still had a historical attitude to enforcement. But I think it is less the case now and it is much more the case now that people realise that it is much more important that we are protective to women who are involved. (P499)

A former sex worker, who had worked since the mid-'00s and exited six months prior to interview, experienced some police enforcement activity in residential areas but this was combined with concern for her safety:

No, it wasn't arresting all the time. What it is, "You wouldn't like to have working girls, outside your house, would you?" Well, that's what it was. The area didn't like them outside, so the police, like, would move you along because they were getting so many complaints. But the police weren't there really to ruin you - they were there for your safety. That's how I feel. (SU14)

As this woman's experience shows, the new approach had not meant that street sex workers had experienced no enforcement in recent years, particularly in residential areas which were not part of the 'area of lesser chance of arrest' (a designated area for sex workers; see the next section for more discussion). The policy of strategic enforcement described in Chapter Four meant, rather, that enforcement was a last resort, to be used in residential areas, and only as part of a staged approach, following mediation. Whilst this still created a tension between sex workers and the police, the manner in which enforcement does appear to have been carried out is in a more professional, respectful manner. Interviews with sex workers suggest many officers do seem to stress their duty of protection as well as any enforcement duties. One of the few women to get an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) related to sex work in Merseyside described why, for a period, she continued to work in a residential area rather than the 'area of lesser chance of arrest' and despite the police attention she got (as can be seen, she was very positive about police concern for sex worker safety):

I stayed there because there was more walking punters on there, and at that time the obsession for the drugs drove me, no matter what the cost. ... I didn't give two hoots, you know. I'd see them and I'd dive behind a wall (laughter)... get away from them, outrun them a couple of times (laughter). Most of them were sound with me and some would say "Just move down to the other area". When I reported stuff to them, they were good. (SU5)

'Area of lesser chance of arrest'

As described in Chapter Four, a policy of an 'area of lesser chance of arrest' came into being in Liverpool in August 2005, in order to reduce the criminalisation of street sex workers and provide an area women could work. With policing focused on safety, this was also intended to improve confidence in the police amongst sex workers as well as reduce the impact of street sex work on residential areas. This area was a non-residential area where street sex work had taken place for many years; women were informed if they were there after 7pm and before 7am, and they did not

commit any other crimes or anti-social behaviour (including openly taking drugs), they would, in most cases, not be charged with soliciting and there would be limited use of the kerb crawling legislation.

An officer, who was a neighbourhood Inspector when the policy was introduced and was responsible for its initial operational oversight, candidly described the reason he shifted to supporting an approach with a degree of 'managing' street sex work following holding a previous responsibility for policing street sex work in an area of residential complaint:

The neighbourhood team displaced a large number of sex workers overnight to us. We weren't overly keen in engaging the other agencies because one, we wanted a quick fix, two, we had a definite outcome in mind. And that was, effectively, to clear the streets of sex workers ... what I learnt from that was it didn't really work because, you know, we moved the women on and they went back to Netherfield Road and then they moved back again to us. It didn't actually achieve anything...so something needed to be managed... That's when I think we first decided that we needed to do something different and started looking for support from multi-agency groups around managing the impact on sex workers. I moved from there into the city centre... and became more engaged in the multi-agency approach to dealing with the issues of a long-standing, well-known street sex work area. There was an established multi-agency group and we discussed the area of lesser chance of arrest and the rules, the times and what was acceptable. (P666)

Most participants who had worked the streets in recent years were aware of the 'area of lesser chance of arrest' and the boundaries to toleration. A participant who returned to working after a break of over a decade described how she learnt about the area:

I'd been talking to a girl and I was like, "Here are the police", giving it toes, running and hiding. And she's like, "What are you doing? You're alright"... she said, "They don't nick you as much now here on Crown". Obviously we're not in a residential area. If you're on Netherfield Road, it's a different story - you get nicked every five minutes there because that's a residential area. I think the girls were moved there somewhere along the line. (SU4)

Seven other service user respondents made reference to the 'area of less chance of arrest'; for example:

Now, basically we have been told that between seven at night and seven in the morning, they basically don't give a shit, which is basically fair enough because there is like no women taking the kids home to school and I think that is right. (SU11)

There were mixed views as to whether this area was actually being maintained as one of 'lesser chance of arrest'; one participant felt officers in Matrix vans had not respected the agreement:

Yeah it was supposed to be a district where the girls could work with no trouble from the police but they're all getting arrested, they're getting moved on...they used to go up and down and they stop in the van the yella fella, and they'd say "Name and address? Come on, get off the road". I'd be like "I'm on Crown Street, we're meant to be ok here". I've seen them arrest a few girls there but I haven't been arrested there. (SU7)

Two women explained that, whilst they were aware of the area, they did not work there:

I've heard that, but I just don't like Crown Street area. ... I just do not like it. So I don't like going there but it's only a gut feeling, I never had any problems there. (SU13)

Just like about the tolerated area, about Crown Street. ... I still worked TJ's I'd always go to TJ's, I'd come to Crown Street now and again...It was because of the girls, it's some of the girls can be bitchy, you know what I mean? I just keep myself to myself and all that stuff. (SU17)

Yet some women described the specific difference and benefits a less enforcement-focused approach had on the dynamics of the 'street beat'; for example:

The women weren't as nasty to each other. You'd talk, because it was more laid back because the police weren't on our case all the time to move us on ... the police were a lot more lenient towards you - they actually ask and say "Are you alright? Have you seen any funny characters about?" (SU4)

Overall, current and former sex worker and police participants described a reduction in enforcement, with a shift in the balance from enforcement-based policing to protection and partnership.

More understanding: a concern for safety and welfare

Many respondents described how police officers now enquired after their safety and adopted a more professional and respectful manner in interactions with them and other sex workers. Many contrasted past police treatment with this more sensitive and welfare-focused treatment:

When I started sex working, the police were a bit more politically incorrect, can I put it? (joint laughter) Then, in the early '90s, they'd come up and say, "Fuck off back home" or "Get off the street". You know, just f'ed and blinded at you, called you a slut. Comparing that to me coming working out from the last seven years now, especially recently because I hadn't worked for twelve months... They are more this time round, "Are you alright, are you keeping yourself safe? ... The police over the last five years have been alright with me, you know. More professional, not calling you a little slut like they used to be... So your '80s, early '90s cops were nothing like they are now. They wouldn't get away with talking to you like they did then now. You see it in the way they talk to you now - they are really sound. They're more, "Are you alright? Are you keeping safe?" (SU20)

Since all them years ago, you know, they seem to have got better. One policeman went looking for me bag that time, and he found it for me and he were very nice, and then the sergeant wanted to give me a cuppa. Well, I tell you what, they never used to care, but now it seems that they are trying to make it better for us. (SU13)

Oh yeah, I've seen a change in the police, so much that it's unbelievable ... They're more caring, like they'll pull up, "Are you's ok?", do you know what I mean? No bother. And at one time they never used to pull up... since you have been working with them they're well concerned do you know what there's a hell of a lot of change... They've well changed. It's for the better. (SU10)

One respondent said she was unsure as to the reasons for the changes which had taken place but described the shift in attitude as being akin to 'magic':

Yeah, I don't know what the hell had happened to them in that space of time, from when I worked to this time. You know it's like someone has waved a magic wand or something and they have gone from good to bad. (SU4).

When I started they were just bad bullies, I know it has changed now. I think, I hope it's changed now for good. (SU17)

A small minority of service users interviewed were still cautious and did not think change had been substantial or would be sustained:

But we've had all this before. I don't feel a change. I've heard of a couple getting to court but I've heard of a lot more getting away with it. ... You know, and if it wasn't for the outreach here, it would be worse. I mean, they have done an amazing job but there is a lot more to be done. The girls need to feel safe on that road. In my opinion, the police haven't changed. (SU7)

An officer who recently joined the force described what he saw as a now modern approach to sex work:

I knew obviously that it went on and the history they (other officers) talked more about how they (street sex workers) used to be targeted and they were arrested and it was an easy arrest and all that sort of 'Life on Mars' aspect. But I soon realised there were designated officers to work the areas the girls were in, who they could go to, who they had built up some good relationships with and it seemed, I have to say, when I joined, I thought it was quite a positive way that Merseyside were dealing with the sex workers ... But, I have to say, hearing some of the stories, you know, god, how archaic to deal with these women in that way. (P727)

A detective sergeant – who, after a period of time spent working in hate crime, went back into a uniformed role in an area where street sex work took place - noted a move away from enforcement. Moreover, her team embraced this, with senior officers adopting a more managed, balanced approach:

When I went back I never saw anyone being arrested for it ... All I had was a very willing section of people saying, "Teach me, educate me, let me know what I need to be thinking". So a completely different ball game and people very open to the new way with safety, building communication (and) trust ... I have to say I feel really quite proud of what Merseyside Police have done, now. When I was on patrol last year you'd get your Chief Inspectors ... in the city saying, "We've had a complaint from the University. We're going to have to speak to Armistead. Let's go and talk to all parties and sort out this problem - it's not going away". I don't think you'd get that in many forces. (P512)

The majority of officers felt there had been progressive change in this vein.

From offenders, to victims and vulnerable people

A key discourse amongst police respondents was that sex workers were victims or vulnerable people in the community, who were targeted by offenders taking advantage of their vulnerability (this is explored further in Chapter Six in specific relation to the issue of hate crime). Several officers with long service commented directly on a shift from sex workers being treated as offenders to being treated as vulnerable victims:

We changed. We saw the women, as I said before, as the offenders. We were ignorant. We knew very little about their past and their background, what they faced. We suddenly realised they were not the offenders, but they were actually victims. (P623)

In my earlier service, I would say sex workers were viewed as criminals. Then came the realisation that most of them, those on the street, had severe drugs problems and I think that began a shift towards looking upon them as victims. (P255)

Many officers talked of how they themselves or the police more widely now have a greater understanding of the reasons for sex working, as well as the social, economic and legal issues faced by sex workers, with particular emphasis on the range of offenders targeting sex workers. This understanding was presented as having lead to a humanisation of sex workers and to the current policy on sex work which treated sex workers as members of the community with rights to public protection policing - and the right, if they became victims of crime, to a professional policing response. Many police officers in my study were critical of past policing of sex work in Liverpool, supported the contemporary policy of treating crimes against sex workers as hate crime (to be discussed in Chapter Six), and were critical of national laws on sex work.

'Nice' respectful police

Whilst sex workers' experiences of police attitudes were still mixed, the overall view was that the balance had now tipped and a larger proportion of officers were respectful, with a minority of officers left demonstrating disrespectful attitudes:

I think they were all nasty to you years ago. Like you were piece of meat ... They're not so much like that nowadays. They're more like, "Are you alright?" Yeah, they've changed. You do get the odd one who can be nasty, you know, "If I see you in, like, 5 mins" and they can be like abruptly nasty, if you like. But compared to ages ago, no, most of them are nice. (SU19)

Another service user – who, at the time of interview, had exited sex work three months previously, and had, prior to that, street sex worked since 2005 - described a mix of attitudes and treatment from the police:

Some were just really old fashioned in their ideals and the way they work. But like now, the newer ones coming in, they seem to be like gentler - you get more understanding. They get, like, training - they seem to have a better idea and a better understanding. It's the old school cops that you've got to look out for. They can be cruel and nasty, but there were fewer of them around. (SU5)

Another respondent who had street sex worked from 2005 to 2008, had exited for three years and returned due to a drugs relapse two months prior to interview, also described a mixed experience:

The police stop you and check you out and that. Some are nice and some are not, you know what I mean? (SU8)

Some sex workers described how contact with individual professional, respectful and caring officers in recent years (post-2005) had changed their own attitudes to the police more generally:

It did change my attitude towards some of them because that R and D were brilliant, and I thought to myself, “There are a handful of bizzies out there who are approachable, that you can talk to and they won’t like snigger at you or patronise”... It was the way they were with me, the way they spoke to me, the way they behaved towards me. There was no nastiness, there was no sniggering or like snide comments, they were just so genuine with me, they were just really nice. And that is hard for me to say when it comes to bizzies. (SU18)

This participant had described how this change in attitude was significant for her because she was from a family that had limited respect for the police, feeling their community had experienced police harassment. Another woman described the positive impact of a very supportive female officer:

Having had that relationship with the likes of X (female officer dealing with a professional standards case) ... I do trust the police now. I know there’s the likes of him who’s a corrupt little bent bastard, (but) there’s bad apples in every job, do you know what I mean? It’s like saying a person who works in the ASDA, you know, there’s going to be someone who works in the ASDA who’s a rapist, you know. When they (police officers) go home every night and take that off the uniform, they’re a person just like you and me. (SU15)

Reduced levels of police misconduct and unprofessional behaviour

Earlier in this chapter, we saw evidence of the concerning occurrence of incidents of police incivility and other unprofessional, even criminal, behaviour by officers in their dealings with sex workers in the 1980s and 1990s in Merseyside. As has been discussed, police officer respondents were of the view that such behaviour was now increasingly challenged and at odds with formal policy on sex work and professional standards, and a recurrent theme amongst the women interviewed who had worked in the ‘90s and early 2000s was the feeling that police attitudes and conduct towards street sex workers had improved over time. Those sex workers working in recent years, meanwhile, described relatively few incidents of police incivility and professional misconduct, and these were presented as being committed by a minority of ‘bad apples’ and more likely to be challenged, brought to the attention of ‘Armistead Street’ and subject to investigation and disciplinary action.

Moreover, it is true to say that at the time of my fieldwork, the Professional Standards Department (PSD) within Merseyside Police dealt with unprofessional behaviour and complaints against the police, handling matters which would be responded to within the police disciplinary codes and practices. There was also a covert element to PSD which dealt with behaviours that were subject to criminal proceedings. This unit had criminal investigative capacities and acted on intelligence from police officers or members of the community. Whether they took on an investigation was assessed on a case-by-case basis; an incident that comes to their attention may relate to non-criminal behaviour but there may be other intelligence that leads to investigation and that subsequently uncovers evidence of criminal behaviour. However, whilst my analysis certainly suggests a significant shift has occurred between the '80s/ '90s and now in terms of levels of police misconduct, it would be a mistake to assume that incidences of misconduct are entirely a thing of the past. Indeed, two sex worker participants recounted having recently been interviewed as witnesses in the investigation of former Police Constable John Forrester (one appeared as a witness in his trial); both described incidents which created considerable distress for them and which they felt initially fearful of reporting to the police because of Forrest's social status as a police officer. His criminal behaviour had taken place up to 2010, when he was investigated by professional standards and prosecuted. He was sentenced in 2011 and received a prison sentence of 15 months for misconduct in a public office and was dismissed from his job (Liverpool Echo 2012). And there have been other cases since. For instance, in May 2015, temporary police Sergeant David Gibson was found guilty of wilful misconduct in a public office and received a 30 months prison sentence, he forced a sex worker (Liverpool Echo 2016) to perform a sexual act or he would arrest her. There are, then, still recent and ongoing cases where police have been guilty of behaviour that constitutes misconduct in a public position; this is true of Liverpool and also

of other parts of the UK. Meanwhile, research in areas of the globe where sex work is criminalised highlights a range of human rights violations by the police - including violence, corruption, bribery, intimidation, and hostile attitudes - as a key contemporary issue for sex workers and one which leaves them without protection (SWAN 2009; Sherman et al. 2015). Current UK studies do not illustrate such police behaviour as endemic but my research does draw attention, nonetheless, to the continuing occurrence of incidents in which sex workers' rights are violated. The relationship of the police to sex workers, as shaped by the legal framework, thus sees sex workers remain in a vulnerable position.

An increase in confidence: reporting crime against sex workers

For some years, there have been a number of initiatives to encourage the reporting of crime by sex workers in Merseyside, initiatives which have been supported both by sex work support projects and the police as an organisation. These have included, for example, those initiatives described in Chapter Four - the development of 'Ugly Mugs' schemes (Penfold et al. 2004; Campbell and Stoops 2014) and creation of police sex worker liaison roles. These, as well as the changes in policing that have been described in this chapter, seem to have contributed to increased reporting of crimes by sex workers – as was suggested by my research.

The majority of police respondents were of the view that there was increased confidence amongst sex workers in the police, some giving specific examples of this:

I think the service the women have had over the past five years, the enhanced service with the hate crime policy, 'Ugly Mugs' and Armistead Street, has made them more willing to come forward direct to us, whereas in a lot of cases certainly, if you take it back, there was much less willingness to come forward to the police. (P848)

I think there are still issues around violence but I think the way the police deal with it now and take it far more seriously and investigate it has made a big difference. And I think that does then reduce the incidences of it, because then people are more wary of doing it because they know they are not going to get away with it now. I think the police keep an eye more on the women now. I think they are a bit more alert to what's going on. (P724)

One police officer made reference to a recent case where an escort had directly reported an incident to the police, which was seen as a marker of increased confidence:

It's good that people are coming forward and saying, "Hang on, I've got a bit of confidence here". Because good news travels ... Before the police would not have done that but now you have got a situation where the outreach organisation (Armistead) inform us, and we do them. Much work has gone on there to get to a situation we are in here now. It's just fabulous. (P777)

Indeed, a number of officers highlighted the extent and nature of changes in policing, referring to the shift that had been undergone from attitudes which dismissed crimes against sex workers, to an approach in which such crimes are taken very seriously:

Historically, going back to about 1988, there were incidences that I was aware of where - and it was attacks on sex workers - where it was regarded by some people as an occupational hazard and that you know that sort of attitude has been overcome, wholly. The whole mindset is different now, the whole policy. It's this is crime on a member of the public which must be taken very seriously and investigated in a professional manner. (P848)

I think the police mindset, especially old school police, was that if you're gonna do that trade, you've gotta expect risks. But it's not a given that just because you're a sex worker that you should expect rape. I don't think there was much of an understanding a few years ago. Now I think things have changed a lot - the police have been educated a lot more on this. (P963)

Nowadays, it is treated more seriously. Many years ago, if a prostitute said she'd been raped, for a start we wouldn't take her seriously ... But nowadays, that wouldn't happen. As soon as that allegation would be made, the female would be treated seriously. She'd be taken to one of the rape units. She would be supported. They would identify, locate and arrest the male concerned and they would put that case before the court. (P623)

The majority of current and former sex workers interviewed reported having greater trust and confidence in the police, and said they would now be more likely to report crimes against them – with some making specific reference to times when they have actually done so. Their replies and narratives generally reflected a sense of greater trust in the police and also a belief that they have the right to be protected from crime and to report it just like any other member of the public. Alongside this, however, emerged another significant reason for reporting: a desire to apprehend offenders, not least to ensure the safety of other sex workers:

I have more confidence in the police since Armistead have been working with the police they have more concern...Too right I'd report, because of what's happened to Anne Marie and to all the other girls. Too right, yeah! Because I'd think if I hadn't reported it, I'd be an al'arse (slang for contemptible person) because it could happen to any of the other girls, do you know what I mean? And what happened to poor Anne Marie, it's changed me a hell of a lot, because that could have been me - that could have been me, and, you know, it scares me! (SU10)

I would report, like when I reported the kidnapping...I didn't want them to do it to another girl. It petrified me, what they put me through in that house. It wasn't just the kidnapping - it was everything that went with it. And I would never have forgiven myself if that happened to another girl. (SU11)

Yeah, I would report. That last robbery I reported ... But lately, when I've reported two robberies, the police have been sound, where that's concerned. I didn't report getting strangled, 'cause it's five years ago now. But now I do, so that's the difference between five years and now. (SU13)

A women, who had been to court as a victim of rape where the offender was convicted, was also very clear she would now report:

Yeah, because I'm sick and tired of these cunts getting away with what they get away with and they shouldn't. (SU18)

Two participants said they would report but would do this with the support of 'Armistead Street' and the ISVA – for instance:

Yeah (I would report), even though I still might go through the Armistead though, because I know them and I feel more comfortable talking with them. If I tell them details and then I can repeat them again, Armistead will help me do that. (SU19)

Two participants interviewed who were working as independent escorts both said they feel they would report, should a crime be committed against them; both had worked the street in the past:

Yes, too right I would, and I've told other people on the forums to. Girls who have posted (For example) "I've got this guy and he's stalking me, he sends threatening text messages". I say, "Go to the police". And they're like, "But people might find out what I do". And I'm like, "Well no, because it doesn't matter what you do for a living". And the police seem to be a lot more understanding, especially in Liverpool now... With recent attacks that have gone on in Liverpool, the police seem to be spot on now. They are taking it really seriously. (SU6)

A small number of respondents in total (n=4) said that, for them, reporting was not a given, citing the factors affecting the likelihood of whether or not they would do so. One woman referred to the 'hassle' involved, and proposed that there were limitations on how far it was worth taking a complaint (initially invoking the 'trivial' incident of 'egging' to make her point, before extending this reason for limited or no reporting to include serious sexual offences):

Some you do report, because you get people who do things like take hundred eggs out with them and throw them at us. If outreach are out that night, you say, "There's a car going round and they're egging - here's the reg and the make", you know, whatever. But there's no real point in going any further than that because I'd rather go on working than the hassle of reporting it. ... Yeah, and on my worst rapes, I've been like that. (SU1)

In contrast, others said the type of incident would shape whether or not they reported it:

I think it depends what's happened as well and what kind of attack it is. It shouldn't matter, I know that. An attack is an attack - it's wrong, full stop. But at the same time, I reckon nine times out of ten that is why girls don't report them. If you do report them, you report them to Armistead, for the safety of the girls. And some police do look at you like: "It's you're own fault, you put yourself at risk". (SU16)

This shows the importance of sustaining initiatives by projects and the police to ensure all officers are non-judgemental, to promote the importance of reporting all incidents of harassment and crime, to continue to encourage sex workers to promote rape and have dialogue about rape and consent, to uphold sex worker rights, and to provide support and responses which reduce the challenges of reporting.

Service users who had reported crimes committed against them in recent years were, on the whole, satisfied with the police response and felt they were praiseworthy. One woman who had - with the support of 'Armistead Street' - reported a rape she experienced to the police was one of two rape victims in a case that went to court. She expressed a high level of satisfaction with the police, despite a distressing experience at court and a not guilty verdict:

I had to speak on, what's it called? With the video in the other room. I didn't want to see him and I'm glad because I would have crumbled if I had of done. ...the police, they had done all they can - they have been there for me. I can't dismiss that and I won't lie because they have been there for me. They've rang me up saying, "Are you ok?"...they have been great. So I was surprised and more than satisfied with the police. But when we went to this court, we were ripped apart. (SU5)

(Chapter Eight explores in more depth the positive feedback, given by current and former sex workers, about police officers from the specialist rape and sexual assault unit who supported them during investigations and court cases.)

Whilst there was increased trust in the police amongst sex workers, there was the feeling with some respondents of there being still a way to go. There remained some wariness amongst some women who had difficulty overcoming the effects of past treatment and attitudes.

Both sex workers and police participants were of the view that despite positive change, and an increase in the reporting of crimes committed against sex workers, under-reporting to the police was still an issue. They felt some sex workers still experienced a number of enduring barriers to reporting, linked to the stigma associated with sex work and criminalisation - including a concern/anxiety that they would not be taken seriously; a wariness of public identification; and a fear that, despite the changes in policing, making themselves known to the police could lead to trouble.

Conclusions

The description, by Chakraborti and Garland (2009), of hate crime victim groups as historically over-policed (being subject to police attention and harassment as offenders) and under-protected (crimes against them not taken seriously) directly translates to the past experiences of sex workers in Merseyside – and is still the experience of sex workers in many other areas of the UK. Chapter Two presented the academic evidence that the police's role in enforcing UK prostitution legislation has created an adversarial relationship between sex workers which acts as a barrier to reporting crimes by sex workers (Kinnell 2008; Hubbard 1999). In the UK the fact that the people who are there to protect sex workers are the ones who have the power to arrest them (plus their customers and others they work with) serves to provide a highly problematic context in which to effectively offer this protection and prevent violence (Campbell 2011b).

It is a context that feeds into the psyche of offenders who target vulnerability, believing sex workers are 'easy targets' who will not go to the police or that the police will not protect them if they do; in other words, it contributes to 'the conditions for predation' (Bowen 2015).

The data presented in this chapter evidences that these conditions reflected the experience of sex workers in Merseyside at least into the 2000s. The analysis of my interviews with both police officers and sex workers suggests that, from the 1990s up until the year when my fieldwork was completed (2011), there was an important shift in the official approach towards policing sex work in Merseyside - and, consequently, a shift in the relationship between sex workers and the police. Critically, this included progressive changes in officer attitudes towards sex workers generally and in relation to crimes committed against them more specifically, including in terms of policing practice for dealing with crimes against sex workers in Liverpool. Sex workers, as we have seen, have reported experiencing a more caring, respectful and professional attitude towards them, with a reduction in incidents of police incivility and misconduct. Police officers were characterised as more focused on enquiring about sex worker welfare and safety rather than arresting sex workers, their clients or closing their places of work.

Whilst there is evidence in the interviews of some competing discourses at play amongst the police in Merseyside, the dominant discourse which emerged was one of public-protection policing, with emphasis on promoting sex worker safety and reducing harms. As shown here and in Chapter Four, policing practice moved away from prohibition and criminalisation, to active 'management' of sex work, with enforcement used strategically, only as a last option in exceptional cases, and in a proportionate way. As part of an approach in which sex workers' safety was a key priority and crimes against them were now dealt with within hate crime procedures, policing resources

were realigned to focus on building confidence amongst sex workers, encouraging reporting, and investigating/prosecuting violent and other crimes committed against them.

The move away from enforcement to a more protection-focused approach has, then, been vital in transforming the relationship between sex workers and the police in Merseyside. I have argued it has been fundamental in providing a terrain in which sex workers have increased confidence that officers will treat reports of crimes professionally/seriously and offer them protection against crime. Without this change in policing approach, it is hard to see how any significant progress could have been made in increasing levels of trust and confidence in the police and so in better helping to bring to justice crimes against sex workers in the area. Moreover, this focus on protection, does, in fact, form a key strand of the Merseyside hate crime approach (central to this thesis), which I contend has been informed by - and, in turn, informs - local policing policy and practice in recent years.

Indeed, in the next two chapters, I will explore police and sex worker views specifically about this hate crime element to the work of Merseyside Police. The first of these, Chapter Six, now explores police attitudes to sex workers as a hate crime group, their views on the policy of treating crimes against sex workers as hate crime, and the benefits they identify from including sex workers in hate crime procedure for improving the policing of crimes against sex workers.

Chapter Six: Treating crimes against sex workers as hate crime - police perspectives

Introduction

This chapter details the key themes, perspectives and narratives on sex work and hate crime which emerged from my analysis of the police interview data. It draws predominantly on data from the Merseyside Police interviews but includes data from one interview with a Liverpool City Council officer with a leading role in multi-agency hate crime policy.

The chapter examines police awareness and understanding of, and views about, Merseyside Police's hate crime policy. It assesses what views and attitudes the police have towards treating crimes against sex workers as hate crime, analysing police officers' conceptualisations of sex workers as a hate crime group. It will also outline the advantages identified by police officers of including sex workers in the hate crime policy and procedures. It will finally reflect on how sex-worker-targeted hate crime has featured in hate crime practices and procedures within Merseyside Police at the time of my research fieldwork, and to what extent sex work hate crime has become integrated within these.

Police officer awareness of the hate crime policy

Of the 39 police officers interviewed, 25 (64%) had been aware of the hate crime policy before being approached for interview in this study. Officers interviewed were positioned differently to the policy in terms of how involved they had been in its development and implementation, and this shaped how and when they had become aware of the policy. An officer who had previously been a sex work liaison officer was very much aware of the policy:

Yeah, I'm aware of it and think it's brilliant. It was when SIGMA came into place and took it on. I think it's one of the best things the police have done in years (PI963)

One SOLO officer noted she became aware because she was in Liverpool North and in a role in Intelligence:

I was aware because the area I worked in. I was in the Crime Recording Bureau and we recorded all crimes and we were responsible for ticking the hate crime box, so I was aware. (PI639)

A neighbourhood Inspector who had joined Merseyside Police from another force after the introduction of the policy, now managed a team involved in policing street sex work and, whilst not aware of the details leading up to the policy launch, was aware that this was Merseyside's approach:

That was '06, I came up here in '09 - it would be very diluted by then. I know it's dealt with as hate crime. I know it should be dealt with as hate crime, yeah, because it is, isn't it? (PI225)

This Inspector's comment illustrates how police officers' awareness of this policy is clearly variable, with officers who have, or had in the past, a strategic or operational role policing sex work, or were officers in an neighbourhood area where street sex work takes place, more likely to be aware of sex work issues. Indeed over a third, (n=14) were not aware of the policy.

Two relatively new in service police constables who worked in the city centre had not heard of the policy; both had joined after the introduction of the policy (and the video statement made by the former Chief Constables referred to in Chapter Four):

No, I wasn't aware of that, no. That's interesting. (PI958)

Not been made aware of that, no. (PI83)

Other officers who had not heard about the policy noted that the fact that they were not heavily involved with policing sex work at the time it was introduced, or they were not currently in an area where sex work issues

were to the fore, could have been a factor. A senior officer was open that he was not aware of the policy and was concerned this indicated some ambivalence within the force and limits to championing; he supported the policy:

When you mentioned previously about treating crimes against sex workers as a hate crime, I have no idea what that policy is ... if you've got me at three o'clock in the morning as the Duty Superintendent involved in a serious assault, I would not know that we'd treat it as a hate crime ... I'm not sure if I could put my finger on the pulse of the organisation in terms of street sex work or indeed, you know, off-street stuff around lap-dancing or brothels or massage. (PI666)

These responses indicate there is limited awareness of the policy amongst some officers in Merseyside, suggesting a need to further raise awareness about the policy across the force. The limited awareness of the inclusion of sex workers in hate crime policy and procedure amongst officers interviewed who worked in SIGMA hate crime units, and the implications of this, is specifically discussed in the penultimate section of this chapter.

Majority support for the policy: viewing sex workers in terms of hate crime

The majority of officers, whether they were aware of the policy prior to the interview or not, were of the view that the hate crime policy made sense to them and supported the policy of treating crimes against sex workers as if they were victims of hate crime. Even the majority of those who learnt about the policy through participation in the research expressed a supportive view. The main reasons for support were that sex workers fitted the criteria for a hate crime group, with discourses of vulnerability to the fore, and/or because having the hate crime label would bring with it what was seen as a more appropriate, improved, 'victim-centred' policing response, sensitive to sex workers' needs or issues and with more accountability. Support was also given because a direct link was made between sex workers' experience of crime as police participants perceived them and their

understanding of targeted crime as experienced by other hate crime groups. Amongst those giving these reasons for support was a section of officers who were very enthusiastic about the policy. Some supported it because it was the force's formal policy and was supported by the Chief Constable; as professional disciplined officers, they would take on and follow that policy. Some expressed a combination of these reasons.

A small minority were critical of the approach but were still clear they would respect it as policy (this is discussed later in the chapter). However, only one of the 14 who had not heard about the policy did not support it, with just one further officer who had been aware of it not supporting the policy - a total of two opponents.

Officer perceptions of sex workers as a hate crime victim group: fitting the definitions – vulnerability and visibility

Officers most often linked their support for the hate crime policy with statements that confirmed and explained why they recognised sex workers as victims of hate crime. The majority of police officers interviewed and who participated in the focus group expressed a view that sex workers were victims of hate crime; they fitted the criteria which they saw as defining hate crime and, hence, felt that the policy was appropriate.

The force strategic lead for sex work in the focus group detailed Merseyside's policy and why sex workers were included:

Hate crime for us deals with five strands. It's for someone identified as belonging to a particular group - the same applies to sex workers. Given their vulnerabilities, they need an enhanced service. They needed it especially the way they were treated up to 2006. After Stephen Lawrence, there was a sea change in policing minority groups as victims - there was a failure in the Met and lessons have been learnt from that, and the murder of Anthony Walker in Liverpool. This is part of that - we have to gain the confidence of victims and their families ... under Article 2 of the European convention, we have to protect the lives of all. In Merseyside,

we approach investigation of crimes against sex workers as hate crime and from the viewpoint that safety of sex workers must be prioritised above all else. (PI499)

Strikingly in this quotation, the hate crime policy is connected to the police's legal obligation to provide protection under international human rights instruments. Grieve (2004), outlining key success factors for hate crime policing, noted these should be undertaken in a human rights context.

In 2006, when the sex work and hate crime policy was adopted, hate crime was defined in Merseyside Police guidance as crimes perceived by the victim, or another person, as motivated by prejudice against a particular identifiable group. At that time, the five monitored hate crime groups, or 'strands', were: race, religion, disability, gender identity and sexual orientation. In the more recent 'Merseyside Police Hate Crime: Policy and Procedure' (2015), hate crime and hate incidents are defined as follows:

A hate incident is defined as "Any incident that may or may not constitute a criminal offence, which is perceived by the victim, or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate". A hate crime is "any hate incident, which constitutes a criminal offence, perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate". Any crime can be motivated by hate or prejudice. The prejudice or hate perceived can be based on any identifying factor, including, but not exclusively, the following strands of equality: Disability, Race, Religion / Belief, Sexual Orientation, or Gender Identity. (:2)

The strands remained the same but the policy, immediately following this definition, goes on to make reference to the inclusion of sex workers:

Merseyside Police has adopted the approach that crimes committed against Sex Workers would be treated as Hate Crime. This recognises the fact that violence against sex workers is often shaped by discrimination, attitudes of hostility and prejudice. As such, it required an approach that encouraged sex workers to come forward and report crimes in the knowledge that Merseyside Police would take their report seriously. (Merseyside Police 2015: 2)

This inclusion of groups other than the five strands of hate crime, offences against which will result in prosecution through the courts, is recognised not

just in police policy but also in the most recent multi-agency hate crime strategy in Merseyside, which states:

However it is recognised in the Merseyside Police and CPS areas that some crimes are also motivated by other factors, e.g. Age, Appearance, Being a sex worker and this Strategy reflects that broader approach. (Merseyside Criminal Justice Board 2014: 5)

The Armistead Centre are listed as one of the partners in the strategy.

Vulnerability and targeting

The most commonly stated reason for agreeing sex workers were victims of hate crime was that as a group they were specifically targeted because they were members of a particular minority and a vulnerable group who faced prejudice. Discourses of vulnerability were the most prominent in police narratives about why sex workers should be included as a hate crime group, police officers talking about vulnerability in a number of ways; these differing discourses of vulnerability are now described.

A Detective Sergeant who had been involved in establishing the SIGMA North unit talked about vulnerability for all sex workers as a group, but particularly street sex workers:

Our approach was, “Don’t be narrow minded. Look at other issues in other parts of country. For example, there had been issues around Goths as an identifiable group ... it is prejudice against an identifiable group that is the basis of hate crime - someone has been targeted because of who they are, and you are being targeted because of that, because you are vulnerable ... but I believe it fits the criteria for the reasons that sex workers are extremely vulnerable and an identifiable group and some people will target sex workers, especially street sex workers because of their vulnerability because of who they are and what they are doing. So, for me, they fit the criteria, and that was supported by the chief constable (P592)

The elements of *vulnerability*, *targeting* and *membership of a minority or identifiable minority group* were recurrent and commonplace in the narratives of police officers when discussing whether and why they felt

crimes against sex workers could be classed as hate crime and sex workers treated as a hate crime group. As outlined in Chapter Two (the literature review), these elements relate to and reflect criteria for hate crime as defined by hate crime theorists. Out of these, *vulnerability* was the most common discourse constructed in police narratives about sex workers as victims of hate crime – but often not as a standalone factor but as interacting with the other elements, which they saw as contributing to hate crime.

Sanders and Brown (forthcoming) note the multiple and overlapping discourses of vulnerability which circulate in the policy arena. They identified a number of discourses of vulnerability employed by practitioners, including police officers, involved in the management of street sex work in Leeds, West Yorkshire. These ranged from essentialist discourses which tended to focus on individual factors and pathologies sex workers and sex work, to more constructive, situational discourses which ‘employed the language of vulnerability to frame more situational accounts of adversity, countering emphases on individual defects or potential pathologies. In these accounts, sex worker agency and resilience could be accommodated within vulnerability narratives’ (: 6). Situational discourses described the adverse environmental spaces and working conditions sex workers had to work within. Indeed, they found that discourses of vulnerability could be a way of identifying injustices, inequalities and structural factors which lead to violence against sex workers. I would argue the latter were more common in the narratives of Merseyside police officers. For example, the narrative from the senior officer (PI499) quoted earlier, pointing to the human rights act, was clearly accommodating a notion of injustice and need to restore rights. I will now explore further the various discourses of vulnerability present in police officers’ narratives in the context of conceptualisations of sex workers as a hate crime group.

