

# Streets Apart: Outdoor Prostitution in London

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## Terminology

'Women involved in prostitution' will be used to describe women in the sex industry. The term 'sex worker' is used widely among a number of individuals and **projects**, primarily because it is considered less stigmatising than 'prostitute' and because some believe that prostitution can be viewed as 'labour'. Interestingly, very few women in the sex industry use the term 'sex worker' to describe themselves. The use of these terms dignifies and de-stigmatises the sex industry and the buyers/exploiters, and not the women. Use of such language undermines efforts to locate prostitution as a form of sexual violence.

### 1. Introduction

"A welfare-oriented strategy is the only way to get women out of street prostitution. Unless we literally provide everything they need, such as drug rehabilitation, housing, childcare and counselling, they are likely to die" (Professor Roger Matthews, 2004)

Street prostitution is a dangerous and unhealthy business. Women in both on- and off-street prostitution experience numerous physical and mental health problems. The majority of women in street prostitution are addicted to drugs (such as heroin and crack cocaine) and / or alcohol. A recent comparative study on violence undertaken in three UK cities with 115 women in outdoor and indoor prostitution (Church, Henderson, Barnard & Hart, 2001) found that women on the streets became involved in the sex industry at a younger age and experienced significantly more violence and abuse than those working indoors (81 percent compared to 41 percent).

In a study of prostitution in five countries, 62 percent of the women interviewed reported being raped; 73 percent had been assaulted; and 72 percent were currently or formerly homeless.

Two thirds of the women met the criteria for post-traumatic stress disorder - under which people relive painful memories against their will. Almost all (92 percent) said they wanted to escape prostitution immediately.

The Home Office review on prostitution, published in January 2006, defined its key strategies as working towards: challenging the view that street prostitution is inevitable and here to stay; achieving overall reduction in street prostitution; and; improving the safety and quality of life of communities affected by prostitution, including those directly involved in street sex markets. The review acknowledged that, although all forms of prostitution are fraught with danger, the most vulnerable women and children in society are to be found in outdoor prostitution. The government pledged its support to:

- tackle demand – responding to community concerns by deterring those who create the demand and removing the opportunity for street prostitution to take place;
- develop routes out – proactively engaging with those involved in prostitution to provide a range of support and advocacy services to help them leave prostitution;
- ensure justice – bringing to justice those who exploit individuals through prostitution, and those who commit violent and sexual offences against those involved in prostitution (Home Office, 2006).

To date, none of the above have been implemented by any governmental department, and nor have support services for women in street prostitution noticed any additional resources being made available. This report should highlight the urgent need for an expansion of available services for women, and educational and criminal justice deterrents directed towards buyers and potential buyers.

Additionally, this report aims to add to the existing bank of knowledge of street prostitution in order that intervention – both in supporting the women and tackling demand - can be targeted appropriately.

### **Historical Context of Street Prostitution**

Three out of four women in prostitution become involved aged 21 or younger, and 1 in 2 aged 18 or younger (Child and Women Abuse Studies Unit).

Street prostitution has long been a contentious issue, with the women involved usually being seen as the problem, as opposed to the men who kerb crawl in 'red light' areas. Its effects on the women involved and society in general are usually minimised. In the early 19th century, women in street prostitution in England, Wales, and Scotland could be arrested under vagrancy legislation. In 1839 a clause in the Police Act introduced the notion of a 'common prostitute' who could be arrested for soliciting. This marks the beginning of women being labelled as "prostitute".

During the 1830s and 1840s social reformers began to argue that women were victims, and develop a critique of men's presumed right to buy sexual services. Societies for the prevention of child sexual exploitation were also formed in London in 1834.

In the mid-century social investigators produced several detailed studies, and although they admitted that poverty drove many women into prostitution most also were judgemental towards them. Some argued that men's sexual drives could not be controlled, and that they had to find release through the use of prostitutes. They further argued that women in prostitution should be regulated to minimise the spread of sexually transmittable infections. The

notion of a 'necessary evil' was current, and apart from the early feminists few asked questions about the principle of buying sex.

The Contagious Diseases Act (CDA), passed in 1864, was intended to stop the spread of syphilis amongst men in the armed forces. Under these laws, any woman in designated military towns could be forcibly inspected for venereal disease. It was decided that men should not be examined because they would resist. Women believed to be prostitutes could be reported to the authorities, and those found to be infected could be imprisoned for three months in a secure hospital. There were instances of such women, many of whom were not prostitutes, being subsequently forced into the sex trade.

The Ladies' National Association was founded by feminist Josephine Butler in 1869 to campaign against the Acts. Those spearheading the campaign argued that 'systemised prostitution will never be overthrown until it is attacked by women'. The campaign was remarkably successful and the CDAs were repealed in 1886. This was the beginning of movement which defined prostitution as violence and abuse of women.

For most of the 19th century, prostitution in many countries had variations of regulated brothels and attempts to control street prostitution. In the early to mid 20th century the focus shifted to trafficking for sexual exploitation, resulting in the 1949 UN Convention on the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others. Towards the end of the 20th century a new perspective was added to the debate - the case for legalisation.

### **Current Policy Approaches**

Almost ten percent of men in London aged 16-44 reported having paid for sex in the past 5 years (Home Office, Paying the Price. A consultation paper on prostitution, 2004).

Currently in the UK, after decades of neglect, a debate is ongoing with respect to prostitution, in the wake of new research and widespread disquiet in relation to trafficking and sexual exploitation of children. Whilst there is widespread agreement that the current legal framework, and policy approaches (such as they are) are problematic, there is no consensus with respect to the available options, nor do any of them come without deeper implications and potential costs.

Many policy responses are described as "pragmatic compromises" and often make little or no difference to the situation. Discussions and debate around prostitution often rely on inaccurate clichés and myths, such as: 'prostitution is the oldest profession'; 'it has always, and will always be with us', and 'prostitution prevents rape'.

There is no national policy on prostitution in Scotland, or England and Wales, although reviews are underway in both jurisdictions. Local responses, as a

consequence, tend to be sporadic and complaint led, focusing on street prostitution. Various single stranded interventions have been piloted - tolerance zones, kerb crawler re-education, media “name and shame” campaigns, road closures - but have either only had short term results, or not been sustained over time. Off-street prostitution generally receives less attention from the police and general public simply because it is, to an extent, hidden from view. Alongside these interventions have been more health and support based services, often delivered by NGOs. From an initial limited focus on harm reduction, a number are moving into more advocacy-based approaches, and several now have a specific aim of enabling women to exit prostitution.

## **Paying the Price**

The Home Office review on prostitution, *Paying the Price*, recognises the need for radical reform of both legislation and policy regarding street prostitution, in regard to the victims involved, effects on neighbourhoods, and the need to tackle demand as a way to reduce supply:

We are failing our communities, if we simply accept the existence of street prostitution. Local partnerships can, and must, develop strategies to disrupt sex markets – that means finding ways to reduce demand as well as supply, and taking every opportunity to reduce the opportunity for a sex market to flourish (Home Office, p13).

Many respondents to the consultation highlighted the need for a coordinated response to street prostitution which should include the primary prevention of women and children entering street prostitution; development of exiting strategies for women caught up in prostitution; police initiatives to deter demand; and decriminalising the selling of sexual services (p13).

As well as dangers facing women in street prostitution, some respondents highlighted the problems faced by those living in areas where prostitution activity takes place, such as fear of violence and victimisation (by kerb crawlers); increased low level crime; litter, such as used condoms and needles; and sex taking place in public (p35).

Since the publication of *Paying the Price*, little has been done to implement the recommendations made by the review team to address street prostitution, namely resourcing coordinated exiting strategies for the women involved, which would include a package of care such as social housing, counselling, and drug and alcohol rehabilitation. One of the aims of this report is to reiterate the fact that whilst street prostitution appears to be dwindling, it is nonetheless affecting thousands of women and other citizens in an adverse and unacceptable way.



## 2. Aims and Methods

As many as 85% (of women in prostitution) report physical abuse in the family, with 45% reporting familial sexual abuse (Home Office, Paying the Price. A consultation paper on prostitution, 2004).

The aims of this study were:

- To identify the scale and nature of the on-street sex industry in London;
- Map the locations of street zones;
- Establish the extent of the problem;
- Provide police and other agencies with information;
- Identify potential needs of women involved in street prostitution;
- Inform existing support services about those needs;
- Identify gaps in service provision and law enforcement.