Easy targets and perceived vulnerability

Situational narratives which pointed to adverse environmental factors, injustices and inequalities were prevalent amongst police narratives. One officer, who had, for a period, held a frontline sex work liaison post attending the 'Armistead Street' drop-in and had been involved in a number of investigations, pointed to how perpetrators target sex workers and perceived them as easy targets:

Oh yeah, I think it is hate crime. That's why I'm shocked other forces haven't taken it on by now ... Because they are targeted - they are being raped because they are sex workers ... I do think the girls are getting raped because of what they do, because of who they are and that is a hate crime because they're targeting the girls ... they think, "Nobody's going to believe a sex worker and the police are just gonna go, 'Well that's what you do for a living don't be reporting it to us'". ... think they've got a better chance of getting away with it ... so there's, you know, if you're gonna go and rape somebody, sex workers (are an) easy target for them, you know. That makes them vulnerable from these offenders. (PI963)

A senior officer, who previously headed up MIT and investigated a number of sex worker murders and now was responsible for the Serious Crime Review Unit, stressed planned targeting by offenders and vulnerability:

I think it's intended to be a hate crime ... this is targeting a specific group isn't it? You've got that element of whether it's for sexual kicks or because they see themselves as a vigilante because they don't like sex workers or whatever. ... They're not one off cases. Murderers who gone and killed one fella because he's gay doesn't think, "Right now, my campaign's over, is it?" It's just the start of it, if you like, and I think it's the same when they attack girls on the street ... It comes back to what I was saying before in that it's a vulnerable group. And I think you've got your homophobic crime, you've got your racist crime, and the danger is when you've got somebody who selects the victims, if you like, because they are vulnerable, because they belong to a certain group. They're the individuals who will keep reoffending and that's the problem, isn't it? (PI747)

As discussed in Chapter Four, sex worker murders were identified as watershed moments for policy change, catalysts for shaping personal attitudinal change. As the extremity of hate crime, preventing sex worker murder was seen as a reason for supporting the hate crime policy, and

other proactive initiatives associated with it, to address crimes against sex workers.

A Detective Inspector, who had some years before the interview worked with Armistead on the first case in which the project supported a victim and got a successful outcome at court (and also had experience of investigating an number of crimes against sex workers), highlighted vulnerability and targeting:

Yeah, undoubtedly... straight away you could see they are very vulnerable aren't they? You know, they were being attacked because they were sex workers ... They're vulnerable undoubtedly - all the evidence is there, the investigations, robberies, rape. Perpetrators specifically target them. And there's a perception that some people have, not now from the police, "Can a sex worker be raped?" Well, of course they can. But not everybody understands that, I don't think, or they didn't. (PI711)

Walklate's concept of 'targeted victimisation' is identified by Chakraborti and Garland (2015) as a useful backdrop to consider different forms of harassment experienced by difference groups, and moves hate crime into 'targeting of perceived difference and vulnerability'.

A sergeant, who had served as the Police Sex Work Liaison Officer when working in Community Relations in the early 2000s, had begun to approach crimes against sex workers under the diversity agenda; he had worked closely with the Linx Project and was very supportive of the policy, again flagging up vulnerability, difference and targeting:

You know, the vulnerability thing, if people are targeted, if you look at a lot of the things to do with hate crime, people are targeted because of difference - they are targeted because of something about them. Sex workers are targeted because they are sex workers, some because they are on the streets and they are vulnerable. I think it's common sense because they are targeted for that vulnerability. I get exacerbated trying to get it out because it's so obvious to me. (PI777)

The 'nature of sex work' and lifestyle factors

One version of a discourse of vulnerability through which police described sex workers as vulnerable was the identification of individual 'lifestyle' factors, or expressions of a view of sex work as inherently dangerous or violent - what Sanders and Brown (forthcoming) describe as an essentialist discourse of vulnerability in the context of sex work:

They are more vulnerable by the nature of what they do, where they do it and the time they do it. (PI134)

They are by the very nature of on-street work, they will become more vulnerable and people prey on them. (PI666)

Well, yeah, because I don't see why not because, by their very nature, they are vulnerable. And I think if you look at groups of people who have their own vulnerabilities, they need that extra support ... I mean, they really are. In the past, when I was working, you'd see some of the injuries that the sex workers were turning up with, and they just didn't want to get the police involved in any way, shape, or form. And it was definitely then that if they reported an allegation of rape, there was an attitude then of, you know, "Oh, so-and-so has reported a rape." "Oh right, yeah." But you knew, the following night, she's just going to retract and that'll be the end of it. But there's a whole sea change now, which is good, with vulnerability. (PI592)

Two discourses of vulnerability seemed to be at play for this second officer: one of sex work by its 'nature' creating vulnerability; but, on the other hand, a recognition of structural factors creating vulnerability in a number of ways - in this case, due to sex workers having not in the past had trust in the police as an institution and hence not being given the protection they should have received. For the following officer, social, 'lifestyle' factors, such as drug use, alcohol use and homelessness, led to vulnerability:

They tend to have massive social issues that they cover with drink and drugs ... most of our sex workers tend to live in hostels ... I'm talking about the people that I deal with who make most reports to me, street workers, So, going back to why it's a hate crime, they are a community that can be classified by the characteristics that they share, which are underpinned by the lifestyle that they lead and that, in turn, creates and makes them

vulnerable people ... they definitely get targeted ... Now a lot of people don't like that classification, 'cause to them somebody who is vulnerable is "not their fault", i.e. they've been born with a disability that makes them vulnerable, they have a learning difficulty that makes them vulnerable, they're elderly and they've lived their lives and it's been lovely and now they've become vulnerable. Whereas sex workers, I think, does get some people's backs up because a lot of people perceive that they've brought those problems on themselves. But I challenge anybody to bring me a drug addict or a sex worker who would tell you, they choose to do it 'cause they don't have any other option but to say they choose to do it. And I know there are women who go out there and seek sex work as a career and that's a different entity again for me ... I'm talking about those extremely vulnerable, generally homeless, drug or alcohol dependent, group of women who see no other option than to go out and earn money through that (PI678).

The terms lifestyle and inherent dangers were present in a small section of police narratives. I would argue these risk lapsing into 'victim blaming' or a construct of sex worker vulnerability which ignores structural factors and can be an essentialising discourse (Sanders and Brown, forthcoming). Yet, it is important to point out the wider narratives of the respondents who expressed this perspective showed a strong commitment to the view that sex workers deserved to work free from violence and assault; and such officers recognised perpetrators targeting and 'taking advantage' of vulnerability and officers - with PI678, for instance, expressing concern for the welfare of sex workers, supporting the hate crime policy and showing some recognition of diversity amongst sex workers.

Whilst no officers interviewed espoused the view that crimes against sex workers should not be treated seriously because they 'put themselves at risk', the discourse of risk-taking and sex workers 'putting themselves' in a dangerous situation was present in some officers' interviews. This was linked to vulnerability:

It did make sense to me because, at the end of the day, they're out there plying their trade, doing a job in very dangerous circumstances. And, yeah, they do put themselves in that danger but they shouldn't have to be targeted because they are sex workers, or because they happen to be of a particular ethnic group. So they should be allowed that protection and it should be viewed as a serious crime. (PI727)

There was a contradictory discourse in this narrative. This officer was indeed a strong advocate for protection-focused policing for sex workers and wanted legal changes to enable safer working. This notion of 'putting themselves in danger' did not undermine her commitment to sex worker rights to protection, but her choice of language could be interpreted as contributing to a degree of victim-blaming.

I have described a number of discourses of vulnerability present in police officer narratives when explaining why sex workers are victims of hate crime. An essentialist construction of vulnerability was present in the narratives of only a small number of officers in my research. I concur with Sanders and Brown (forthcoming) that such essentialist discourses around sex work, and particularly violence against sex workers, offer a more problematic conceptualisation of sex work and vulnerability. They are in danger of accepting violent and other targeted crimes against sex workers as a given and sex work as inherently violent, pathologising sex workers and sidelining the socially constructed and structurally generated nature of the violence (ICRSE 2014; Kinnell 2008) and targeted hate crime sex workers can experience.

Much more prevalent in police narratives, I would argue, were situational narratives, including those which recognised the cultural and structural factors that lead to targeted violence and other hate crime against sex workers. Police officers' conceptualisations of hate crime which deploy vulnerability in this way, I suggest, are making sense of hate crime as an outcome of 'perceived vulnerability' (Chakraborti and Garland 2012), i.e.

describing a process via which attitudes towards, and the beliefs of perpetrators about, sex workers lead to target victimisation; this includes recognition of perpetrators taking advantage of the vulnerable position sex workers are put in as a result of structural factors such as the law criminalising them, and beliefs (grounded in some reality) that sex workers will not report and if they do will not be taken seriously.

Also, within police narratives, the discourses of vulnerability were gendered, with the construct of the 'vulnerable female sex worker' being to the fore in police responses. Whilst gender vis-à-vis women must be accounted for in shaping crimes against sex workers, conceptualisation of hate crime must allow for the possibility that male and transgender sex workers can be victims of hate crime too. The experience officers had of working with sex workers was, with only some exceptions, that of working with female (predominantly street) sex workers.

Some sex workers themselves interviewed described vulnerability as one of the reasons sex workers were victims of hate crime; but, compared to police officers' discourses of vulnerability, sex worker narratives were much more consistently linked to issues of prejudice, injustice and beliefs that sex workers had limited protections and were easy targets - these factors creating vulnerability (see Chapter Seven).

These conceptualisations amongst police officers about sex worker vulnerability in the context of violence and hate crime are a reminder that, in making the case for sex workers as a hate crime group, utilising the concept of vulnerability has to be considered carefully. Brown (2014) has identified how the definition of female sex workers as a vulnerable group (particularly street sex workers) can be problematic and should be approached with caution. Sanders and Brown (forthcoming) note that:

Vulnerability narratives merge concern for sex workers' safety with anxieties about the 'problem' of prostitution. Indeed, dominant narrations of sex work might be considered part of a wider 'vulnerability-transgression nexus' (Brown 2014 and 2015), where classifications of vulnerability are used to indicate that an individual is at risk, but also to imply that they pose a risk to others and should be surveyed or controlled. (: 1)

There is a need to ensure sex work and sex workers are not pathologised and 'removed' from the structural conditions, criminalisation, stigma and the processes of 'othering' which generate targeted hate crime and through which sex worker rights to protections are eroded. Also it is important that the diversity of sex worker experience is not ignored, and that definitions and constructs of hate crime do not perpetuate a reductionalist notion of sex work and sex workers. The concept of 'perceived vulnerability' goes some way to counter this, putting the focus back on the perpetrators of hate crime. But it is important that this is employed within an intersectional framework to understand the varied experiences of hate crime victimisation within and across hate crime groups, including sex workers.

Sanders and Brown (forthcoming) found in their research that discourses of vulnerability became a lens through which stakeholder groups and individuals with various understandings of sex work could share a language - one which was progressive in the sense that sex workers were not understood as deviants or criminals but as a group who needed safety and protection; as such, in terms of local policy, they benefited from improved protections and less enforcement. (This is a discussion I shall return to in my concluding chapter.) They argued that language of vulnerability

can be a useful concept in relation to sex work, when approached as referring to positioning in a social order where physical and emotional suffering is inflicted and patterned by economic injustices, cultural stigma, and gendered, sexualised and racialised discrimination. This was a step towards an approach to sex work based on rights and entitlement. (:1)

Whilst acknowledging the 'vulnerability' framework as a progressive shift, they cautioned that the concept of vulnerability also can be limited in terms of dealing with wider inequalities and problematic social policy.

Visible minority group

Following the discourse of vulnerability, the discourse of a visible minority group, perceived as different, was most frequently described in police officer narratives about why sex workers were victims of targeted hate crime and therefore could justifiably be included in hate crime policies in the force. Some officers drew direct comparisons with other established hate crime groups, as sex workers themselves did (see Chapter Seven). Responses from a number of police officers evidences that sex workers are a visible minority group:

They are a minority group with individual needs, as with gay people and ethnic minorities (PI776)

So I think a crime perpetrated against someone because they're perceived to belong to a group of women selling sex, I think that hits the definition (PI225)

Hate crime for me is crime targeted at certain groups. Perpetrators see sex workers as a group, they're identifiable as a group. You could go out now, drive round the city, go to certain locations and go, "There's a sex worker, there's a black person, there's a disabled person." They are seen by attackers as different. They will target sex workers - they can see who they are. They know where they'll be and they know they're vulnerable and if that's hate crime, yeah, it fits. (PI241)

If you're black and people are calling you names in the street or throwing stones at the windows because they're black, that's a hate crime. A lot of crime targeted at these women is because of who they are and what they do. So I would say, yeah, they are effectively a visible community. (PI444)

A retired senior officer who for a two-year period had a strategic role on the multi-agency forum just before the policy was introduced refers to the recurrent elements:

Yes ... Because of attitudes towards them, in terms of their sex, their behaviour, their vulnerability, they're identifiable ... you can see who they are, the difference. So they're exactly the same as a minority racial group. Yes, it's a bit late to think of it, but it does fit. (PI255)

This shows a belief amongst some police officers that sex workers are victimised because of the group they belong to and their perceived difference; for many such officers, they are a visible minority group. This emphasis on minority group membership, visibility and perceived difference is a factor which has been increasingly discussed by academics exploring definitions of hate crime and widening them to include new groups hate crime groups (Garland 2010; Chakraborti and Garland 2012; also see Chapter Two). In such conceptualisations, many of the police officers interviewed in this study have tended to focus on street sex workers; this was the group they had more experience of policing, and local and national research (as discussed in Chapter Two) has demonstrated higher levels of targeted violence and other crime. However, such a focus does then exclude indoor sex workers, who also experience targeted hate crime.

Hate crime and off-street sex work

Many officers when asked about sex work and hate crime referred to female street sex workers and gave examples and experiences relating to this sector of sex workers. For the majority of officers, this was the sector of sex work they were more familiar with, in terms of the levels of contact they had with people working in the sector during their policing duties. Some officers did though include off-street sex workers in their dialogue. Those officers with more experience of dealing with street and off-street sex workers, or in roles that gave them a greater awareness of some of the differences across sectors, were able to comment in more detail when asked specifically about off-street sex workers. This was the case for the officer who, in the past,

had acted as a sex work liaison officer, worked closely with Armistead and briefed the Chief Superintendent who led on the hate crime policy:

Do you see the hate crime policy applying to all sex workers, for example parlour workers? (Interviewer)

Yeah. I think, though, you can kind of have this perception, parlour workers might be more protected, with CCTV and protection in there, a receptionist there. And, yeah, a person intending on committing a crime against a sex worker in a parlour, they've not got full control ... and obviously a lot of the offending, sexual offending and violence is all about the control of the person. But you still get people who go in and get aggressive and violent to the workers there, threaten people, rob people. (PI241)

One female detective constable, who had supported street sex worker victims of crime, also felt off-street sex workers could be victims of hate crime, and she pointed to motivations and beliefs which she felt shaped the actions of perpetrators targeting sex workers in both street and off-street settings:

I think because they think they're easy prey, because they think they wouldn't necessarily report, won't come forward. I sometimes think that these people will be trying out possible crimes that they are trying out if they decide that they will perpetrate that crime against any other woman. I also think you've got some people who think sex workers are just a piece of meat, which they're not, and they have the right to treat them in a certain way and they see it like that on the street and indoors. (PI963)

Police understanding of hate crime in the context of other diverse sectors of sex work beyond the street, and the application of the hate crime policy to other sectors, needs further research, specifically addressing officers awareness of and responses to issues particular to such sex workers. This will be discussed further in the concluding Chapter Nine.

Practical benefits: improved response and prioritisation

Several police interviewees supported the policy because of the enhanced or improved service that sex workers should receive with the hate crime categorisation, with a number of practical benefits and improvements; they often specifically pointed to inadequate, poor or discriminatory policing in the past by way of contrast (this has been discussed in Chapter Five). They felt this past had left a legacy and there was still a problem with under-reporting; as such, hate crime policy was one pragmatic strategy to try and address this and improve policing for sex workers. This was a reason given for supporting the policy by a number of officers, including a minority who were ambivalent about whether sex workers fitted their understanding of what a hate crime group was.

The advantages of involving the SIGMA unit, who were seen as providing a quality service with victim-centred care and with specialism in policing crimes against minority groups, was specifically identified. The following quotations illustrate this view that the policy will lead to an enhanced response and quality victim care:

I think it's a good idea ... for prostitution to be labelled as hate crime because, one they get a better service. You know, they're going to get detectives down there and they've got some good systems and process. You know, good victim contact, things like that - it labels them up to go to the hate crime JAGS and things like that, where they can get a bit of more multi-agency working and things like that. So you know, I don't see why they shouldn't. If it's only beneficial to them. (PI385)

SIGMA, they probably can give the best service because they are more experienced with dealing with victims of that sort of crime (PI766)

I think it's good ... because when it's a hate crime I believe it gets flagged up as such and things can be linked. I think that's good from that point of view that the hate crime ups the ante. And with hate crime, we have this unit in town, SIGMA. And so there is an experienced group of officers with lots of training and working with communities who have experienced discrimination. (PI711)

Some officers highlighted the additional coordination, enhanced intelligence, central monitoring and specialist response that a hate crime should get within the SIGMA unit structure and the higher prioritisation across police procedures, seeing this as advantageous. Such benefits were raised by the Sex Work Liaison Officer who was briefing senior officers when the policy was adapted:

By making it a hate crime, it brings it to one central department ... You know, that, for me, is the main benefit. Whatever we want to call it ... We need some way to centralise – to centrally investigate it. If you're going to set up a department that just deals purely with offences against prostitutes and call it the, you know, sex worker investigation unit, even better. But you're never really going to get that, with resources, and they're well linked with Unity. (PI241)

The Neighbourhood Inspector responsible for policing the main street sex work area in the city centre, Basic Command Unit, pointed to the advantages of SIGMA as a specialist unit dealing with sex worker hate crime and monitoring:

Rapes, sexual attacks, robberies would normally fall into the CID remit anyway, so whereas a hate crime will be investigated by the SIGMA team, SIGMA is effectively an extension of the CID. So I think we would have always investigated seriously in any case but where this helps now, where it is a hate crime, is that it will then get certain tags. And it is easier to identify the patterns and trends, and a smaller group of people would investigate them, so you are getting not more professional but more expertise in those sort of offences. If you think sex workers in the population are probably a small percentage, aren't they? So if you have a small percentage of officers investigating their crimes, trust builds, so if you put all that together it has got to be a good thing. (PI776)

A senior officer was of the view that hate crime teams were well placed to ensure coordination for investigations if they linked effectively to other operational teams:

Personally, I would say that, you know, SIGMA is the right unit to do it, SIGMA North, especially with their location ... generally, they're a more sympathetic team of investigators. They're well connected into multi-agency work, there is a coordinator as well ... So it's right and I think probably fits best. But I think there needs to be a clear steer to investigate into operational cops ... so there is a good opportunity to have a clear crime allocation police around this. (PI666)

Some officers felt labelling crimes against sex workers as hate crime created a greater degree of accountability for officers' behaviour and higher standards in investigations:

Going back, I remember basically having to give someone a right telling off in relation to when they were interviewing a sex worker. They were asking too many questions into their business rather than investigating what they have seen and what they knew. And now I think it has been well highlighted, you know in relation to inappropriate attitudes. And the fact that our last Chief Con making it that any offence against a sex worker is a hate crime has gone an awful long way to making sure there is extra accountability in effect. (PI156)

An officer, who was heading the Serious Crimes Review Unit at the time of interview and had previously lead the Major Incident Team and investigated a number of sex worker murders, pointed to the critical importance in investigation of crime of the hate crime categorisation and how this helps with the efficacy and approach to the investigation:

If you've an attacker ... you've actually targeted them you've thought "Right I'm gonna go down there, I know that there'll be potential victims". And if you've got a degree of planning, then it won't be a one-off case. As an investigator, you want to be aware of that. It's like remember the Anthony Walker murder? We will look for any other racist attacks that's been in the area, to look for potential clues for this that and the other. It's exactly the same because you've got the hate crime, if you like, you will look for what other incidents have there been on girls on the street and, you know, you'll look for clues. You're looking at the wide picture because it's hate crime. (PI747)

Several officers saw including sex workers in hate crime policy as a way of ensuring reported crimes against sex workers were prioritised and raising the profile of crimes against sex workers across the force:

Regarding the hate crime, what I find now, if it's not a hate crime, we don't tend to treat it as important ... because once it becomes a hate crime, in whatever way for whatever group, the ante gets raised (PI592)

A Detective Inspector who had worked on a number of street sex worker murders commented:

I didn't always agree with everything Mr Hogan Howe did but I did in this case - it raised the profile. It put offences in that category along with racial discrimination and a whole host of offences against sex workers were

recognised and that gave it the recognition of a vulnerable group. ... So properly putting it in that category of hate crime for us as an organisation raised the profile. (PI156)

An officer, who had been in SIGMA North when the policy was introduced, drew attention to a range of practical advantages which she felt the hate crime policy had had, ranging from the heightened public profile of crimes against sex workers, to better intelligence and professionalism:

Generally, the public know what hate crime is - I think it raises the profile ... you do need buy in from the general public ... it also allows us to sensibly quantify the crimes against sex workers. If we don't call it that, it's just victim of sex crime. It just professionalises the service automatically. If you dealt with it as a punch in the face to a woman on Crown Street, patrol turned up and uniform turned up, we'll investigate, that's not a problem, it goes in the tray, its allocated to a uniformed neighbourhood bobby ... But with the hate crime straight away, CID are made aware of it. Straight away, it's deemed and given a service that affords it what we call the golden hour principle, so, "This has happened - have we got cameras? What's happened? Who needs to know about it? Have we spoken to Armistead?" Now you've got SIGMA, you've got a team that looks at and says, "Hang on a minute" ... it gets a more professionalised service and quite rightly so. (PI83)

One officer stressed that the inclusion of sex workers as a hate crime group flagged up crimes against sex workers to the police, giving sex workers more protection:

I think it gives that extra bit of protection. It flags it up to police. But to be honest, I think we should be taking it seriously anyway and they should be allowed to go and work safely. It shouldn't really need a big flag on it. (PI727)

Researchers have identified a range of aspects of hate-crime-policing models from which victim groups should benefit (Hall 2005, 2014), such as training for officers, intelligence initiatives to support prevention, monitoring and detection, specialist hate crime units to offer support and protect victims, and investigation of crimes in line with specific quality standards. Police officers interviewed pointed to a whole range of practical benefits that sex workers should benefit from - and such enhanced policing is a long way from the prejudicial policing service of the past which sex workers received

and a shift to more welfare- and protection-focused policing (discussed in Chapter Five). Yet, later in this chapter, we discuss findings which suggests sex workers are not fully integrated into hate crime policing procedures in Merseyside and, hence, may not be gaining the full benefits which should be attached to being a named group in the hate crime procedure and policy.

Police ambivalence and critical perspectives

Only two officers did not support the hate crime policy and another four supported the policy but expressed some criticism or ambivalence. The notion that particular crimes or offenders should get a 'gold standard' response under hate crime policy was met with concern by a minority of officers taking part in the study. They expressed the view that there should be one quality standard and this conviction lead to discomfort amongst some officers about the outcome of hate crime policy. This concern was something they had with regard to the wider hate crime policing agenda. But the majority of officer expressing this point still felt there was a need for sex worker crimes to be recognised as hate crime within the current system and be treated appropriately, and they did not question efforts to improve policing crimes against sex workers:

Well, don't you get a gold service from the CID in any event, you know? But to me, you should get that for every crime. But if making it a hate crime makes it dealt with in a more collective, better way than it has been or whatever, then fine, you know (PI499)

I'm aware there's a hate crime policy but to be totally honest, I've never read that. Don't tell Mr Murphy or anything. I wasn't aware but I think although you've got those policies there, to me nothing should be treated differently. It doesn't matter who you are - if you come in to report a crime, it should be treated properly and investigated (PI102)

The two above officers who were critical of the hate crime policy identified sex workers as vulnerable to crime, but they were of the view a hate crime label was not necessarily needed to address this vulnerability; quality policing should be received by sex workers as it should from any member of

the community. They tended to have a cynical view of hate crime policy more generally. (This view that all people including sex workers should get the same high-quality standard of policing as others was also a point raised by the small minority of officers interviewed who did not support the hate crime policy, discussed earlier in this chapter.)

As noted only a minority, two, expressed a view that crimes against sex workers should not be included within the hate crime policy. The oppositional reasons given were that: sex workers did not fit the hate crime definition and/or should be treated the same as all members of the public; that the standard of police responses to victims should be high generally; and sex workers should experience this same quality standard (as expressed by the PI102). One officer who expressed this view had been a long standing critic of the policing of street sex work which involved criminalising sex workers; he had expressed absolute intolerance for crimes against sex workers and recognised vulnerability, but was sceptical about the hate crime element of the policy:

Honestly, and you know you'll only get honest with me, no, I don't think it should be classed as a hate crime. It's a crime - I don't think it's a hate crime. It's a crime - you shouldn't treat it any differently. They've not raped, assaulted, murdered, robbed a street worker because they're a street worker, they've done it because it's easy, that's the difference between a hate crime. They don't do it because she's a street worker. (PI684)

He was in effect, though, recognising targeting by perpetrators, but for him this was due to street sex workers being perceived as easy targets - which was not part of his conceptualisation of hate crime.

Several officers expressed reservations or ambivalence but were not oppositional to the inclusion of sex workers themselves in the policy. The issue of whether sex workers were 'hated' was something a number of officers commented on when asked about if sex workers fitted their understanding of hate crime. Whilst uncertain about the appropriateness of

the language 'hate', and of 'hate' as a motivation, they still pointed to vulnerability and still supported sex workers being included in the sex work policy. The following two officers' viewpoints illustrate this:

I don't think they're targets in a lot of circumstances because they're hated. They're targeted because they're vulnerable. So if you changed hate crime to – to a vulnerable crime, then it would fit perfectly. With other aspects of hate crime, I think hate's the wrong word to use. Because they might racially abuse somebody but they don't do it because they hate them or they hate that race. Sometimes they're doing it because they just want to be as insulting as they can. But if there's a vulnerable crime it fits perfectly. But we've got hate crime and for that reason it's the best place where it sits because it's targeted crime for me. (PI241)

The whole point of treating things as hate crime is because they are hated. People like attacking people because they are of a different religion, different ethnicity or different sexuality. I wonder if that's necessarily the case with crimes committed against sex workers and whether they're actually attacked because they are perceived as being particularly vulnerable or whether they're attacked because offenders think, 'The policing community don't give a shit about you, so I will get away with this. So I have a greater opportunity and less threat to myself'...rather than they're attacked because they're hated; "I hate you because you're a sex worker," etc. So in the broad or strictest definition, possibly not... these women they're more vulnerable than most. They are by the very nature of on-street work, they will become more vulnerable and people prey on them. (PI666)

A Detective Sergeant from a SIGMA unit area where there was no street sex work and little police attention was given to 'off-street' had ambivalent views about the categorisation but he supported the policy; indeed, he went on to state that, in his view, sex workers 'ticked all the boxes', referring to them as members of a defined group and vulnerable 'because of what they do':

Is it right that we should look upon sex workers as being victims of hate? I'd probably say yes. Hate is...In one word is a bit ambiguous in itself, there's nothing specific to, "I hate you because you're an Everton fan". Hate can be an awful lot of things. I do feel for the SIGMA role, there has to be a defined specific sort of remit of what hate crime is and that framework and does it include sex workers right now? ... If I get the actual specific definition, I'd have no problem at all in including sex workers as part of the umbrella of hate crime. ... Here's the definition here - any

incident which may or may not constitute a criminal offence perceived by the victim or any other person as being motivated by prejudice or hate. (PI291)

A number of hate crime theorists (Gerstenfeld 2013) have contested the use of the word 'hate', not least because, they argue, it can mask other reasons for victimisation and targeting and it has been recognised that crimes do not have to be motivated by hatred to be classified as hate crime. These officers were not of the view that sex workers were not targeted but were expressing a view that sex-worker-targeted victimisation happened for a number of reasons, including perpetrator assessment of risk of detection, rather than because of 'hatred'.

No, they're being targeted because they're easy targets. And lots of girls won't complain still, and lots of girls are poor witnesses, and lots of girls can be got at by them because they know, the guys that do the crimes against the street workers, they know the girls will be out again, mightn't be that street, but they won't be far away from their safety area. They know they'll be out again the next day. (PI684)

As discussed earlier, this notion of sex workers as easy targets was expressed by a number of officers and fits with definitions of hate crime that encompass hate crime motivated by perceived vulnerability, with perpetrators targeting groups they see as weak, powerless and hence easy targets (Chakraborti and Garland 2012).

Not immutable, and criminogenic

A small number of interviewees noted that one reason some officers may resist the hate crime label for crimes against sex workers is that they may judge sex workers to have chosen their group membership or 'lifestyle'; the following quotation illustrates this point:

I've not heard this but I can imagine that some people say, "Well, you're vulnerable by choice", if you like, "Because you're a sex worker. You're not vulnerable by choice because the colour of your skin or the fact that

you're gay or whatever." I think that might creep in. I don't know if it does. (PI747)

One officer working in a hate crime unit did not oppose the policy, but was open about what he saw as a difference between sex workers and other hate crime groups within current laws, and this related to criminalisation.

I haven't mentioned it up to now, but the difference for me in including this as a hate crime is that potentially these women are committing offences, whereby people who are gay, who are black, who have certain faiths, who are disabled, aren't committing offences when they become victims of crime, so it's kind of a paradox, isn't it? (PI291)

This comment suggests that, for some officers, there could be some resistance to the inclusion of sex workers because sex workers are seen as a group amongst whom some break the law or work in criminalised workplaces. It highlights another negative impact of criminalisation of sex work, i.e. it can create ambivalence about sex workers' right to inclusions in hate crime policies. Chakraborti and Garland (2012) referred to a number of groups, for whom claims are now being made for recognition as hate crime groups, who have 'typically been seen as "undesirables", criminogenic or less worthy than other more "legitimate" or credible victim groups...[and consequently] excluded from view' (: 503). This, they argue, contributes to a hierarchy amongst groups who experience hate crime, creating distinctions between deserving and undeserving victims. As discussed in Chapter Two James (2014) identified the challenges for Gypsies and Traveller communities who are likely to be approached as a problem by the police 'rather than a community in need of some protection' (: 217). I would argue this potential distinction between the deserving and undeserving hate crime groups needs to be further addressed in hate crime theory and practice.

The LGBTQ community is one of the monitored hate crime groups, wherein gay male identity has in itself been criminalised historically, with decriminalisation of sex between men in private and over 21 in 1967, and equalisation of the age of consent in 2000. Hate crime studies have shown that criminalisation and poor relations with the police continued post

decriminalisation with the 'the over-policing of public LGB sex environments and drug consumption in LGB night-time establishments' (Jones and Williams 2013:190) and evidence of enduring individual and institutional homophobia directed at the gay community and gay officers. Whilst the relationship between the LGBT community is now considerably improved (Jones and Williams 2013) the experience of this community is a reminder that criminalisation of certain activities related to sexual activity is one facet of the structural factors that create hate crime, although in the context of sex work it is a very significant one. The police officer who drew attention to this seemed to be recognising how criminalisation can create a distinction between hate crime groups. He personally did not support continued criminalisation; indeed, he supported legalisation:

My personal opinion is the whole thing should be legalised anyway. Why it is an offence still, I've no idea. (PI291)

Whilst my PhD did not focus on the regulatory framework police officers would like to see in place, it is important to note that the majority of officers interviewed supported some form of decriminalised or legally regulated street and off-street sex work. Support for such legislative changes were in response to a question about what more could be done to improve the safety of sex workers.

Treating crimes against sex workers as hate crime: full inclusion and sustainability

Some officers who had been involved in the initial introduction of the policy raised a concern that awareness about the policy and its proactive implementation could wane - that, whilst treating sex workers as victims of hate crime was included in policy of paper, it would not be implemented as systematically and regularly as it has been. Some officers felt there could

not be complacency and the hate crime policy needed to be championed at a high level consistently and reasserted so all officers were aware. Some felt this was particularly important at a time of police cuts.

I think it is sustainable. I think it's manageable but it needs (a) high-ranking officer. It had it at one time but there already seems to have been some dips in the last 18 months. I would like to see those dips brought back up again and I would like direction to be given from Chief-level that this is the way that you will deal with these, so that there is no excuse for anybody to turn around and say, "Well I thought we did it this way." So I think organisational change is one of the hardest things to do. I think it's been led from the higher level of middle management to date and it needs driving strategically from the very top, from the very top, whatever. (PI678)

My research did find, interestingly, some signs that there was less awareness of the hate crime policy amongst officers in hate crime units and less involvement of those officers in hate crime units in policing or monitoring crimes against sex workers.

My research found that, at the time of my fieldwork, the active involvement of SIGMA North had waned since the policy was adopted. When the policy was adapted in 2006, the Sergeant heading up the unit was actively involved in forming and maintaining links with Armistead, building confidence amongst the sex worker community, acting as a liaison point for 'Ugly Mugs' and keeping abreast with reports and investigations regarding crimes against sex workers, and investigating some crimes. This officer moved on to another role which was still in Liverpool North but outside of hate crime; while she had been allocated a nominal sex work liaison role to keep an eye on links between police units and neighbourhood, this was no longer a core part of her daily work.

When I interviewed the Acting Sergeant of Liverpool Hate Crime North in 2011, who had been in that role for six months, he was aware of the policy but (at the time of the interview) this was not translated into any SIGMA activity in terms of procedures, partnership or any other work of SIGMA

North. He supported the policy but reported that SIGMA had little involvement in policing crimes against sex workers and saw the Unity Team as being more involved. There was no ongoing liaison with 'Armistead Street', and SIGMA did not receive 'Ugly Mugs' reports ('it surprises me that the SIGMA unit doesn't seem to have any input into that, not at the moment. We may done in the past - I don't know with 'Ugly Mugs'" (PI8)). Nor were they was involved in any investigations involving sex workers and they did not have an active role in tracking investigations or monitoring crimes against sex workers or liaising with other police intelligence or other units in relation to sex work. No other officer was identified in SIGMA North as having taken on these responsibilities and a lead for sex work issues. This lack of involvement is made clear in the following quote:

Interviewer: So currently could you tell me any role or responsibility SIGMA North has in relation to sex work?

Unfortunately very little – negligible, I would say, in fact ... I have to say it is very rare that we get anything to investigate from the sex workers to pursue, unless they are a gay sex worker or a black sex worker, you know. (PI724)

He did note that in the monitoring system, when it is recorded that a crime is perceived as a hate crime, there is a drop-down menu of 'why, under what criteria?' and 'prostitute' is a category within this; he did not resist the notion of sex workers as potential victims of hate crime:

They are vulnerable, they need help and they need treating in a way that is different to how we would treat the general public who have been assaulted or whatever. I think the SIGMA unit are really well placed to do that, compared to my uniform colleagues - we're more used to dealing with people on a one-to-one basis on a personal level, and I think they would benefit from that. (PI724)

The officer who held the position of Hate Crime Coordinator within Sigma North, and was the officer responsible for centralised monitoring of hate crime for the area, had not heard of the policy. All incidents which are identified on the system as a hate crime come to the Coordinator. He had

joined the unit in February 2011 and had been there for four months when the interview took place:

No, as far as I was aware was just the LGBT, the ethnic minorities and now the disability hate crime that comes under a separate category of hate crime... Just speaking from my own experience, I dealt with a few jobs which were robberies and assault against sex workers and I didn't refer those to the SIGMA team and nobody ever suggested to me that I ought to refer it to the SIGMA team because as I say I wasn't aware that came under the hate crime policy. (PI444)

He felt it could be appropriate to include sex workers as a hate crime victim group because previously, as a detective, he experienced targeted crimes against sex workers. He also noted that 'since I've been here I have not had one where the victim has been a sex worker'. He felt that sex-worker-motivated hate crime could be easily recorded within the system but wider lack of knowledge amongst officers would be contributing to crimes not being recorded as hate crime and the hate crime box being ticked; officers would not be considering hate crime as a motivation themselves and would not be alerted to ask the victim:

I mean, if it was common knowledge that that was the case it wouldn't be a problem in having those cases referred to us because it doesn't create any further work for the officers, creating that crime. It's just literally just a case of just referring it to us - it doesn't create any further work for them. Speaking from my experience, for my part it's just a lack of knowledge that they are considered hate crimes. (PI44)

This data suggest at some point sex workers had fallen off the agenda of SIGMA North and was not part of their core business. From a monitoring perspective, crimes against sex workers did not seem to be being routinely and systematically included within the formal hate crime monitoring systems which were in place in Merseyside Police and/or were not being recorded as such by officers attending incidents. My research found that the prominence of sex-worker-motivated hate crime within the operational work of the SIGMA North unit had been diluted considerably. This would indicate that the role of SIGMA North relating to sex work had not been formally embedded in core formal practice of the unit.

I interviewed officers from two other force area SIGMA units and here there was some limited awareness of the approach but no apparent substantive involvement by those units. One unit, Liverpool South, was represented by a Detective Constable; he had not been aware of the policy prior to the research interview, but welcomed it and was keen for the unit to engage further. Following the interview, he attended a multi-agency 'Ugly Mugs' training event at Armistead delivered by the researcher and the ISVA. He was made aware of this training by the researcher and was keen that he offer a link to SIGMA South.

SIGMA Sefton was represented by the unit Sergeant, who explained he and become aware of the existence of the policy when researching for his interview for the Sergeant post and had read information about it on the Merseyside Police website but did not have further knowledge about it. He had not heard of either of the Chief Constables' Statements (which I mentioned during the interview) and was unclear whether SIGMA North worked to a formal written local policy or not. He requested me to send him the Liverpool North Memorandum which referred to the categorisation and the Chief Constables statements. The following quote from a SIGMA officer shows the limited knowledge and lack of clarity about the policy:

In Liverpool North - I mean, you'll probably be able to tell me in your research so far - in Liverpool North, for example, do they include sex workers as hate crime? Is there a specific remit to investigate hate crime against sex workers? I'm not sure. (P291)

He supported this approach and categorisation but saw it as more of an issue for Liverpool North where there was seen to be a more visible street sex work scene. (This association with street sex work was a recurrent theme amongst officers.) He was not resistant to the policy and indeed described it as 'a bold move' and expressed the view that he hope it was more than a political step: 'It is radical, but I hope it's not just political point scoring and there's some substance to what they're saying' (PI291).

My research findings also indicate that sex workers had not been fully incorporated into wider multi-agency hate crime practices in Liverpool. Hate crime against sex workers was not considered by the multi-agency Hate Crime Joint Action Group (JAG), a group which meets regularly to consider hate crime cases and agree packages of intervention and support from agencies. The Liverpool City Council operational lead for hate crime had not been aware of the police policy of treating crimes against sex worker as hate crime prior to the interview:

Interviewer: Were you aware that in 2006 that Merseyside Police adopted this policy of treating crimes against sex workers as hate crime?

I would say no. It's quite interesting - in my whole time of being here, we have never had a case coming to the JAG of hate crime against a sex worker ... But I can't think of any occasion either in the reduction forum or in the JAG that sex worker or hate crime against sex workers has been addressed ... Did SIGMA say that they deal with them or not? ... I wasn't aware of this bit of it and it certainly hasn't been brought to my attention, flagged up ... we would welcome it but it has never been on our radar. (SCPI2)

She was not resistant to the inclusion of sex workers in hate crime policy and made suggestions about how this strand could be more effectively included in multi-agency arrangements, such as training and representation for police and support agencies:

What I think we need is we need a bit of training and awareness of it and we'd need better representation at the JAG and maybe that would be the Unity Team and somebody from Armistead or whatever ... perhaps we'd need some kind of training or briefing session for members ... But I don't think it would be a major issue - as I said, I just think it feeds into that wider issue around characteristics and identity and why people are targeted (SCPI2)

The lead had been involved in and was very active in a number of initiatives to address a new hate crime strand that of disability. This suggested a disconnect between work and policy within Merseyside Police and the wider multi-agency operational and strategic work in Liverpool.

Conclusions

This chapter has outlined findings about police attitudes towards treating crimes against sex workers as hate crime. A key finding was that the majority of police officers interviewed supported their force's policy approach; only a small minority held oppositional views or expressed a degree of reservation. The most commonly stated reason why police officers felt sex workers were victims of hate crime was that sex workers were specifically targeted because they were members of a 'vulnerable' minority group. Notions of sex workers' membership of a minority or identifiable, vulnerable group, who face prejudice and targeting were recurrent and commonplace in the narratives of police officers.

My findings also indicated that, at the time of my fieldwork, there was limited awareness of the policy of treating crimes against sex workers as hate crime and that sex workers had not become fully integrated into both policing and multi-agency hate crime practice and procedure in Merseyside. This was evidenced by the lack of awareness of the policy both by the local authority hate crime lead in some SIGMA hate crime units - including SIGMA North, where one would expect to find officers to be more informed of the inclusion of sex workers. Hall (2005) indeed has noted the difference between having a proscriptive police hate crime policy and its implementation and success in the 'real world', and states that 'the transformation of police policy into effective practice is a complex and vulnerable process' (: 207).

Merseyside Police have a specific procedure and policy which states that sex workers should be treated as victims of hate crime and, at the time of my fieldwork, had senior champions of this policy. However, there is a way

to go in raising awareness, promoting the policy across the force and embedding sex workers in wider hate crime policies and practices.

At the time of my fieldwork, the proactive involvement of the Unity Team in the policing of rape and serious sexual assaults committed against sex workers was playing a key role in ensuring the maintenance of quality investigation and victim support for sex worker victims of those crimes (to be discussed further Chapter Eight). The hate crime policy was introduced to ensure an enhanced response for all crimes which may be investigated by a range of units or neighbourhood areas. A concern is that if SIGMA is less active in investigating and monitoring crimes against sex workers, and some officers are not aware of their force's formal hate crime policy, the enhanced response in cases of other crimes - such as harassment, physical assaults, robbery and harassment - may not be put in place.

One Unity officer reflected on what could happen to the efficacy of their work if the hate crime policy was ever lost:

I actually think we could still do what we are doing in terms of serious sexual violence without the hate crime model, because of the dedicated team. But the problem if you lost the hate crime model, would be those offences that don't reach the threshold of what our team deal with, assaults, robberies, criminal damage, and public order offences. You know they would not be dealt with to the same level ... we would lose a lot for the precursory offences or lower level offences. A murder will always get a gold standard response and a rape will get the response from the Unity Team. It's the slap, the assault, the throwing of a missile, the theft or the robberies that perhaps wouldn't get the gold standard of approach if the hate crime model was not adopted or retained. (PI613)

Whilst the hate crime policy has not yet led to the full integration of sex workers into hate crime procedures in the force, it has had some important and progressive effects that could be lost if the policy was discontinued. Indeed I would argue the impact of what I refer to in this thesis as the 'Merseyside hate crime approach' could be much greater if there was further integration. Despite this lack of full operational integration, Merseyside Police's hate crime policy has had a number of advantages for addressing crimes against sex workers. It has also influenced national police guidance on both the sex work and hate portfolio areas (College of Policing 2014; National Police Chief's Council 2016). Chapter Seven now explores sex workers' experiences and views about approaching crimes against sex workers as hate crime.

Chapter Seven: Treating crimes against sex workers as hate crime - sex worker perspectives

Introduction

This chapter details the key themes and findings about sex worker perspectives on hate crime which emerged from the NVivo analysis of the interview data relating to hate crime. It outlines sex worker awareness, understanding and views about Merseyside Police's sex work and hate crime policy. It examines what views and attitudes sex workers have towards treating crimes against sex workers as hate crime. A key finding is that the majority of current and former sex workers interviewed supported Merseyside's approach, with some cautionary reservations key being that treating crimes against sex workers may risk reinforcing difference when what was wanted was equal treatment.

A considerable body of research, covered in the literature review has explored sex workers' experience of violence none has directly asked sex workers if they think sex workers can be victims of hate crime and if they personally have been victims of hate crime due to their sex worker status, this research did that, although with a small sample of predominantly female street sex workers. The overwhelming majority of sex workers interviewed felt sex workers could be victims of hate crime and that they themselves had experienced hate crime due to their status as a sex worker, with targeted victimisation being a lived reality.

Current and former sex workers' awareness and understanding of hate crime

Sixty two per cent of current and former sex workers interviewed had heard of the general concept of hate crime, with a section who were not familiar with the concept. Amongst those sex workers who had heard of the concept of hate crime this tended to mean to them crimes committed out of prejudice against groups such as black, migrant, ethnic minority groups and members and gay people. These were the groups most commonly referred to by interviewees hence the most common understanding of the meaning of hate crime was crime motivated by racism or homophobia. The following were illustrative of the responses to 'What do you understand by hate crime?'

You mean like homophobic crime and racial crime? (SU5)

Well, racism and stuff like that (SU6)

Like racism or something? (SU8)

Yet some women did immediately refer to incidents involving sex workers as well as recognised established hate crime groups:

I think a hate crime like, it wouldn't really have to do with working girls. It could be like people could hate people like racism, do you know what I mean? But I think mainly it probably sounds like they hate working girls. They think they're filthy and dirty, they sound as if they think oh well, they're disgusting. (SU14)

One woman when asked about what she associated with the word hate crime, referred to specific cases of sex worker murder and also incidents of hostility she had experienced:

It brings to mind the people ... the case where Hanane and Pauline were chopped up, that guy used to walk past me ... I used to ask him for business and he used to go "I don't do business" and be really horrible. I was so lucky he didn't do me, he was really horrible. I've had that as well "Do you want business, love? What did you say to me?" (raised voice). Do you want business? You fucking dirty bitch". I've been threatened and all kinds. I've got into a car after agreeing business and the guy didn't like me and he said. "Put your seat belt on, we're going to the police station. I can't stand you prostitutes getting in my car all the time so we're going",

blah, blah, blah. "Drive me to the police station and I'll tell them exactly what you have just propositioned me with". (SU1)

Another participant referred to race hate and the high profile race hate murder of Anthony Walker, aged 18, in July 2005 in Huyton, Merseyside, she also made a reference to vigilantes who target sex workers:

A hate crime is like coz of the colour of your skin, that's a hate crime, isn't it? That lad who got murdered in Huyton, that was a hate crime. (SU17)

Those sex workers who had been victims of hate crime through themselves belonging to and identifying with an established hate crime group tended to have a clearer knowledge and understanding of hate crime and were more reflective.

Had you heard of the concept of hate crime? (Interviewer)

Yeah because not being funny (laughs) I'm black and years ago someone was calling me names because of my colour. She smashed the windows on me and she admitted it and everything. I actually felt sorry for her because she was going to lose her tenancy and everything, and I dropped the charges in the end. Recently someone and their partner, I got punched in the road they'd been coming up, two, three o'clock in the morning, and I actually spoke to a Sergeant and because they actually heard them call me nigga, it's a group three of them screaming and all that. The police heard them and I had to speak to the Sergeant and said I didn't want anything doing but if it happened again I would. So yes, I do know what hate crime is. (SU19)

A transgender woman who identified herself as having been a victim of homophobic hate crime gave her definition of hate crime; she did include street sex workers in this definition:

A hate crime to me is words or actions to hurt someone because of the minority group, they're a minority group they're in, a visible minority usually - so black, gender choice, sexual orientation, sex work. I think for sex work it has to be a visible minority. I don't think a normal heterosexual white female walking down the street getting raped is a hate crime - two men holding hands getting attacked is a hate crime, someone being attacked because of their gender is a hate crime, someone being attacked because of the colour of their skin is a hate crime, because of their lifestyle choice is a hate crime. (SU3)

One respondent defined hate crime as people having a problem with you because of 'what you do or what you take' and included drug-using status, this was a factor that came up in a number of interviews when women were describing reasons for motivations for violent and other crime and harassment against sex workers, particularly street sex workers:

Well, to me, it's people that have got a problem with you because of what you do, or what you take and they go after you. I got beaten up at the top of Islington. X (boyfriend) was going to score for us and I walked down there - was a gang of kids sitting on the grass embankment and they saw me and two lads ran over grabbed me by my hair and went "Right you dirty little smack head, we're going to show you" and that to me is like hate crime. (SU18)

A number of current and former street sex workers identified drug use as another social marker which could generate hostile attitudes and violence. UK studies of the relationship and problem drug use show a high percentage of female street sex workers have problem drug and alcohol use, with much higher levels of problem heroin and crack use amongst street sex workers compared to off-street (Jeal and Salisbury 2007; May and Hunter 2006, this is reflected in Merseyside studies (Campbell 2002).

This will be discussed further later in the chapter, when I argue sex worker experiences of hate crime highlight the intersectionality of various forms of identity and hate crime to which some theorists have drawn attention (Chakraborti and Garland 2012; Mason-Bish 2015 Meyer 2010) and which reflect the complex lived relations of hate crime for those people who are members of multiple hate crime groups.

There was a group of sex workers who said they had not heard of hate crime but when I provided an explanation this prompted comments and indicated some level of prior awareness or associations with the concept of hate crime:

It's like crimes against groups attacked because they're black or gay. (Interviewer)

Right like the Hitler sign and all that. (SU16)

This previous participant associated hate crime with far right groups. The next participant who initially said they did not know what hate crime was went on to associate hate crime with a less established hate crime group:

It's crimes committed against a particular group who are visible or identifiable minority. (Interviewer)

It's just like what are they called, Goths and stuff. You know people target at them and it's wrong. (SU22)

Awareness of the sex work and hate crime policy

Only one respondent had heard of the sex work and hate crime policy:

Merseyside Police are the first force in the country to say that they're going to treat and investigate crimes against sex workers as they were hate crimes. Had you heard about that? (Interviewer)

I'd seen that, yeah. (SU6)

This participant was still working as an escort, had been in contact with Armistead over some years initially when she had worked in the parlours and more recently with the Routes Out project when she was getting involved in volunteering and training to work in homelessness and other social care work.

The large majority of current and former sex workers interviewed were unaware that Merseyside Police included sex workers in the hate crime groups and so were not aware of the police policy to treat crimes against sex workers as hate crime:

Had you heard about that hate crime policy before today? (Interviewer)
No, no. (SU18)

Hate crime to me is like racist attacks things along them lines, homophobia you know things along them lines but I didn't know it included sex workers no. (SU20)

The majority of participants were aware that police were making some sort of efforts to take crimes against sex workers seriously, working with the 'Armistead Street' support project, as has been discussed in Chapter Five. They felt police attitudes towards and treatment of sex workers was improved, but they had not picked up on the hate crime element and showed little awareness of this. This also meant many sex workers were not aware of the significance of this within Merseyside Police force, i.e. that if a sex worker is treated as a victim of hate crime a set of procedures should be triggered and they can have certain expectations of the treatment they should receive from the police. Also for an incident or crime to be classed as hate linked it has to be identified by the victim, police officer or another person involved as being motivated by prejudice and if sex workers are not aware they can be included in this policy they may not think to raise this when reporting a crime. This finding of a lack of awareness amongst the group of current and former sex workers interviewed, predominantly who had in the past or at the time of interview worked in street sex work, shows that at the time of my fieldwork there was a long way to go to raise awareness about the sex work and hate crime policy amongst sex workers in all sectors. Yet this does provides the opportunity for constructive, renewed proactive partnership work and joint initiatives between Merseyside Police, 'Armistead Street' and the other multi-agency partnerships which support strategic and operational developments on sex work and hate crime. Such efforts could more proactively include off-street and internet-based sex workers as well as street sex workers and male female and transgender sex workers.

It is perhaps not surprising that in the early years of this policy the work has concentrated on street sex workers due to a number of factors: the levels of violence against street sex workers, the focus of outreach and support work on street sex work with no commissioned service for off-street sex workers in Merseyside since 2008; and the specialist ISVA being located in a project that was working predominantly with street sex workers.

Sex worker support for the hate crime policy

Whilst a key finding was that the large majority of sex workers had not been aware of this policy until it was discussed at interview the reaction from the large majority of women was overwhelmingly positive, and there was a great deal of support from sex workers in this study for this policy. Including sex workers alongside other groups who were considered victims of hate crime made sense to the large majority of participants in that they felt sex workers fitted definitions of hate crime applied to established hate crime groups and they were targeted as a group by hostile individuals. The following four quotations illustrate that spontaneous support and acceptance on learning about the policy:

No I didn't know that, is that a fact? Is it tantamount in stone? ... Well I support that .I think it's good ... It's 50 years too late but I support it. (SU11)

Yeah, that's right. That's right, because it is a hate crime. It is. If you're gonna throw things out the window at you, shout at you or come over and punch you for nothing, that is a hate crime - whether it's black, lesbian or sex workers. Yeah, I think that's right, to be honest. (SU13)

Yeah definitely, 100% it makes sense to me. (SU18)

One participant was particularly enthusiastic in her support for the policy and described it as 'powerful':

Merseyside Police have said they want to treat crimes against sex workers as if they were hate crime. What do you think of that? Do you support it? (Interviewer)

It's amazing! It's powerful. It shows the police are now taking a more hands-on approach. They can't pretend anymore that these crimes don't exist, end of story, they do exist! ... Why can't you be comfortable with whoever you are without being hurt, you know what I mean? It's about time, it's about time, that's all I've got to say. (SU5)

For her the policy was about recognition of the crimes committed against sex workers and highlighting that action had to now be taken, that such offences should not be ignored.

Another participant immediately connected with the targeted element of a hate crime:

Yeah, it does make sense and yeah, they are targeted. Girls walk down the streets, one of the working girls get fucking egged, get beaten up: "Oh we'll just go and twat her because she is a working girl". Even the girls on the street you get girls half my age wanting to punch your head in and rob you thinking you're some little dick head. They should put that in that category, I agree totally! (SU9)

One woman described how she saw the policy as part of wider, and what she saw, as positive change amongst the police:

Yeah it makes sense. I think it sounds dead positive because times are changing aren't they. What I've learned from doing this with you as well is times have really changed and that is really positive. Maybe they've got new police in and now and got rid of all the idiots. Because you look back to when I started and the police were a bit bullyish, as bit taking the piss and using their authority and stuff and now I look at it and it's more supportive. (SU17)

Some supported the policy change because it appeared to be working and bringing improvements so at a practical level it was part of the actions taken to bring about change and sex workers did not want to loose something that seemed to be working:

Well, if it's working, yeah. Yeah, it does fit for me ... they've gone about it the right way. Well, it's working because certainly for me with this rape case and the period I was waiting for it to come to trial you know speaking to them they were brilliant. They have done a good thing there. They are treating people with respect. (SU4)

Some saw it as important as part of efforts to protect sex workers from attacks rather than arrest them:

It's right because they are sex workers - they get attacked. They need to do more than picking the girls up, arresting them - as soon as they let them go they'll go straight back on the street. So protect them, not arrest them. Protect them. (SU7)

Others supported if it helped gain equality and fair treatment for sex workers when they are victims of crime including rape:

If it helps, they should do, because we're human beings ...You're a woman, you're human - if you're raped, you're raped, you know what I mean? It shouldn't matter if you're a sex worker or not - you should all be treated equally. But I think most women that are working probably feel the same as me. (SU8)

No, I've not heard about it being a hate crime but I can identify with that, you know, stigma. You get all that. It's not with the outreach teams and the police no more but the public in general. We're vulnerable women ... people need to recognise that we are human beings and we are nice underneath. (SU4)

Both these woman made reference to the humanity of sex workers and one made a direct reference to stigma. In research interviews when women were talking about changes in police attitudes and treatment of sex workers, changes in policing sex work, police responses to crimes against sex workers and sex worker experiences in court, the experience of being treated like a human as a marker of progress was a recurrent theme. This is indicative of the impact of objectifying, stigmatising and dehumanising discourses and social practices that sex workers had experienced and hence the importance in all aspect of the hate crime approach of introducing values and practices which recognised and treated sex worker as humans with full citizenship and equal rights.

One woman was more cautious and reserved judgement on the hate crime policy but did see it as a step in the right direction: *'It's a start, it's a start, isn't it? Lets hope it helps'*. (SU16)

Cautious: equal treatment and fear of labelling

Five sex workers interviewed were critical of the hate crime approach or more accurately expressed some reservations. Four shared similar reasons for their caution, they were wary that the labelling of sex workers as victims of hate crime alongside other groups such as the LGBT community risked putting sex workers 'in a box', reinforcing difference:

So hang on a minute. Is it like putting a label on us again? I'd worry about that. But if it means the police are gonna recognise the violence and do a better job, well, I think it's good. (SU11)

The view was expressed by the following participant that sex workers should ideally just be treated the same as any other members of the community and they were concerned hate crime approach applied differential treatment to sex workers and hence risked treating sex workers as normal and in a different category:

I mean sex working is as old as day dot. Homophobia and racist attacks, even those they've gone on for many years. It's like taking sex workers, especially if you are a street worker, it's like they're taking you away from being your normal man and woman and putting you into a separate group. So take the sex workers away from your average man and woman reporting a crime from their house and put the sex workers with like, you know, it's like they've got to put us in a group with like a bit of controversy about it instead of treating you like a average person who becomes subject to crime. But if that's the way forward so be it, at least they are recognising that we are targeted and we do get crimes against us and just because we're sex workers it doesn't mean we're, you know, so tough that nothing is going to touch us. Because some people have that attitude because we work the street, we've prostituted ourselves, we must be as hard as nails, which is far from the truth. (SU20)

One of the two current escorts interviewed (both had experience of street sex work) saw the policy as differential treatment and wanted 'normal treatment':

Why are they hate crimes when they're just the same? If it's an assault, it's an assault. If it's a rape, it's a rape. How is it hate crime? (SU6)

Merseyside Police, they're saying because of two things. They're saying one, some people target sex workers 'cause of their attitudes and two, they're saying some sex workers are particularly vulnerable, because people target them. (Interviewer)

Yeah, I would say the girls on the streets and stuff, who are taking drugs and that, yeah, 'cause they're not in control of – 'cause they're off their heads on something. That yeah, I suppose ... just think it's a bit of a weird thing to call it hate crime. Instead of just calling it an assault or a rape, does it matter what the name of the job is? ... I think if I went to the police and if it was a work thing, if I had it dealt with as a hate crime I think I'd be quite offended. I'd just want it dealt with normally (with emphasis), like, no thing on because I'm an escort or a prostitute or whatever they want to call me. ... But I suppose there are girls, aren't there, that are vulnerable and stuff that are doing that that could be doing with a bit more kid gloves treatment or whatever if that happened to them? They're not in a good place or whatever. But if that was me, yeah, I'd just want to deal with it normally. (SU6)

She had strong concerns that this approach could lead to a focus on her escorting status, rather than her being treated 'normally' like other citizens, she wanted to be treated the same. Yet, she did recognise the usefulness of a sensitive approach for those sex workers who she defined as 'vulnerable' women, particularly pointing to women street working with drug problems.

The other participant who was working as an escort when interviewed and who was the one transgender women participating had mixed feelings, welcoming the policy on the one hand but also worried about another label being placed on sex workers. She referred to the 'contradiction' that was taking place a contradiction which has been identified and discussed in hate crime scholarship in relation to hate crime groups (Roulstone et al. 2011);

I don't know. I think it's a good thing that, yes, it's being recognised as hate crime. But I think it could also be putting people under an umbrella and a label as well. It's kind of saying it's a hate crime, I don't know, it's kind of a contradiction. I think it's fab that it's been recognised and things are going to be getting done, but it's putting working girls into a pigeonhole at the same time. (SU3)

Would that be the same for you with LGBT hate crime, would you see that as pigeonholing? (Interviewer)

I think it would be slightly different. I mean I was a victim of a hate crime last year. I had 'Man' daubed on my front door and I reported it to SIGMA and it was all good and I was treated very well. However, I think if it was a prostitute, if someone like the ISVA was there, I think it would be ok, but you know walking into, say, Stanley Road Police Station and saying you've been attacked because you're a prostitute, because it's not just police officers on the desk now, it's some civvies as well. So unless the police are educated by someone like Armistead going in and saying this is how you deal with it, it's all ignorance. I don't think now if they look down their nose at you, it's done purposely - I think it's done through lack of knowledge and ignorance. (SU3)

This participant engaged in a sophisticated discussion about the hate crime policy, reflecting on her own experiences of homophobic and transgender hate crime.

Similar debates about whether hate crime policies can reinforce difference or are a useful practical approach which make visible discrimination and ensure improved policing responses to groups who have taken place about established hate crime groups within academic research. (Roulstone et al. 2011; Roulstone and Mason Bish 2013).

A fifth participant with reservations was cynical more widely about the extent of police change and was wary that the hate crime policy could be merely tokenism:

Merseyside Police have said they will treat crimes against sex workers as if they were hate crimes. They say it means the police have to take it seriously (Interviewer)

But we've had all this before. I don't feel a change. (SU7)

But despite this questioning of and concerns about the policy, four of these women stated that Merseyside Police should not change the policy; they were not pushing for sex workers to be removed from the hate crime groups (the fifth did not express a view or call for a change to the policy). Their reasons for wanting this retention were two fold. Firstly, they could identify with the meaning of defining crimes against sex workers as hate crime (i.e. they all were of the conviction that sex workers were targeted due to their sex working status). Secondly, they were observing that it was possibly having some positive outcomes; it was working and getting results (in increased reporting, improved police attitudes, increased prosecutions) and hence there was anxiety that changing the policy could jeopardise progress made. These participants seemed to assume that change had not reached a point where it could be guaranteed that sex workers should be treated the same as any other member of the public so measures such the hate crime policy could help.

Yet, these reservations bring into sharp focus the need for careful thought about how to promote and represent this policy and should be considered in future development of the policy in Merseyside and other area of the UK. Some sex workers will be wary of a policy especially if they understand it as labelling sex workers and reinforcing difference and providing differential treatment rather than equal treatment in the mainstream. This reflects debates about the appropriateness and implication of treating crimes against a range of minority groups as hate crime (Mason Bish 2015; Roulstone et al. 2011).

For sex workers in Merseyside, these comments illustrate the importance of police and other agencies developing the policy further to be sensitive to issues of labelling and difference and at all times considering how they

ensure sex workers are constructed and included as equally members of the community in Merseyside. It is important that mechanisms for ongoing consultation with all sex workers (including male sex workers as well as female and trans sex workers, indoor and internet-based sex workers, - sectors which have been less engaged by the authorities) achieve more comprehensive view of sex worker experiences; and the views of the Merseyside policy, to enable more inclusive participation of sex workers.

Personal experiences and understanding of hate crime: hostility, targeting and vulnerability

Hostility and derogatory attitudes: 'lowest of the low'

The key reasons for majority support for the hate crime policy emergent from women's comments was that defining crimes against sex workers as hate crime connected to their understanding of the motivations for crimes against sex workers generally and particularly their own experiences of violent and other crime. Describing the policy to participants often prompted women to describe hate crime and hate incidents they had experienced or witnessed as sex workers (this was before they were directly asked if they had been a victim of sex work hate crime and what type of incidents they had experienced); as such the policy was seen as valid.

Respondents described incidents of harassment and crime they had experienced which they saw as hate crime and they connected to hostile and derogatory attitudes towards sex workers. When, during interviews I directly asked what evidence participants could present to show that the incidents and crimes they had described as experiences of hate crime were hate crime, the response was often astonishment that I was asking. To the women, the core elements that for them made these hate crimes - purposeful targeting of sex workers, hostility or prejudice towards sex workers, and offenders perceiving sex workers as vulnerable and taking advantage of that - were obvious.

The majority of current and former street sex workers in this study, when asked in interview generally about the work-related crime they had experienced, described high levels of harassment and violence as well as experiencing a range of crimes and harassment (including robbery, being held against will, physical assault including with weapon, threats to kill, rape and sexual assault), reflecting the types of crime found in national (Hester and Westmorland 2014) and Liverpool-based studies of street sex work (Campbell 2002). Verbal abuse and objects and substances thrown from cars and passers-by was described as commonplace and, for some, part of the territory of street sex work that you usually dealt with yourself rather than report to the police - suggesting that this category of hate crime was massively under-reported to the police.

Current and former sex workers interviewed were asked specifically if they personally had experienced hate crime; the majority felt they had. They described a range of experiences of hate crime; interestingly respondents were more likely to initially refer to verbal abuse and abuse and objects being thrown from cars or passers-by, gangs of youths and other individuals on the street scene. Some women did, though, identify an element of sex-worker-specific hostility and prejudice in most of the violent and other crime they had experienced.

The following participants directly linked hate crime to the level of violence they had experienced and saw this as a result of perpetrators holding derogatory and prejudicial attitudes towards sex workers as being 'lesser':

So what about this treating crimes against sex workers as if they were hate crimes? (Interviewer)

I think it's good. Because the amount of stick and stones you get. And people think because you do what you do, they can what they want to you because you're lower than the low in some peoples eyes. ... I've got loads of that and didn't report it. (SU19)

It happens so much. I have been like at the bus stop, right, and I've had like girls, not my age but say young girls, X's (daughters) age. They walk past and go "Smack heads, prostitutes. You should be ashamed at yourself." You know what I mean? "Fucking hell, I'd kill my mother if she was out here like". (SU14)

One dual-heritage participant, a former street sex worker, identified that she had been a victim of sex work hate crime and explained this through hostile attitudes which reduced sex workers to 'nothing';

Yeah, I have ... Because I'm a sex worker. The kids calling me names and chasing me down the street and throwing stuff at me, even men beating me up ... In their little heads, they probably thought, "It's ok if I do that to her because she's a prostitute!" (SU17)

Do you think there was that psychology? (Interviewer)

Yeah, definitely. It's like, you know, that psychology in your head - you can justify things, do you know what I mean? It's like, "I raped a prostitute so it's not really rape. I thumped a prostitute because she's a prostitute - she's nothing, she deserves it." That's how they justify it in their head. Which isn't right at all. (SU17)

The transgender women who participated referred to derogatory language, verbal abuse and object-throwing she had experienced in the past when street sex working as possible hate crime; she was still pondering whether such acts fitted the hate crime definition, as this interview extract highlights:

You mentioned you have experienced hate crime as a trans person, have you ever experienced hate crime as a sex worker? (Interviewer)

Just kids throwing, eggs and stones, but not really, no. (SU3)

Right, so not really? (Interviewer)

Well, yeah, "You slag", "Get off the streets", throwing rotten eggs at you and all that, I suppose that is a hate crime, isn't it? So, yes, it is tantamount to hate crime, so yes, it does, I have. I think for me, because I had worked for so long before I went onto the streets in Liverpool, I'd become kind of hardened to it, so it was kind of I was okay with it. But if you get young girls coming onto it, new, fresh faced, to fund a drug habit, then it's different, do you know what I mean? If it's vulnerable women who are attacked and vilified for doing what they need to do, then that is hate crime. (SU3)

This respondent described the impact of persistent experiences of hate crime, with the process of normalisation, and learning to 'deal with it' which research with other hate crime groups has illustrated. This reflects findings in some studies of sex work and violence which describe how high levels of violence can for some sex workers lead to taking for granted harassment and violence (Barnard 1993; O'Neill and Barbaret 2000). This does not equate to an acceptance of such hate crime.

Another participant referred to verbal abuse and objects thrown from cars she related this to people judging sex workers:

I've had eggs thrown at me. You get it all the time. You get people shouting from cars and that. A hell of a lot it happens. It makes you feel terrible. People like that, they're just narrow minded. They don't know, people like that they don't understand the situation. They just judge you for what you're doing - they want to put you down, they don't know why you're doing it. I feel sorry for them, most of them. I do what I need to do. (SU8)

Some participants did though take account of a wider range of crimes, including both physical assaults and sexual assault, when responding to the direct question of whether had they experienced hate crime in their sex work:

Yeah I've been nearly run down...over the years, I've been called prostitute, junkie, whilst I was working. You get gangs of fellas and girls in the cars shouting, "Agh, dirty prostitute". There was one time, and I never reported it to the police, it was in the past, there was this fella and he had a white van. I went in for business and he forced my head down on him, punched me in the face, and then threw me out of the van saying like "dirty whore" and tried to run me over. I crawled up an embankment and it was too steep for him. (SU4)

One participant, when asked if she had experienced hate crime, referred specifically to a physical assault she had earlier described where the offender used language derogatory to sex workers:

That fella that hit me, it was horrible. I've never wet myself and that time I did - it was horrible. Why didn't he just say to me, "If you don't do it, I'll do this"? He just hit me straight away, he took me off guard. He said, "If you

bite or do anything I'll stab you, you dirty whore". He showed me a knife in his sock. He was horrible - he knew how to humiliate as well. He has major issues with women. (SU2)

One respondent described how groups targeted and toyed with sex workers, this behaviour emerging from derogatory attitudes and objectification:

But you get gangs of scallies who go out there and think, "Oh, we'll pick up a fucking dirty brass." And when that girl gets to the point of saying she's going to do it, she's only going to get a fiver and if she doesn't, she's going to get slapped everywhere, because what difference does it make, you're a fucking piece of meat there for them to use anyway? "I've paid you!!". "You ain't paid me to beat me!" Do you know what I mean? But that's how it happens. But it should be treated like that because we are treated like gay people are treated. ...but a prostitute and a gay person doesn't deserve it. (SU9)

Such descriptions by women of crimes they had experienced clearly show that many women understood these as hate crime because they felt they were not just incidental victims but had been targeted because of their sex working. Many referred to having experienced target victimisation repeatedly and described anti-sex-worker hostility expressed in language. This highlights that the objectifying discourses identified by many theorists, discourse of sex workers as dirty as disposable, were present in offender language of 'dirty whore, dirty prostitute'. As we have seen, several women referred to how offenders were expressing anger and hostility to sex workers; SU2 described how the attacker she described 'knew how to humiliate'. This use of crime to humiliate and 'put people in their place' is a core defining element of hate crime for Perry (2001).

The majority of sex workers offered support for the sex work and hate crime policy because it connected to experiences of hostility, hatred and aggression they had experienced or they felt were directed towards sex workers due to negative attitudes, prejudice and stigma.

And people think because you do what you do they can do what they want to you because you're lower than the low in some peoples eyes. (SU19)

One woman was pleased to hear about the hate crime policy because in her view a lot of men who attack sex workers 'hate the working girls'; she held that view because of her own experiences:

That fella that attacked me and punched me in the face, I was the lucky one coz he done it to other girls as well he put girls in hospital he broke someone's collarbone and ribs and everything. He was getting more violent each time. And I think at that time because I didn't really look like a user and I said "Please don't hurt me, don't hurt me face I've got to go home to me kids" I think he was a bit lenient on me. Even though he punched me and kicked me to the floor and everything it's nothing compared to what the other girls went through. In some cases he didn't even do anything sexual he just battered them until they were nearly dead. He done it because they were sex workers (SU2)

Sex worker targeting: easy targets and vulnerability

All participants were of the view that many offenders targeted sex workers specifically because of their sex working status. Some specifically described what they saw as the premeditated element of this targeting:

Before you said, "I've been set up", you said, "some people plan it" and that, do you think some people target sex workers? (Interviewer)

Like some people they throw eggs at you. It's not like they're going to just have a box of eggs in the car - they've brought them eggs purposefully with them to come and throw at you. "What a fun night! Let's go and throw eggs at them". I know most people don't like sex workers walking up and down but come on, "Let's go and buy a box of eggs and throw them at girls", what a fun night that is! (Said sarcastically). (SU19)

Well they do go for us because we're sex workers - they think we're nothing. I've been badly attacked. ... one they just beat me up and my leg was fractured and my knee was dislocated - they literally bounced all over me leg. It was lads driving up and down, just divvy lads and they dropped one off round the corner, and this was daylight as well, morning was coming, he was only about 18 or 19, a red headed lad he was, and they were in a posh car, a blacked out car ... I'm about to cross over at the lights, something told me to turn round and he's running and knocked me off me feet ... They had been looking for a sex worker to attack (SU16)

Some sex workers also mentioned that sex workers could find themselves targeted in reprisal attacks, regardless of whether they had been involved in the incident the person was seeking retaliation for such attacks against sex workers as a group is something many respondents had experienced or witnessed.

No, it should be classed as that because we are targeted. I mean ok, you might not agree with me saying this, but say one of the girls who is naughty, she could go out and rob someone tomorrow night. I could go out tonight and get the beef for it because I'm a prostitute - he ain't arsed that I'm not the same girl who robbed him, but he'll take it out on you. They'll come back. (SU9)

When exploring why this targeting occurred, the majority of participants described the hostility towards sex workers as a motivating factor shaping offenders attitudes and actions (as already described in the previous section). This was very much to the fore for women in understanding and explaining the targeting of sex workers, indeed, as we have seen, targeting and hostility were often closely interrelated in their narratives.

Sex workers described how they were vulnerable to such targeting for a range of reasons, including underlying hostility to sex workers but also the fact they were identifiable and easy targets because of their presence in specific public spaces. Participants who had predominantly worked in street sex work described the particular visibility and easy access to people working on the street:

When you're on the street, everyone can see you. Them attacking working girls it's easy for them - they know where they'll find us. They can come up to us, pretend they want business or just throw things. (SU1)

This visibility and locality was partially why current and former sex workers described perpetrators as perceiving sex workers as 'easy targets', vulnerable to targeted hate crime. Within the narratives of sex workers was a repeated theme that sex workers are targeted as a group because

perpetrators think they have a greater chance of getting away with it than with the general public because sex workers will not report it to the police and if they do they will not be taken seriously:

Why do you think men like him target sex workers? (Interviewer)

Because we're easy targets working girls, aren't we? He's probably thinking of the stigma from the early '80s, '90s ... it might have been up to like 2000, the way the police treat the girls and they didn't actually report half the rapes that went on. He's probably thinking it's still like (that), not thinking there's been a big turnaround since the early days to now where the girls can go to the police and report it and get something done about it. He probably hasn't heard about 'Ugly Mugs'. Well, he has now (laughter), but he might not have done then. If he had, he wouldn't have dreamt of doing it, would he? (SU4)

It's what I said to my friend - he must have planned to do what he done that night, yeah, definitely. I don't think they go out thinking they're going paying. They must know what they're doing - they must plan and they must think they'll get away with it all together. They think, "There's no way they'll go to the bizzies". (SU21)

I've even had ones who have said like, "What you going to do about it? You're not going to the police, they won't do anything your a prozzie". You know, stuff like that? (SU2)

Some participants, as well as referring to a perception that the police will not respond to crimes against sex workers, referred to other vulnerabilities, such as drug use and estrangement from families, which perpetrators exploited:

Do you think there are people who target sex workers? (Interviewer)

Yeah definitely!! Because they think, because they're out there doing what they do so the police aren't going to take them seriously for one. Half of them are druggies so people just think, "Oh, it's just another junkie on the street and a lot of them have cut ties with the family, they're homeless so if they go missing, who's going to notice they've gone missing??" They are taking advantage of all that. (SU18)

Do you think people who are sex workers get targeted because they are sex workers? Do you get targeted because you're a sex worker? (Interviewer)

Yes, obviously because we're out there so we're vulnerable straight away. Because if I wasn't vulnerable, I wouldn't be out there but I am and need money for drugs or food or whatever. ...and obviously punters know that and punters, some of them, like the one who did that to Anne Marie and the one who did that to X, obviously they're just sickos - that's hate crime. The ones who've robbed my money off me and things like that, they've handed money over and then they take it back off me that must be a hate thing. I'd rather him say, "I'm not fucking pay you" at the start, but it's mind games, do you know what I mean, as well? (SU12)

This respondent linked vulnerability to the social status of sex workers and the pressures of drug use in the sense of offenders being aware of these pressures; she also pointed to a offenders for whom in her view hatred and hostility are part of the motivation for murder.