This project adopted a multi-methodological research approach as follows:

### **Literature, Newspaper and Internet Search**

A literature and media search covering London was conducted in order to obtain details of the location of street prostitution areas; gather information on any police initiatives against the women and/or buyers; and the concerns of residents/businesses in the areas.

### **Site Visits**

Known street prostitution sites were visited and observed for between 2 – 3 hours. Sites visited included the following:

King's Cross  
Streatham  
Hackney  
Newham

Reports of the site observations are appended.

### **Police and Crime and Safety Units**

London's 33 boroughs each have a Crime & Disorder Reduction Unit, all of which we contacted for an assessment of street prostitution in their area. 22 units replied (67%), with two broad categories of response. Firstly, that no relevant data was held by the borough and/or secondly that street prostitution was not a problem in the area.

With regard to the first type of response, according to the Police Performance Information Bureau, “as prostitution is a non-notifiable offence, there are no obligations for any borough to record prostitution offences. A prostitute would need to have received a number of warnings before being recorded – the reason being these offences come under sexual offences and the figures would rocket (which looks terrible for the government). There is no standard approach at local level, hence the lack of information being held by boroughs; no mandatory records on prostitution.” (Ken Shuttlewood, PPIB, August 2006)

We contacted the Police Performance Information Bureau of the Metropolitan Police Service and requested information under the Freedom of Information Act, who provided us with crime and custody data for prostitution-related offences in each borough for the last five years.

With regard to the second type of response (that street prostitution was not a problem in the area), this can be explained by the shift of prostitution from visible street-based activity to operations behind closed doors.

### 3. Police Responses

87 percent of women in street-based prostitution use heroin (M. Hester and N. Westmarland, Tackling Street Prostitution: Towards an Holistic Approach, Home Office Research Study 279, London, 2004).

Kerb crawling is an offence under section 1 of the Sexual Offences Act 1985. Section 71 of the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 makes kerb crawling an indictable offence where it is likely to cause annoyance to women or to other people in the neighbourhood or where it is persistent behaviour. The penalty for the offence is a maximum fine of £1000 and since 1 January 2004 the courts have also had the option to order disqualification from driving.

Prostitution is not an offence, but soliciting and loitering for the purposes of prostitution is. Women in street prostitution are routinely arrested and charged with such offences, and experience a 'revolving door' of going to court, being fined, and then going back onto the streets soon after to make enough money to pay the fine.

High profile 'clean up' or 'crack down' operations by police, focused either on prostitutes or kerb crawlers or both, do have short-term effects, but these tend to be short-lived (May et al, 1999). There may also be unintended and unforeseen consequences, such as those documented in Liverpool (Campbell et al, 1996), where street prostitution areas expanded across a much wider area of the city. A number of studies and commentaries note that such strategies may also have the effect of increasing risks, especially by decreasing the possibilities for assessing 'dodgy' buyers (McKeganey and Barnard, 1996). What is often ignored is the fact that so many women working on the street are driven by the need to earn money for drugs. Therefore measures to keep safe are often not prioritised by the women themselves.

A number of recent studies have documented the increasing connections between street prostitution and drugs (May et al, 1999). Almost two thirds (63%) of women working in street prostitution across three cities (Church et al, 2001) reported their main reason for involvement in prostitution was to fund a drug habit, primarily heroin, with 92 per cent stating they had used drugs in the last three months. The same study found that women working indoors seldom gave this reason, although a third used alcohol whilst working. There is some evidence that use of crack is expanding amongst those involved in street prostitution (May et al, 2001), and that there are significant associations with homelessness. An increasing proportion of women in street prostitution are doing little more than funding their (and often their partners') drug habits, and may work daily and for very long hours in order to do so (McKeganey and Barnard, 1996).

Clearly arrest and/or cautions alone will have little, if any, impact on street prostitution, when the majority of income is spent on drugs, often given directly to pimps who are also dealing in heroin and crack cocaine (Taylor, 2004). It merely serves to create a debt, which will be paid, if at all, from the proceeds of prostitution. In London, police 'crack-downs' are instigated in response to complaints from residents and businesses in areas where street prostitution takes place. They are usually short-lived, and, as is argued by those working directly with women involved in street prostitution, merely cause temporary displacement (Hester, et al).

Whilst police and local policy responses have been 'nuisance' driven, relatively little research has sought to document impacts on the quality of life for those living in areas of street prostitution: often a mixture of negative attitudes to women in prostitution, rather than buyers, and the impacts on their everyday life. These include female residents being propositioned by kerb crawlers, increased traffic, used condoms and needles in the street, and a general sense of fear and threat (Campbell et al, 1996). An incompatibility is apparent here, with those involved in street prostitution choosing residential areas, since it increases their sense of safety, whilst local community members resent the intrusion and disruption involved (May et al 2001; Campbell et al, 1996). Tolerance zones have been one attempt to address this conflict, but there is a growing body of research which shows they solve none of the problems inherent in street prostitution.

The location of zones is always a subject of contention - either because those who live or work close to them object, or the intended beneficiaries find them unsafe and unpleasant (op cit).

Women in street prostitution are routinely criminalised. The tables below on arrests and cautions of women in street prostitution (for soliciting), when compared to the relatively rare criminal sanctions against men for kerb crawling, show the disproportionate targeting of women by police officers.

### **3.1 Anti Social Behaviour Orders**

A three-city comparison of customer violence against prostitute women found that two thirds of women involved in prostitution had experienced violence. The same report found that only 32 percent of customer crime had been reported to the police (Home Office, Paying the Price. A consultation paper on prostitution, 2004).

Punishment of women in street prostitution is usually disproportionate to that of kerb crawlers. For example, bearing in mind that there are more buyers than women in prostitution (Kinnell, 1999), arrest figures for 2004 – 5 show that women were more than twice as likely to be arrested for soliciting than men were for kerb crawling.

Women in street prostitution are also much more likely to be issued with an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO). Introduced in 1999 as part of the Crime and Disorder Act, these orders were designed to help police and local authorities tackle young people creating havoc on housing estates, as well as problem neighbours. In 2000, the use of ASBOs against women in street prostitution was piloted in the Midlands and extended to London in 2001.

Police forces and councils in these areas argue that prostitution falls within the definition of anti-social behaviour which causes "harassment, alarm or distress" to the community. Prostitution is not a criminal offence but loitering or soliciting is. ASBOs are served under civil law but breaching them is a criminal offence. Therefore, women who persistently breach ASBOs could be given up to five years in prison.

In November 2006, Marylebone magistrates' court handed down ASBOs to two women involved in street prostitution whom were described in court and in press reports as the "most persistent offenders of Sussex Gardens". The women, aged 25 and 31, had been arrested more than 130 times (between them). On each occasion, they paid a nominal fine and were reportedly back on the street before nightfall. If they break the conditions of the ASBOs, by merely setting foot on Sussex Gardens in the next five years, they each face imprisonment of up to two months.

Kerb crawlers tend either to be ignored by police, or given the option of signing a voluntary Acceptable Behaviour Contract (ABC), agreeing not to enter the area where the offence took place, and not to pay or attempt to pay for sexual services. According to a senior police officer<sup>1</sup>, "the publicity surrounding men who have appeared in court or received an ASBO can be very damaging to their reputation." (August 2006)

Research by campaigning group ASBO Concern found that two out of three ASBOS are breached (October, 2006). Matt Foot, coordinator of ASBO Concern, has said that issuing such orders to women in street prostitution is merely, "Targeting the vulnerable and sending prostitutes to prison through the back door" (2006).

- ASBO issuance to 10-17 year olds peaked in 2005 with 117 ASBOs issued across London.
- ASBO issuance to adults peaked in 2004 with 213 ASBOs issued across London.
- ASBO issuance for all ages has remained consistent over the last two years, with 295 ASBOs in 2004, compared with 298 issued in 2005.
- In 2005, 58% of ASBOs were issued to known adults, down from 72% in 2004.

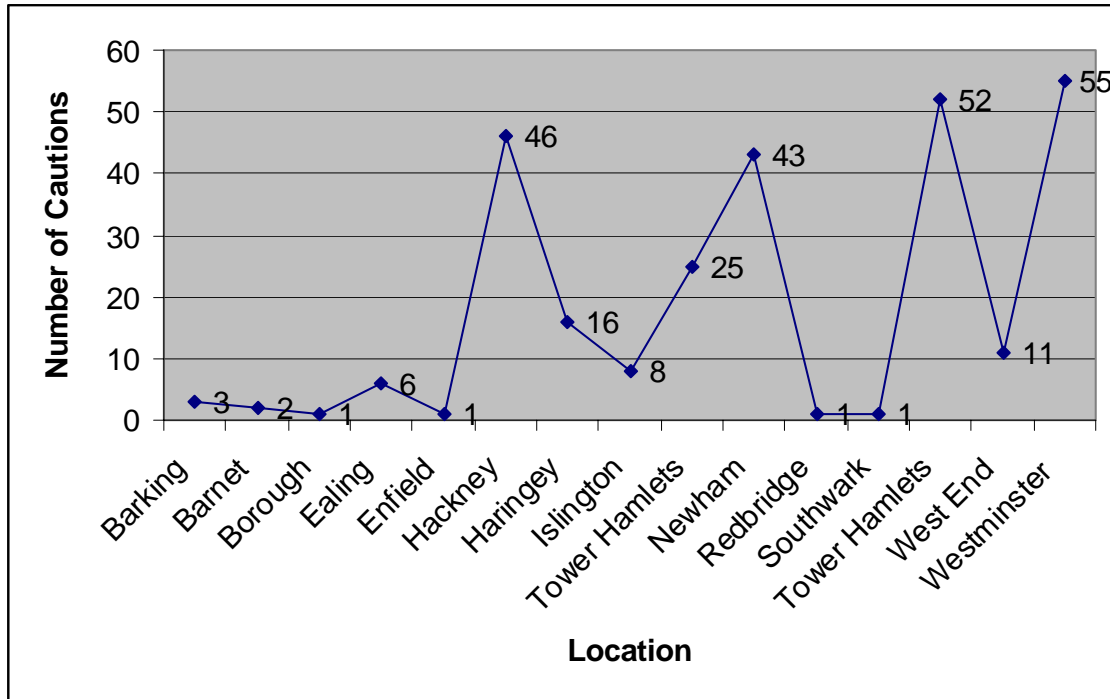
Source: MPS/CO14/Chris Pellet

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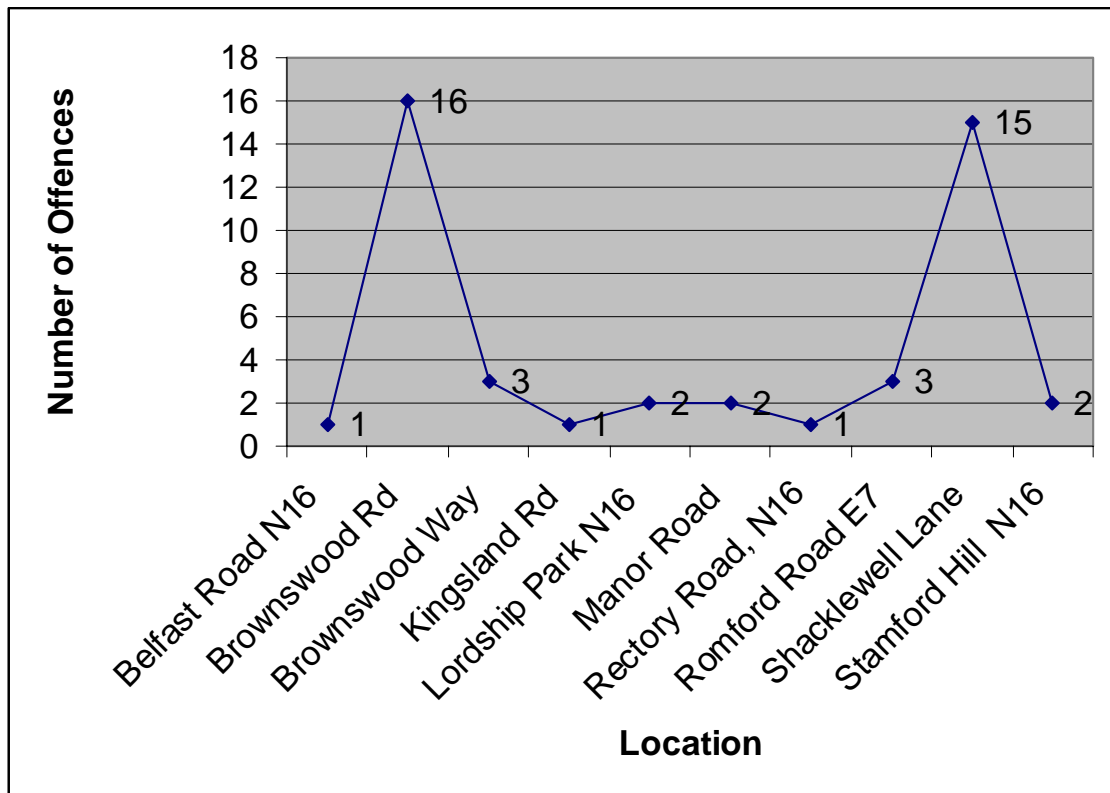
<sup>1</sup> Inspector Andy Bennett, Avon & Somerset Police Force, August 2006.

Out of the top seven boroughs for ASBO issuance, five are well-known areas for high street prostitution (Camden, Westminster, Tower Hamlets, Haringey, Lambeth).