As outlined in Chapter Two there is indeed a very strong body of evidence to show that crimes against sex workers are still massively under-reported in the UK as well as globally, and the reasons for this are linked to criminalisation, an antagonistic relationship between sex workers and the police, and a failure of police in many localities to protect sex workers and take crimes against them seriously.

Several respondents felt that one of the reasons for the direct targeting of sex workers by a particular group of offenders, for example those intent on robbery, was the awareness and calculation by those offenders that sex workers would be carrying money and that they would be in isolated places:

He was targeting the working girls because he thought they had money, but he didn't know – I'd only just come out. He only got £22 off me. That's enough for his weed and that. (SU13)

They know you want the money, you going somewhere secluded and quiet so obviously for some people it's perfect. (SU19)

They know you've got money. They're watching you and if they see you getting in a car and then you get dropped back off half an hour later they know you've got money. That's why I always used to separate my money. (SU18)

A range of researchers have noted that some offenders target sex workers in order to commit robbery because they believe that they will be carrying money and doing so in isolated contexts - for example, on the street with no one else present. Research on street and indoor sex worker robbery has found that sex workers are particularly vulnerable to robbery, not only because they are perceived to have cash but because offenders think sex workers will not report such robbery and this is the case for sex workers in indoor as well as street settings (Kinnell 2008). I argue this is part of the widely 'perceived vulnerability' motivating sex worker robbery.

The Stern report (Home Office 2010) flagged up particular vulnerabilities that put some people at greater risk of experiencing rape. They pointed to research carried out by the Metropolitan Police Service overviewing five years of rape allegations data, which found four out of five victims of rape were:

... either under 18 years old, are raped in circumstances involving drug and/or alcohol use, have mental health problems or are raped in circumstances related to domestic violence' (pg 110). What the report did was link this heightened risk of victimisation for vulnerable group to issues of power 'vulnerability concerns us a lot ... the people least able to protect themselves and assert their right to refuse non-consensual sex are those with less self-confidence and in a position of less power, those who are dependent on others for a range of reasons. (: 114)

The report also found that groups with particular vulnerabilities were often repeat victims; this was reflected in this study, many participants had experienced repeat work related rapes and sexual assaults.

As outlined in Chapter Six, police officers also saw sex workers as victims of hate crime, who were specifically targeted because: perpetrators believed they were 'easy targets' due to a perception that the police would do very little; they can gain easy access to vulnerable victims; and, in the case of robbery, because they will have cash.

So hate crimes against sex workers, and the targeting that was part of this, was understood by sex workers in two key, linked ways: that offenders who targeted sex workers held hostile and prejudicial attitudes to sex workers linked to wider 'othering' discourses; or some took advantage of a range of perceived vulnerabilities experienced which they believed made sex workers easy targets and increased their own chances of getting away with their crimes. Examples of such vulnerabilities were the easy access to street sex workers and their isolated working, and the pressures of problem drug/alcohol use, having money on them in this setting, and a poor relationship with the police.

Chakraborti and Garland's (2012) concept of 'perceived vulnerability' to understand hate crime targeting is relevant here, with hate crime offenders targeting groups who they perceive for a range of reasons as vulnerable and they can harass, commit crimes against and get away with it. This concept does not see these vulnerabilities as inherent and automatically putting people at risk. I would argue that it is important to stress that that vulnerability and perceived vulnerability that perpetrators exploit is structurally generated; it is part of the 'structural violence' that sex workers face globally (ICRSE 2014).

Sex work misogyny and gender-based hate crime

A large theoretical and research literature on violence against women supports the argument that violence against women is generated by gender discrimination and misogyny. More recently, gender-based hate crime specifically has been recognised and debated (Mason-Bish 2014; Chakroboti and Garland 2015).

Approximately one quarter of participants felt that a proportion of the hate crime that sex workers experience was motivated by hostility to women more generally. The following quotations illustrate this perspective and also show how some participants identified misogyny as a feature in the motivations for the murder of female sex workers:

Oh, target them. Yeah, I think women haters ... Like the Yorkshire Ripper did not like women. So then, because to be honest with you, a fella said to me one day, outside the bus stop two years ago, he went, "I hate prostitutes. You make me sick!" But he asked me to do business, as if I'd go with him then! (SU14)

Some men do it to women because they hate women, don't they, just attack prostitutes? Look at the one who murdered prostitutes - he never killed anyone except prostitutes. The one who killed all those women in Ipswich. (SU2)

Participants had differing views on whether rapes and sexual assaults had a sex work hate crime element. Several sex workers deliberated about whether rapes and sexual assaults they had experienced connected to their sex working and were sex worker hate crimes, or whether these were gender-based hate crimes, i.e. misogynistic hostility targeted at women generally. For example, one woman, who was clear sex workers were victims of hate crime, having had experienced such herself, explained that she did not think of rape as a hate crime specifically against sex workers:

But I wouldn't think of rape. There is hate crime for sex workers, but I wouldn't necessarily of thought of the rape. Rapes like a hate crime against women in general, isn't it? (SU1)

Reflecting another view, the following participant did feel some of the rapes she had experienced were motivated by sex worker hate:

The people who have raped you, would you see them as committing hate crime or not? (Interviewer)

Some of them, yeah. A couple of them, yeah. Because you can see the anger in their faces, the disgust in their face. They're raping you and at the same time they're despising you. You can see it in their face - they're disgusted in what you're doing but they're raping you. Yeah, some of them rob you as well - beat you up to take your money off you. I've had that many a time. That's aggravated street robbery to me (SU18).

She used the words 'despise' and 'disgust'; this was her lived experience of the feelings towards her as a sex worker during some rapes. She also described her sense of the direct targeting of sex workers for their money.

Another sex worker immediately saw rapes she had experienced as hates crimes due to her sex worker status, motivated by prejudice; she made specific reference to the hate language directed towards her as a sex worker and identified 'the reason why we get it (is) because we're sex workers':

Back to hate crime. Do you feel the things you experienced the rapes and the attacks were any of them because you were a sex worker? (Interviewer)

Yeah, all of them were. I know, because I was called a dirty brass. (SU7)

So it came with that sort of hate language? (Interviewer)

Yeah, that's the reason why we get it - because we're prostitutes. (SU7)

Another respondent made the link to misogyny in relation to a physical assault she had experienced but she also saw this offender holding particular attitudes to women who sell sexual services:

I think they don't like women. I'd seen it in his eyes when he was strangling me; he didn't like women. Or he doesn't like them selling themselves to someone, 'cause he said, 'Is your life worth £20?' But even

before that, I'd seen it in his eyes. He just doesn't – before I got knocked out you see – he just didn't like that. (SU13)

This discussion about whether sex worker prejudice or gender-based hate crime motivates sex worker rape is perhaps best understood in the context of the growing recognition in hate crime theory that people can experience multiple forms of hate crime and hate crime motives can be multifarious; hate crime is intersectional. Indeed, my research found that this was the case for sex workers. Also an important issue in relation to sex work is that there is a section of the sex worker community who are male and do experience sex-worker-related violence and identify this as target hate crime. Understanding sex worker violence as only a product of misogyny ignores the experience of male sex workers. An intersectional framework is more inclusive and allows for the combination of gender-based (Mason-Bish 2014) and sex-worker-based hate crime, including recognition of hostility towards sex workers as experienced by male sex workers. Indeed, it recognises how sex worker hate crime can intersect with other forms of hate crime.

Sex worker hate crime and intersectionality

My research strengthens arguments proposed by some hate crime theorists who are increasingly identifying the intersectionality of different forms of hate crime, in order to make sense of the complex experiences some people have whose identity cuts across what have been traditionally approached as distinctive hate crime groups and who experience multiple forms of hate crime (Mason-Bish 2010, 2014). Some researchers have highlighted how hate crime is experienced differently within hate crime groups, shaped by factors such as socio-economic status and race (Meyer 2010). In my research, the intersection of sex work hate crime with hate crime targeted at people with drug and alcohol problems and race hate crime was described by participants. A number of quotations in this chapter

have already touched on respondents' views and experiences which illustrate how these can operate and be experienced simultaneously.

Several women flagged up negative attitudes and hostility towards drug users as an additional or concurrent factor fuelling crimes against particularly drug-using street sex workers. It is important to stress that all but one women interviewed were current or former drug users who had had or still were experiencing problem class A drug use or alcoholism and the majority had been or were street sex workers. Hence, this experience of targeted victimisation linked to drug use is likely to be more salient for this group than sex workers in other sectors of sex work where research has shown drug and alcohol use is less prevalent (Jeal and Salisbury 2007; May and Hunter 2006). The following quotations are examples of respondents who directly connected the targeting of sex workers for hate crime to stigmatising discourses and attitudes towards both sex workers and drug users:

Why do you think sex workers get targeted? (Interviewer)

The street girls because of their alcoholism and addiction, they are classed as the - what's the word? The dregs of society. There's myths about us on diseases, because of our addictions and stuff like that, you know. We're thought of as half a human being, that's why they treat us like that. And they think they can get away with treating the sex workers like that. (SU5)

But being a prostitute, they're targeted in all different sorts of ways, because they are not just prostitutes but because they're alcoholics or drugs addicts. Then it comes back to the diseases people think they might be carrying. (SU4)

This following extract from an interview with a woman who had been a street sex worker for over 20 years showed how she immediately related hate crime to various assaults she had experienced which she saw as motivated by hostility to sex workers and drug users:

Oh yeah you get a lot of that...I've had beatings and they've gone, "You dirty smelly, dirty bastard prostitute", "You junkie", and been kicked and all that. And as they're kicking you, they're going, "Dirty, smelly, smack head, prostitute", things like that.

Right, so you get that? (Interviewer)

Yeah you do get it. Gangs of lads, like the kids on the Langey, they were the worse for it. "Fucking prostitutes! You're scum!" And you get a hiding. It wasn't even to rob you - it was to give you a hiding because of what you did, because of what we were, what you were on. (SU18)

Yes it is a hate crime because they are being hated for what they are doing and they are a minority of people. I mean a hate crime isn't so much around them being sex workers but around them being addicts ... I think it kind of links in. You probably get escort haters, but with me doing this I think it's probably more towards the street workers. (SU3)

Two women felt they had experienced hate crime incidents motivated by their sex worker status and their race, both were Black British, one woman describes her experience here:

Have you ever been a victim of hate crime for being a sex worker or any other reason? (Interviewer)

As a sex worker, yeah, I've got abuse off the public - young kids in cars throwing coke at us, you know, eggs and stuff at us. Calling us names. You must have seen it on the block, some of the kids in cars. And they call me "Nigga", "Black whore", everything and being a sex worker both. (SU5)

As the experience of new groups such as sex workers are considered within the frame of hate crime, their experiences throw new light on how the dynamics of hate crime operate, and support the directions in hate crime theory which are allowing for multiple identity and multiple membership of hate crime groups and are constructing models for making sense of hate crime which build in intersectionality.

Conclusions: It's hate crime! Making the case for sex workers as a targeted hate crime group

One of my key findings and theoretical assertions is that three elements - i) hostility/prejudice, ii) targeting and iii) perceived vulnerability - were most salient when current and former sex workers reflected on whether sex workers were victims of hate crime. The evidence from the research presented in this chapter supports the case made in this thesis that sex workers can be victims of hate crime and their experiences fit the components found in a number of definitions of hate crime. The large majority of current and former sex workers themselves who took part in this study felt sex workers were victims of hate. Yet the majority, before taking part in the interview, had not heard that Merseyside Police officially treat sex workers as a hate crime group. Whilst the majority were not aware of the specific policy, they welcomed it; critically, they did so because it instantly made sense to the majority of participants in terms of how they have experienced sex-work-related violence.

Naming crimes against sex workers as hate crime spoke directly to the lived experiences of violence of the majority of current and former sex workers who contributed to this research. The majority of sex workers directly connected violence against sex workers, including incidents they had experienced which they say as motivated by prejudice, 'othering' and the stigmatisation of sex workers. Sex workers expressed this and illustrated it through examples of lived experiences of hate crime, with a clarity and power that social researchers and theorists can only do second hand (as I have in this thesis). Hence I argue sex workers experiences for established academic definitions which emphasise 'othering' and social hierarchies, and which define hate crime as an expression of power and prejudice (Perry 2001). Current and former sex workers narratives also articulated conceptualisations of sex worker experiences of hate crime as a result of

targeted victimisation based on *hostility* towards a group who are perceived by some offenders as *vulnerable*. 'Perceived vulnerability' (Chakraborti and Garland 2012) encompasses what sex workers and police described as one motivating factor for crimes against sex workers, a perception that sex workers are vulnerable firstly because they think sex workers are easy targets because they will not report to the police and secondly because of 'situational vulnerability' - taking advantage of the opportunity to be alone with and attack or rob sex workers. My findings also indicate that sex worker experiences of hate crime vary depending on sex workers' personal and social circumstances, the sector they work within, and their positioning within the wider structural framework where the intersectional dynamics of gender, race, nationality, sexual identity and class operate. This intersectional nature of hate crime was highlighted in the narratives of sex workers whose identity spanned more than one hate crime group, including black British and transgender participants and those who identified targeted hostility based on other characteristics such as problematic drug use and homelessness. These themes are returned to in my concluding Chapter Nine.

Chapter Eight: Improvements in victim support and justice for sex workers

Introduction

Increasing reporting, improving investigation and increasing prosecution of hate crimes has been a key aim of multi-agency and police hate crime policy in the UK. This is in a context where established hate crime groups have had little trust in the police to take seriously and adequately investigate hate crimes committed against them (Hall 2014). Indeed a range of laws are in place in the UK which mean a range of offences become treated as aggravated offences with higher sentencing tariffs if motivated by hostility on the grounds of race and religion. Also, enhanced sentencing can be considered for cases where hostility is based on sexual orientation, disability and transgender identity (Chakraborti and Garland 2015). Whilst sex workers are not beneficiaries of that framework nationally, improving justice for sex worker victims of hate crime has been a key objective of the policing and multi-agency approach in Merseyside. Merseyside's approach has received considerable national attention, not only been because Merseyside Police is the only force to include sex workers in its hate crime policy but because it has demonstrated concrete outcomes, relating to increased reporting of crimes by sex workers, and the investigation and prosecution of crimes against sex workers. Indeed between 2005-2013, Merseyside brought more offenders committing crimes against sex workers before the courts than the majority of other forces in the UK and secured a high conviction rate for these. The conviction rate for crimes against sex workers in Merseyside, reported to police which made it to court from 2007 to June 2011 was 83% and 75% for cases involving rape and sexual offences compared to the then national 'generic' rate of 58% (Stoops and Jones 2011). (See Appendix Nine, in which the cases of 36 offenders charged with committing crimes against sex workers and being brought before the courts - and 36 women receiving justice – are summarised; four descriptive case studies are given in Appendix Ten.)

A significant reason why there has been much interest nationally is because such cases are historically perceived as difficult to prosecute and have also been set against a background of high attrition rates for rape complaints amongst the general population (Home Office 2010).²² Thus, the work done in Merseyside has highlighted effective ways of encouraging reporting and keeping victims engaged in the criminal justice process; there has been interest in learning how the police and other agencies gain the trust of sex workers to report and support them through the criminal justice system, and how police officers specifically had investigated cases.

Exploring with research participants their views about why so many cases have been reported and successfully prosecuted a number of key factors were identified. As well as the improved relationship and trust between sex workers and police discussed in Chapter Five, they described *improved support* for sex worker victims. The role of the specialist Independent Sexual Violence Advisor for sex workers, located in the 'Armistead Street' sex work project, was identified as particularly important in enabling them to receive the support they need and to keep them engaged in the criminal justice system as witnesses. Indeed, the existence of the ISVA role has been identified by the Home Office (2011) as effective good practice in helping to support sex worker victims of crime from report to court, and is a model other areas have replicated (Blair 2011, Campbell and Sanders 2014). This chapter now shares what service users, police and service providers identified as the benefits of the specialist ISVA role and its outcomes, including the importance of the ISVA in addressing crimes against sex workers.

One objective of the Baroness Stern's review of rape (Home Office 2010) was to examine this attrition. Stern noted that only a small proportion of rapes are reported to the authorities but that, once a case comes to court, conviction rates suggests juries are *not* less likely to convict defendants compared to other crimes - with an overall jury conviction rate of '55% for rape from October 2006 to March 2008 across all courts in England and Wales' (Home Office 2010: 16). Thus it was critical to have an approach which supported victims in reporting and remaining engaged in the criminal justice system.

The chapter also highlights the importance for victims of feeling they have had an opportunity for justice, and how convictions are important in signalling to offenders that crimes against sex workers will be taken seriously and that they cannot get away with such crimes. Finally, the chapter examines the issues police identified in relation to cases they had been involved in investigating and taking to court, and the good practice lessons they felt had been learnt in Merseyside - with a focus on the role and impact of the Unity Team, the specialist rape and serious sexual assaults unit.

A specialist Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) for sex workers: development of a good practice role

In 2006, a small number of sexual assault referral centres and Rape Crisis Services had, as part of their support provisions, developed the role of an Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) with pilot funding from the Home Office. This role provide a trained professional independent of the police who could support victims of rape and sexual assault and advocate for them from report to court. In 2006, the Home Office agreed to fund more ISVA posts in order to roll out this good practice role in England and Wales, and applications were invited for these posts.

When this additional funding was announced in 2006, I was sitting on the cross-departmental stakeholder advisory group on sexual violence and child abuse, as well as acting as Co-ordinator for the sex worker support project 'Armistead Street' (see Chapters One and Four)... It was clear to me that if there was dedicated full time staff member within Armistead to support sex workers as victims of crime, with a focus on rape and sexual offences, we would have the opportunity to improve the quality and level of support for sex workers, as well as increasing the number of cases coming to court and

so enabling access to justice. The main evidence of need for a specialist ISVA located within a sex work supported project was constituted by:

- The higher levels of rape and sexual assault reported amongst sex workers (who were vulnerable to crimes due to targeted victimisation) than amongst the wider community.
- The need for specialist intervention to address under-reporting of crimes by sex workers, to increase sex worker confidence in the police and ensure sex worker victims had the opportunity to access appropriate support in the wake of assault and through the criminal justice process (for those sex workers who chose to engage with it).
- Sex workers were under-represented amongst those accessing mainstream ISVA services and wider sexual violence support services including Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs).
- Sex workers victims of rape and sexual assault had specific and multi-layered health social care and support needs and faced particular issues when they become victims of crime. These would be best addressed by specialist staff working within sex worker outreach and support services who had an existing trusting relationship with sex workers, knowledge about the community, and regular contact.

‘Armistead Street’ were successful in securing the funding in October 2016,²³ with required match funding provided by Liverpool Citysafe. The post commenced in November, with an existing member of the Armistead team taking on the post. The post holder would work specifically with female sex workers and they would be located within a sex work support project.

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One barrier that had to be resolved was the guidance for ISVA funding stated that applicants had to be in the non-statutory sector. I discussed with the Home Office whether this could be waived considering the specific vulnerabilities of sex workers and the advantages of placing an ISVA within a dedicated sex work project (i.e. established relationship of trust, and experience of supporting sex worker victims) which happened to be in the NHS. It was agreed that an application could be submitted and would be considered.

Also it was agreed that while the focus would be on supporting victims of rape and sexual assault, there was flexibility and the ISVA could support victims of other offences, such as physical assault and robbery.

The post holder completed the required ISVA training which the Home Office funded. The ISVA was also permitted onto what was usually police-only training for vulnerable witness interviewing, so they could attend and support at these. Armistead had received funding to have recording equipment on-site at the Armistead Centre so victims could make statements at that location if they chose to. The ISVA also took a lead in providing training to partner agencies about violence against sex workers and their support service needs, and the work of Armistead and the specialist ISVA service.

The specialist sex work ISVA post was acknowledged in the 'Cross Government Action Plan on Sexual Violence and Abuse' (Inter-Departmental Ministerial Group on Sex Offending 2007) as one of the 38 ISVAs they had supported to date: 'one the ISVAs funded will work specifically with women involved in prostitution and three will work specifically with young people' (: 25) - reflecting the two types of specialist ISVAs that had emerged at that stage.

As part of a national evaluation of ISVAs, Robinson (2009) described the ISVA's role as:

Trained support workers who provide assistance and advice to victims of sexual violence. Their goal is to help victims find the support that they need from different agencies, and to offer support directly. This, in turn, is expected to lessen victims' reluctance to engage with the criminal justice system. ISVAs work closely with a range of partners and may be based in Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) or voluntary sector projects.

(: 4)

Generic ISVAs became an important part of the Labour government's strategy on sexual violence, and have continued to be under the coalition and current Conservative government. The Stern review (Home Office 2010) found ISVAs had a range of practical functions, including: reassurance to victims that they have been believed, including in cases where not taken to court; practical court support (including accompaniment to court, informing of verdicts); and offering continuity for victims as cases go through the criminal justice system and, in this context, helping to keep victims engaged and confident in the process. They stressed the holistic and coordinating role of ISVAs and found unanimous support for the role across all those consulted and argued that the independence of the role was important to engender trust by all parties.

They help the victim to make sense of the system. They help the police by supporting a victim throughout the investigation. They help the prosecution by supporting the victim through the psychologically gruelling process of preparing to give evidence. They provide a link between the criminal case that is under way and the range of social agencies whose help may be needed. Victims find that an ISVA makes an enormous difference to the way they feel about what is happening to them. (:105)

Stern concluded that, in terms of reforms that were 'cost-effective and affordable, the establishment of ISVA is hard to beat' (:105). Baroness Stern, during her evidence-gathering, met with the specialist sex work ISVA and UKNSWP members who were advocating for 'National Ugly Mugs' (NUM); she subsequently became a Champion for NUM and Patron of UK Network of Sex Work Projects, demonstrating her commitment to protecting sex workers from sexual and other forms of violence.

The Home Office published an updated action plan in March 2012, which updated the government strategy. Sex workers were specifically named as 'particularly vulnerable to violence and can be less likely to come forward and seek help', with reference to additional areas of action for the plan (Home Office 2012: 8).

It was Point 67 in this action plan in which the Home Office committed to fund a national 'Ugly Mugs' scheme to protect sex workers from violent customers; and indeed the 'National Ugly Mugs' pilot funded by the Home Office was funded from 1st April 2012 until 31st March 2013. This, alongside further funding for a number of other specialist ISVAs located within other sex work projects in other cities (directly inspired by the Merseyside ISVA role), was the key national government action regarding violence against sex workers at that time.

This chapter now looks at findings from interviews with current and former sex workers and police officers who were involved in cases where crimes against sex workers were investigated by the police and brought before the courts. I argue that a victim-centred partnership approach with enhanced specialist support for sex workers specifically the specialist ISVA - has been a key element of the Merseyside hate crime approach, with the findings documented in this chapter supporting this assertion. In my research, both police and sex workers identified this post as having an important role in engaging victims - supporting them to report and through investigation, the court process and beyond.

Sex worker experiences and views of the ISVA: from report to court

Service users and the police identified various elements of the role and impacts they valued and had made a difference to them.

Initial reporting and 'Ugly Mugs'

Several service users described how they accessed 'Ugly Mugs' via the ISVA:

They'd put my attack on the 'Ugly Mugs'. In fact, every time something happened to me, ISVA would always put it on the 'Ugly Mugs' - she would always sort things out for us. (SU7)

Indeed this role in encouraging reporting was important. Several women described how they would not have reported serious crimes that went onto court if the ISVA and Armistead had not been in existence.

I was on me way up Edge Hill and I got picked up by him and one thing lead to another ... When I got back to my place, the police come out and I wouldn't let them take me. I said "I'm not going unless the Armistead are here", because I knew what the police were like with working girls. (SU9)

A number of women, whether they had been to court or not, mentioned that should anything happen to them or another sex worker they would go to the ISVA or Armistead more generally. The ISVA located within a sex work project presented a trusted point to turn to for sex worker victims of crime, including for the reporting of unprofessional behaviour by a police officer.

Sex workers showed awareness of the role and its specific functions and support for sex workers who have been victims of crime:

... there's one, she's only about 21 ...she's only a kid and every time I see her, I say, "Are you ok? Nothing happened to you?" And I say, "If anything happens go and see ISVA or tell them what happened to you!" (SU10)

Practical crisis support, advocacy and police liaison

The experiences of some service users highlighted the advocacy element of the specialist sex work ISVA. Some felt the work of the ISVA and wider project meant pressure was exerted on police to act when crimes against sex workers were reported. Some also preferred and trusted an intermediary, independent of the police, who they saw as being on their side:

One night, a fella, he'd got me at the back of the entry in Walton Road and he had a knife to my throat. And he'd give me a slap, took all my money, and that's when I meet the ISVA ... The police came but he'd gone. But because the ISVA was involved, they did do something about it ... I know myself the girls that work the road, if anything ever happens to them, they will say, "Have you got ISVA's number?" They'd rather phone ISVA than

phone the police. She will sort it out for them - she give them the support, the lot ... take them to the interviews, they sit with them in the police interviews (SU7)

A service user whose daughter also sex worked and had been raped described positively the ISVA support her daughter received in the aftermath of the assault, and stressed the liaison role with the police the ISVA fulfilled:

She was so scared, wasn't she, and in a terrible state. Honestly X (ISVA), she was fantastic. She helped out a lot, coming to the hospital and talking to the police. (SU14)

Some service users described the commitment of the ISVA to sex workers' rights to protection and justice, expressed through advocacy work:

She is really good about getting girls to go to the police - she is really good at getting you through that. She really wants everyone to come forward, because she will fight for the girls. (SU2)

Advocacy took a number of forms. One woman had been hospitalised as the result of a rape. The patrol officers she had reported to had responded inappropriately; they made comments about how it would not have happened if she was not working. She had returned home, very distressed and attempted suicide. She describes how the ISVA came to see her at the hospital the following morning with a police liaison officer:

That police officer who came to the hospital with X (ISVA), she was that disgusted that she made it her duty to do something about it. And that just feels amazing, that somebody is actually listening to me this time, you know? (SU11)

The liaison officer took the issue to a senior officer who took it very seriously and referred the matter to the Police Complaints Authority.

One service user, who had accessed ISVA support, described a range of practical advice and information they had received from the ISVA and police.

The ISVA was there from when it happened - she helped me with everything, keeping me calm, speaking to the police, getting me clothes. (SU19)

One service user described how the ISVA helped in the run-up to court, with an incident the night before the case was to be heard. This involved a problem at the hotel where temporary accommodation had been booked for her and her partner by the police for during the trial; they were street-homeless and wanted hostel accommodation where they could be housed together but this was not available. The hotel had refused to let them in the booked room when they arrived and she had phoned the project from a homeless night drop-in:

They went, "Well we didn't like their hygiene." I went to the Basement [homeless drop-in] and with X (ISVA) and Y at the Basement, she got it sorted so we got a room in the YM. I thought, "Sack it, I can't be arsed with this anymore. I'm sick of people judging us." ... in the morning I was rattling. I'd had no gear and it was going to be emotional anyway. The gear would have helped me - if I would have had a tout it would have, you know, suppressed the emotions, I suppose. But ISVA she encouraged me to go. ISVA was great. She sat with me, came outside with me for breaks, finding out was happening in court - all that. (SU1)

This illustrates how the ISVA can support with crisis and challenging situations in the run-up to and during a court case, often in close partnership with police officers.

Support to access sexual assault referral centre services (SARC)

National good practice recommends all victims of rape and sexual assault should be able to attend SARC services to receive crisis health and other support, have their needs assessed, have the option of forensic medical examination by specialist doctors, be supported to report to the police or make an anonymous intelligence report as they wish, and, if not already in touch with the ISVA, be referred onto ongoing ISVA or counselling support as appropriate.

SAFE Place Merseyside is the SARC service for Merseyside, established in 2007. Some women who had been raped were accompanied to SAFE Place by the ISVA:

I was with ISVA first, she was already there. It was good to have a friendly face there ... they contacted me to do a video interview. X (ISVA) came there with me - she was good. I did a statement - it was X (CID officer), X (ISVA) and me. I was dead anxious - I have panic attacks as well, especially with the cameras on you. (SU2)

A participant, who had had a bad experience with a forensic medical examination following a rape over a decade previously (she described her past experience as involving very disrespectful and rough treatment), explained why she went to SAFE Place after her most recent rape:

I was a bit reluctant this time but I'd already built up a relationship with ISVA. I'd already phoned the police after this one and they didn't turn up because I didn't say he raped me - I just said over the phone he had done something to me. Anyway, I went with her to the SAFE Place. She was with me all the way. (SU4)

The role of the ISVA as supportive advocate was critical on this occasion for the women. Another service user described what it meant to her to have the ISVA with her at the forensic medical examination:

The next morning Armistead come and got me and brought me here (indicates to SAFE Place) and they did me examination with one of their own special doctors and I went through with it. But I wouldn't have gone through with it if it hadn't have been for ISVA. It meant I knew I had someone there who knew that we weren't just a piece of meat. That it wasn't right for men to go around smacking you because you were a working girl - "It's alright you're only a prostitute, they deserve it anyway". We're women too, we've got feelings. (SU9)

As discussed in Chapter Four a sex-worker-friendly and accessible sexual assault referral centre was a key element of the Merseyside approach to address crimes against sex workers.

Emotional support

Several interviewees emphasised the emotional support they had received from the ISVA as vital in getting them through trauma and distress:

She used to make me feel so comfortable. She made me feel not like a worthless little junkie - she brought me out of the gutter and out of myself. She saved my life a number of times when I was waiting to go in rehab. I was threatening to do myself in and she stayed at the Royal with me all day, she knew about the trial as well. She was amazing - she got me in a hostel, she got my first appointment for rehab. (SU4)

Emotional support was also an essential element identified in evaluations of the 'Open Doors' specialist ISVA (Blair 2011; Campbell and Sanders 2014). This emotional support was part of the wider support women identified they received during trials.

Court support

Both sex workers and police stated that support in the run-up to and during trials was a vital aspect of the ISVA role. Service users described the usefulness of the role for keeping victims up-to-date with investigation and court matters; for example:

They kept me up with what was going on. ISVA, especially, told me what the barristers were hoping to get, that they had evidence off other girls and they wanted to make sure it was understood how bad this had actually been, you know. (SU1)

One participant described how she drew on the ISVA in the period of waiting for the offender's trial, for housing, mental distress and general support:

I ended up spending all me money and had to go out to work. So I got on the phone to ISVA. I'd had enough - I'd been raped, had the court case coming up, had the police round all the time, not that they were a problem. I was going mental. ... I said to ISVA, "I want to do myself in" and I meant it at that time. So she helped me get a hostel place and talked to me. She would call round or call all the time ... She was same as the police - very caring (SU4)

Several women who had to go to court as witnesses specifically noted that they would not have made it to court without the ISVA's support and encouragement.

Without that support there is no way I would have stuck it out with that arrest and the charge and court ... If it hadn't have been for ISVA, he wouldn't be where he is now - she pushed me, in a nice way. She gave me tips to look after myself and she gave me the encouragement to stay strong. You know I felt like this tall person when she'd finished talking to me - not this dishevelled piece of shit. I felt like a human being and I hadn't felt like that for years. (SU4)

I said to ISVA, "I can't go through with it." She went, "You will - we'll support you." And I had ISVA one side of me and X (female police officer) the other and they were there every single step of the way. (SU9).

This participant went on to describe the points in the criminal justice process where she felt she may have backed out without ISVA support. She had been abused by her stepfather; when that had gone to court some years previously, it had been a distressing experience - and she was particularly anxious about going to court now:

The examination, because of me stepdad, I nearly backed out then. X (ISVA) come and she knew me sitting on that table and getting examined and tested all over again would have brought back all the memories of me step dad and it did. Then standing in court and having to give evidence again ... it was the same courts ... When he got sentenced and the judge said he got ten-and-a-half years and an IPP, I was sitting there crying my eyes out. (SU9)

Some respondents also mentioned that the ISVA had advocated for practical help regarding liaising with police and court officials, to apply for special measures for their appearance in court as a witness.

Women valued that they were made to feel they could easily access the ISVA whenever they needed support. One women identified the ISVA and other improvements in sex worker support as the key reasons for more cases of crimes against sex workers being brought to court and enabling women to have the strength to stand up and give evidence:

The Armistead! Routes Out and the Armistead, they're supporting us more and making us realise that we're not just a piece of meat! We're not just there to be raped. And we've got the support to stand there and actually say to a judge, "He raped me and I'm still a woman and it's wrong!" (SU9)

Ongoing support

Several women mentioned that they would still contact the ISVA for support a long time after an assault, whether their case went to court or not.

Don't get me wrong. I have moments when I feel like using and ISVA will be on the phone or X (outreach worker) and say, "Oh no, I don't think so". But with social services I couldn't speak openly to them, like I can to, X (ISVA), X (outreach worker) and you. I can stop them in the streets and tell them openly. I can say, "I was drinking last night and I met this man". Do you understand what I mean? If I need something, I'll ring Armistead. (SU9)

This more longitudinal access was also identified as helpful for service users who had ongoing needs related to the attack they experienced. The location of the ISVA with a sex work support project also meant they could easily refer service users to the wider team and other support provisions where appropriate, and a number of respondents described how they benefited from ISVA support and wider Armistead support (see Chapters Four and Seven).

Supporting indoor sex workers

One of the two current escorts interviewed praised the work of the ISVA, but felt the role and broader service needed to be promoted to indoor sex workers:

I know about the ISVA because I know about Armistead and what's happening there. I knew you all from when I was working the streets and keep in touch. But I think other escorts won't be as aware of the ISVA and the other work. If anything happened to them, they might not know where to turn if they didn't want to go to the police or weren't sure. (SU3)

Promoting the ISVA role to indoor sex workers was a more challenging issue in Liverpool, during the period I carried out my PhD fieldwork, because, from 2009, Armistead were commissioned only to work with female street sex workers via 'Armistead Street' and the 'Portside' service ceased; no other organisation in the city was commissioned to work with off-street sex workers. This did not mean Armistead would not offer support to indoor sex workers if they were contacted by them, and the remit of the ISVA was to provide support to sex workers in all sectors. However, apart from contacts for the ISVA being placed on the SAAFE escort forum during the time I carried out my PhD fieldwork, there was no proactive outreach to indoor establishments or 'netreach' taking place to promote services to indoor and online sex workers, which is a key good practice element for reaching sex workers in those sectors (UKNSWP 2009; EUROPAP 1998; Pitcher 2006).

Police experiences and views of the ISVA: a key element of change in improving access to justice

Those officers who were aware of the ISVA role and the work they performed spoke highly of the role. A neighbourhood Inspector, who had worked in areas where street sex work took place over some years and had worked with the ISVA, emphasised the accessibility of the role and dedication of the ISVA:

Certainly X (ISVA), who for my opinion should be given an award. She should because, you know, you ring her anytime, day or night, on a mobile and she'll speed dial and she'll answer your call, and I do the same for her. She's easy to work with, she's easily accessible, she cares, she gives a damn about what happens to the girls. (P684)

A Detective Sergeant, who had worked with sex workers in Intelligence and also in the capacity of a neighbourhood role, described how the close liaison between the police and the ISVA, and the accessibility of the ISVA

with close links to the sex worker community, could aid speedy investigation and save police resources:

Without a doubt, the ISVA role. Having that person dedicated has made a big difference. The fact that you can contact ISVA on her mobile anytime day or night is great. The fact that she is doing it full-time is great ... I had a kidnapping that was reported and I needed to speak to the ISVA late evening, to try and locate this girl to make sure she was safe and well. Now, I know for a fact we wouldn't have found her as quickly but ISVA knew who her mum was, where she lived - that was how we got to her. That was all done in a matter of hours, instead of it taking days trying to find her. Now, without that post being there, I don't know if that would have happened. (P241)

Intermediary and building confidence

The role of the ISVA was seen by officers as something that had made a difference in encouraging reporting and keeping sex worker victims engaged in the criminal justice system. Several police officers pointed to the intermediary function of the ISVA and the role the ISVA performed in building confidence amongst sex workers in the police:

In the past women would say, "Look, I don't want to take this any further." But you'd still say to her, "Well, if you want to give us any information", but there was nowhere else to go. Now you've got the Armistead with ISVA, you'd phone up and say, "She doesn't want to know. Can you have a word?" Recently there was a supposed very upstanding member of society, but his penchant, or whatever way you call it, was literally to beat women up. It was only through the support that Armistead had given this particular sex worker that it was found that not only had he assaulted her very, very badly but he'd assaulted other women as well. As a result of that, he was convicted and sentenced. (P592)

A police detective sergeant who had previously coordinated the sex work liaison officers also pointed to confidence building to encourage reporting by sex workers:

ISVA is predominantly very pro-police. So, for us, it works backwards, that she will go out and say to them, "But I know this policewoman and she will do this for you, and I know that woman," and so she gives our names she advocates us and really helps to build their confidence in reporting to us. (P678)

A Detective Sergeant at Unity described how this intermediary and trust building function had aided the specialist rape team in better responding to sex workers who had experienced sexual violence:

Since we've had Armistead, it's been very easy to deal with sex workers because we have, a person, ISVA. She's really good because she acts as the middle person. Sometimes it's difficult for the girls to speak to us but, through ISVA, we can always facilitate it. The likes of Armistead and the ISVA, they're just invaluable. You know, they're that link between the police and sex workers, and I think without that middle ground, we would still find it difficult. ... They trust ISVA implicitly and they see her working with us, so they think, "Well, if ISVA thinks they're okay, then they're okay". (P532)

This was reinforced by a Unity Sexual Offences Liaison Officer (SOLO), who felt the ISVA played a role in increasing confidence to report amongst sex worker victims of rape:

We have confidence in her and she has confidence in us. When she is recommending us to the girls, she can say "They are brilliant". Whereas sometimes the police, we're a faceless organisation, but because she knows that with the ten SOLO's here, that we all work well. And we will say, "Look if you're not comfortable speaking to us, ISVA will come with you". She's helped me - she's been in some of my interviews and they feel comfortable with that too. (P639)

Supporting investigations

Several officers described how the ISVA worked in partnership with the police to support investigations and evidence gathering. A neighbourhood Inspector based in an area where street sex work is prevalent was, at the time of interview, working with the ISVA to investigate a man suspected of child sexual exploitation and crimes against sex workers:

We are very supportive of protecting sex workers. We've got an operation at the moment, where we're with ISVA ... I've been here nine months now and we're slowly trying to gain the trust of the girls, especially with this operation we're doing at the moment. We're hoping to eventually get a successful result from that operation and get someone into prison, and just as importantly, get the confidence of the girls, and try and set up some sort of regular meeting with them. So far, we're getting statements. (P385)

The force strategic lead also highlighted this function of supporting investigations by engaging sex workers:

Also the trust the ISVA has amongst the sex worker community, she is able to work alongside investigators to go out and find people ... get people onboard or get people back onboard. There have been incidences where we have identified offenders through DNA at particular scenes and then been able to link the DNA to victims who have to yet come forward, and the ISVA has assisted us to go out and locate those women ...Then you have another complainant, which bolsters the evidence against a particular offender, so it has been very important in that way ...The ISVA service is fundamental to what we do. We bring the ISVA onboard very quickly in relation to sex worker attacks - she will be onboard from the outset. We have seen so many examples of where that has worked well. (P848)

Support for sex workers

The majority of officers acknowledged the emotional and practice support the ISVA gave and which complemented the policing role. For example, a Detective Constable described the input the ISVA could have in the wake of assault, combining emotional and welfare support with a role in enabling evidence gathering:

One case on Netherfield Road, she'd come from Manchester and she'd only come like the day before so she hadn't had any interaction with Armistead. She was raped and contacted the police. So I contacted ISVA and she then had the introduction to Armistead. She'd just run away from an abusive relationship - she didn't stay here long it was only a few weeks but at least while she was here she had the assistance from Armistead, she had the support. And ISVA came to the video interview and the medical and then helped here with other things, where to stay and health. (P963)

Court support

A detective Sergeant who had been involved in a number of cases with sex worker victims which went to court, described the value of the ISVA to her as a CID officer (and later police sex work liaison officer), emphasising the role played by the ISVA in a rape case. The victim was a homeless sex worker, and the case highlighted a range of challenging situations the specialist ISVA can work with the victim and police to resolve. The provision of court preparation and support was to the fore:

I had the assistance from ISVA who was an absolute godsend really ... just before she went to court, we had ISVA coming to me saying, "We need to get her into some accommodation before the court because she's homeless, living in a bush and we need to be able to pick her up from somewhere and she'll definitely be there". I had to get authorisation from the CPS to pay for her to go into a hotel and she got booked in the Adelphi ... I had a phone call from the manager going, "She's not staying here", because she turned up with black bin bags and her boyfriend. So I had to then get her into another hotel who was brilliant. ISVA helped with that. The ISVA really helped me in court as well with her, which was great ... Her boyfriend turned up with drugs and she was just about to take them just before she went into court and we had to encourage her to give her evidence! Without the ISVA being there, it would have been very hard. I don't think we would have got a conviction without her. (P963)

The majority of officers who were aware of the role identified the ISVA role as important in supporting victims and police and playing a key part in getting cases to court and contributing to improvements in convictions. For example, a Unity Team Detective Constable felt the ISVA role had helped the Unity Team become more sex-worker-accessible and in getting cases to court:

She'd done a lot of work promoting us as a team to street sex workers, and some of us had been involved in a number of cases. I definitely have to say the ISVA, for one, and the work they do at Armistead has played a big role in us getting those cases to court. There are massive social issues sex workers are facing ... ISVA will help us with those. So we work sensitively and closely with the ISVA around the case and trial. (P727)

The force strategic lead also highlighted the advocacy and critical friend role the ISVA played in representing the needs of the service users and challenging police. He valued this role and saw it as a legacy of partnership work where good relationships and communication have been established:

There have been incidences when we have said something should or shouldn't happen and the ISVA has argued from the opposite perspective, and ultimately we have agreed on some sort of compromise ... I think it is about having the confidence in who you are dealing with, and the relationship helps to overcome any preconceived ideas that one side or the other may have. So it is about developing relationships. I think the relationship now between Merseyside Police and Armistead is really good. (P848)

Other reasons for increases improved access to justice

As has been documented in the previous section, the ISVA role – along with the wider work of Armistead - was identified by police officers as one of the key factors in increasing the number of cases coming before the courts. Yet most officers also set the improved criminal justice outcomes in a context of multi-factorial changes.

A Detective Constable, who had worked within the SIGMA North hate crime unit, played an active role in developing the LGBT police network in the city and had shared the sex work liaison role, sketched a multihued picture:

The laws have changed, legislation has changed and human rights, we've all got them now at last. The Sexual Offences Act changed ... Even now you look at it and you think, "If we hadn't had SIGMA and we hadn't have had that Chief supporting the work, would we have had what we had with Matthew Byrne (see Appendix Ten)? Would we have had what we have had with others cases since?" I can't do this interview without stressing the work of ISVA, Armistead and yourself have done and the importance of that buffer between the women, that relationship building. (P512)

A Detective Constable based in North Liverpool CID also described a number of interrelated factors leading to the high number of cases to court and convictions.

Well, mainly it's SIGMA, Unity and the 'Ugly Mugs'. The trust with the sex workers, you know, it all links in ... you know, gaining more evidence and plus you've got the SAFE Place. There's all the different elements that all link in to boost up the conviction rate - it's not just one standalone reason. (P963)

Several officers pointed to wider changes in the policing of rape and sexual assault and the wider improvement in treatment of rape victims, such as the emergence of a SARC, as important in leading to successful outcomes at court:

I think it's this thing about having that bridge, isn't it, with the outreach workers at Armistead and the whole process with the SARCs and all that kind of business has made a difference as well. (P747)

The Inspector who was heading up the Unity Team pointed to the significance of the establishment of the ISVA role coinciding with the launch of the Unity specialist sexual offences team:

So the stars came aligned at the right time there, because we had the ISVA role and the SOLOS and then we had the specialist Unity Team come about. (P613)

The specific impact of the Unity Team is now discussed based on analysis of interviews with officers from that unit.

Unity: specialist rape and sexual assault team

Throughout the thesis I have argued that the hate crime approach to addressing crimes against sex workers is constituted of a number of key elements. One of these has been improved victim support for sex worker victims with the critical role of the ISVA, as evidenced, plus the introduction of a sex-worker-friendly SARC. The final key component to be considered in this thesis is the Unity Team, which offers a 24-hour specialist dedicated team to deal with rape and serious sexual assault across the force with specially trained Sexual Offence Liaison Officers (SOLOs) who respond to initial complaints and continue liaising with victims, detectives and partner agencies.

As described in Chapter Four, Unity have proactively reached out to sex workers via its dedicated SOLO officers, who have made sex workers aware of their services, providing friendly faces and reassurance and involvement in victim support. Seven of the officers I interviewed were working within the Unity Team, this including both as SOLO officers and detectives.

As the majority of offences prosecuted in cases of crimes against sex workers have involved rape or sexual assault, Unity have had an important role in supporting sex workers, investigating crimes against them and prosecuting them. Police officer participants identified the Unity Team, with its specialist expertise in investigating rape and supporting victims, as one of the key reasons for successful prosecutions.

SOLO officers and detectives had a good reputation amongst current and former sex workers interviewed. Those who had reported rapes and sexual assaults spoke highly of specialist rape and sexual assault police:

They were amazing! It was the rape police ... they were so lovely, they were so sympathetic to me, they treated me like I was a human being and not a prostitute. It is such a big difference to be a person and not a label, when you have been a label all your life. They were so compassionate and they were so patient with me, because one minute I wanted to go forward with it and the next minute, I got too scared. And they was nice, but especially in the rape suite, they was fantastic. (SU11)

The police supported me right from the outset ... They said, "Anything at all, just call." So they left me two mobile phone numbers, the office number: "Anything at all, someone knocks on your door, we'll have it sorted out straight away." Then they even came round for me to have a tour around the Crown Court. (SU20)

I went straight to the police still naked, just had me coat on ... called the police ... They were marvellous. I'd recommend to anyone whose been raped, go to the police. Because it's not like it used to be - they put you at ease. You feel like a human being, you feel like the victim rather than the person who has committed the crime ... it was so different than before. They were so nice to me, no matter what was going on, even if I had the littlest questions I could phone them (specialist rape officers) ... since I got threatened, they're put the landline to here (rehab) on fast track. (SU4)

Being treated with sensitivity, empathy, good-quality ongoing communication, being able to make contact, getting a timely response, putting in protective measures where required, receiving practical support and a sense of being treated like a human being were the positive attributes participants who had received support from the Unity Team described.

The contribution of the SOLO officers appeared to have been pivotal in establishing and maintaining trust amongst sex workers; the comment of a detective in the team was illustrative of this view:

We are very user-friendly for the girls. We support them ... we have worked really hard to keep it that way. It has been the groundwork that all the SOLOs do. They don't have any preconceived judgments of the sex workers. They're very open, approachable - they understand them. They ensure the girls are fully aware of what is going to go on - they're very open, even if it's bad news, and (ensure) that the lines of communication are always open (P727)

A SOLO, who had worked on a number of sex worker cases, summarised her role and some of the particular factors she felt police dealing with rape needed to consider when investigating sex offences against sex workers:

We're a single point of contact for any force-wide cover for rape and serious sexual assault ... we would do a first account and then take the victim for a medical, make sure she gets the correct sexual health screening and the ISVA support, and then we would do a video interview. Then our role is to keep them informed of the investigation at different stages, bail conditions. Likewise if there've been breaches they contact us. We assist with video interviews... I was the SOLO on one case of a sex worker victim where we got a conviction. I'm on one now with three sex workers ... Every person is different and that's important to recognise with sex workers. Some of the street workers have drink and drug problems so, with interviews, you've got to time the video interviews, I would say do them in the day when they've got up, done their morning routine - if they are alcohol dependent they may need to have a drink before they go. Be patient if they do miss an appointment, they have a lot going on. (P639)

A non-judgemental attitude towards and sensitivity to the particular needs of sex workers with drug and alcohol issues was flagged by Unity officers:

We don't frown on them. We don't say "You have got to be sober, you have got to be clean", because they are not going to be and it would add extra pressure when they are already panicking and dreading the barristers and these twelve people looking at them and them having to justify why they are here. (P727)

A Detective Sergeant in Unity described what she would want to share with other forces who wished to improve their response to sex worker rape; a timely response and prioritising sex workers were to the fore:

Most importantly in relation to sex workers, that ties in with the hate crime aspect, if you don't respond quickly, literally every five minutes you're losing confidence of that victim...The only plates we have to spin here are sexual offences, so we will get straight out and we will prioritise visiting and dealing with the more vulnerable victims first...straight away sex worker goes to the top. So we get somebody out to them as soon as we can, get them on board, let them know that we're listening, we're there to support them and they're important. If she says, "I don't want to go ahead with this at the moment, by all means get a pocket notebook entry stating that, but put it through for intel, contact her again two days later, 'Are you absolutely sure?'. If they say, "We don't want to engage," don't just leave it at that, go through the anonymous referral scheme at the SARC...give them every opportunity. That's what other forces need to do, they need to prioritise it. So victim engagement is absolute top priority. (P678)

The Crown Prosecution Service in Liverpool have been actively engaged in efforts to get cases of crimes against sex workers successfully prosecuted. Unity police officers in my study pointed to a CPS prosecutor co-located within the Unity Team as having been generally advantageous in joint case building, and important in improving outcomes for sex workers, with the prosecutor being perceived as committed to prosecuting sex worker rapists and having developed expertise:

We have the luxury of having the CPS upstairs and having the forensic issues and the analysts at hand. Having the CPS with us, that's a godsend. They're there for advice, it's good to be able to speak to them on a face to face basis, on a daily basis, to give us advice into which direction the investigation needs to go. With our prosecutor here, they've worked on quite a few sex worker cases and they really have expertise. (P532)

What's made a big difference with the CPS is having the dedicated rape investigation lawyers who assist and advise on other cases, whether it be

a penetrative assault or other attacks on sex workers, the CPS lawyers who sit in Unity. And they are onboard with the sex work cases. Certainly the CPS are much more supportive than they were in years gone by. (P848)

Two themes that emerged from the Unity Team and other police officer narratives was a positive approach to sex workers as witnesses, and that a good practice lesson was a transparent approach to issues that the defence may use to discredit sex worker witnesses. These themes are now further explored.

Sex workers as good witnesses

One of the striking themes amongst police views and experiences of sex worker victims whose cases go to court was that police officers who had worked on such cases often commented that sex workers were good witnesses. Indeed several officers commented they have been some of the best and most powerful witnesses they had encountered. Two detectives who had been involved in a number of sex worker cases expressed this discourse:

Some people are just so strong. I've been gobsmacked by that over the years. Unbelievably strong. And some of the stuff people have been through, you can't even begin to imagine. Some people think sex workers are not good witnesses, but that is not what I have found. One particular case was a retrial. The woman was grilled in the box and slaughtered and she stands up to it and says, "Absolutely not, this is what happened to me". You just think, "How do you do that?" I couldn't have done that. She was so powerful in her testimony. (P974)

I look at some of these accused pleading not guilty - the legal advice they get, I think, a lot of the time is to plead not guilty because there there's a perception, I think, that people in the sex worker community, "They won't turn up, they're unreliable witnesses". You have to work hard to get people to court, they need the support from yourself, from the police. But they are good witnesses. (P711)

Indeed, interview findings suggested there was a greater understanding of the particular issues sex workers may face as complainant witnesses - such as witness intimidation, intrusive questioning from defence barristers, and difficulties for those sex workers with drug and alcohol problems. Several officers, including Unity Team participants, stressed that the police should be supporting sex workers in the process and anticipating and planning for challenging situations they may face at court. A very experienced investigating officer, who had previously headed up the Major Incident Team, illustrates this:

It's supporting them through the process and getting them over all their fears, building a bond and explaining court to them. In the case we were talking about, he put her through everything to try and frighten her off and at the end of the day ... when we got her there, she was brilliant. We had said, "The defence counsel's gonna bring up your convictions for prostitution" ... She was such a good witness because she just stood in the box and said, "Yeah I am a prostitute". She says "Do you know why I'm a prostitute?" and she told them in court why. And she got the jury thinking, so their perception changed and it's like, "This is a human being". The jury had tears in their eyes - it takes the wind out of the sails of the defence. (P747)

A Detective Constable, reflecting on Merseyside's work with sex worker victims of rape, felt successful convictions had been obtained because of this type of transparent and open approach in dealing head-on with witness issues that the defence may use to discredit sex worker witnesses. He felt anticipating and planning for this was good practice lesson learnt:

We are open and honest and we're transparent in what we do. I think, historically, we would try maybe to cover things up, like, "You are a drug user" or "You are an alcoholic" - we like, didn't broadcast them. Then we put this person in the box and then suddenly the defence would say, "Is it right you're a drug addict?" Then the jury would think, "Well, hang on", as if we're trying to hide something. Now we say, "I am a drug addict. I am an alcoholic. I am a sex worker but, you know, I didn't deserve to be raped!" ... So I think because we're aware of those issues, were not judging or seeing them as a problem, they're dealt with straight away - nothing's going to catch us out. We can deal with most things as long as we know about it and nothing's too hard to deal with. I think when you present it like that, the jury look at it and think, "Well, you know, you've got the guts to stand there and say that. And why put yourself through that, knowing that

public perception and society's outlook on things still may not be ideal?" That's why we're successful. (P532)

An officer who had been the investigating officer on one of the earlier 2006 cases (this involved an offender who previously physically assaulted and stalked a number of sex workers and evaded conviction for many years, and was eventually convicted for robbery), also stressed the powerful impact of sex worker testimony and the importance of openness and approaching sex working as not being a problem:

There's been a perception that sex workers won't come across that well when they're in the box, giving evidence. But, honesty is very powerful, and saying that they're sex working ... shows how open and honest that they are. They're got nothing to hide and they've been a victim of a horrendous crime and they're not having it - that's the truth. All that came across in the trial. And that's why he was found guilty and that's why he was hammered - a lifelong antisocial behaviour order was fantastic. It was a £10 robbery which, if you look at it in the greater scheme of things, was quite minor and it probably was to X (the victim) actually, but she knew what had gone on, the abuse that she'd suffered at his hands and that he was drugging and detaining girls against their will (P711)

I think juries aren't as judgmental of them because when we are doing the video interviews, we like them to say, "Yeah I'm a sex worker, yeah I've got a drug addiction" ... they're being very honest about their lives. So there's nothing where a defence can come and turn round and say: "She's a prostitute!" Because she has already said, "I'm a sex worker, this is what I do. I had sex with this male, agreed a price but I did not agree to him anally and orally raping me". It's as clear as a bell. (P727)

The Chief Constable reflected on the historical assumptions amongst police and CPS, that sex workers were poor witnesses; he saw such attitudes as a result of discrimination and prejudice which needed to be challenged:

... Recognising that sex workers had been second-class citizens because of historic stereotypical perceptions that they didn't make good witnesses. A reluctance by the CPS when files were brought to them to prosecute them on the basis of the previous sexual activity of the victim and the perceptions that those things were insurmountable ... recent history tells us that, actually, they're not ... the quality of the evidence being gathered which is as a consequence of the partnership work. All of that has made a massive difference. If you're prepared to put the effort, in you will elicit complaints and you will achieve convictions ... It's justice for the victim and it's making the public safer. (P710)

Yet a small minority of respondents (just three officers) still expressed the discourse of the 'difficult sex worker witness'; the following comment was from a longer serving officer:

The other problem we've got are the standard of witnesses. God help the girls, but they have fairly chaotic lifestyles and, as witnesses, they try their best but they're not the best witnesses. It's as simple as that ... And the times and dates are always shot to pieces and that causes two problems. It causes a problem that you've got information which is not accurate that you're working to. It causes a problem that, when you eventually get to the truth of the matter, you've got this information which potentially then undermines the truth of the matter. (P499)

More commonly, though, officers talked with sensitivity about some of the realities and challenges involved in supporting those sex worker victims and witnesses who experienced a number of personal and social issues such as problem drug and alcohol use and homelessness. The emphasis was on offering appropriate support and being sensitive to particular 'needs' or vulnerabilities witnesses faced. This understanding is illustrated by a Detective Inspector in MIT, who had been involved in investigating sex worker murders and a range of other crime against sex workers, and who is quoted here, followed by a Unity SOLO officer:

We're a modern force. We treat all groups with respect and equality. I mean, that is drummed into us morning, noon and night, and rightly so. We are a public service and we don't get to choose who comes to the door as a witness. When we get the white boards up and say, "What would you want your perfect witness to have?" and we'd write everything up and you'd say, "Tell me who that person is?" Well, that could be anyone and sex workers sit in that category as well. We've had some situations where we think of this person should be a good witness but they're absolutely hopeless. And then I've sat there with some sex workers and thought, "You've got all this going on in your life yet your account is just excellent." We've had sex workers here identifying people we couldn't. (P156)

Some of the street sex workers, they have chaotic lifestyles. We support them, we get them to court, we help people with clothes, we help them access services. They are vulnerable victims and we need to look what their needs are and do our best. (P727)

This discourse of sex workers as good witnesses turns on its head what several officers described as the more traditional discourse that had previously predominated - that sex workers make poor witnesses and are unreliable, particularly due to their 'lifestyle', with credibility issues. The newer, emergent discourse was one of sex workers as good witnesses, with equal rights in law, who are facing an intimidating court process, who can have particular needs, with a varying range of vulnerabilities, to which the police have a responsibility to respond and work with partner agencies to ensure appropriate support is in place. I would argue that within this new discourse there is a less stigmatising approach to sex work itself, with greater acceptance of sex work and sex workers as part of society. This is another area in which the Merseyside hate crime approach has generated new relationships, perceptions and understanding of sex worker experiences of rape and how best to prosecute. Burrowes (2013) found that in rape cases generally 'much of the evidence about the case is sewn into a discourse that supports the defence', a narrative that 'mirrors current rape myths and is likely to confirm some of the attitudes that jurors may hold about rape' (: 2). She argues that, informed by a better understanding of how sex offenders who want to avoid being caught commit their offences, prosecutors require a 'wider range of narratives on which to base their case theory and a way of turning the tables on some rape myths' (:2) I would argue that through some of the investigative and prosecution work in Merseyside, taking place within the only police force area to approach crimes against sex workers as hate crime, police are creating, with sex workers, new narratives about sex workers and rape. Burrowes (2013) argues that various myths around victim blaming, which point to victim behaviour getting them into the situation, ignore the influence of the offender; alternative narratives would emphasise that the tactics sex offenders use to avoid punishment is to carefully select 'an appropriate person as a target for their offence' (: 16).

The conceptualisation of crimes against sex workers as hate crime also recognises this targeted victimisation and the targeting of perceived vulnerability by perpetrators. The prominence in police narratives of some particular but varied needs of the sex worker community reflects some of the principles of hate crime policing approaches which demand awareness, sensitivity and respect for the particular needs of hate crime victim groups (Hall 2005).

Getting justice

Nine of the women interviewed had been involved in a case which went to court; four had been involved in more than one court case. When they were the victim, the majority had received a guilty verdict or plea. Those women who got guilty verdicts or pleas in their cases described the meaning of going to court and the outcome for them; they described what getting justice felt like for them. The experiences of respondents shows that, whilst the verdict itself was very important, justice was not just about the guilty verdict but a number of other factors such as having a voice and the opportunity to stand up, as well as being treated with respect - the reversal of, or a challenge to, personally endured stigma. The following quotations show this more nuanced meaning of 'justice' for sex workers who have been victims of targeted crime.

The broader Merseyside hate crime approach is symbolically important in many ways, including in relation to justice for sex workers, because it affirms that sex workers are entitled to equal treatment in the criminal justice system; this recognition was important to the following respondent:

They said I could go on video link. I went, "I want to be in the court, I want to look at that cunt in the face" ... I think they appreciated the fact that I wasn't going to hide behind a video ... I know it sounds stupid but I feel a lot stronger in standing up for myself when it comes to these horrible people. And they call us dirty lowlifes! ... The court case helped with that especially the judge ... he was brilliant! "It doesn't matter what job this lady does, it gives you no right to harm her in any way". He was brilliant ... it made me feel brilliant, especially a judge on my side. Someone was actually believing me. I can't explain the feeling - it was just a lovely feeling. (SU18)

One respondent described the importance for her of the sentence her attacker received, as it sent a message that he cannot get away with attacking sex workers:

It went to court and he pleaded not guilty ... he thought I weren't going to show up and when my barrister got in and said, "The lady is here and ready to give evidence", he's changed his mind and shit himself - pleaded guilty then. So I didn't have to go in. Because I'd come forward with that, his ex-partner had come forward and said she'd suffered years of domestic violence with him, so he got 5 years. I thought it was a good sentence. He's out now - he only served two and a half years ... But I'm glad he went away, you know. He knows he can't get away with it, attacking working girls and other women. He's got conditions as well - he can't come anywhere near me. (SU5)

The following respondent who had experienced rape and assault described the elation for her and also the importance for her that the sentence her attacker received would prevent offending against other sex workers:

I couldn't stop smiling for a week. Me stomach turned but in a good way, you know, butterflies - it was a really good feeling. I was feeling, "It's all over" - it wasn't because of the threats but the trial was. Then I had to wait for the sentence. That was a bit of a walking-on-eggshell time for me because I'm like, "I hope he gets longer than 10", and he got 10. He got double figures, that's the main thing, and he's not allowed to go along Crown Street anymore for the rest of his life. He's not allowed to talk to a working girl for the rest of his life or anyone to do with a working girl. He's not allowed to work with vulnerable people and he's on the sex offender register for life! (SU4)

The following respondent's comments illustrates how the response she got at all stages of the criminal justice response to a physical assault was significant to her in terms of recognition and rights:

Some lad asked me for business ... grabbed me and another lad jumped off the flat roof. It all was on camera. One was strangling me, the other one started booting me - they got my money but they weren't stopping and the security vans came round ... They chased them - they actually got my money back for me ... The security didn't have to chase them and they did - it was really nice of them and they came to court for me ... He didn't deny he robbed me ... His brief said, "He only kicked you between one and three times", and I said, "He had no right to kick me at all". The judge told him off. He kept questioning me about how many times I got kicked - it's all on camera and you could see me get attacked. So he couldn't deny what he'd done, so it was "Well, he only kicked you between one and three times." Well, that's a good defence! I think he got done for common assault and street robbery - two years. It felt really good. It was like, "You can't treat people like that". (SU19)

Police officers and the ISVA stressed how important it was to get good outcomes at court, not only for the victims, but also so they could actively make other sex workers aware in order to increase confidence in reporting crimes. This was done through outreach staff, project newsletters and the media. Promoting such outcomes in the media was seen as vital in challenging cultural attitudes and beliefs that crimes against sex workers would not be taken seriously and directly challenging perpetrators who target sex workers. Merseyside Police officers, with the support of the force press office, gave press statements following successful trials and participated in newspaper, TV and radio news pieces; this was often in collaboration with Armistead ISVA or managers.

I think the women need to know, you know, they need to see these results. I know Armistead and ISVA does a lot of work with telling them the results of, you know, these court cases of rape. You know, how they're getting really quite a high percentage through success rates now. (P385)

These show convictions of people who commit crimes against sex workers was clearly very important for individuals who had been victimised, who attached a range of meanings to these outcomes.

Conclusion

As evidenced in this chapter, the role of the specialist sex work ISVA has offered a range of support to sex workers and achieved a range of practical and emotional outcomes, including improving confidence, self-esteem and quality of life for the people supported. In addition, it has had a range of criminal justice impacts, including acting as intermediary interface between victims and the criminal justice system, providing an independent role, encouraging reporting, smoothing the evidence collection process, facilitating contact and engagement, and through to the court process - encouraging people to attend, and reducing distress for the victim. This chapter has described how the ISVA role was highly valued by both police and current and former sex workers interviewed and seen as one of the key factors in increased convictions.

Indeed, the specialist sex work ISVA post has had impact beyond Merseyside. It has been recognised nationally as good practice in supporting sex worker victims of sexual violence, encouraging reporting by sex workers of crimes committed against them, improving their engagement to progress cases through the criminal justice system and contributing to increased numbers of cases being brought to court and gaining convictions (Home Office 2011; CPS 2012). National Home Office guidance (2011) included Merseyside as a case study example of an area that has prioritised addressing sex worker safety and refers to the ISVA as a key aspects of the Merseyside approach (: 16). The Home Office (2012) identified the ISVA as contributing to improvements in bringing perpetrators to justice:

A Home Office funded specialist Independent Sexual Violence Advocate working in Merseyside with sex workers has helped improve the prosecution of rape cases involving sex workers and their safety. (: 32)

The specialist sex work ISVA has provided a model for one way of improving victim support for sex workers in the UK and has been adopted within a number of other sex work projects elsewhere in the UK (Blair 2011). 'Armistead Street' was involved in sharing practice through the UK Network of Sex, and when the Home Office made a call for applications in 2010, five other sex work projects applied and Armistead advised and shared their original proposals. One of those successful was 'Open Doors', Homerton NHS Trust, East London who visited Merseyside prior to submitting their bid for funding for an ISVA located within their project. Blair (2011), evaluating the London service, acknowledged the pioneering approach in Merseyside:

The Armistead Street project has, until very recently, been the only service in the UK to offer ISVA services to women in the sex industry, and the context in which their specialist ISVA sits is no less unique ... With the ISVA now in place, situated in the supportive environment of the Armistead Street project and working in partnership with a committed police force, improved confidence in the criminal justice system has led to some excellent outcomes across all stages of the criminal justice system. (Blair 2011: 12-13)

She found that the model now adapted in London delivered holistic wrap-around support 'tailored to meet the needs of each client' (Blair 2011: 33), had a range of positive outcomes, and was seen to add significant value by all partners. Other sex work projects have established specialist sex work ISVAs, with some having further developed and innovated the role to better meet local needs; for example, 'Open Doors' have an additional specialist Romanian speaking trained ISVA (Campbell and Sanders 2014), while 'Bristol One 25' and 'Basis Yorkshire' each have a combined specialist ISVA/IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advisor).

Findings outlined in this chapter have illustrated how various aspects of the Merseyside hate crime approach - including the innovative specialist sex work ISVA role, improvements in investigating rape and sexual assault, (specifically) the introduction of the Unity Team, and a sex-worker-friendly SARC - have combined to improve victim support for sex workers and to increase the level of prosecutions of perpetrators of crimes against sex workers. These changes have been set against a backdrop of an improved relationship and trust between sex workers and the development of protection-focused policing discussed in Chapter Five, signified by the inclusion of sex workers in police hate crime policy.

A watershed for hate crime policing was the case of the hate motivated murder of Stephen Lawrence (Hall et al. 2011), when Stephen and his family were let down by an investigative and court process that brought no justice. Ensuring professional, rigorous and sensitive investigation and prosecution of crimes against hate crime community groups, which meet quality standards, are an important part of hate crime models of policing. Sex workers do not have any of the legislative protections and sentencing enhancements associated with some hate crime groups. Nevertheless, this chapter has demonstrated that there has been a concerted policing and partnership effort to improve the investigation and prosecution of crimes against sex workers, particularly rape and sexual assault. As discussed in Chapter Four the murders of sex workers were one of the key catalysts to change in policing in Merseyside. My findings suggest progressive ways of investigating and prosecuting crimes against sex workers have been developed in Merseyside and there is much to be learned from practice officers identified in my research.

From Merseyside we begin to see the possibility of an inclusive, non-discriminatory approach, which is creating new understandings of sex workers' experiences of crime, particularly rape, which challenging historically enduring 'rape myths' and discourses about sex workers as unreliable witnesses, as witnesses whose sex work itself cast doubt on their credibility. Indeed new narratives are being created about sex workers and rape, which can contribute to the wider range of narratives Burrowes (2013) identifies as much needed to challenge rape myths which are still shaping outcomes in rape cases.

I would argue prosecutions have been one important measure of how seriously crimes against sex workers are being treated - an outcome of a policing model shaped by the principles of hate crime policing, such as building relationships with and improving trust amongst communities where there is distrust and suspicion (Hall 2005). This chapter found that getting justice was very important for sex worker victims; for some, it meant validation of their personhood and rights, a 'recognition' of their account or their right to equity in law. For all, it was important in preventing others being harmed by removing offenders. Significantly for many convictions also represented a challenge to the offenders who thought they would 'get away' with offences against sex workers and to wider cultural attitudes and discourses that condone and generated targeted hostility and hate crime against sex workers.

Chapter Nine: Conclusions - reflecting on the Merseyside hate crime approach and the outcomes of the research

This thesis has documented the Merseyside hate crime approach, identifying the factors that led to its development and locating it in the wider context of multi-agency sex work policy work in Liverpool. It has discussed the various elements which constitute this approach, and has argued that treating crimes against sex workers as hate crime recognises the documented cultural and historical issues of discrimination against, and 'othering' of, sex workers which directly shapes their experiences of crime, violence, policing and the criminal justice system.

My research has demonstrated that the Merseyside hate crime approach is innovative and has achieved some positive outcomes in terms of police-sex worker community relations and criminal justice outcomes, from which practice lessons can be learnt. Indeed, the approach has been recognised at a national level as effective practice in addressing crimes against sex workers (Home Office 2011). The Crown Prosecution Service (2012) recognised that, historically, in the UK crimes against sex workers have been under-reported, and referred to Merseyside, and the hate crime approach, as having made a positive impact on reporting and bringing cases before the courts.

As explained in Chapter One, the study grew from my own direct experience of being involved in pioneering policy and practice development in Liverpool and work informing wider national practice and policy work on sex work, and as a researcher committed to participatory and feminist action research which aims to contribute to social change. I will summarise the ways in which this research and the hate crime approach has fed into and shaped both local and national sex work policy; such impacts have been an integral part of my approach to research.

This thesis represents the first academic study to date to examine the Merseyside hate crime approach, and is the first empirical study to examine sex worker experiences of violent and other crime through the lens of hate crime and to present evidence that sex workers' experiences of victimisation fit various established definitions of hate crime victimisation. At the heart of this thesis is the argument that there are real practical benefits at a policy and practice level for approaching crime against sex workers as hate crime, including the recognition of sex workers' rights to protection from such crimes and their right to be free of such victimisation. I also make a contribution to the development of a theoretical framework for hate crime, which is inclusive (Chakraborti and Garland 2012). My research does not just add sex workers to a list of hate crime groups, but recognises the diversity of identity and the intersectional nature of hate crime (Mason-Bish 2010, 2015).

Sex workers and hate crime: towards an inclusive framework

The thesis has connected established theory and research about the 'othering' of sex workers and empirical research evidence on the victimisation of sex workers, with established theoretical conceptualisations of hate crime and debates about broadening definitions to include non-established hate crime groups. The levels of violence perpetrated against sex workers globally are alarming (Deering et al. 2014), and, for over 20 years, academics have discussed the stigmatising discourses, regulatory frameworks and other structural factors which have generated violence against sex workers. Yet targeted hostility, harassment and violence against sex workers had not, until my research commenced, been considered within the context of mainstream hate crime academic debates and constructs. Making and exploring this connection is one of the core contributions of the thesis.

The data presented in this thesis evidences that sex workers' experiences of harassment and crime fit various definitions of hate crime victimisation. This includes established definitions foregrounding 'othering' and social hierarchies, and which define hate crimes as expressions of prejudice, discrimination and power 'against those without rights, privilege and prestige' (Chakraborti and Garland 2009: 5; see also Perry 2001, Sheffield 1995 and Hall 2005). Perry's (2001) emphasis on groups who experience historical social marginalisation and acts of violence and intimidation which 'put them in their place' connects directly with the literature on the enduring stigmatisation, social marginalisation and othering of sex workers (Lowman 2000; Kinnell 2008) which was described in Chapter Two). This has long been identified as creating hostility and prejudice towards sex workers, leading to a denial of rights, lack of protection, and victimisation, and highlighting what some theorists have argued is the lack of full citizenship which sex workers experience (O'Neill 2007). Treating crimes against sex workers can be a recognition of this discrimination and 'othering' which has historically shaped their experiences of crime, policing and the wider criminal justice system.

It maps directly to the experiences of the majority of current and former sex workers interviewed in this study who felt sex workers were objectified, demonised and vilified; the 'dregs of society', 'scum', 'lowlifes' were phrases used, this leads to hate crime. Participants identified the actions of offenders as being shaped and motivated by these cultural attitudes and discourses which generate hostility and violent hate crime towards sex workers.

Sex worker experiences of targeted victimisation also illustrate the relevance, proposed by Chakraborti and Garland (2012), for wider and more inclusive conceptualisations of hate crime which define hate crime as

‘acts of violence, hostility and intimidation directed towards people because of their identity or ‘perceived difference’.

Chakraborti and Garland’s (2012: 507) conception of ‘perceived vulnerability’ (as utilised throughout my analysis) describes perpetrators seeing ‘their target: as weak, defenceless, powerless, with a limited capacity to resist’. Police and sex workers felt offenders saw sex workers as vulnerable ‘easy targets’ firstly because they think sex workers will not report to the police and they will therefore ‘get away with their crimes’. Secondly because they can take advantage of the opportunity to gain access to sex workers, with street sex workers particularly vulnerable, due to the current geography and organisation of street sex work i.e. situational vulnerability. Chakraborti and Garland stress the concept of ‘perceived vulnerability’ does not accept that hate crime against any particular group is inevitable or that the group actually are passive victims. This is an important emphasis in the context of sex work, as it is vital to ensure that hate crime targeted at sex workers is not conceptualised in a way which draws on discourses of vulnerability which remove agency (Sanders and Brown forthcoming 2017) and resistance from sex workers, or which essentialise sex work as inherently violent, and sex workers themselves as inevitable victims of violence.