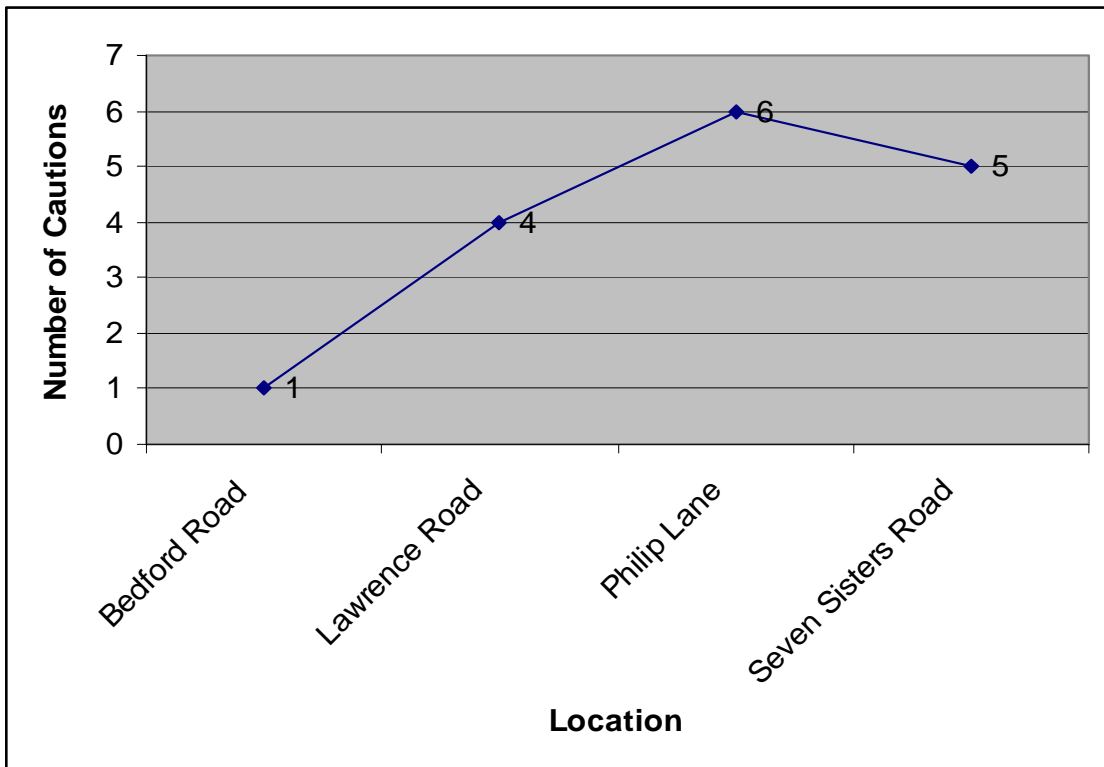
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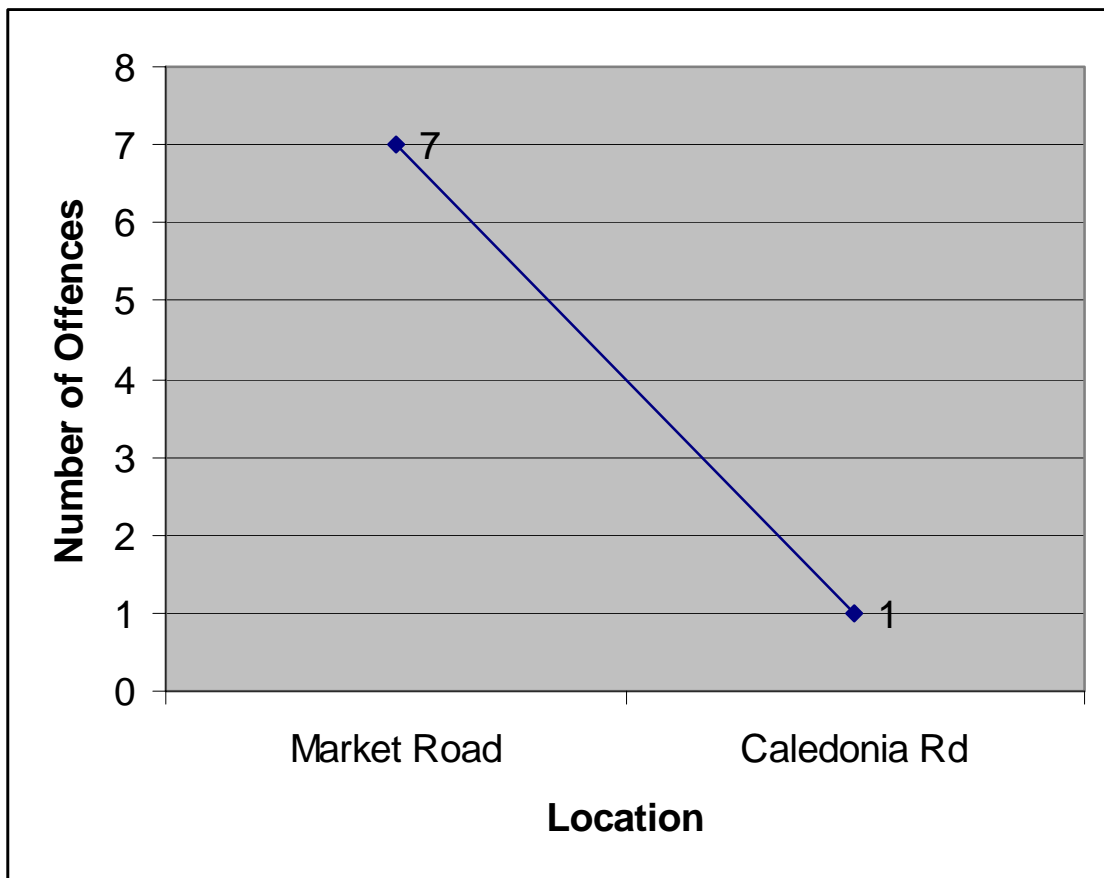
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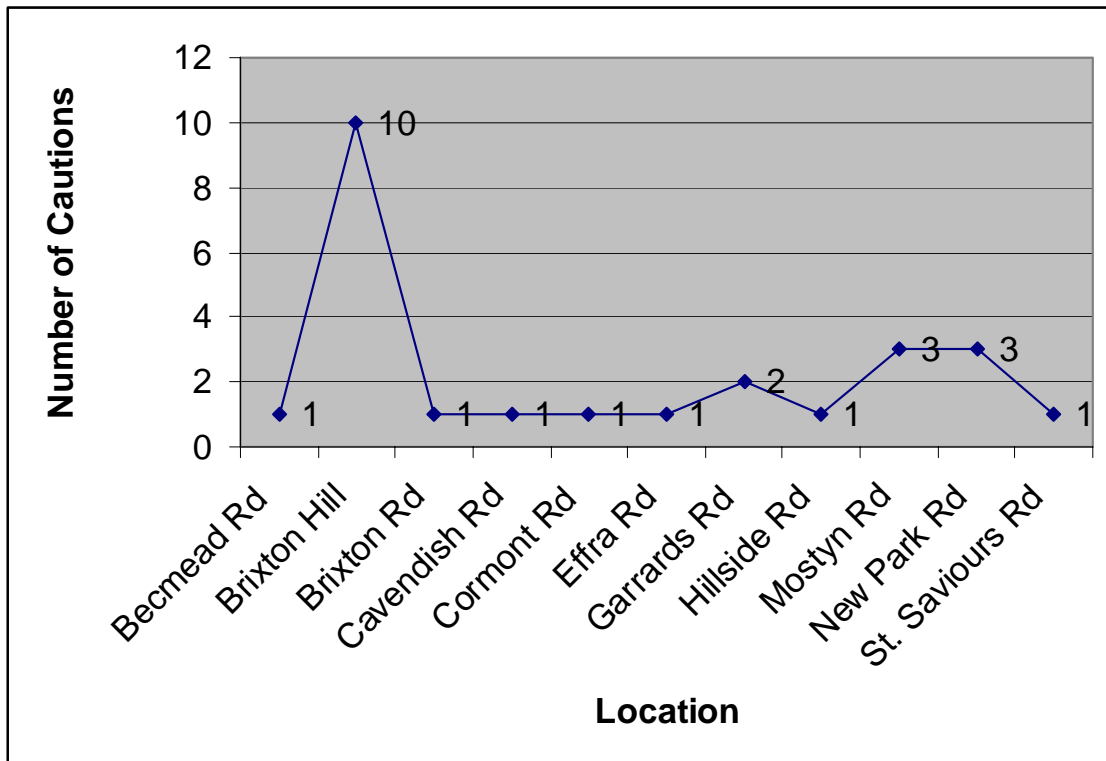
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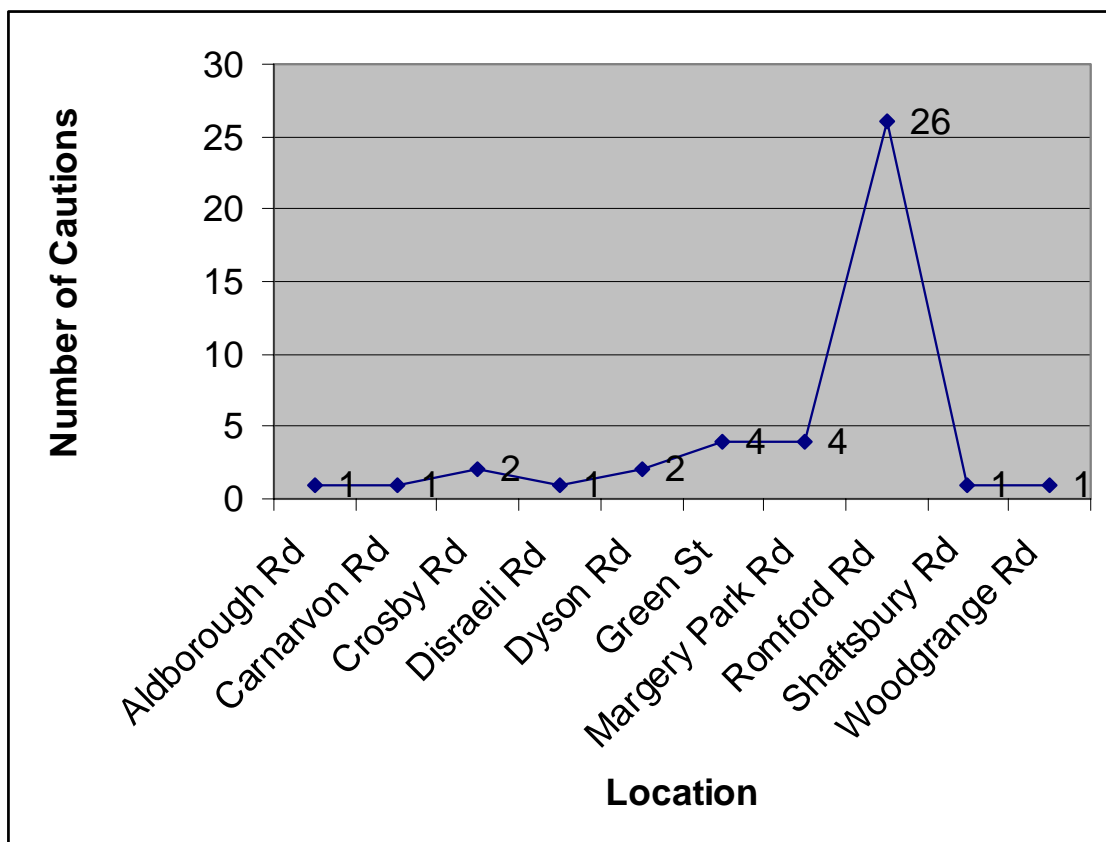
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### 3.6 Lambeth

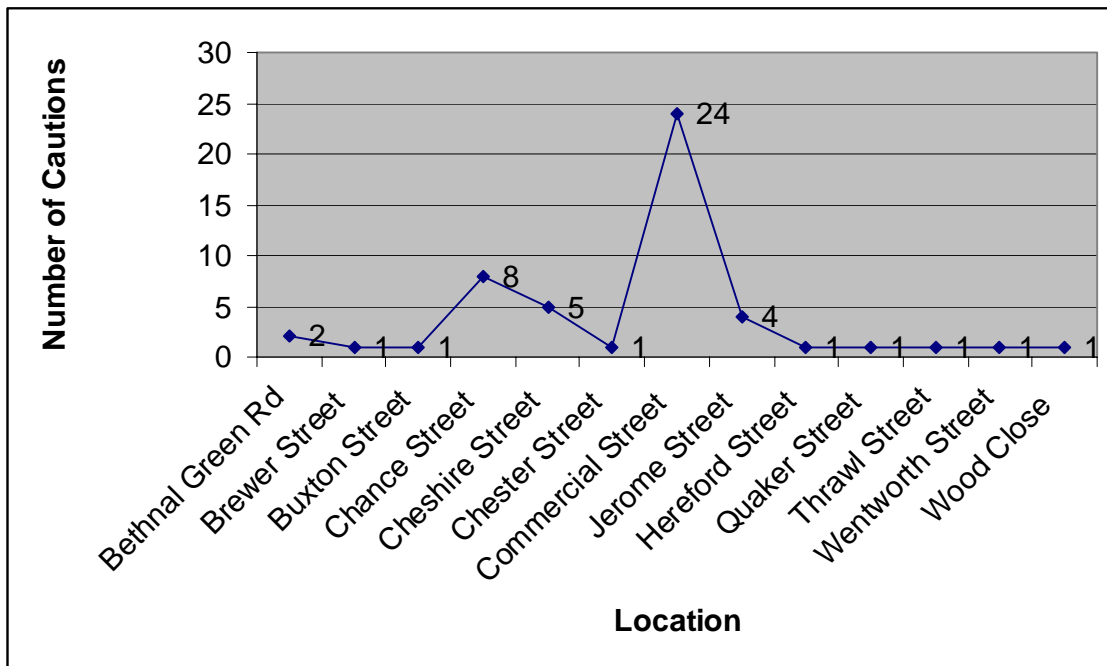


### 3.7 Newham

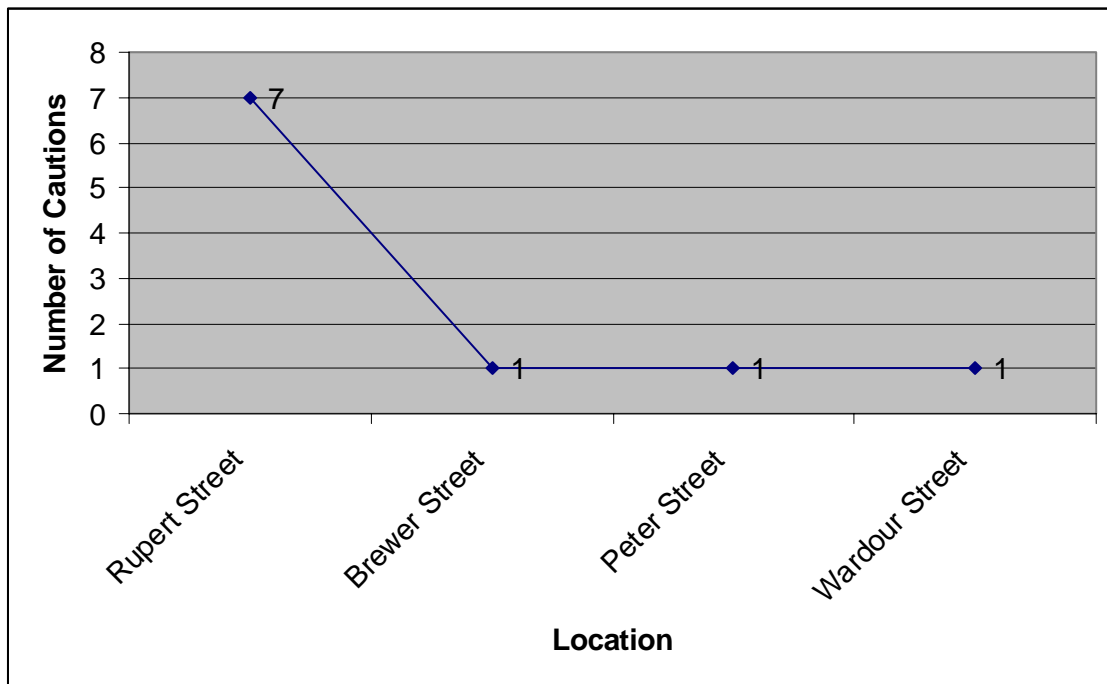




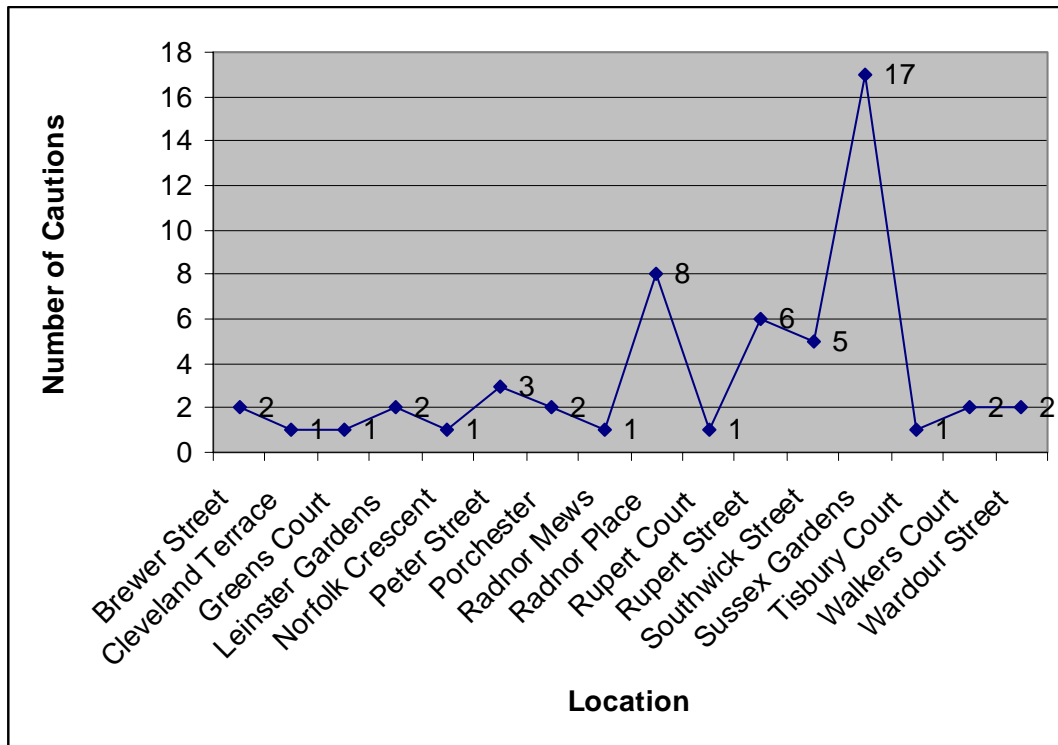
### 3.8 Tower Hamlets



### 3.9 West End Central



### 3.10 Westminster



## 4. Facts and Figures on Violence Towards Women in Street

### 4.1 Prostitution

- 68 percent of women in street prostitution (n=193) have been physically assaulted. The mortality rate for women in street prostitution in London equals twelve times the national average. (Ward et al 1999 referenced in Solutions & Strategies: Drug Problems & Street Sex Markets, Home Office March 2004 p.23)
- Fourteen women experienced violence from buyers, and five were raped (Sex For Sale: New Challenges and New Dangers for Women Working On And Off The Streets, Mainliners March 2003 p.8)
- Over half said they did not like prostitution; only 13 percent said they were “fairly happy”, and more than half had experienced violence (Selling Sex in the City: An evaluation of a targeted arrest referral scheme for sex workers in Kings Cross, South Bank University, 2001 p.23)
- Hodgson (1997) found that 85 percent of respondents had experienced physical assaults by pimps. (For Love or Money: Pimps and the management of sex work, Home Office, 2000 p.7)
- All women interviewed had experienced physical abuse from their current pimp; over half had been raped/sexually abused by their pimp; some were hospitalised and one had a miscarriage induced by beatings (For Love or Money: Pimps and the management of sex work, Home Office, 2000 p.18)
- Almost three-quarters of surveyed women in prostitution had experienced physical abuse from their partners (Street Business: Links Between Sex and Drug Markets, Home Office 1999 p.22)
- Over 80 percent of women in street prostitutes had suffered violence, compared to 48 percent of women in off-street prostitution (Church et al, 2001), 98% (Benson, 1998) Teela Sanders, Urban Studies p.3.

### 4.2 Current Regime in the UK

Prostitution in itself is not an offence in the UK, although certain activities relating to it are, such as pimping, soliciting and running a brothel. The crimes that relate to prostitution concern public order or nuisance. In England and Wales, buying or attempting to buy those under 18 years of age is prohibited, as is ‘carding’- the placing of advertisements for prostitution services in phone boxes and kerb crawling.

Although prostitution is often described as ‘the oldest profession’ and ‘inevitable’ there are those who challenge such assumptions. These beliefs can seek to stifle debate and provide excuses for doing nothing to challenge the institution of prostitution. Belief in such clichés can lead those responsible for policing the sex industry to accept the situation as currently is, as has happened in the Netherlands, Germany and some states in Australia. Brothel

legalisation and 'zoning' (that is establishing a 'managed area for women to sell sex during certain hours without the risk of either the women or buyers being arrested) are initiatives often offered as a solution to the multitude of problems relating to prostitution.

Similarly, piecemeal initiatives and inadequate legislation make it difficult to support women. Research on prostitution regimes in four countries found that when police are not given specific guidelines, and/or are not operating in line with a clear regulatory framework, it is detrimental to the women. Additionally, a flexible approach by police, such as choosing not to arrest the women who are not committing public order offences, is an option that might lead to women in prostitution seeing experienced officers as a potential source of support and advice.

It is, for example, possible to develop forms of decriminalisation at a policy level without changes in statute law. For example, with respect to children in England and Wales, it is now police policy not to arrest but to respond to them as 'children in need' and to target exploiters and buyers through the criminal law. Whilst it is not possible to transfer this model to adult prostitution (and certainly not where there is no 'kerb crawling' legislation) there are possibilities which have not been systematically explored. For example, if law enforcement focussed on a pro-active approach to identify crimes against women in prostitution (Bindel and Kelly, 2004).

Although there is disagreement between those working on issues involving the sex industry as to the viability of legalised brothels and tolerance zones, there is broad agreement amongst those working directly with the women of the necessity of minimising risk and providing exit routes out of the sex industry.