The recognition of sex workers resistance and the fact that workers globally, within a sex worker rights framework, are active in challenging the policies, laws and cultural attitudes which stigmatise and generate the conditions for violence against sex workers is imperative (Sanders and Campbell 2014; ICRSE 2014). Many current and former sex workers who participated in my research were of the view that many offenders targeted sex workers specifically because of their sex working status, due to hostile attitudes towards sex workers, and also a belief that they are ‘easy targets’, with perpetrators thinking they will ‘get away with it’.

Hence I have argued that whilst the concept of 'perceived vulnerability' is useful to employ to make sense of this aspect of sex workers' lived experience of hate crime (and some police officers' understanding of why sex workers are a hate crime group), it should not replace the conceptualisation of sex worker hate crime as an expression of prejudice, discrimination and power (Perry 2001) against a group who have historically been socially marginalised, 'othered' and stigmatised.

I found that naming crimes against sex workers as hate crime spoke directly to their experiences of harassment and violence - and to their understanding of why people target and victimise them - amongst the majority of current and former sex workers who took part in this study. Recent research analysing incidents reported to 'National Ugly Mugs' further solidifies the claim that sex workers are a group who experience and identify targeted hate crimes. Connelly (2015) found that 18% of sex workers throughout the UK who made a report to 'National Ugly Mugs' identified hate crime victimisation related to their sex working as an element of the incident they were reporting²⁴. This survey took place in a context where treating crimes against sex workers as hate crime is only policy in one force area of the UK and there have been no national or local public promotion campaigns to raise awareness about sex work and hate crime.

Some theorists reflecting on the widening of hate crime victim groups have cautioned against overly restricting hate crime status to certain groups, arguing this risks the creation of victim hierarchies (Chakraborti and Garland 2009; Mason-Bish 2010).

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Hate crime categories were added to the report form during the NUM development project 2011/2012 because NUM board, which I sat on, recognized sex workers as a hate crime group, wanted to monitor this and wanted to raise awareness amongst project workers and sex workers making reports that hate crime motivated by prejudice and hostility towards sex workers can be recorded as could other hate elements in the scheme.

As well as groups such as disabled people (Roulstone et al. 2011), Goths (Garland 2010), and Gypsies and Travellers (James 2014), whose experiences of hate crime are increasingly being recognised, sex workers are one group who could benefit from inclusion and the 'special protection afforded to the officially recognised minority groups' (Chakraborti and Garland 2009: 16) - and whose experiences could contribute to understanding experiences of victimisation for groups outside recognised hate crime groups. Chakraborti (2010) argues that far too little is known about other groups

whose vulnerability extends beyond the boundaries of most hate crime policy and scholarly frameworks, nor have we paid enough attention to the targeting of disabled and transgender people despite these groups being recognised beneficiaries of most official discourses on hate crime (: 7).

I have added sex workers to this list (although not yet recognised in most official discourses on sex work), and it is encouraging to note that, by 2015, sex workers were beginning to be acknowledged by leading hate crime theorists in the UK, Chakraborti and Garland. Indeed, they note: 'Of all the groups on the borderlines of the hate crime debate perhaps the most socially stigmatised is that of sex workers' (Chakraborti and Garland 2015: 97).

This thesis has presented empirical evidence which provides some insights into sex workers' experiences of hate crime and which supports the call for an inclusive, non-hierarchical, hate crime framework which includes not only sex workers, but also people with drug and alcohol problems, homeless people and other victim groups not currently recognised (Chakraborti and Garland 2015). Some hate crime theorists have cautioned that, for some groups who have 'typically been seen as "undesirables", criminogenic or less worthy than other more "legitimate" victim groups...' (Chakaroborti and Garland 2012: 503; see also James 2014), there is a danger that distinctions between deserving and undeserving victim groups may emerge. Indeed, I would argue this is a concern in the academic and policy context for sex workers, especially within a framework of the criminalisation.

This accentuates the need for an inclusive framework and for decriminalisation of sex work (an argument to which I return in my final section). It also provides further evidence for the need for conceptualisations of hate crime which allow for the intersection of a range of forms of hate crime (Mason-Bish 2010) and acknowledge those who 'occupy multiple positions of culturally defined inferiority' (Chakraborti 2010: 6).

My findings indicate that sex worker experiences of hate crime vary depending on sex workers' personal and social circumstances, the sector they work within, and their positioning within the wider structural framework where the intersectional dynamics of gender, race, nationality, sexual identity and class operate. As discussed in Chapter Seven the intersectional nature of hate crime was highlighted in the narratives of sex workers, with a number of participants describing how sex work hate crime intersected with hostility and violence targeted at their race, drug use, and homeless status. Responses from current and former sex workers who identified as Black British, and a transgender woman who contributed to the research, described experiencing varying types of hate crimes, which highlighted the complexities of hate crime victimisation (Mason-Bish 2010). Some researchers have begun to explore the intersectional differences amongst established groups of hate crime victims (Meyer 2010).

Employing an intersectional approach across a wider diversity of sectors of the sex industry would, I propose, expand further our understanding of hate motivated violence as experienced by sex workers. Perry (2010: 22, 23), assessing trends in hate crime scholarship, asserts that work in the area has been occupied with the broad sweep and there is a need for theoretical and empirical work which explores the 'concrete experiences of discrete victim groups' and 'does justice to the specificity of the experiences of diverse communities'.

This thesis addresses this gap by looking at sex workers' concrete experiences of hate crime. However, I have been explicit that, whilst my research is the first UK study to focus on sex work and hate crime, the majority of current and former sex workers interviewed for this study had experience of street sex work, identified as female and were all UK nationals. Therefore my findings are based on the views and experiences of a particular group of sex workers based in one UK location. Hence, there is much scope and need for further academic research on hate crime and crimes against sex workers which explores the experiences and views of a more diverse range of sex workers - in terms of sector of the sex industry worked, gender identity and nationally - both within Merseyside, across the UK and other countries where hate crime policies and laws vary. For the future we need to explore sex workers' varying experiences of sex work motivated hate crime across sectors. For example, we have no research which explores and informs us about the views and experiences of hate crime amongst internet-based sex workers, gay male sex workers or migrant sex workers. This is particularly significant since the majority of sex worker murders in the UK over the last three years have been committed against female migrant sex workers (Sanders and Campbell 2015). This points to an intersection of sex work and migrant hate crime, and the targeting by offenders of 'perceived vulnerability' of a particular group of sex workers, which merits future research.

The Merseyside hate crime approach

This research has argued that the Merseyside hate crime approach did not appear overnight but grew out of the specific historical context of sex work policy in Merseyside. For some years, prior to the emergence of the hate crime approach, innovative multi-agency work had taken place to improve the safety of sex workers. This thesis has also found how events at the extremity of hate crime – i.e. the tragic murders of women involved in sex work in Merseyside - acted as catalysts for change, with all stakeholder groups wanting to prevent murders and improve sex worker safety, including police officers who had been involved in investigating such murders.

In Chapter Four, I asserted that what is referred to as the hate crime approach has acted as a symbolic banner for a package of elements. These include:

- a) The hate crime policy itself, which increased the status of crimes against sex workers, signalled that reports of crime should be taken seriously and responded to professionally, and provided a focused team (SIGMA) with a monitoring and coordinating role for crimes against sex workers (liaising closely with the project and sex workers, monitoring crimes against sex workers and investigating some crimes against sex workers).
- b) Close partnership work between the police and the 'Armistead Street' sex work project.
- c) Policing initiatives to proactively built trust and confidence in order to encourage reporting, such as appointing police sex work liaison officers, enhancing 'Ugly Mugs' and championing a 'National Ugly Mugs' scheme;
- d) The introduction of an Independent Sexual Violence Advisor for sex workers, who has been a vital element for engaging victims; the post has been recognised as good practice nationally (Blair 2011; Crown Prosecution

Service 2012). I return to this when reflecting on the impacts of the approach, and this research, nationally.

e) The specialist rape and sexual offences Unity Team, which has played a key role in improved responses for sex workers in the investigation and prosecution of sexual violence against sex workers from its establishment in 2007. Obtaining a conviction rate for rapes against sex workers brought before the courts higher than for the national rate for the general population was a significant achievement and testimony to the approach. The progressive way in which crime against sex workers has been investigated by the unit has included a radically different approach to sex workers as complainants and witnesses, in which they are approached as good witnesses (as evidenced in Chapter Eight). From Merseyside, we begin to see the possibility of an inclusive, non-discriminatory approach, which is creating new understandings of sex workers' experiences of crime, particularly rape - challenging historically enduring 'rape myths' and discourses of sex workers as unreliable witnesses.

The Merseyside hate crime approach, taken all its constituent parts, I would argue is a progressive approach to addressing violence, harassment and other crimes against sex workers which accepts the personhood, citizenship and human rights of sex workers, including the right to equality and non-discrimination, the right to liberty and security of the person, and the right to access to justice.

Hate crime and ‘protection’ focused policing

Another key element of the approach has been a proportionate policing response with limited strategic enforcement of the prostitution laws, i.e. ‘protection-focused policing’ (Campbell 2011b). This has made a crucial contribution to improving the relationship between sex workers and the police, and is now explored further in terms of wider national policing policy.

Chapter Six showed that a large majority of police officers viewed sex workers’ experiences of crime as hate crime. A majority of officers supported the Merseyside hate crime approach and the specific policy of treating crimes against sex workers as hate crime, and felt the inclusion of sex workers in the hate crime policy had a number of practical benefits which meant an improved police response to crimes against sex workers. The support demonstrated amongst police officers, and sex workers who took part in this research, gives the sex work and hate crime policy a level of legitimacy not found in studies that have examined police and sex worker attitudes to policing sex work in the UK (Brooks-Gordon 2006), which are much more contested and often divisive.

Within a national legislative framework of criminalisation, policing approaches to sex work vary across the UK (Hubbard 2006; Pitcher et al. 2005); and, based on findings from this research, I have identified a continuum of policing along which police forces can be positioned, ranging from enforcement-focused policing at one end to protection-focused policing at the other (Campbell 2011b, 2014). As described in Chapters Four and Five, a crucial part of the hate crime model was the ‘strategic enforcement’ adopted by Merseyside; and, at the time of my fieldwork, there had been a shift from enforcement-based policing of sex work towards protection-focused policing - the specific policy of treating crimes against sex workers as hate crime being an important part of this shift.

Enforcement-focused policing is characterised by an ethos of eradicating, reducing or disrupting various forms of sex work; it prioritises enforcement initiatives with high levels of enforcement of the laws relating to prostitution. There tends to be a high level of enforcement activity (where resources are available) in relation to street sex work, including use of soliciting legislation, and other forms of punitive orders such as Anti-Social Behaviour Orders and rehabilitation programmes targeted at sex workers and their clients. Policing of indoor and internet-based sex work is focused on surveillance, disruption, brothel raids and closures, sometimes conducted under the guise of anti-trafficking operations. This approach leads to dispersal and/or displacement of street sex work and displacement of indoor sex work venues to other locations, or forms of more fluid and mobile forms of sex work. Protecting sex workers and improving sex worker safety is not a priority, and initiatives to build trust with sex workers and encourage reporting tend not to be fully developed or are restricted in their effectiveness by the enforcement activity which predominates and undermines trust and confidence amongst sex workers in the police. As discussed in Chapter Two, there is much evidence that enforcement-focused policing contributes to social marginalisation, 'othering' and under-reporting, and heightens vulnerability and the 'conditions for predation of sex workers' (Bowen 2015).

In the protection-focused model, the safety of sex workers is a priority, and the predominant ethos is one of improving safety and reducing harm; sex work is strategically located within public protection. A range of proactive initiatives and measures are put in place to encourage the reporting of crimes and improve safety, such as police sex work liaison officers who have a non-arresting role. There is a high level of strategic and operational support for and active engagement with local 'Ugly Mugs' schemes and 'National Ugly Mugs'. Enforcement of the prostitution laws is avoided,

applied strategically and as a last option, following mediation and diversion approaches. When used, utilised enforcement is proportionate and any impact on sex worker safety is considered and action taken to minimise this impact. Policies or policing approaches are formally or informally adopted to provide spaces for street sex workers to work (within certain agreed rules) without fear of caution or arrest for soliciting; non-strategic enforcement of the soliciting legislation also applies to customers of sex workers. The objective is to provide a climate in which the relationship between sex workers, the police and support projects can be improved, and trust and confidence increased.

Police intelligence resources are focused on gathering intelligence about crimes against sex workers in partnership with local projects and 'Ugly Mugs' and those coercing or exploiting sex workers, including those involved in trafficking. Approaches to indoor sex work are focused on improving confidence and trust amongst sex workers to report crimes, building communication through sex work liaison officers. A staged mediatory and proportionate approach is taken to community complaints about premises. Intelligence gathering supports focused investigation and prosecutions related to violent and other crimes against sex workers, exploitation, cases of trafficking and organised crime involvement. There is close and inclusive partnership work between the police, sex work projects and other partners. Police develop partnerships with support services offering holistic services, who retain independence, and can effectively support harm reduction, safety, health and welfare interventions, as well as exit. Liaison and information sharing between police and other partners, including specialist sex work support projects, takes place in a framework that respects and values the independence of sex work projects and the confidentiality of their clients within boundaries of public protection. Media and public messages about sex work are balanced, sensitive and strategically planned to challenge violence against sex workers, stigma and

social exclusion, by communicating a clear uncompromising message that sex workers are part of the community and that addressing violence is a priority for the police. (See Appendix Eleven for a table summarising the core features of enforcement- and protection-focused policing.)

As I have shown, Merseyside, at the time of my research, was firmly located on the far end of the protection axis. The Merseyside hate crime approach has made a pioneering contribution to public-protection-focused approaches by its inclusion of sex workers in force hate crime policy. It has made a critical contribution to reshaping national policing guidance on sex work. New guidance policing sex work (National Police Chief's Council 2016) produced under the auspices of a national policing lead from Merseyside Police, advocates for treating crimes against sex workers as a priority including the public protection of sex workers of all genders and in all sectors, and critiques enforcement as having harmful impacts (see next section).

Research by Sherman et al. (2015: 478) has evidenced that sex workers in Baltimore experienced a policing approach that was enforcement-focused, with crackdowns, entrapment, verbal, physical and sexual abuse, and dismissal of crimes against them. The authors called for research to find 'points for leverage in preconceiving (the) police's role, identifying a guardianship framework that includes rather than excludes these vulnerable women'. In this, they postulate that police would be an access point to services rather than a deterrent to health and support services. I would argue the Merseyside hate crime approach provides one alternative protection-focused model. Elements of it could contribute to a 'guardianship framework' for 'vulnerable women'.

As argued earlier, discourses of vulnerability were prevalent in police officer participants' conceptualisations of sex workers as hate crime victims. And as discussed in Chapter Six, policing of crimes against sex workers (and sex work more generally) based on discourses of vulnerability can be progressive but need to be approached with some caution, because such discourses can be employed in a manner which marginalises sex workers' agency and pathologises sex workers by focusing on individual characteristics. Yet Sanders and Brown (forthcoming) did argue that some discourses of vulnerability could be a way of identifying injustices, inequalities and structural factors which lead to violence against sex workers and unify stakeholders around more progressive approaches in the local regulation of sex work. I would argue a hate crime approach premised on the conceptualisation of sex work hate crime as a product, of 'othering' and prejudice, and which recognises all sex workers as having human rights to safety, protection and justice, can provide a rights-based approach for sex workers of all gender identities.

This thesis has shown the possibility of progressive models of policing sex work in the UK which try to move away from enforcement, improve confidence in the police amongst sex workers, emphasise sex worker safety as part of the police's duty of public protection. As a model for national policing policy on sex work, placing pressure to address crimes against sex workers under the hate crime has the potential to offers a rights-based, non-stigmatising, non-essentialising strategic approach for the policing of violence against sex workers and of sex work more generally. With the approach endorsed by the new national guidance on policing sex work (National Police Chief's Council 2016) and the national hate crime guidance (College of Policing 2014), other forces may adopt the approach or elements of it.

There is a need for further comparative research to examine contemporary policing approaches across a range of forces in the UK, to further develop models for understanding the policing of sex work nationally, to capture other models of protection-focused policing and policing informed by 'vulnerability' (Sanders and Brown 2017, forthcoming; Sanders and Semhbi 2005) - as well as to assess how forces in England and Wales respond to new national policing guidance introduced in February 2016, which for the first time openly critiques enforcement and identifies sex worker safety and protection as a priority objective for police forces (see next section).

Research into practice: impacting on practice in Merseyside and beyond

In adopting a participatory action and feminist research approach, I aimed to produce research which shaped policy and practice, improving social justice, particularly for the women involved. This research and the sharing of its findings, sitting alongside my wider involvement in local and national policy development, has had a range of impacts, some which have contributed to improvements in policing responses to crimes against sex workers – or may do so in the future. My research has contributed significantly to informing sex work and hate crime policy in Merseyside and nationally, particularly in the areas of policing and support for sex work victims of sexual violence and other hate crimes.

Findings were shared with local stakeholders on an ongoing bases for example at an event to mark 'International Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers' on 17th December 2011, I alongside two other women from the Armistead Centre, plus community participants - presented initial findings from my interviews with current and former sex workers. Our presentation entitled, 'Recognising crimes against sex workers as hate crime in Liverpool: current and former sex workers speak', was the focus of

the event. Three women, all who had participated in the research read their own quotations from their interview transcripts and those of other women who chose to remain anonymous. There were approximately 45 people in attendance, made up of a range of stakeholders (see Figure 5).



Figure 5: International Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers, 17th December 2011, Stanley Street, Liverpool (where the Armistead Centre were based at the time). Source: photograph by Armistead Centre.

Chapter Eight evidenced that one element of the hate crime approach, improved support for sex worker victims specifically through the ISVA role, has left a legacy of innovation and good practice in supporting sex worker victims of rape and sexual assault. It has been recognised as an effective practice for supporting sex worker victims of rape and sexual assault (Home Office 2011) and has been replicated by a number of projects in different areas of the UK. My research and advisory input has supported the development of the role in other areas. The only concerns raised by police officers were fears that the role would be lost with funding cuts. Whilst the role was eroded in Merseyside for a period (2013-2014), when the ISVA for sex workers was located in a generic rape and sexual support service, April 2016 saw SAFE Place Merseyside secure funding from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for a full-time specialist sex work ISVA for 2016-2017.

My research findings outlined in Chapter Six were shared with stakeholders to inform fuller integration of sex workers into hate crime systems within the police and wider partnership arrangements. For example, I shared with the force strategic lead that the research had found limited awareness about the inclusion of sex workers as a hate crime group amongst the SIGMA hate crime unit who had previously played a key role in the approach, but now had limited contact with the 'Armistead Street' project. I also facilitated SIGMA team members to meet project staff and attend an 'Ugly Mugs' training update I was co-facilitating with the ISVA. Following the finding that Liverpool City Council's hate crime lead supported but knew little about the policy of including sex workers, the police strategic lead and I presented to the Hate Crime Joint Action group in November 2011. Later, and this remains the case, sex workers were included in the multi-agency policy document on hate crime in Liverpool (Merseyside Criminal Justice Board 2014). In 2013, I presented findings from my PhD to the Assistant Chief Constable in Merseyside who had also taken over the national lead on prostitution. This included a table of findings (see Appendix Eleven) which illustrated the key elements of the Merseyside approach put in place in 2006, plus the status of these in 2010/2011 (when my fieldwork took place) compared to the situation in July 2013, highlighting how some of the key elements had been eroded. At that time I also worked with Merseyside Police and Armistead, collaborating with a BBC documentary made in early August 2013. This was filmed in Liverpool and London and looked at approaches to crimes against sex workers (see Jacobs 2013), and the research informed this.

At a national level, my research has contributed to discussions about national policy and practice, including shared learning from Merseyside. I represented UKNSWP on the Home Office Advisory Group for the Review of Effective Local Practice which produced 'A Review of Effective Practice in Responding to Prostitution' (2011) and identified Merseyside as an example of local effective practice for addressing crimes against sex workers. The coalition government under which this was published produced no other strategic guidance document on sex work, and, as of June 2016, the Conservative government has produced no other national multi-agency guidance on prostitution that has replaced this for England and Wales.

As UKNSWP Liaison with the Association of Chief Police Officers and Joint Chair of the UKNSWP Practice and Policy Group, I was involved in a number of national initiatives including the 'Strategy on Prostitution and Sexual Exploitation' published in October 2011, and which included the first reference to sex work and hate crime in a national police guidance document.²⁵ New national guidance on policing sex work, superseding the 2011 guidance, was published in February 2016 (National Police Chief's Council 2016); the new guidance reasserted treating crimes against sex workers as a beneficial way of addressing violence against sex workers. As part of the national group, I provided substantial comment on drafts. Whilst such guidance is not statutory, recognising the autonomy of local force commands, it does seek to influence, and this guidance is very clear that sex worker safety should be a key priority for police forces. It seeks to raise awareness of vulnerabilities, highlight those behaviours and practices that

It identified 17 strategic principles. One of these was 'the safety of people engaged in sex work must be paramount to the police service' (Association of Chief Police Officers 2011: 6), and it pointed to Merseyside's treatment of crimes against sex workers as hate crime as a way forces could achieve this aim. This group continued to sit when the ACPO lead was handed over to the Assistant Chief Constable of Merseyside Police in 2012, who relinquished the role in 2015 to the officer who now holds the national police sex work portfolio, another Assistant Chief Constable of Merseyside Police.

can erode the confidence of sex workers and communities, and promote a 'risk based approach to managing prostitution related issues' (National Police Chiefs Council 2016: 4).

It recognises that 'many sex workers are marginalised' and that 'Police responses must not increase that vulnerability by forcing sex workers into more isolated and dangerous locations, where they are more at risk of violent attack' (: 5). Amongst its key strategic principles is that police have a role protecting sex workers against any forms of violence exploitation and coercion' (6). It states that 'Enforcement alone has proven to be an inadequate solution' (: 6), and calls for a proportionate response and partnership with local outreach projects. Significantly, in relation to hate crime, the guidance describes how the aims of the strategy will be achieved and lists a number of operational tactics and approaches. One of these is: 'Crimes against sex workers to be dealt with as hate crimes in accordance with National Policing 2014 Hate Crime Guidance' (: 11).

A summary of my research was used by the national police hate crime lead to inform new national police hate crime guidance, which was eventually published in 2014 as the 'Hate Crime Operational Guidance' (College of Policing 2014). This guidance reinforced the message that forces locally have the discretion to include victim groups outside the monitored strands if it will achieve community safety goals. The report stated that: 'If a partnership detects a trend, or a community reports concerns about a non-monitored hate crime, this should be considered and appropriate action taken' (: 9). It provided a number of examples of appropriate action which included community engagement and 'including it in local policy and applying the same type of response as to other hate crimes' (: 9). Merseyside's inclusion of sex workers and the information we provided was used as an example of this in the guidance:

Merseyside Police introduced crimes against sex workers into the locally monitored strands to demonstrate their commitment to addressing these issues. Merseyside's SIGMA (hate crime investigation unit) played a key role in working with other agencies to provide a more victim-focused response. (: 9)

The guidance described the key elements to the approach and referred to findings from this PhD research:

Research carried out by Durham University reports a change in attitude among police officers in Merseyside. Officers demonstrate greater respect towards sex workers, have an increased understanding of the crimes committed against them, take such reports more seriously and deal with them sensitively in a victim-centred manner. (: 9)

At the time of writing this remains the current national policing guidance document on hate crime. Whilst both the national guidance on policing sex workers and the hate crime guidance are not compulsory for forces, they do exert considerable influence.

Merseyside's approach of treating crimes against sex workers as hate crime policy has clearly had considerable national impact and influence, particularly on policing guidance and models of support for sex worker victims of rape and sexual assault; my research, with its action research approach, has played a role in that. Wherever one sits within debates about including other groups within hate crime policy, this research has found that the approach in Merseyside has contributed to achieving some positive outcomes in terms of police-sex work community relations and criminal justice outcomes, has shaped national policy debates about policing sex work²⁶, and has been recognised at a national level as effective practice in addressing crimes against sex workers (Home Office 2011; Crown Prosecution Service 2012; National Police Chiefs Council 2016).

A way to go!

Whilst I argue the approach enacted in Merseyside is progressive and has brought about real pragmatic improvements in the policing of crimes against sex workers, there are challenges for, and limitations, to the approach. A key finding of my research was that there was limited awareness specifically about the element of including sex workers as a hate crime victim group in policing policy and procedures, amongst sex workers and police. There is a way to go in raising awareness amongst sex workers and police about the policy and sustaining this awareness. My research was carried out five years after the introduction of the policy when there had been high level championing; sustaining change in hate crime policing across all ranks on the ground is challenging (Chakraborti and Garland 2009). At the time of my fieldwork, SIGMA had a less active role in coordinating, monitoring and investigating sex worker hate crimes: officers who had championed the issue had moved on other posts, meaning sex workers were far from integrated into police hate crime monitoring and other procedures.

As discussed in Chapter Six, I also found that the hate crime policy had not, at the time of my fieldwork, been fully integrated into wider multi-agency hate crime policies and procedures. My research findings stimulated discussion about this and, as noted earlier in this conclusion, sex workers were, as of 2014, specified in the multi-agency hate crime policy (Merseyside Criminal Justice Board 2014). There is a need to further integrate sex workers if they are not to have a second-class status within multi-agency and police force policies.

Despite the fact that the hate crime police policy element of the Merseyside approach was not fully operationalised and embedded during my fieldwork, it does not mean the approach overall has not lead to improvements in the policing of crimes against sex workers. It does, however, suggest there is further potential to develop the approach. Indeed, I would argue a fully fledged hate crime approach, in which crimes against sex workers were monitored, investigated and prosecuted in the same way as other established other hate crimes, with the same multi-agency partnership capacity and oversight, would have huge benefits for sex workers and further enhance response to crimes against them - with improved support, monitoring information and preventative strategies. The hate crime policy element of the approach indicates to officers these crimes cannot be dismissed and should be treated seriously, and it enables senior officers to give a strong message to officers, the public and sex workers in this vein. It also suggests an understanding amongst police of the routes of violence against sex workers, that sex worker victimisation is not a random act or because of sex worker risk-taking but a result of discrimination, hostility, prejudice and the targeting of 'perceived vulnerability'.

As well as the need to further embed sex workers in wider hate crime practices, and sustain quality specialist victim support through the ISVA role, my research findings indicate that ongoing initiatives are needed to maintain levels of trust amongst street sex workers and to extend proactive community liaison work to off-street and online sectors. I would argue that there is a need for more effective engagement and inclusion of sex workers of all sectors and genders in the approach, based on consultation and involvement of people working in those sectors. No doubt progress has been somewhat restricted by the fact that, in recent years, no dedicated outreach and support service for indoor and online sex workers has been funded; and developing new projects at a time of funding cuts is a challenge.

Indeed, in early 2016, restructuring of staffing in the Armistead Centre has meant there is now a much smaller dedicated outreach team to work with street sex workers (personal communication with former Manager of Armistead), and it is unclear how this will impact on partnership work and the Merseyside approach. Even at the time of my fieldwork, some police officers and service providers expressed concern about sustaining the approach through austerity and police cuts, with uncertainty about the commitment of resources to the various initiatives which have contributed to the approach. It must be stressed it is over three years since my research fieldwork and hence further research would be needed to assess the current shape of the Merseyside hate crime approach and whether progress had been made to more fully integrate sex workers or whether funding cuts had impacted on the model.

Not an either/or: the hate crime approach and decriminalisation

The hate crime approach, as enacted in Merseyside, has brought real pragmatic and progressive improvements in the policing of crimes against sex workers and I would argue similar approaches in other areas could achieve such outcomes. But the approach can only achieve so much, as the national framework of criminalisation is left intact. It is important that the hate crime approach should not be seen as the end goal in itself for the regulation of sex work at local and national level in the UK. The weight of international research evidence demonstrates that decriminalisation is the most conducive regulatory framework in which to reduce violence against sex workers and improve safety, and ensure sex workers receive adequate health care, legal assistance, and other support as needed and promote sex worker rights (Deering et al. 2014; Beyer 2015).

Support is growing from major international human rights and health organisations who have adopted formal policies in support of decriminalisation of sex work (World Health Organisation 2014). Amnesty International published its formal policy in May 2016, recommending decriminalisation of consensual sex work; this was published alongside research reports from four countries evidencing human rights abuses experienced by sex workers across all countries due to criminalisation (Amnesty International 2016).

I would argue decriminalisation is the regulatory framework required in the UK to enable a radical transformation of the relationship between sex workers and the police, and make significant impacts on reducing violence and targeted hate crime against sex workers. It would remove the current structural framework which has many detrimental effects, including the creation of a problematic adversarial relationship between sex workers and the police. Decriminalisation would remove many of the social, legal and cultural conditions which create structurally generated violence against sex workers. It would enable employment rights, health and safety, and other appropriate regulatory frameworks to be focused on creating safer work spaces and conditions for sex workers, and for scarce policing resources to be focused on those who continue to commit any crimes against sex workers. It would provide a framework in which policing focuses on improving the safety of sex workers: public protection policing would be the norm.

In New Zealand, the Prostitution Reform Act 2003 introduced decriminalisation (Abel and Fitzgerald 2010a). Research has found that whilst decriminalisation has not eliminated violence against sex workers, it has improved the relationship between sex workers and the police, and has provided sex workers with legitimacy through the 'realisation of employment, legal, health and safety rights' (Abel and Fitzgerald 2010b: 256). Armstrong (2016a) found decriminalisation enabled 'a dramatic shift in the approach to policing sex work' (: 1), with much greater trust amongst street sex workers in the police and a sense of responsibility amongst the police for sex worker safety. Her research found decriminalisation had enabled police officers to take a 'proactive interest in sex-worker safety (: 14) and there had been improved information sharing about crime. Both of these are important elements of a protection-focused approach. Decriminalisation helped to address the previous imbalance in power between sex workers and the police: 'First it reduces the power police have over sex workers by removing the threat of arrest. And second it empowers sex workers through the provision of rights' (Armstrong 2016 a: 14). The legal framework of criminalisation can be used as a tool by unprofessional officers to exert power over sex workers (Sherman et al. 2015); the removal of such power is another powerful argument for decriminalisation. Researchers in New Zealand have stressed that the experience of violence against sex workers post-decriminalisation has further highlighted that violence against sex workers is also tied up with embedded cultural and social discourses around violence against women and sex workers which will take concerted efforts to erode. Armstrong (2016b) found violence towards street sex workers in New Zealand comes from passersby as much as offenders using the client guise to access and target sex workers.

Protection-based models of policing such as the hate crime approach may have something to offer in decriminalised contexts, providing a model for delivering a police service to people in sex worker communities who still

face discrimination, prejudice and violence generated by stigmatisation and 'othering' - in the same way that hate crime policing has been an important way of improving relations between LGBTQ communities and the police in a number of international jurisdictions.

When I presented at a conference in 2015, a representative from the English Collective of Prostitutes was critical of the hate crime approach, arguing that it was a distraction from decriminalisation. I very much understand the concern that adoption of the hate crime approach could be utilised by national or local policy makers to take attention away from more fundamental legislative changes needed to improve sex workers' safety and that potentially campaigns for the hate crime approach could take the energy of advocates away from campaigns for decriminalisation. Yet this is not a given and it is possible to create improved local approaches whilst still advocating for wider legislative change, as various individuals involved in the Merseyside approach have done. Whilst I greatly hope decriminalisation in the UK will happen quickly, there is no guarantee this will be the case. In that intervening period I would argue the hate crime approach, with all the elements that constitute that it, would be more favorable to sex worker safety and access to public protection than many enforcement-focused approaches in the UK deliver. Hence I suggest it should not be a case of the hate crime approach *or* decriminalisation; and indeed the hate crime approach could be seen as a step towards decriminalisation, with a policing and partnership approach which prioritises the safety of sex workers and delivers a clear message that violence against sex workers will be taken seriously and perpetrators will 'not get away' with their crimes. The hate crime approach has not eliminated violence against sex workers in Merseyside but it goes further than many other local regulatory approaches in the UK to prioritise sex worker safety, ensure justice and assert sex workers' equal right to protection.

APPENDICES

Appendix One: Participant information leaflets

ADDRESSING VIOLENCE AGAINST SEX WORKERS AS HATE CRIME IN MERSEYSIDE – INFORMATION LEAFLET FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS: SERVICE USERS



We would like to invite you to take part in our research study. Before you decide we would like you to understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for you. We hope this leaflet can answer some of the questions you may have about taking part. We'll go through this leaflet with you and answer any questions you have.

WHO IS CARRYING OUT THIS RESEARCH AND WHY?

Rosie Campbell is carrying out the research, she's carrying it out for her postgraduate study which she's doing based at Durham University. Some of you may know Rosie, she used to work full time with Armistead and still does street outreach. Rosie has the full support of Armistead for this research and Armistead Street staff are helping her let service users know the research is taking place and explaining what taking part would involve, so people can decide if they want to take part or not.

WHAT IS THE RESEARCH ABOUT?

Rosie's research is looking at how the police in Liverpool, Armistead Street and other support projects have treated crimes committed against sex workers over the last few years. She wants to find out how violence against

sex workers is being dealt with and if there have been any improvements or not in the police and courts responses for women involved in street sex work who experience violence. As part of the research she is talking to women who are, or have been involved in sex work about their experiences of reporting crimes committed against them, to hear about their experiences of such crimes and their experiences and views about the responses of police, projects and courts. Rosie is also speaking to the police, project workers and the crown prosecution service as part of her research. So taking part in the research can help us learn how the police and projects are dealing with crimes against sex workers from the viewpoints of women who are, or have been, involved in sex work. It gives you a chance to have your say!

DO I HAVE TO TAKE PART? HOW DO I GIVE MY CONSENT?

No, you do not have to take part in the research. Taking part in the research is totally up to you! It's a completely voluntary decision. You decide whether or not to take part. Whatever your decision, the service you receive from Armistead will not be affected.

Indeed before you take part the researcher has to explain the research, how your confidentiality and anonymity will be protected and then ask you to sign a form giving your consent to take part. Without this written agreement of your consent, they cannot involve you in the research.

WHEN IS THE RESEARCH BEING CARRIED OUT?

The research fieldwork is being carried out between March 2011 and April 2012.

HOW CAN I TAKE PART?

You can take part by taking part in a one-to-one interview with Rosie, the researcher.

WHAT DOES TAKING PART IN AN INTERVIEW INVOLVE?

- This means doing an interview for approximately one hour to one and a half hours. There will be comfort breaks and there will be refreshment.
- All the interviews will be carried out by Rosie Campbell, the researcher from Durham University.
- She will be asking you a range of questions about your experience of crimes committed against you, reporting crime to outreach/support projects and police, cases that may have been investigated and gone to court and the support you have received.
- You do not have to answer any questions you are uncomfortable with. The researcher will give you a copy of the list of question topics she is using before the interview starts. This gives you chance to see if there are any areas you do not want to answer questions about.
- Remember, you can stop the interview at any point. You are in control!!
- The interviewer will record what you say by taking hand written notes or making a digital voice recording (depending on your preference). She will ask you what you prefer before the interview starts.

Your interview will be anonymous and confidential. Your name, or any details that could identify you, will not be recorded. Any identifiers will be deleted from the typed up version (what's called the interview transcript) of the recording or notes. The recording will be downloaded from the digital recorder within 2 days, it will then be stored on a password protected computer. Until being downloaded the recording device will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the offices of the researcher, if hand written notes are taken they will be stored in a locked filing cabinet. The recording will be deleted from the recording device immediately after downloading. The digital recording or hand written notes will be transcribed within a maximum of 8 weeks from the interview and the digital recording will be deleted from computer file within 12 weeks. If hand written notes have been taken, these will be destroyed immediately after transcription. All electronic computer files are kept on a password protected computer.

So if you want to take part in a one-to-one interview, Rosie can arrange for you to be interviewed at a time convenient for you. Interviews will take place in a private room at the Armistead Centre, 1st Floor Musker Buildings, 1 Stanley Street, Liverpool City Centre. If you need a lift to the interview this can be arranged, just let Rosie or Shelley the ISVA at Armistead know. We can refund any travel expenses. Or if you prefer, the interview can take place where you are living.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND ANONYMITY

The information you give in your interview or focus group will be kept confidentially and anonymous to the extent permitted by law. You know Armistead respects your confidentiality as best they can within law and NHS policies. This research will be carried out in line with the Armistead confidentiality policy, Durham University ethical guidelines and NHS ethical practice.

The researcher will not record your full name on any documents, a number code will be used for each person taking part. When your interview or the focus group discussion you take part in is typed up personal identifiers such as names, address or others details that may have been referred to which could identify a person will **NOT** be recorded. The researcher will not be requesting such details in interviews and focus groups.