There is a requirement for multi-agency working to provide a range of social and medical services e.g. general health checks, access to accommodation, methadone and counselling services. It is also necessary to ensure availability of provisions to undertake preventative work and to assist those who are currently involved to exit. This can be achieved without the creation of tolerance zones.

Legalising prostitution has, in countries such as Germany, The Netherlands and some states in Australia, resulted in a lack of support for women, as a result of prostitution being removed from the criminal justice system.

A 2004 report, *Sex in the City*, outlined the extent and geographical range of London's commercial sex industry and support services available to women involved. The study found that sexual health outreach provision is only available in eighteen of the thirty-three London boroughs, with a number of the others being inadequately resourced. The boroughs of Barking and Dagenham, Brent, Bromley, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Harrow, Havering, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Kingston upon Thames, Merton, Redbridge, Richmond upon Thames, Sutton and Waltham Forest offer no outreach support. A lack of any services will negatively impact on the women.

In addition to increased provision across London, there is a need for more services specialising in assisting women to exit, running alongside and complimentary to harm minimisation / reduction. Housing has been identified in a number of studies as a crucial component to women leaving and remaining out of prostitution. Currently these women have only one specialist housing option in London if they wish to exit.

Strategies focussing solely on harm reduction as opposed to long-term exiting work with the women can result in inadvertently helping to keep the woman involved in prostitution. Whilst harm reduction/minimisation is important it should be treated as an interim measure. Prominence should be given to strategies based on prevention and intervention to ensure that women are not placed in positions of vulnerability. Sexual health outreach projects, although acknowledging the need for specialist exit strategies, are predominantly based on harm minimisation / reduction<sup>2</sup>. There is a lack of strategies, resources and safe housing in place to assist women who wish to leave prostitution.

### 4.3 Tolerance Zones

In the UK as many as 90 women involved in prostitution have been murdered in the last 12 years (Kinnell, 2006).

Brothel prostitution, long tolerated in Holland, was legalised in 2000. In addition, street prostitution is rife. In 1995, a tolerance zone was set up for street prostitutes in central Amsterdam. The Toppelzone (pick-up area) was promoted as a great way to control the problems associated with prostitution, such as drug dealing, trafficking and violence.

Between 2003 and 2005, several tolerance zones were closed down by the local municipalities. In 2003 the Amsterdam zone was closed by the city's mayor, Job Cohen, who admitted it had become a haven for traffickers and drug dealers, and had not achieved its aim to break the links between prostitution and organised crime. In 2004, Rob Oudkerk, a councillor responsible for education and social affairs policy, was forced to resign when it was discovered he was a regular visitor at the Toppelzone. Legalising prostitution seemed to have shaped the opinions of many Dutch citizens - around 70% supported Oudkerk and were opposed to his resignation.

Julie Bindel visited one of the last remaining tolerance zones in the Netherlands, in Utrecht, a town 25 miles outside of Amsterdam. Behind the mile-long stretch of road where the women wait for buyers, there is an enclosure where sex takes place. There are 12 parking spaces separated by 6ft-high wooden partitions, as well as one for cyclists, or those who wish to stand up to have sex. It is cleaned every Sunday by the council. The floors of

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<sup>2</sup> Although such services are vital for women involved, resources need to be made available for projects to offer exit strategies.

the cubicles are littered with tissues, used condoms and cigarette butts. There are empty food cartons, underwear, clumps of hair and human excrement.

The arguments for tolerance zones include safety of women. However, there is no evidence that women are safer on zones than on the streets in general.

Glasgow-based journalist Jean Rafferty, who spent a year researching prostitution for a book on street based women, found no evidence that tolerance zones protect women in prostitution. "Zones were not created to help the women, but to dump them somewhere away from 'respectable folk'. Those in Edinburgh were an insult to the women - horrible, dangerous places with no proper protection."

## 5. Summary of Key Findings and Implications for London

The following areas have been identified as locations where street prostitution regularly takes place in London. Information was gathered from:

- Visits to a number of locations notorious for street prostitution
- CO14 Clubs and Vice Unit, Metropolitan Police
- Outreach agencies<sup>3</sup>
- Press reports
- PunterNet website
- On-site observation

BOROUGH	LOCATION
Camden	King's Cross – Around the station concourse, and York Way, Pentonville Road and Birkenhead Street, Market Lane, Grays Inn Road
City of London	Defoe House and Ben Johnson House (council housing estates), Barbican, St Paul's Walkway, Long Lance, behind Liverpool Street, Bishopsgate, Aldgate Bus Station and Underground.
Croydon	Norwood
Hackney	Stoke Newington – Shacklewell Lane, Amhurst Road, Kingsland Road, Stoke Newington High Street, Shackleton Road and Shackleton Lane, Brownswood Road, Penbury Road, Morning Lane, Cecilia Road, Queen's Drive
Hammersmith & Fulham	Earls Court
Haringey	Tottenham, Seven Sisters Road, Green Lanes, Manor Road, Northumberland Park, West Green, Finsbury Park
Kensington & Chelsea	Bayswater – Ladbroke Grove
Lambeth	Brixton –Streatham – Garrads Road, Streatham and Tooting Common, Bedford Hill, Brixton Hill, Josephine Avenue, Water Lance, Upper Tulse Hill, Palace Road, Hillside Road
Lewisham	Brownwood Road (women sell sex from crack houses in the area, with occasional street-sightings), New Cross and Honor Oak
Newham	Forest Gate, Green Street, Romford Road
Tower Hamlets	Commercial Street, Wheler Street, Commercial Road, Spitalfields, Banglatown/Brick Lane
Wandsworth	Balham (Garrads Road, Bedford Hill)
Westminster	Mayfair – Park Lane, Edgware Road, Harrow Road, West End, Sussex Gardens, Radnor Place

## Occasional (non-established) street-based prostitution locations

There is also some anecdotal evidence of occasional prostitution activity (provided by residents' groups in the area) in Catford, Honor Oak, Park Rise, New Cross Gate and Sydenham Road. Also, sex has been sold in public toilets on Deptford High Street.

BOROUGH	LOCATION
Enfield	Colyton Road, Ponders End
Hackney	Downs Park Road, Wentworth Street, Digby Crescent, Kingsland High Street, Arcola Street, Dalston Lane, Rectory Road
Haringey	Lordship Park
Kilburn	Ealing Road
Lambeth	Fairmount Road, Halliwall Road, Arodene Road, Surbourn Road, Water Lane, Blenheim Gardens, Clarence Avenue, Dumbarton Road, Garrads Road, Lambert Road, New Park Road, Parkthorne Road, Tooting Bec Lido, Tooting Bec Road, Becmead Road, Christchurch Road, Cameron Place, Garden Lane, Peabody Hill, Steep Hill, Kennington Road
Lewisham	Ballina Road, Crofton Park, Grierson, Clifton Rise, Mona Road, Pepys Road, Catford Broadway, Doggett Road, Ringstead Road, Rosenthal Road
Newham	Disraeli Road, Margery Road, Carnarvon Road
Southwark	Rye Lane, Asylum Road
Tower Hamlets	Quaker Street, Cheshire Street, Jerome Street, Chance Street, Hereford Street, Chester Street, Buxton Street, Bethnal Green Road, Wood Close, Brewer Street
Westminster	Paddington Green (Norfolk Place)

### Implications identified for London in this study include the following:

- With the growth of the sex industry in London, prostitution will become more 'normalised', with more women entering prostitution, and more men becoming buyers;
- London will inevitably see an increase in trafficked women brought in to meet the increased demand;
- 'Black market' economy will continue to increase, as will the links between street prostitution, drugs, and violent crime and disorder.



## **Gaps in Service Provision for women in Street Prostitution**

The following gaps have been identified in a previous POPPY report (*No Escape?*, 2006):

- Dedicated exiting services
- Outreach, for those working on- and off-street
- Safe temporary and long term accommodation
- Crisis accommodation
- Single-sex rehabilitation programmes
- Outreach counselling services
- Mental health services/counselling
- Education programmes
- Peer support
- Community safety strategies<sup>4</sup>.

### **Development of Exit Strategies**

Assisting women in prostitution to exit is difficult and complex work, requiring a multitude of skills and resources. Primary prevention is often overlooked, and there is little work with vulnerable girls and young women, for example those in, or leaving, care.

There is a recognised lack of emphasis on exiting work in many of the health funded projects (Bindel, 2005). Additionally, there needs to be an increase in services addressing outreach support and mental health needs of women in prostitution, and for fast and efficient referral services. Women attempting to exit require assistance with a number of problems and issues, for example, safe housing, child care support, drug and alcohol rehabilitation programmes and training and employment. There are no services for women in London that can provide all of the above.

### **Ugly Mugs / Safety Schemes**

Some services in London are involved in 'Ugly Mug' schemes (Bindel, 2005). Initiatives that seek to identify dangerous buyers, by way of circulating photographs and other details to women involved in street prostitution can offer some protection to women in prostitution. This approach encourages police and social services to work with projects and their clients in reducing the risk of serious assault and murder.

It should be noted, however, that such schemes can only reduce, rather than eliminate harm, and can be seen as a way to maintain women in the sex

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<sup>4</sup> Many of these gaps could be filled if more funding was available to develop services additional to STI/HIV prevention. However, additional training for staff on dealing with wider issues of prostitution should be available for project workers dealing primarily with HIV prevention.

industry, as opposed to assisting their exit from it. This is argued in the POPPY response to Paying the Price:

(Ugly Mug schemes) ...are a good example of harm limitation. However, it does place the onus and responsibility on to the women to protect themselves and 'size up' potentially dangerous buyers. Murders of women in prostitution make up the largest group of unsolved crimes (of murder) in England and Wales. The police should not be leaving voluntary organisations to compile Ugly Mug databases, but should take on the responsibility and share intelligence with those supporting women in prostitution. In turn, police officers should become more proactive in detecting and arresting these men rather than putting the onus on the women to avoid them (POPPY Project response to the Home Office Consultation on prostitution (Bindel, 2004).

## 6. Demand

In Sussex Gardens, Paddington, police estimate that 3,000 kerb crawlers frequent this notorious thoroughfare every year

Women in street prostitution experience high levels of violence and abuse from buyers (Farley, 2003; Kinnell, 2003). One study of women in selected UK cities found that two thirds of the women surveyed had experienced violence from buyers, and almost one third had experienced attempted rape (Barnard, et al, 2000).

A sample of buyers in London was obtained via the PunterNet website. All had accessed women in street prostitution, in various locations throughout the city<sup>5</sup>. A number of men allude to pressurising the women into unsafe sex. "and yes, bareback (sex without a condom, usually anal) is available", writes one buyer. "Felt the condom fall off but I just went for it big time", writes another.

A blatant lack of respect towards the women is apparent from many posting on Punternet. "A dirty girl" writes one. "A drink-sodden old boot, and filthy with it", writes another.

Some of the buyers wish to inflict pain on the women as part of their own sexual pleasure. For example: "Will try anything, but doesn't like pain. She was crying but explained that it was only as she was so turned on."

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<sup>5</sup> A degree of caution should be applied when analysing data and general information from such websites as it is possible that some of the descriptions of sexual encounters may be unreliable. Indeed, there may well be a number of men posting details on Punternet who are merely fantasising about buying women, but who have not experienced sexual encounters.

The numbers of men who pay for sex doubled between 1990 and 2000, according to a survey of 11,000 British adults (Ward et al, 2005). Researchers found that 5.6 percent of men had paid for sex at some point in their lives, with two percent having done so in the last five years and only half a percent in the previous year. In 2000, around nine percent of men said they had paid for sex, whereas fewer than five percent had done so in the previous five years and just over one percent had paid for sex in the last year.

The survey found that men who said they had paid for sex in the last five years were more likely to be aged 25-34 and single. More than a third had had 10 or more sexual partners in the past five years. Concern has been expressed by those in the medical profession that HIV transmissions in heterosexuals, as well as in other sexually transmittable diseases such as Chlamydia and gonorrhoea, are rising amongst men who buy sex.

Although research on men who buy sex is relatively sparse, increasing interest in demand for sexual services has led to a number of studies on buyers (Mansson, 1998; Brooks-Gordon, et al, 2003; Groom & Nandwani, 2006).

There is no such thing as a 'typical buyer'. Men who buy sexual services are 'ordinary men, just like your father or boyfriend' according to Fiona Broadfoot, a survivor of prostitution (Broadfoot in conversation with the author, 2006). Research shows that such men represent a wide range of age, social and ethnic groups. A study of 90 kerb crawlers in the West Yorkshire area found that the men were from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, ethnicities, ages and professions (Hanmer, 2000). Many of the men expressed surprise that their behaviour could be seen as problematic, with most considering prostitute use as a victimless activity. As one regular buyer commented; "it is just like using a slot machine, or satisfying a need, like eating. Use them like a dirty rag and throw them away" (Hanmer and Bindel, 2000).