The only time you will be asked for your name is on the Consent Form that you will be asked to go through and sign before taking part. This will be kept in your client file within Armistead which are kept in line with Armistead and NHS confidentiality policies. The anonymised written up interview transcript or focus group transcript will **not** be kept in your file so it cannot identify you.

HOW WILL THE INFORMATION FROM INTERVIEWS BE USED?

Information collected in interviews that you and other service users and those with police and service providers will be used by Rosie to write a PhD thesis in which all the research will be written up. So anonymous extracts

from interviews may be incorporated into the researcher's PhD thesis and academic reports and papers based on this research. The location of the research fieldwork for the study, i.e. Liverpool, Merseyside, will not be anonymous in publications. The interview materials will be used appropriately and no material will be used in a manner that causes distress or danger to any participant.

INDEPENDENT REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Postgraduate research carried out by Durham University is looked at by a group of people called an Ethics Committee at the University to protect your interests. This research has got approval from the Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee at Durham University. Because some people taking part in this research are service users of the NHS, it has also been looked at by an independent NHS research ethics committee. This study has been reviewed and given favourable opinion by NHS North West Research Ethics Committee and Liverpool PCT Ethics Committee.

ANY CONCERNS AND FURTHER INFORMATION

If you want any further information about the evaluation or you want to take part, you can contact:

Rosie Campbell the researcher directly by texting or calling on her Mobile:
07870695883

Email: rosemary.campbell@durham.ac.uk

School of Applied Social Sciences

32 Old Elvet

Durham

DH1 3HN

**ADDRESSING VIOLENCE AGAINST SEX WORKERS AS HATE CRIME
IN MERSEYSIDE**
INFORMATION LEAFLET FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS:
AGENCIES



We hope that this leaflet can answer some of the questions you may have about taking part!

WHO IS CARRYING OUT THIS RESEARCH AND WHY?

Rosie Campbell is carrying out the research, she's carrying it out for her postgraduate study which she's doing based at the School of Applied Social Studies, Durham University. Some of you may know Rosie she has been involved in other research studies on sex work in Merseyside. Rosie has the full support of Armistead Centre for this research and also has the support of Merseyside Police.

WHAT IS THE RESEARCH ABOUT?

The key aims of the research are to;

- Establish and document the current approach adopted in Merseyside to crimes against sex workers.
- Identify the factors that have led to the development of the Merseyside Hate Crime approach to addressing crimes against sex workers.
- Explore why key stakeholders hold the current model adapted in Liverpool as good practice and identify what national good practice lessons can be learnt.
- Explore how service users i.e. women involved in street sex work in Liverpool have experienced this model.

- Consider how the current hate crime approach adopted in Merseyside is related to the wider historical and contemporary development of multi-agency /partnership work and policy on sex work in Liverpool and specifically violence against sex workers.
- Explore how this approach relates to wider national policies /frameworks and governance of sex work.
- Locate crimes against sex workers as hate crime, building on existing theories of hate crime and theoretical approaches that identify prejudice against sex workers, the 'othering' and stigmatisation of sex workers. In doing so making an original contribution to the sociological and criminological literature on sex work and hate crime.

The thesis aims to make a contribution to the theoretical and policy literature relating to multi-agency responses to sex work and specifically violence against sex workers.

In summary the research fieldwork will consist of one-to-one interviews and focus groups with individuals from key groups and stakeholders involved in developing, or experiencing, the hate crime approach to violence against sex workers including; women involved in street sex work in Liverpool, police, crown Prosecutions Service, staff from Armistead Street outreach and support project and other health and social care projects working with sex workers in Liverpool and service commissioners/ policy makers.

WHEN IS THE RESEARCH FIELDWORK BEING CARRIED OUT?

The research fieldwork is being carried out between January 2011 and April 2012.

HOW CAN I TAKE PART IN THE RESEARCH?

Taking part in the research is totally up to you! It's a completely voluntary decision. You decide whether or not to take part! You can withdraw at any time without giving any reason or explanation for doing so. Before you take part the researcher has to explain the research, how your confidentiality and

anonymity will be protected and then ask you to sign a form giving your consent to take part. Without this written agreement of your consent they cannot involve you in the research.

You can take part by taking part in a one-to-one interview with the researcher.

WHAT DOES TAKING PART IN AN INTERVIEW INVOLVE?

- This means doing an interview for approximately one hour to one and a half hours.
- All the interviews will be carried out by Rosie Campbell, the researcher from Durham University.
- She will be asking you a range of questions, following an interview guide, about your involvement in agency responses to crimes against sex workers.
- You do not have to answer any questions you are uncomfortable with. The researcher will give you a copy of the list of question topics she is using before the interview starts. This gives you chance to see if there are any areas you do not want to answer questions about.
- Remember you can stop the interview at any point!
- The interviewer will record what you say by taking hand written notes or making a digital voice recording (depending on your preference). She will ask you what you prefer before the interview starts.
- Your interview will be anonymous and confidential. Your name, or any details that could identify you, will not be recorded. Any identifiers will be deleted from the typed up version (what's called the interview transcript) of the recording or notes. Under university and NHS ethical practice it is required that the recording will be transcribed and deleted from the recorder within a maximum of 6 weeks from the interview (but the researcher intends to transcribe within one week). Until being transcribed and deleted the recording will be kept securely at all times in a locked filing cabinet in the offices of the researcher.

- So if you want to take part in a one-to-one interview Rosie can arrange for you to be interviewed at a time convenient for you. Interviews can take place at your place of work or a private room can be booked at the Armistead Centre, 1st Floor Musker Buildings, 1 Stanley Street, Liverpool City Centre.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND ANONYMITY

The information you give in your interview will be kept confidentially and anonymous to the extent permitted by law. This research will be carried out in line with the Armistead confidentiality policy, Durham University ethical guidelines and NHS ethical practice.

The researcher will not record your full name on any documents a number code will be used for each person taking part. When your interview is typed up personal identifiers such as names, address or others details that may have been referred to which could identify a person will **NOT** be recorded. The researcher will not be requesting such details in interviews.

The only time you will be asked for your name is on the Consent Form that you will be asked to read and sign before taking part, this will be stored in a locked filing cabinet.

HOW WILL THE INFORMATION FROM INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUPS BE USED?

Information collected in interviews that you, other agency representatives including police and service providers will be used by Rosie to write a PhD thesis in which all the research will be written up. So anonymised extracts from one-to-one interviews may be incorporated into the researchers PhD thesis and academic reports and papers based on this research. The location of the research fieldwork for the study i.e. Liverpool, Merseyside will not be anonymised in publications. The interview materials will be used appropriately and no material will be used in a manner that causes distress or danger to any participant.

INDEPENDENT REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Postgraduate research carried out by Durham University is looked at by a group of people called an Ethics Committee at the University to protect your interests. This research has got approval from the Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee at Durham University. Because some people taking part in this research are service users of the NHS, it has also been looked at by an independent NHS research ethics committee. This study has been reviewed and given favourable opinion by NHS North West Research Ethics Committee.

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you require any further information about the evaluation you can contact;
Rosie Campbell the researcher directly on 07870695883
Email: rosemary.campbell@durham.ac.uk

School of Applied Social Sciences
University of Durham
32 Old Elvet
Durham
DH1 3HN

N.B. Research Supervision: *This research is being supervised by Dr Maggie O'Neill, Reader in Criminology, School of Applied Social Studies, and Durham University.*

THANK YOU FOR CONSIDERING TAKING PART!!

Appendix Two: Participant consent forms



INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM: ARMISTEAD SERVICE USERS

TITLE OF PROJECT: *Postgraduate research "Addressing violence against sex workers as hate crime in Merseyside" 2011* NAME **OF RESEARCHER:**
Rosie Campbell

PLEASE INITIAL BOX

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet dated 18th March 2011 for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason, without my medical care or legal rights being affected.

3. I understand that this study involves an interview that lasts approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes. I further understand that the information I give during the interview, and names given, will be kept anonymous and confidential to the researcher to the extent permitted by law. I agree to take part in the above study by taking part in an interview.

4. I consent to the interview being recorded and transcribed. I understand that the digital recording, following the interview, will be downloaded, removed from the recording device and kept securely in a password protected computer file. It will be transcribed within a maximum

period of eight weeks. After a maximum period of twelve weeks the recording will be deleted from the computer file.

5. I consent to anonymised direct quotes from this interview being used in the researchers PhD thesis and academic reports and papers based on this research. I understand that the location of the research study fieldwork i.e. Liverpool, Merseyside will be named in publications and that interview materials will be used appropriately and that no material will be used in a manner that causes distress or danger to any participant.

6. I consent to another person's voice being used to read out a short clip from my interview, this will then be used as part of an "audio collage" made up of clips from a number of different people interviewed this will be played at conferences/events. This will be an anonymous clip and there will be no details included that will identify me personally.

Name of Participant: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Name of Person Taking Consent: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

When completed: 1 for participant; 1 for the participant's Armistead client file (original).

INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM: AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES

TITLE OF PROJECT: *Postgraduate research "Addressing violence against sex workers as hate crime in Merseyside" 2011/2012*

NAME OF RESEARCHER: Rosie Campbell

PLEASE INITIAL BOX

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet dated 18th March 2011, for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason, without my medical care or legal rights being affected.

3. I understand that this study involves an interview that lasts approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes. I further understand that the information I give during the interview, and names given, will be kept anonymous and confidential to the researcher to the extent permitted by law. I agree to take part in the above study by taking part in an interview.

4. I consent to the interview being recorded and transcribed. I understand that the digital recording, following the interview, will be downloaded, removed from the recording device and kept securely in a password protected computer file. It will be transcribed within a maximum

period of eight weeks. After a maximum period of twelve weeks the recording will be deleted from the computer file.

5. I consent to anonymised direct quotes from this interview being used in the researchers PhD thesis and academic reports and papers based on this research. I understand that the location of the research study fieldwork i.e. Liverpool, Merseyside will be named in publications and that interview materials will be used appropriately and that no material will be used in a manner that causes distress or danger to any participant.

Name of Participant: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Name of Person Taking Consent: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

When completed: 1 for participant; 1 for researcher site file 1 (original).

FOCUS GROUP CONSENT FORM: AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES

TITLE OF PROJECT: *Postgraduate research “Addressing violence against sex workers as hate crime in Merseyside” 2011-2012*

NAME OF RESEARCHER: Rosie Campbell

PLEASE INITIAL BOX

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet dated 18th March 2011, for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason, without my medical care or legal rights being affected.

3. I understand that the study involves a focus group interview designed to explore the views and experiences of representatives from professional agencies who have been involved in developing and delivering the multi-agency responses to sex work in Liverpool and the hate crime approach to addressing crimes against sex workers. I confirm that I have an obligation to respect the privacy of the other members of the group by not disclosing any personal information that they share during our discussion. I further understand that all information I give will be kept confidential and that all names of people in the study will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law (i.e. unless under the statutory obligations of the agency the researcher is working within, it is judged that for the safety of the participant,

or others, that confidentiality will have to be breached). **I agree to take part in the above study by taking part in a focus group.**

4. I consent to the focus group interview being recorded and transcribed. I understand that the digital recording, following the interview, will be downloaded, removed from the recording device and kept securely in a password protected computer file. It will be transcribed within a maximum period of eight weeks. After a maximum period of twelve weeks the recording will be deleted from the computer file.

5. I consent to anonymised direct quotes from this interview being used in the researchers PhD thesis and academic reports and papers based on this research. I understand that the location of the research study fieldwork i.e. Liverpool, Merseyside will be named in publications and that interview materials will be used appropriately and that no material will be used in a manner that causes distress or danger to any participant.

Name of Participant: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Name of Person Taking Consent: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

When completed: 1 for participant; 1 for researcher site file 1 (original).

Appendix Three: Police focus group guide



HATE CRIME AND SEX WORK IN MERSEYSIDE

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH PROJECT: ROSIE CAMPBELL

POLICE OFFICERS FOCUS GROUP GUIDE

Greet and Register Participants

- ❖ Greet participants on arrival
- ❖ Go through "Participant Information Leaflet": include explaining practice re: confidentiality and anonymity
- ❖ Ask participants to fill out consent forms
- ❖ Fill in focus group details form: date/location/number of participants

Introduce the Focus Group

- ❖ Welcome Participants
- ❖ Introduce Study – Why we are here? *Description of research aims*
- ❖ *Confidentiality statement: reassure about confidentiality and anonymity/privacy of information/views given*
- ❖ Welcome different experiences and views
- ❖ Describe how the group will be organised: Facilitator ask questions, and listen. Should last approx 2 hours. There will be a break.
- ❖ Guidelines or ground rules: e.g. agree basic ground rules such as turn taking, respect for others views/experiences, have your say but give others, theirs i.e. don't dominate discussion, talk to the group not each other, no smoking building, if you need to leave the group at any point this is ok, Please respect the facilitator, We have limited time and a lot to cover so facilitator will have to move on discussion to new areas please respect this.

1. PAST EXPERIENCES OF POLICING PROSTITUTION AND MULTI-AGENCY WORK

When did officers first get involved in policing prostitution? What was their role?

How would they describe Merseyside Police's approach to policing prostitution at that time?

What were the key issues/priorities for the police at that time in relation to prostitution?

What was the force's approach to violent sexual and other crimes committed against sex workers?

What did the police do to encourage sex workers to report crimes against them?

What was the force's approach to working with support projects?

Were officers involved in responding to crimes committed against sex workers at that time? Probe for examples.

When you first joined the force what were the range of officers' attitudes to prostitution, to sex workers and violence against sex workers?

2. CHANGES AND CURRENT APPROACH TO PROSTITUTION

Have you experienced any changes in your views on and attitudes to prostitution towards the policing of prostitution and violence against sex workers? If yes, what has shaped your views and led to these changes in attitudes and views?

What changes have you seen in the policing of prostitution generally and the police response to violence against sex workers specifically? When and why have these changes come about?

Have there been any particular key events locally or nationally that you would identify as leading to changes in policing of prostitution in Liverpool?

Sex worker murders in Merseyside or nationally (e.g. Ipswich)? Political pressures?

How would you describe Merseyside Police's current approach to policing prostitution generally? How is this coordinated across the force and with strategic partners? Who takes a lead for prostitution in Merseyside Police?

3. CURRENT APPROACH AND POLICE INVOLVMENT

Which police departments within Merseyside Police are involved in policing sex work and specifically addressing crimes against sex workers currently? Please outline their specific role and responsibilities and how they contribute to a. encouraging reporting b. gathering intelligence c. investigation and bringing cases to justice and d. offering support to victims.

- North Liverpool neighbourhood team
- SIGMA (Hate Crime) Unit
- Public Protection Unity Team
- Major incident Team
- MIT
- CID

What current policing priorities for Merseyside Police does the work around sex work contribute to/feed into?

How can enforcement-based operational policing responses to community complaints be balanced with the need for the police to offer protection to sex workers and to deal with crimes against sex worker? What lessons have you learnt regarding the dual role of enforcement of laws on soliciting kerb crawling and the role of public protection?

4. HATE CRIME APPROACH

In summary what is Merseyside Police's general policy on hate crime? How hate crimes are generally dealt with by police in Merseyside?

What systems are in place for encouraging reporting of hate crime and for responding to these?

When and how did officers first become aware that crimes against sex workers should be treated as hate crime?

Why do you think this policy was adopted and how did it come about?

Why do you think historically crimes against sex workers have been un-reported to the police? What barriers do sex workers face in reporting crimes committed against them?

Do you think crimes against sex workers should be treated as hate crime? Explore yes/no. Why should crimes against sex workers be treated as Hate crime?

Did this approach seem appropriate? Explore.

What are the advantages of this approach? Any disadvantages?

Why do you think Liverpool was the first force (and currently only) in the UK to adopt this policy and treat crimes against sex workers as hate crime?

Have sex workers been written into the current Hate crime policy? (Feb 2009 policy and procedure)

5. ADDRESSING RAPE AND SEXUAL CRIMES IN MERSEYSIDE

How have wider changes in policing to rape and sex crimes in Merseyside impacted on policing of rape and sexual assault of sex workers

- Specialist police officers and teams
- Unity Team
- Closer work with the CPS
- The establishment of the SARC

There appears to be a number of “police champions” in Merseyside Police force for the hate crime approach, determined to address crimes against sex workers? Is this the case? What role do “champions” have?

How significant was it that the former Chief constable publically supported the inclusion of sex workers in the hate crime approach?

Have there been any other general changes in policing that may have impacted on Merseyside approach to sex workers?

6. UGLY MUGS INTELLIGENCE AND INVESTIGATIONS

When did you first become aware of “Ugly Mugs” schemes?

What involvement have you had with “Ugly Mugs” schemes managed by projects in Liverpool?

What role can “Ugly Mugs” play in the policing of prostitution issues?

What role can “Ugly Mugs” play in enabling the police to address crimes against sex workers?

How are Ugly Mugs reports feed into police intelligence systems?

How does the Intelligence single point of contact (SPOC) role operate?

How have police intelligence systems changed to allow for more effective investigations of crimes against sex workers

How is “Ugly Mugs” information analysed and acted upon?

7. PARTNERSHIPS: WORKING WITH SEX WORK SUPPORT PROJECTS AND THE ISVA ROLE

How do the police in Liverpool work in partnership with health and social care outreach and support projects? Which projects? What are the current key partnership, initiatives arrangements and agreements?

What are the advantages for the police in working with sex work support projects?

What do you think characterizes the relationship between the police and Armistead Street? How has the relationship developed?

How do the police work with the specialist Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) in Armistead Street?

How has the specialist ISVA role contributed to multi-agency work?

How is multi-agency work coordinated and planned?

8. INVESTIGATIONS AND ACHIEVING BEST EVIDENCE

What changes have there been regarding ABE in investigating crimes against sex workers? Video interviewing, early evidence kits.

Other comments on practice and innovation for investigating crimes against sex workers.

What is done differently/if anything for investigations where the complainant is a sex worker?

9. COURT CASES

What trends have there been in cases of perpetrators committing crimes against sex workers being brought to court?

Since 2007 there have been an unprecedented number of cases coming before the courts. Why in your view have there been an increase in the number of cases coming to court and securing convictions?

Have you been involved in cases of crimes against sex workers going to court? Detail.

What lessons have been learned from cases that have been brought before the courts? In terms of securing convictions?

How have special measures been utilized?

What role has the CPS had in addressing crimes against sex workers?

What difficulties have been encountered in the court? How have these been overcome? Which remain your key challenges?

What has been the role and approach of the judiciary in these cases?

When not guilty decisions have been given by juries in your view what were the reasons for these decisions? Weak evidence, jury attitudes??

Do you think juries in Liverpool demonstrate prejudice against sex workers or have fair attitudes and views?

What is the procedure for application for criminal injuries compensation claims for sex workers? What have been the outcomes of applications to date?

10. BUILDING TRUST AND COMMUNICATING WITH SEX WORKERS

How have Merseyside Police tried to build trust with sex workers and increase confidence in the police amongst sex workers?

Do you think there has been an increase in the confidence sex workers have in the police? If yes/no, what has led to this?

How have Merseyside Police communicated with sex workers about their policing approach including the hate crime approach?

Police sex work liaison officer role: duties, how currently operating?
Advantages

How do Merseyside Police let sex workers know about positive outcomes such as arrests, charges and convictions?

Merseyside Police website?

What approach do Merseyside Police have to media work on this issue? Is there a media strategy?

11. BENEFITS AND OUTCOMES

What have been the benefits to this approach for the police, sex workers and the wider community?

How can Merseyside Police evidence success and positive outcomes?

What measures of success can you point to?

- Reporting levels to Ugly Mugs and the police
- Active investigations
- Reduction in disengagement from criminal justice system by victims
- Numbers of cases being brought to court
- Conviction rates
- Sex workers accessing SARC services including forensic examination

12. GOOD PRACTICE

What in your view are the good practice lessons that can be taken from the current Merseyside force approach to crimes against sex workers?

If you had to give 3 pieces of advice to other forces about how to encourage reporting amongst sex workers and increase prosecutions and convictions what would these be?

13. CHALLENGES AND THE FUTURE

What challenges remain in addressing violence against sex workers in Merseyside?

Are all barriers to sex workers having confidence in the police, reporting and co-operating with investigations removed?

Sex workers still facing concerning levels of violence on the streets and are being targeted. Why do you think this is? What more in your view can be done to further enhance responses to violence against sex workers?

a. locally b. nationally

If you had to choose 3 key things that could change/be improved to prevent violence against sex worker what would they be?

All the cases dealt with since this policy was adapted have involved female street sex workers. Do you think this means there is no crime being committed against off-street female sex workers and male sex workers?

What could be done to adapt this approach to reach these groups? How can these groups be encouraged to report crimes committed against them to support projects and the police?

Do you think the current approach is sustainable in the current economic climate with cuts to policing and other public services?

14. IS THERE ANYTHING WE HAVE MISSED ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCES/VIEWS OF ADDRESSING CRIMES AGAINST SEX WORKERS?

Facilitator gives a very brief oral summary: THANKS TO ALL PARTICIPANTS

Appendix Four: Interview guides



ADDRESSING VIOLENCE AGAINST SEX WORKERS AS HATE CRIME

IN MERSEYSIDE

ARMISTEAD STREET SERVICE USERS: CURRENT AND FORMER SEX

WORKER

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Consent and Confidentiality

- ❖ Go through participant information sheet with participant: include explaining practice re confidentiality and anonymity
- ❖ Stress that the participant is in control they do not have to share anything they do not want to and must only answer the questions they are comfortable with.
- ❖ Go through and ask participant to fill out consent form if they wish to proceed/

Details

Place of interview: Date of interview: Time began:

Age: Gender identity:

Ethnic origin:

1. PAST CONTACT WITH, EXPERIENCE AND PERCEPTIONS OF THE POLICE

What have been your past experiences of the police generally? Have you been cautioned, arrested or charged with any crimes by the police (including soliciting)? Explore participant's experiences and perceptions of the police, including contact with the police in relation to sex working.

If you are currently sex working what's your understanding of the way Merseyside Police treat sex workers and how at the moment they police prostitution? If you are ex what was the way they policed prostitution and treated sex workers when you last worked?

2. EXPERIENCES OF VIOLENCE WHILE WORKING IN SEX WORK

How long have/were people been involved in sex work?

While you have been sex working have/did you experience any violent or other crimes committed against you? Explore women's experiences of violence while sex working, type of crime/violence violence and nature of perpetrators (clients, people presenting as clients, youths, passers-by, resident, drug dealers, police partners etc).

3. REPORTING TO PROJECTS AND THE POLICE

- Please tell me in the case of violence and other crimes you have experienced whether you reported these to the police, sex work project or any one else. Explore discuss history of reporting of violence to sex work support and other projects and the police.
- Have you reported crimes committed against you to outreach ad support projects?
- Explore use of "Ugly Mugs" schemes? When did first hear about and use such a scheme?
- Are you aware of and do you use the Armistead "Ugly Mugs" scheme and newsletter? Have your reported into the scheme?
- How useful are "Ugly Mugs"? What are the advantages?
- How many times have you reported to the police? Who did you report to?
- What was the response? Were you satisfied with their responses?
- Have an outreach/support project ever helped you to report to the police?
- Do outreach projects and other projects encourage sex workers to report?
How do they do this?
- In incidents which were not reported why did the participants not report?

- Why have you decided to report to the police on the occasions you have? Was there anything in particular that influenced your decision to report or changed your attitude to the police? Increased your trust? Do you trust the police?
- Have there been any particular officers who made you feel more confident to report? What was it about them that helped you do this?
- At the moment what do you think is the attitude of the police in Liverpool to sex workers and crimes against them?
- Do you think police attitudes towards sex workers and how they treat violence against sex workers has changed? If yes, how and why? If not, why not?
- Why do you think some sex workers still won't report crimes committed against them to the police?
- Do you currently have trust confidence in the police to /take you seriously and treat you with respect if you report a crime against you?

4. CRIMES REPORT TO POLICE LEADING TO POLICE INVESTIGATIONS AND COURT CASES

- Please tell me about the types of crimes committed against you that have lead to investigations N.B not in detail but the type of offence, we do not want you to be uncomfortable or upset, just share what you want.
- When did these take place?
- What treatment/service did you receive from the police when initially reporting? If you were raped or sexually assaulted were you seen by a specially trained officer i.e. SOLO officer?
- How was your experience of making a formal statement? Did the police make you as comfortable as possible?
- Details of investigations. How were the police with you during investigations? Did they keep in touch with you?
- What support did you receive through the criminal justice process

- If you had to go to court as a witness tell us about your experience during the court case;
- What was your experience of being a witness?
- How was the judge with you during the trial?
- How was the crown prosecuting barrister with you? How did they treat you?
- How was the defending barrister with you? If you had to give evidence how did they treat you?
- How were you treated by the police during the court case?
- How did you feel about the jury and the verdict they reached?
- What sentence/s were given? Were you satisfied with the verdict and sentence/s received?
- Did you feel treated with respect in the process? Did you feel at any time that you were treated differently than other community members would be because you were or had been involved in sex work?
- If the offender pleaded guilty before a trial, how did you feel about that?
- Looking back now what was good for you during the court case and what was bad?

5. PRACTICAL AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT RECEIVED

- Considering recent incidents and crimes committed against you. What support did you receive when you were attacked?
- Did you receive support from sex work support projects such as Armistead?
- Did you receive support from the Independent Sexual Violence Adviser? How did they support you? Had you heard about this role before you were attacked?
- Did you receive support from any other agencies?
- If you were a victim of rape and sexual assault did you attend the SAFE Place (SARC)? How were you treated there?

- Did you receive health care at A&E or elsewhere?
- Did you receive any emotional or counselling support?
- Did you receive any support to do a criminal injuries claim? Explore.
- What else would have helped you?
- From your experience what support do you think is needed for people involved in sex work who have crimes committed against them?

6. HATE CRIME

What do you understand by the term hate crime?

Were you aware that Merseyside Police treat crimes against sex workers as hate crime?

(Explaining what this means, i.e. what a hate crime is, that they will treat seriously with extra priority). Views on this policy.

Is this a good approach/is it appropriate? Do you think sex workers are victims of hate crime? What are your views on this?

Do you think you have been a victim of hate crime because of your involvement in sex work? If yes why? Was it something the attackers/offenders said or did? Have you ever been a victim of hate crime for any other reason?

How did you become aware that the police were changing their approach and giving attention to crimes against sex workers?

Have participants seen any information leaflets/heard any media reports from the police encouraging them to report, reporting back on convictions and explaining the hate crime approach? Explore what people have seen.

7. IMPROVING SEX WORKER SAFETY AND STOPPING OFFENDERS

To your knowledge what is being done in Liverpool at the moment to make sex workers safer and to get the people who commit crimes against them?

In your view what more could be done to improve the safety of sex workers in Liverpool? By the police, by Armistead and other services, by the council. By national politicians and government?

Why do you think some people target sex workers and what can be further done to stop these people?

8. IS THERE ANYTHING WE HAVE MISSED ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE OF VIOLENCE, REPORTING TO THE POLICE, COURT AND SUPPORT?

THANK YOU!

ADDRESSING VIOLENCE AGAINST SEX WORKERS AS HATE CRIME

IN MERSEYSIDE

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH PROJECT: ROSIE CAMPBELL

POLICE OFFICERS' INTERVIEW GUIDE

Consent and Confidentiality

- ❖ Go through participant information sheet with participant: explaining practice re confidentiality and anonymity
- ❖ Go through and ask participant to fill out consent forms

Details

Place of interview: Date of interview: Time began:

Current rank: Length of police service:

Age: Gender identity: Ethnic origin:

1. **POLICE SERVICE HISTORY**

Could you give me a brief summary of your service in the police? When you joined and with which force? Which roles you have held?

PAST EXPERIENCES OF POLICING PROSTITUTION AND MULTI-AGENCY WORK AND ATTITUDES/VIEWS

When did you first get involved in policing prostitution?

What was your role?

How would you describe Merseyside policy approach to policing prostitution at that time?

What was the forces approach to violent sexual and other crimes committed against sex workers?

What did the police do to encourage sex workers to report crimes against them?

When you first joined the force what were the range of officers' attitudes to prostitution, to sex workers and violence against sex workers?

Do you think there are any differences in attitudes between younger and older officers? What are the things that you think shape the attitudes and police officers to sex work and the policing of it?

Have you experienced any changes in your views on and attitudes to prostitution, the policing of prostitution and violence against sex workers?

If yes, what has shaped your views and lead to these changes in attitudes and views?

2. CURRENT ROLE AND FORCE APPROACH TO PROSTITUTION IN MERSEYSIDE

What changes have you seen in the policing of prostitution generally and the police response to violence against sex workers specifically?

When and why have these changes come about?

Have there been any particular key events locally or nationally that you would identify as leading to changes in policing of prostitution in Liverpool?

Sex worker murders in Merseyside or nationally (Ipswich), political pressures, Ipswich.

How would you describe Merseyside force current approach to policing prostitution generally?

What is your current role in policing sex work?

MIT Officers (Only)

The role and responsibilities of MIT? MIT Role in investigating sex worker murders? Same or different to other murder investigations? Any specific considerations?

How do you liaise with/build trust with the sex worker community? Sex work projects?

What changes have there been in investigating murder generally in the last 10 years?

What changes have there been in investigating sex worker murders?

Do you think the accusation that sex worker murders are taken less seriously has any substance in the Merseyside context in the past and now?

Cold case review: process, considerations and issues in cases of people who were sex workers.

4. HATE CRIME APPROACH

In summary what is your understanding of Merseyside Police's general policy on hate crime? How hate crimes are generally dealt with by police in Merseyside?

When and how did you first become aware that crimes against sex workers should be treated as hate crime?

Why do you think this policy was adopted and how did it come about?

Why do you think historically crimes against sex workers have been un-reported to the police? What barriers do sex workers face in reporting crimes committed against them?

Do you think crimes against sex workers should be treated as hate crime?

Explore yes/no. Why should crimes against sex workers be treated as Hate crime?

Did this approach seem appropriate? Explore.

What are the advantages of this approach? Any disadvantages?

Why do you think Liverpool was the first force (and currently only) in the UK to adopt this policy and treat crimes against sex workers as hate crime?

5. UGLY MUGS INTELLIGENCE AND INVESTIGATIONS

When did you first become aware of “Ugly Mugs” schemes? What involvement have you had with “Ugly Mugs” schemes managed by projects in Liverpool?

What role can “Ugly Mugs” play in the policing of prostitution issues?

What role can “Ugly Mugs” play in enabling the police to address crimes against sex workers?

How are Ugly Mugs reports feed into police intelligence systems?

How does the Intelligence single point of contact (SPOC) role operate?

How have police intelligence systems changed to allow for more effective investigations of crimes against sex workers

How is “Ugly Mugs” information analysed and acted upon?

6. PARTNERSHIPS: WORKING WITH SEX WORK SUPPORT PROJECTS AND THE ISVA ROLE

How do the police in Liverpool work in partnership with health and social care outreach and support projects? Which projects? What are the current key partnership, initiatives arrangements and agreements?

What are the advantages for the police in working with sex work support projects?

What do you think characterizes the relationship between the police and Armistead Street? How has the relationship developed?

How do the police work with the specialist Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) in Armistead Street? How has the specialist ISVA role contributed to multi-agency work? How is multi-agency work coordinated and planned?

7. INVESTIGATIONS AND ACHIEVING BEST EVIDENCE

What changes have there been re ABE in investigating crimes against sex workers? Video interviewing, early evidence kits.

Do you think there have been any changes in practice for investigating crimes against sex workers? Any innovations?

What is done differently/if anything for investigations where the complainant is a sex worker?

8. COURT CASES

What trends have there been in cases of perpetrators committing crimes against sex workers being brought to court?

Since 2007 there have been an unprecedented number of cases coming before the courts. Why in your view have there been an increase in the number of cases coming to court and securing convictions?

Have you been involved in cases of crimes against sex workers going to court? Please detail your role.

What lessons have been learned from cases that have been brought before the courts? In terms of securing convictions?

How have special measures been utilized?

What role has the CPS had in addressing crimes against sex workers?

What difficulties have been encountered in the court? How have these been overcome? Which remain your key challenges?

What has been the role and approach of the judiciary in these cases?

When not guilty decisions have been given by juries in your view what were the reasons for these decisions? Weak evidence, jury attitudes?

Do you think juries in Liverpool demonstrate prejudice against sex workers or have fair attitudes and views?

What is the procedure for application for criminal injuries compensation claims for sex workers? What have been the outcomes of applications to date?

9. BUILDING TRUST AND COMMUNICATING WITH SEX WORKERS

How have Merseyside Police tried to build trust with sex workers and increase confidence in the police amongst sex workers? How do you and your team do this in your role?

Do you think there has been an increase in the confidence sex workers have in the police? If yes/no, what has led to this?

How have Merseyside Police communicated with sex workers about their policing approach including the hate crime approach?

Police sex work liaison officer role: duties, how currently operating?
Advantages

How do Merseyside Police let sex workers know about positive outcomes such as arrests, charges and convictions? Merseyside Police website?

What approach do Merseyside Police have to media work on this issue? Is there a media strategy? Do you have a role within this?

10. BENEFITS AND OUTCOMES

What have been the benefits of Merseyside's approach to crimes against sex workers for the police, sex workers and the wider community?

How can Merseyside Police evidence success and positive outcomes?

What measures of success can you point to?

- Reporting levels to Ugly Mugs and the police
- Active investigations
- Reduction in disengagement from criminal justice system by victims
- Numbers of cases being brought to court
- Conviction rates
- Sex workers accessing SARC services including forensic examination

What outcomes would you say there are from the wider police and partnership approach to prostitution in Liverpool?

11. GOOD PRACTICE

What in your view are the good practice lessons that can be taken from the current Merseyside force approach to crimes against sex workers?

If you had to give 3 pieces of advice to other forces about how to encourage reporting amongst sex workers and increase prosecutions and convictions what would these be?

What good practice lessons can be taken from the current Merseyside force wider approach to policing prostitution?

12. CHALLENGES AND THE FUTURE

What challenges remain in addressing violence against sex workers in Merseyside?

Are all barriers to sex workers having confidence in the police, reporting and co-operating with investigations removed?

Sex workers still facing concerning levels of violence on the streets and are being targeted. Why do you think this is? What more in your view can be done to further enhance responses to violence against sex workers?

a. Locally b. Nationally

If you had to choose 3 key things that could change/be improved to prevent violence against sex worker what would they be?

All the cases dealt with since this policy was adapted have involved female street sex workers. Do you think this means there is no crime being committed against off-street female sex workers and male sex workers?

What could be done to adapt this approach to reach these groups? How can these groups be encouraged to report crimes committed against them to support projects and the police?

Do you think the current approach is sustainable in the current economic climate with cuts to policing and other public services?

**13. IS THERE ANYTHING WE HAVE MISSED ABOUT YOUR
EXPERIENCES/VIEWS OF ADDRESSING CRIMES AGAINST SEX
WORKERS**

THANK YOU!

ADDRESSING VIOLENCE AGAINST SEX WORKERS AS HATE CRIME
IN MERSEYSIDE
POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH PROJECT: ROSIE CAMPBELL
HEALTH SOCIAL CARE PROVIDERS, COMMISSIONERS AND POLICY
MAKERS
INTERVIEW GUIDE

Consent and Confidentiality

- ❖ Go through participant information sheet with participant: include explaining practice re confidentiality and anonymity
- ❖ Go through and ask participant to fill out consent form

Details

Place of interview: Date of interview: Time began:

Current job title: Length of time in post:

Gender identity: Ethnic origin:

1. ROLE: SUPPORT SERVICES FOR SEX WORKERS

- Could you give me a brief summary of your current roles and responsibilities?
- Please summarize how you and your agency contribute to providing/commissioning health and social care support services to sex workers in Merseyside.

2. VIOLENCE AGAINST SEX WORKERS IN MERSEYSIDE

- What is your understanding of violence that sex workers (in all sectors) in Merseyside experience? What levels and types of violence do sex workers experience? Who are the perpetrators of violent and other crimes against sex workers? Do you think any particular groups of sex workers are more vulnerable? Any particular issues or vulnerabilities for street sex workers?
- Have these patterns changed at all in the time you have been involved in service delivery/commissioning?
- What level of crimes against sex workers do you think are reported to the police? Do you think there are barriers to reporting? Do you think these barriers have changed at all over the last 5 years? How can identified barriers be overcome?
- How do you explain patterns of violence against sex workers in Merseyside that you have described? Why does it happen?
- What do you think are the impacts of violent, sexual and other crimes committed against sex workers?
- What are the support needs of people involved in sex work who have experienced sexual violence, violent and other crimes?

3. ROLE IN ADDRESSING SAFETY FOR SEX WORKERS AND VIOLENCE AGAINST SEX WORKERS

- What involvement does your agency have in addressing the safety needs of sex workers in Merseyside?
- Do you offer/commission any specialist initiatives/provisions addressing violence against sex workers and their safety?
- Do you contribute to an “Ugly Mugs” incident report scheme? Please outline how this operates and what your contribution is? What are the benefits of such schemes? What outcomes have there been for such schemes?

4. SUPPORT FOR SEX WORKER VICTIMS OF CRIME

- What services can sex workers who have been victims of crime access for support in Merseyside?
- Do sex workers access the SAFE Place (SARC service) and other specialist sexual violence services provided for the general public?
- Which services would you say are the main places sex workers who are victims of crime access for support? (explore from A&E , homeless support services, sexual health services and targeted outreach)
- Tell us about any specialist support you offer or partnership work you have been involved with to support sex workers who are victims of crime?
- Who commissions and funds these services? What funding arrangements and service level agreements are in place?
- Are you aware of the specialist ISVA service for sex workers based in Armistead?
- How does this operate, how are referrals made, what is provided?
- What partnership referral routes and over arrangements are in place linked to the ISVA role and Armistead services?
- Do all groups of sex workers have equal access to specialist provisions for sex workers?
- How is this work written into included in various health, drugs, and community safety strategies in Merseyside?

5. PERCEPTIONS OF AND VIEWS ON CURRENT POLICE HATE CRIME APPROACH TO ADDRESSING VIOLENCE AGAINST SEX WORKERS

- How would you summarise the current approach of Merseyside Police to policing prostitution generally?
- How would you describe the current approach of Merseyside Police to policing violence against sex workers?
- Which police departments within Merseyside Police are involved in addressing crimes against sex workers currently? What is your perception

of their roles? Who are the key police contact and liaison points for sex work support projects?

- What changes have you seen in the policing of prostitution generally and the police response to violence against sex workers specifically over the last few years?
- Why in your view have any changes identified come about?
- Were there been any particular key events locally or nationally that you would identify as leading to changes in policing of prostitution in Liverpool?
- How have police communicated with sex workers and raised confidence levels?
- Have you had contact with police officers with a remit for sex work?
- How have wider changes in policing of rape and sex crimes in Merseyside impacted on the response to rape and sexual assault of sex workers and the support they can access?
- When did you first become aware that Merseyside Police will treat crimes against sex workers as hate crime? What does hate crime mean to you?
- Do you think crimes against sex workers should be treated as hate crime?
- Explore yes/no. Why should crimes against sex workers be treated as hate crime?
- Did this approach seem appropriate? Explore.
- What are the advantages of this approach? Has this policy seen real changes?
- Any disadvantages?
- Why do you think Liverpool was the first force (and currently only) in the UK to adopt this policy and treat crimes against sex workers as hate crime?
- Do any problematic police practices or attitudes persist?
- How in your view does the ongoing role of the police in enforcing prostitution laws such as soliciting legislation, kerb crawling legislation, brothel keeping etc impact on their work to address violence against sex workers?

6. COURTS AND EVIDENCE

Have you or your organization been involved in supporting sex workers to whose cases are going to court?

Have your organization been involved as witnesses in court cases? ? If yes please summarise your organizations role and the nature of the case/s i.e. crimes charged, verdicts and sentencing.

What were the difficulties and achievements you observed for the current or former sex workers?

What are the challenges for sex workers and support projects in the court process?

What lessons have been learnt from this work?

How can the barriers and anxieties that victims face be addressed within the current court system? How can appropriate victim and witness support be accessed? Are special measures accessible and helpful?

What role have support services had in improving the quality of evidence in sex worker cases? Visual evidence scheme?

Why do you think Liverpool has seen an unprecedented increase in the number of cases coming to court and obtaining convictions?

Do you think that sex workers do get equitable treatment through the court system or not?

7. PARTNERSHIP AND STRATEGIC STRUCTURES

- Is there an overarching strategy for addressing sex work in Merseyside?

What is your understanding of this?

- How does the work to address violence against sex workers sit within this wider strategy is it a key element or is it marginal?

- How is the approach to violence against sex workers coordinated? Is there a multi-agency partnership group that lead strategically?

- How are the health social care and support agency responses to violence against sex workers planned and coordinated?

8. ACHIEVEMENTS, OUTCOMES and GOOD PRACTICE

- What have been the main achievements and outcomes of the work in Merseyside to address violence against sex workers?
- How can these be evidenced? How have they been evaluated?
- What in your view are the good practice lessons that can be taken from the current Merseyside approach to crimes against sex workers?
- If you had to give 3 pieces of other areas about how to encourage reporting amongst sex workers and to support sex workers through the criminal justice system what would these be?

9. CHALLENGES AND THE FUTURE

- What challenges remain in addressing violence against sex workers in Merseyside?
- Are there any gaps in service provision and interventions remaining?
- Sex workers still facing concerning levels of violence on the streets and are being targeted. Why do you think this is? What more in your view can be done to further enhance responses to violence against sex workers? A. locally b. Nationally
- If you had to choose 3 key things that could change/be improved to prevent violence against sex worker what would they be?
- All the cases dealt with in investigations and the courts with since this policy was adapted have involved female street sex workers. Currently “Ugly Mugs” reports are not being made by off-street sex workers? Do you think this means there is no crime being committed against off-street female sex workers and male sex workers? What could be done to adapt this approach to reach these groups? How can these groups be encouraged to report crimes committed against them to support projects and the police?
- Do you think the current approach and the level of service provision is sustainable in the current economic climate with cuts to public services and the police?

**10. IS THERE ANYTHING WE HAVE MISSED ABOUT YOUR
EXPERIENCES/VIEWS OF ADDRESSING CRIMES AGAINST SEX
WORKERS?**

THANK YOU!

**Appendix Five: Armistead current and former service user
interviews-socio-demographics**

	Interview age	Age started	Years sex working	Sector and sex working history	Sexual identity	Ethnicity	Substance use	Court case involvement
1	43	20 1991	20	*Started 1991 street Wolverhampton. *Manchester and range other places. * Liverpool over 10 years *Exited street seeing two regular clients at home	Straight	White British	Former problematic heroin use. Methadone script	Yes: found guilty, Robbery 5 years prison 5 year ASBO
2	26	23 2008	1.5	*Street sex worked *Exited at time of interview.	Straight	White British	Former problematic heroin and	Yes: found guilty of

							crack use. Now clean	rape, 6 years and deportatio n recommen ded
3	35	15 1991	20	*London 10 years, street/escorted/ managed establishment *Liverpool worked street 7 years *online escort at time interview	Bisexual Trans woman	White British	*Former problematic heroin and crack use. *Occasional cocaine	No
4	48	21 1984	27 span	Street *1984 worked two years, exited for two years, returned 1988 *exited 1994, *returned 2006, *Exited early 2011 in residential rehab	Straight	White British	Former problematic heroin use	Yes: pleaded guilty to rape and false imprisonm ent 10 years prison
5	30	25 2006	5	*Street sex worked Liverpool *Recently exited	Bisexual	Black British Dual	Former problem crack use	Yes: 2 cases 1 rape, not

				and in rehab		Heritage		guilty verdict, 1 guilty- 5 years section 18 assault (stabbing) 22 months
6	35	17 1993	18	*Street initial brief period *Parlour and flat *Escorting and doing voluntary work	Straight	White British	No problem substance	No
7	40	32 2003	7	*Parlour manager *Street sex work 32 *Exited (8 months)	Straight	White British	Former problem heroin user	No
8	27	21 2005	3 years	*Street sex worked 3 years *Drug free exited for 3 years *Recent relapse and return	Straight	White British	Problem heroin, crack, alcohol and poly drug use	Yes: familial sexual abuse
9	34	22 1999	12	*Street initially *Parlour/escort (10 years) *Street occasionally last two years	Straight	White Black British Caribbean	Former problematic crack user	Yes: found guilty rape, 10.5 years and IPP
10	44	14 1983	29	*Street sex work 29 years, exited for	Straight	White British	*Former problem	No

				periods when in prison			heroin and crack, *Occasional crack Hostel	
11	35	21 1997	14	*Street 14 years (small break two years) *Working from home: UK classified 2009-early 2011). *Recently exited (2 weeks).	Straight	White British	Not known	No
12	29	19 2001	10	Street sex work	Straight	White British	*Former problem heroin and crack *Methadone script *Problem alcohol use Hostel resident	No
13	37	26 2000	11	*Street sex work *3 years exited *2006 returned.	Straight	White British	*Problem alcohol use *Ex crack and heroin user Hostel resident	No

14	48	40 2003	8	Street sex worked. Recently exited	Straight	White Irish Traveller	Former problem crack and heroin use user Hostel resident	No
15	33	17 1997	13	Worked parlours initially then streets	Bisexual	White British	Problem alcohol use Hostel resident	Yes : statement in police misconduct case.
16	36	28 2005	7	*Street *Exited for two years, recently returned	Straight	White British	*Former problematic heroin and crack use. *Methadone script occasionally street drugs *Hostel resident	No
17	33	19 1999	10	Street sex worked currently exited and drug free for 18 months	Straight	Mixed race	Problem crack use	No
18	40	26 1997	12	*Street sex work Currently intermittent street	Straight	White British	*Previous problem heroin *Methadone script with	Yes case with 3 victims, false imprisonm

							some heroin use	ent indecent assault, previous bodily harm, life sentence after previous convictions.
19	36	25 2000	11 year span	*Street *Exited for 5 but returned	Bisexual	Mixed Race (Irish and Barbadian)	Alcohol use problematic, previous problem heroin and crack use. Hostel resident	Yes: robbery with violence, 2 years, found guilty.
20	44	22 1989	22 span	*Street *12 years out (returned 2001). *Then a sporadic pattern.	Straight	White British	*Former problem Heroin user *Stable on methadone.	Yes: police misconduct case 2011 – witness. Guilty on a range of charges but not pertaining to her.
21	37	34 2008	3	*Street *occasionally working	Straight	White British	Former problematic and heroin use Hostel resident	No
22	29	2011	3 months	Street	Straight	White British	Problematic Alcohol Use Hostel resident	No

Appendix Six: Merseyside police force interviews- participant socio-demographics

N=	Rank and role	Gender	Age	Ethnicity	Service years	Joining year	Joining age
1	Inspector Neighbourhood	M	40	White British Welsh	21 (Met 11) (Merseyside 10)	1990 (Met) 2001 (Merseyside)	19 Met 30 (Merseyside)
2	Detective Sergeant, Robbery Squad	M	30	White British Merseyside	11 (3 Lancashire) (8 Merseyside)	2001 (Lancashire) 2004 (Merseyside)	19 (Lancashire) 22 (Merseyside)
3	Detective Chief Superintendent, Force Crime Operations	M	51	White British Merseyside	30	1981	22
4	Detective Sergeant, CID Se Work Liaison Officer	F	38	White British Merseyside	13	1998	25

5	Detective Superintendent , Public Protection, Force Strategic Lead for Sex Work	M	51	White British Merseyside	32	1979	20
6	Detective Inspector, Unity Team	M	48	White British Merseyside	27	1986	21
7	Detective Constable, Robbery Squad	F	35	White British North East	14	1997	21
8	Acting Detective Sergeant, Sigma Unit	M	34	White British Merseyside	8	2003	26
9	Detective Constable, Sigma Unit	M	28	White British South West	7 (5 force in South West 2 Merseyside)	2004 2009 Merseyside	21 original force 26 Merseyside
10	Inspector, Neighbourhood	M	49	White British Merseyside	25	1986	24
11	Superintendent, Neighbourhood	M	38	White British Not Merseyside	16	1994	22
12	Constable, Licensing	M	45	White British	13	1998	32

				Merseyside			
13	Detective Constable, SIGMA Unit	M	26	White British Merseyside	7	2004	19
14	Inspector, Neighbourhood	M	48	White British Merseyside	24	1987	24
15	Civilian Investigator (Retired Detective Constable)	M	50	White British Merseyside	30	1981	20
16	Constable, Neighbourhood	F	25	White British, Merseyside	2.5	2009	22
17	Constable, Neighbourhood	M	26	White British, Merseyside	3	2008	23
18	Constable, Licensing	M	52	White British, Merseyside	28	1984	26
19	Detective Constable, CID	F	39	White British Merseyside	10	2001	29
20	Detective Chief Superintendent QPM, Serious Crime Review Unit	M	54	White British Lancashire	31 (plus 2 post retirement)	1978	21
21	Inspector, neighbourhood	M	31	White British.	12.5	1999 Met	19 Met Police

				Not Merseyside		2009 Merseyside	29 Merseyside
22	Retired Inspector	M	54	White British Merseyside	33	1971	18
23	Chief Constable	M	50	White British, Merseyside	36	1975	18
24	Detective Sergeant	F	38	White British Merseyside	16	1995	22
25	Detective Sergeant	M	42	White British Merseyside	22	1989	20
26	Detective Constable	M	46	White British Merseyside	18	1993	27
27	Sergeant	M	NK	White British Welsh	7	2004	21
28	Detective Inspector	M	47	White British Merseyside	17	1994	28
29	Retired Chief Superintendent	M	61	White British, Merseyside	31	1971	20
30	Constable, neighbourhood	M	53	White British	24	1986	29

				Merseyside			
31	Sergeant , Community Engagement Team	M	52	White British, Merseyside	27	1985	25
32	Detective Inspector, Major Incident Team	M	46	White British, Merseyside	22	1989	22
33	Sergeant, Custody Suite	M	50	White British, Merseyside	23	1988	27
34	Sergeant, Custody Suite	M	46	White British, Merseyside	22	1989	24
35	Detective Constable, Solo Officer Unity Team	F	42	White British Jewish Merseyside	6	2005	36
36	Inspector, Neighbourhood	M	42	White British Merseyside	18	1990	25
37	Police Community Support Officer	F	25	White British Merseyside	3	2009	22
38	Detective Constable, Solo Officer Unity Team	F	47	White British Merseyside	22	1990	25
39	Detective Constable, Unity Team	M	37	White British, Merseyside	15	1997	22

Appendix Seven: Ethics Committees- procedural details

Ethics Committee	Action	Outcome
Durham University School of Applied Social Sciences Ethics Committee	Ethics and risk assessment application to Durham University Research Ethics Committee was submitted in October 2010.	On 17 th December 2010, approval was given subject to minor conditions, these changes were submitted on 10 th January 2011.
North West Region Ethics Committee via NHS Integrated Research Assessment System (IRAS)	As research involved NHS service users and staff members an application to the NHS North West Research Ethics Committee was required ¹ . For my PhD research what was new was the new fully online NHS Integrated Research Assessment System (IRAS) through which the application was made. This was a comprehensive application requiring submission of: a detailed online form, a full research protocol, all research tools including interview aide memoirs, participant information sheets, consent forms and letters of support from partner organisations. This application was supported by my supervisor and the named authorisers for Durham University with IRAS The application was submitted on 27 th January 2011 with attendance at a research ethics committee meeting in Preston on 25 th February 2011, this was a panel of over ten individuals mainly clinicians and health professionals. Questions were ones of clarification and a pertinent question was asked about the proposed use a of small focus group to explore experiences of violence and reporting of violence and the hate crime approach with sex workers, the question related to how confidentiality could be ensured in such a setting, following this discussion I decided to utilise only interviews.	Ethical approval was granted subject to minor changes, these were submitted on 18 th March 2011. The formal ethics approval letter was received 24 th March 2011, fieldwork with service users and NHS staff could then commence.
Liverpool and Sefton Primary Care Trust's R Liverpool and Sefton Primary Care Trust's Research Ethics Committee Research Ethics Committee	Approval was required from the appropriate local research ethics committee i.e. Liverpool and Sefton Research Ethics Committee as the local host area. This was submitted on 28 th January 2011.	Formal approval was received on 26 th March 2011. No requirement was made to attend an ethics committee as the application was being scrutinised by IRAS.

Appendix Eight: NVIVO node trees - summary tables

Appendix 8.1: Service User Interview Data: Node Tree Summary Table

OVERARCHING THEME	NODE	SUB NODE EXAMPLES
SOCIO DEMOGRAPHICS and SEX INDUSTRY	Routes in and socio-demographics	Current sex work status, reasons starting, drug and alcohol issues, socio-demographics, length of time working
	Changes sex work culture/organisation	
	Street and indoor comparisons	
SEX WORKER EXPERIENCES and VIEWS: CRIMES AGAINST SEX WORKERS	Experience of crime/violence	
	Sex worker views on rape and sex work	
	Murder of sex workers	
	Views about offenders	
REPORTING CRIME	Reporting crime	Reasons for underreporting, 'Ugly Mugs', would they report, incidents reported, views levels of crime and violence, reasons for reporting, rights to protection
POLICING SEX WORK AND RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SEX WORKERS and THE POLICE	Contact with police	
	Police approach to policing sex work	Current, past
	Views on whether police have changed	Extent of change, reasons for change
	Police approach to crimes against sex workers	Poor treatment, good treatment
	Relationship between sex workers and the police	Past, present, views on change
	Police attitudes to sex workers	Past, current
	Police abuse of position/misconduct/complaints	
	Policing making sex work less safe	
HATE CRIME	Heard of concept of hate crime	
	What hate crime means to the respondent	
	Targeting of sex workers	
	Reasons for targeting sex workers	
	Hate crime victimisation related to sex work	
	Other types of hate crime victimisation	
	Reasons why sex workers are hate crime victims	
	Stigma/scum	
	Heard of hate crime policy	
	Think hate crime policy appropriate to sex workers	
	Support hate crime policy	
	Hate crime policy criticism	
IMPROVING SAFETY and PROJECT SUPPORT	Improving sex worker safety	What more police could do, changes needed
	Project support and views on	
ENSURING JUSTICE	Ensuring justice	Incident description ISVA support, police support improvements, awareness of court cases, treatment during investigation, Unity team, SAFE Place/SARC, going to court, sentencing, barristers, judges, juries, CPS

Appendix 8.2: Police interview and focus group data: node tree summary table

MAJOR NODE: OVERARCHING THEME	SUB NODES
POLICING APPROACHES TO SEX WORK IN THE PAST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforcement-based approaches/arresting, dispersal/displacement, cycle of arrest, easy arrest, poor attitudes, prejudicial, derogatory language, unprofessional behaviour (bullying, voyeurism, inappropriate relationships), vice squad, responsive to residents, a problem to be dealt with, degree of mutual understanding 'rules of the game', source of intelligence • Crimes against sex workers not taken seriously dismissed, underreporting barriers, variable response to reporting, van and canteen culture, sex workers seen as unreliable witnesses, minority respectful caring officers, mixed attitudes/ambivalence • Not a priority, sex workers criminals but low status policing, priority attention when murder, detectives different attitudes, lack of trust amongst sex workers, hostility between police and sex workers, limited liaison with projects
TRANSITION TO CURRENT POLICING APPROACHES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiatives to address crimes against sex workers established • Sex worker safety and welfare is a concern but still some derogatory and judgmental attitudes • Neighbourhood policing problem solving • Kerb crawling operations • Responding residents • Enforce and arrest: awareness of dilemma enforce v safety • Liaison officers introduced • Managed area debate across city • Multi-agency working • 'Ugly Mugs' and encouraging reporting • Dialogue and negotiation • Project liaison improved • Double murder 2003
VIEWS ON, AND EXPERIENCES OF CURRENT POLICING OF SEX WORK AND CHANGING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role in policing sex work • Strategic enforcement/harm reduction approach, longer term community policing approaches • Good relations with sex work support project and multi-agency approach

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POLICE AND SEX WORKERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sex workers perceived as victims not criminals, empathetic, amicable and professional attitudes and treatment of sex workers, greater understanding of reasons for sex working issues faced, indoor street differences, greater concern for safety, welfare with public protection priority, focus on crimes against sex workers and exploitation and abuse by others, linked strategically to public protection • Professional, modern, respectful attitudes towards sex workers, fair treatment without prejudice • Recognition of sex workers as vulnerable perceived as 'easy targets' by perpetrators • Crimes against sex workers taken seriously, 'Ugly Mugs' and efforts to encourage reporting of crimes, police, sex work liaison officers recognition of escalation of risk, serial offenders, sex workers experience of rape, role of Unity specialist rape and sexual offence unit • Increased trust in police amongst sex workers but still police recognition of continued underreporting and reasons for • Ambassadors sharing practice nationally • Unprofessional attitudes and behaviour still exists amongst 'bad apples', but unacceptable and challenged
VIEWS ON WHETHER THERE HAS BEEN CHANGE and WHY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key changes, extent of change • Reasons for change: Advocacy and work of projects • Changes in policing rape and sexual assault • General shifts in policing diversity minorities • Championing and leadership from senior offices new management style • Murders and serious cases • Hate crime policy • Partnership work now key in policing • Victim-focused approach, victims' care improved • General improvements in professional standards procedures and structures • Generational change/recruitment changes • Culture of doing things differently and innovation • Further professionalisation of policing • Quality of evidence improved • Improvements in intelligence systems re: 'Ugly Mugs'

HATE CRIME	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and perspectives on the history and development of the sex work and hate crime policy • Meaning of hate crime to participants • Awareness of sex work and hate crime policy • How officers made aware of sex work and hate crime policy • Sex workers and definition of hate crime and reasons why fit • Whether support sex work and hate crime policy • Reasons sex workers targeted • Sex workers as vulnerable group • Policing different and particular needs • Reasons why Merseyside first force to adopt • Passionate champions • Advantages of sex work and hate crime policy • Criticisms of sex work and hate crime policy and limitations to the policy • Information and views on the development of policing and hate crime policy generally • Information on current hate crime practices operationally • Views on hate crime policy generally • Whether sex workers embedded in hate crime policy • Training and hate crime • Hate crime and off street sex work • Further action needed to enhance the policy
ENSURING JUSTICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISVA support/role • Sex workers as good witnesses • Awareness of cases to court/prosecutions • Notable cases and case involvement • Role of Unity team • National interest and impact • Judges/judiciary and CPS • Advice and learning for other forces
FURTHER CHANGES NEEDED AND ONGOING CHALLENGES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managed area formal and safer work places • Sustainability of the approach with impact of cuts • Some form of management, regulation or legalisation • Legalisation brothels • Further embedding proactive work • More media promotion • Training/awareness raising for police officers • <u>Cultural shift attitudes to rape of sex work</u>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hate crime national policy and indicator • Police commissioners may erode positive work • 'Ugly Mugs' enhanced further and 'National Ugly Mugs' • Changes in amongst CPS, barristers and judges • Social inclusion reduce marginalisation • Long term approach management • Special unit sex worker safety and investigations • Sustaining strategic drive • Resisting demands for return to enforcement

**Appendix Nine: Merseyside cases January 2006 - 23rd July 2013
summary table***

	NAME OF OFFENDER	YEAR	CHARGES AND NUMBER VICTIMS INVOLVED	PLEA/VERDICT	SENTENCE
1	Ernest Tyler	2006	Rape and robbery Anecdotal history of rape and other offences from sex workers. Two victims.	Guilty verdict	Five years and also received a five year ASBO banning him from Liverpool and the Wirral. Additionally, that ASBO included the tenet that he is not allowed to approach any sex worker in the UK for rest of his life. This was ground breaking at the time.
2	Mr Brian O' Rourke	2006	Rape One victim but long history of rapes against sex workers (victim interviewed)	Not guilty verdict	Offender later in custody for rapes in 2010 rapes and cold cases from 2007, 2008. Original victim to gave bad character evidence.
3	Joseph Kiaria	2006	Rape, false imprisonment and grievous bodily harm. One victim	Guilty verdict	Eight years and nine months. Then deportation.

4	Neil Chubb	2007	Two counts of rape and intent to commit a sexual offence One victim	Guilty verdict	Indeterminate sentence of imprisonment for public protection (IPP); has a minimum of twelve years. Five year driving ban as sexual offending was linked to access to vehicles.
5	X	2007	Section 47 and robbery. One victim but anecdotal history of several offences against other sex workers	Guilty verdict.	Eighteen months community order. Was herself a sex worker who bullied other sex workers The theft was of crack cocaine and cash.
6	Peter Lau	2008	Section 47 1 victim but long history of same offences against sex workers (JOB)	Guilty verdict.	Eighteen months community order under Insanity Act.
7	Michael Wilcox	2008	Section 18 assault (stabbing), one victim (SoAb).	Guilty verdict.	22 month prison sentence.
8	Mr XX (can't be named as would identify the victim)	2008	Historical Child Abuse (on his daughter who became a sex worker), one victim.	Guilty verdict.	Seventeen years sentence.

9	AAnd	2008	Rape, one victim.	No further action.	
10	DA (Trafficked woman)	2008	Rape, one victim.	Client relocated-no charges ever brought as offender not located.	
11	DJack	2008	Rape one victim	No further action.	
12	MK	2008	Rape one victim	No further action.	
13	LS	2008	Rape one victim	Male charged. Client left city and didn't return-all charges had to be dropped	
14	Michael Molyneux	2009	Rape x two One victim	Guilty verdict.	Imprisonment for public protection (minimum four years). History of child sex offences, domestic violence, and holding female police officer hostage at knife point.
15	Paul Kelly	2009	Section 18 (Domestic Abuse) One victim.	Guilty verdict.	16 months imprisonment.
16	Matthew Byrne, 38	2009	Rape, assault by penetration, possession of	Guilty verdict.	Imprisonment for public protection, 3 ½ years minimum.

			indecent images, outraging public decency and making indecent images, level 3 and 4, charged with offences relating to six sex workers, further four identified through DNA (10 victims)		Life on Sex Offenders Register
17	Mr N (park case) Jul	2009	Rape, one victim.	Not guilty plea.	Case collapsed after 2nd trial, client too ill to proceed with 3 rd trial. Client died in 2013.
18	KHig	2009	Rape, one victim.	No further action.	Service user died in 2013.
19	Karl Robert Davis	2010	Rape x three, one victim.	Guilty verdict.	Imprisonment for Public Protection, 10.5 years. Sex offender, raped best friend's pregnant partner. DV rape. Gang rape of sex worker.
20	David Roach	2010	Rape one victim	Guilty verdict.	Seven and a half years custodial sentence

21	Kieran Thomas	2010	Assault and robbery one victim	Not guilty plea.	2 years custodial sentence
22	Lee Kelly	2010 Oct	35 charges (including several rapes) two victims and one victim who he wasn't prosecuted for.	Pleaded not guilty.	Guilty on 15 charges (five rapes, three assault by penetration, robbery, false imprisonment, threats to kill, section 18 wounding, section 47 assault). Committed against two woman (one was sex working at the time and one recently exited). Extreme violence used. One woman was still in mental health facility in 2014. 15 years minimum custodial sentence and imprisonment for public protection.
23	Kenneth Dixon, 17	2010	Attempted rape, assault by penetration, possession of an offensive weapon (knife), held against will One victim	Guilty plea	Four years Youth Offender Institution, 2 years extended monitoring on release, Life on Sex Offenders Register. Was already a sex offender relocated to Liverpool here from Blackpool by CJS
24	Mr. K	2010	Possession of an offensive weapon found in car with	Guilty plea	£85 fine and recall to prison

			sex worker and a twenty inch hunting knife. One victim.		
25	Mr C (Kirkby)	2010	Rape . Two victims over two years.	N/A	Offender had allegedly raped a sex worker in 2008 and case was not further action due to 'inconsistencies in client's statements' - she was psychotic due to crack use. This case was then reopened and tied to 2009 rape of another sex worker- he was found not guilty of both
26	Mr T	2010	Rape One victim	Not guilty verdict.	
27	Lyndon Jermaine Lewis	2010	Sec 62 SOA 2003 (intent to commit a sexual offence), Kidnapping, held against will on one victim and threats to kill, abduction, held	Guilty verdict.	After trial for section 62 on CR - pleaded to all other charges, i.e. threats to kill, abduction, held against will on two other non-sex working women same night as offences against CR. Seven years custodial

			against will on one other non sex working women same night as offences against sex worker one victim.		sentence and lifetime registration on VISOR.
29	Brian O'Rourke	2011	Charges rape and false imprisonment and Section 62 of the Sexual Offences Act (committing an offence with intent to commit a sexual offence) against another of our women. Two victims.	Ready to go to court but pleaded guilty to the rape but not the other offences, 11 th April 2011 pleaded guilty to rape and false imprisonment and committing an offence with intent to commit a sexual offence – two women, one a cold case.	Ten years custodial sentence.
30	Amrullah Hafizi	2011	Rape one victim.	Guilty verdict.	6 years and recommended for deportation back to Afghanistan. Charged in 2009 and fled UK to Sicily. Featured on Crimewatch most wanted. Extradited Jan 2011. Found guilty week of 20th June 2011.
31	ShEv	2011	Rape	Undetected	

			one victim		
32	Scott Jones	2013	Rape (two counts) Attempted rape Unlawful wounding (serious assault). One victim	Guilty plea to two counts of rape, one count of attempted rape and unlawful wounding (she had a fractured skull, smashed cheekbone and many other injuries).	Sentenced to seven years and four months.
33	Rishi Goslain, 41,	2013	Controlling Prostitution for Gain and Voyeurism. One victim we worked with	Guilty plea	Sentenced to two and a half years. Pleaded guilty to controlling prostitution for gain and voyeurism. Ran escort agencies in Liverpool and Manchester. Interviewed women themselves and made them perform sexual acts. Recorded the women having sex without their knowledge using a laptop computer

* Data provided by Shelly Stoops, Manager of Merseyside SAFE Place, Liverpool Community Health (former specialist sex work ISVA, Armistead).

Appendix Ten: Merseyside cases to court - four case studies

Case study one: Lee Vincent Kelly

Research has documented the escalating offending patterns often found amongst perpetrators who committed crimes against sex workers²⁷, including those who murder. A number of offenders convicted in Merseyside displayed escalating offending patterns. Lee Vincent Kelly was one of these. In early September 2010, aged 21, he dragged a sex worker off the street, assaulted and raped her; she was left unconscious, she later reported to the police supported by the 'Armistead Street' project. Whilst active investigations regarding the assault were underway on 14th September 2010, a former sex worker met him and went to his flat where she was raped and kept against her will for eight hours. She escaped by jumping from a window and was found by police, naked and covered in blood; eight body maps²⁸ were needed to document her injuries. In 2011, he pleaded guilty to five charges of rape, three charges of assault by penetration, one charge of robbery, one charge of false imprisonment, one charge of 'threats to kill', one charge of Section 18 wounding, and one charge of Section 47 assault. His sentence was an indeterminate sentence of imprisonment for public protection (IPP), with a minimum term of 15.5 years. IPP is available as a sentence for a 'dangerous' offender who is convicted of a specific violent or sexual offences deemed serious; there are 96 of these offences in Schedule 15 of the Criminal Justice Act. A lifetime restraining order was imposed on him in relation to on both victims, and he was placed on the sex offender register for life.

²⁷ Kinnell, H. (2006) 'Murder made easy'. In: R. Campbell and M. O'Neill (eds) *Sex Work Now*, 212-234. Cullompton, Devon: Willan Publishing.

²⁸ Body maps are used by forensic medical examiners to visually document body injuries sustained by victims of crime.

Case study Two: Matthew Byrne

Offenders against sex workers are drawn from a range of socio-economic backgrounds.²⁹ In contrast to Kelly, who was a working class young man who had been involved in the homeless scene, Matthew Byrne aged 38, was Manager of a local third sector youth charity, on the board of a national charity supporting victims of sexual abuse, and was active in local politics. Through contacts between sex work projects, two assaults of sex workers - which had been reported to the Liverpool and Coventry project 'Ugly Mugs' schemes - were linked. Both women reported they had agreed to do business at Byrne's house; at the house, he had assaulted both women in a dungeon he had established, this including tying a plastic bag over their heads. Matt Byrne committed crimes against sex workers he picked up in both Merseyside and the West Midlands. He was charged with 35 offences relating to six women; as well as crimes against sex workers he was charged with possession of 9,000 indecent images of children, making two level 3 and two level 4 images of children, and committing a lewd act (this was an incident where he was using a mobile phone to film up the skirt of a school girl on a train; this was caught on CCTV). In 2010, he plead guilty to the offences against four of the women, all indecent image charges and to committing a lewd act. He received a prison sentence of 3 years and imprisonment for public protection.

²⁹ Kinnell, H. (2006) 'Murder made easy'. In: R. Campbell and M. O'Neill (eds) *Sex Work Now*, 212-234. Cullompton, Devon: Willan Publishing.

Case study three: Karl Davies

Research has identified a section of offenders who attack sex workers also attack other people in the wider community³⁰. This was the case for Karl Davies, aged 33, who was found guilty in 2010 of three rapes and received a minimum prison sentence of ten-and-a-half years. The first assault he committed was in August 2008, when he physically assaulted and raped a 20-year-old woman he had known for a few months in her home. Two months later he picked up a woman working the streets in Liverpool; unknown to her there were two other men in the van and all three raped her. He was detected after his DNA was found on her clothing and underwear. He was also convicted of the rape on February 2009 of a 17-year-old girlfriend of one of his friends and the charge of causing actual bodily harm when he punched a woman armed with a knife.

Case study four: Amrullah Hafizi

Amrullah Hafizi was convicted of rape in 2011; he was aged 22. He attacked the victim while she slept in his flat, after they had spent the evening socialising with friends in August 2009; she managed to escape and immediately reported the rape. He was arrested on suspicion of rape, denied any sexual contact had taken place, and was later bailed. Forensic tests provided evidence that proved he had been sexually involved with the complainant. He was an asylum seeker and he left the country before he could be charged, fleeing to Sicily. Prosecutors and police worked with Italian authorities to have him returned to the UK to stand trial, and in January 2011 he was deported from Italy, having featured on the TV programme 'Crimewatch Most Wanted'. He was found guilty and received a prison sentence of six years and was recommended for deportation back to Afghanistan.

³⁰ Kinnell, H (2008) *Violence and Sex Work in Britain*, Cullompton, Devon: Willan Publishing.

Appendix Eleven: Enforcement-focused versus protection-focused policing

Enforcement-focused policing	Protection-focused policing
High level of enforcement activity including use of soliciting legislation, ASBOs and other orders	Proportionate and strategic deployment of prostitution related laws with use focused on reducing violence exploitation and harm. Proportionate and strategic approach to soliciting legislation, a staged approach utilising mediation pre-arrest diversion with enforcement as last option.
Ongoing enforcement dispersal and/or displacement of street sex work. Displacement of indoor sex work venues to other locations.	Policies adopted to provide options/spaces for street sex workers to work (within certain agreed rules) without fear of caution or arrest to provide a climate in which relationship between sex workers, so police and projects can be improved and trust and confidence increased. Also so neighbourhood impacts are reduced.
Approaches to indoor and internet based sex work focus on surveillance, disruption, brothel raids and closures.	Approaches to indoor and internet based sex work are focused on improving confidence and trust amongst sex workers to report crimes, build communication through sex work liaison officers. Staged mediatory and proportionate approach to issues of community complaints. Intelligence gathering supports investigation and prosecutions related to crimes against sex workers and enforcement focused on prosecuting violent and other crimes against sex workers, exploitation, cases of trafficking and involvement of organised crime.
Ethos of eradicating sex work	Ethos of improving safety and reducing harm.
Sex work strategically located in anti social behaviour or reducing offending remits/ initiatives	Sex work strategically located within public protection.

Sex worker safety and crime reporting not a priority or undermined by enforcement activity and ethos.	Sex worker safety a priority.
Initiatives to build trust and encourage reporting not fully developed.	Victims centred approach with proactive initiatives in place to build trust, encourage sex worker reporting of crime and to protect sex workers from crime e.g. police sex work liaison officers.
Police intelligence resources focused on intelligence gathering to support enforcement of soliciting, brothel keeping and other sex work related legislation. Trafficking can be a focus. Limited sharing of intelligence with sex work projects and police forces often requesting data within an invasive information-sharing framework.	Police intelligence resources are focused on gathering intelligence re crimes against sex workers in partnership with local projects and 'Ugly Mugs'. Also intelligence on coercive and exploitative offenders including those involved in trafficking.
No, or limited, engagement and support for local 'Ugly Mugs' and 'National Ugly Mugs'.	Support for and active engagement with local 'Ugly Mugs' schemes and 'National Ugly Mugs'.
Police develop partnership with sex work, drugs and criminal justice services who will cooperate with criminal justice orders and support exit as primary goal.	Police develop partnerships with support services offering holistic services who retain independence and can effectively support harm reduction safety, health interventions as well exit interventions.
Unilateral policing activity and limited partnership work and information sharing, often in a framework of invasive information sharing.	Co-ordinated, close and inclusive partnership work. Liaison and information sharing between police, other partners including with specialist sex work support projects in framework that respects and values independence of sex work projects and the confidentiality of their clients within boundaries of public protection.
Multi-agency case management which focuses on reducing offending and prolific offenders.	Multi-agency case management regarding support for street sex workers which focuses on issues of safeguarding, improving safety, welfare, reducing vulnerability and improving access to support resources.
Media and public messages used to stress how police will use the law to prosecute sex workers and their clients, reduce or eliminate prostitution, identify, name and shame men who pay for sex and in most extreme forms publically identify sex workers charged with soliciting offences. Messages about sex worker safety secondary, perpetuate stigmatising discourses about sex work including at the extreme the discourse of disposability (Lowman 2000; Kinnell 2008).	Media and public messages about sex work balanced, planned to challenge violence against sex workers, stigma and social exclusion. Communicate a clear uncompromising message that violence against sex workers will not be tolerated is a priority for the police and offenders will be prosecuted.

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