- Men who buy sexual services are reported as 'ordinary men, just like your father or boyfriend' (Broadfoot in conversation with author) or 'ordinary, local men' (C4, 2002);
- Many of the men expressed surprise that their behaviour could be seen as problematic, with most considering prostitute use as a victimless activity/crime. (Hanmer and Bindel, 2000);
- Tackling demand, through re-education and the criminal justice system, is key to tackling prostitution (Ekberg, 2006).

### **Sanctions Against Buyers in London**

- In Hackney, there have been no arrests for kerb crawling or persistent soliciting between 1st April and 28th September 2006. [Hackey Prostitution & Kerb Crawling Arrest Data]
- Up to 3000 kerb crawlers a year visit one London street, namely Sussex Gardens ['Kerb –crawling drivers face losing licence in

Paddington vice purge,' Richard Edwards, Evening Standard, 29 December 2005]

- In 2005, there 515 prostitution-related arrests in Westminster, of which only 13% (n=66) were for kerb crawling. [Ibid]
- Two women described as “London’s most prolific prostitutes” have been issued with five-year ASBOs banning them from Westminster streets. There was no mention of concurrent action taken against kerb crawlers [‘ASBOs for Paddington prostitutes who made residents’ life misery,’ Daily Mail, 22 November 2006]
- Haringey has issued the second highest number of ASBOs to street prostitutes in London, ten from magistrates. “More support and less punishment” is required to avoid pushing prostitutes off the streets into brothels, where an estimated £35 million is made in Haringey every year (average £1.5 million per establishment). [‘Sex Sells in Haringey,’ This is Local London, Lawrence Marzouk, 8 December 2005]

The vast majority of kerb crawlers who are arrested receive a police caution, or sign an Acceptable Behaviour Contract – a far less punitive order than an ASBO.

An estimated 80,000 women work in ‘on-street’ prostitution in the UK. The average age women become involved being just 12 years old (Home Office, Paying the Price. A consultation paper on prostitution, 2004).

The first ASBO was given to a kerb crawler in London in August 2006. Since then only two others have been issued (ASBO Concern, 2006). As is evident from the charts, women in street prostitution are routinely issued with ASBOs and threatened with prison if they do not comply.

One recommendation in this report is that buyers of women in prostitution are educated, through the criminal justice system, education programmes and other appropriate methods regarding the realities of prostitution. Demand feeds supply, and ignoring the role of the buyer in the growth and expansion of the sex trade will lead to a proliferation of establishments and individuals providing women to be used in prostitution.

## **6.1 Good Practice in Tackling Demand - The Swedish Approach**

In Sweden, where the buying or attempted buying of sexual services has been criminalised since 1999<sup>6</sup>, the government seek to re-educate the public about the inherent abuse in prostitution. However, it has been difficult to ensure that the law is followed with regards to concealed prostitution. In this area, there is a need for clarification regarding the situations and types of

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<sup>6</sup> See <http://www.prostitutionresearch.com/swedish.html> for legislation

relation to which the law applies, and evidentiary problems tend to arise when the suspect denies having committed the offence.

The law is still relatively new, and it is reasonable to assume that the surveillance and arrest procedures employed by the police will be further developed and refined, and that the definition of the offence will become clearer as more cases reach the courts. Prosecutors seem to have taken a cautious stance and in principle have only taken more or less clear-cut cases before the courts.

Gunilla Ekberg, former Special Advisor to the Swedish Government on trafficking and prostitution, has evidence that the Swedish law has a dampening effect on trans-border prostitution. If it wasn't for the law, she claims, Sweden would have had similar problems to those prevalent in northern Norway and Finland. Until the law was implemented, people who traffic women for prostitution to Sweden were being convicted under the anti-pimping laws. Between 1998 and 2001, 14 investigations of trafficking in women were completed.

According to Kajsa Wahlberg, the National Rapporteur on Trafficking at the National Swedish Police, the number of trafficked women to Sweden has declined since the law was implemented.

A study on prostitution in Europe found that the number of men seeking sex from prostituted women in Sweden is 13% lower than in the rest of the continent (Ekberg, 2004). Sweden is hoping to help introduce the law in neighbouring countries, such as Denmark and Finland, and representatives from the Swedish government are attending meetings worldwide to put the issue of abuse within prostitution on the agenda.

At the time that the law was introduced, the government released €800,000 (£539,000) for services to assist women to leave the sex industry. Supporters of the legislation see it as part of a long-term strategy to eradicate prostitution, and efforts to raise public awareness seem to be working: a 2003 opinion poll found that 80 percent of the public supports the law. In April 2004, Swedish children on a school trip to Kenya filmed their teachers apparently fraternising with prostitutes and entering a brothel in a red light area, and went public with the footage after the headmaster refused to act. One said it was "disgusting that we had gone to help these people for them to be exploited in this way" (CATW, 2004).

## **6.2 Kerb Crawler Re-Education Programmes**

The first UK perpetrator programme aimed at kerb crawlers (KCRP) ran in 1999 in Leeds, West Yorkshire. Although a small number of similar courses have since been piloted by some police and probation services, the KCRP remains the only UK course based on feminist principles and understanding of abusive men and of the effects of prostitution on women.

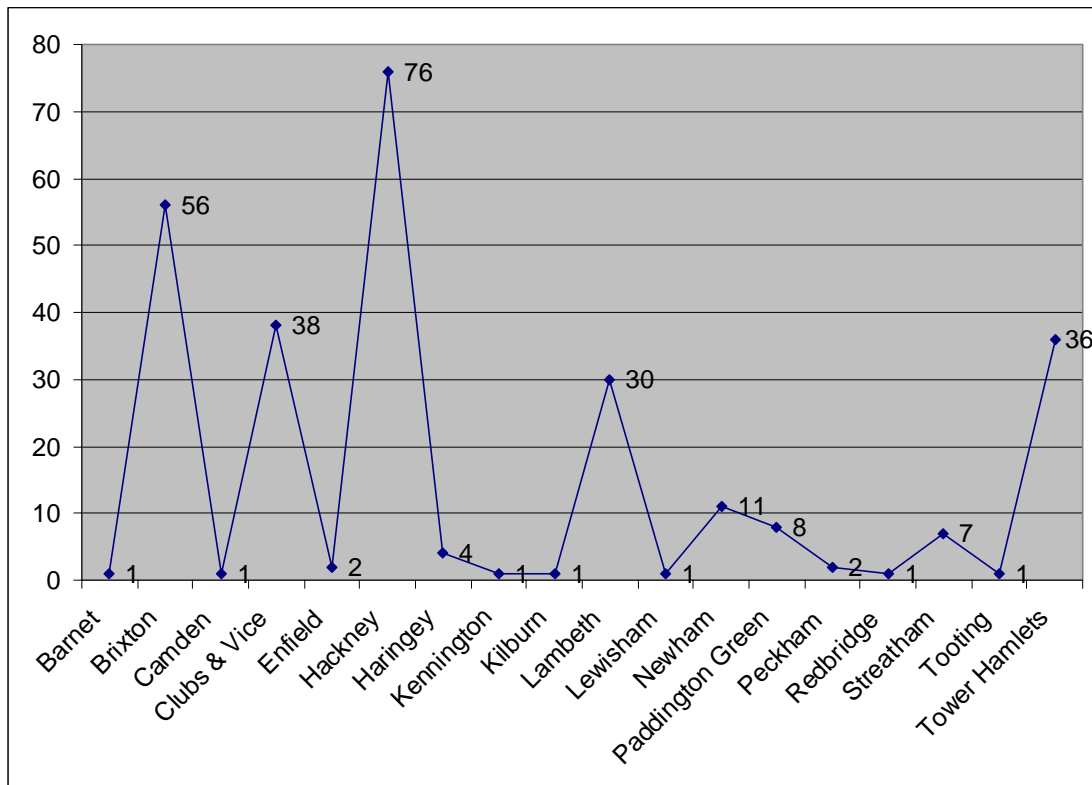
The KCRP was designed and implemented by Julie Bindel and Jalna Hanmer, the director of the Research Centre on Violence, Abuse and Gender Relations with the cooperation of West Yorkshire police.

This hard hitting educational day-school is designed to break the silence, secrecy and collusion surrounding men's involvement as users of women in prostitution. It offers a unique health, education and rehabilitation experience in lieu of a court appearance, publicity and fine. The programme presenters explain the potential effects of paying for sexual services. In particular, the damage caused to women, their families, communities, and in some cases to the men themselves (in terms of sexual health and relationships) is examined.

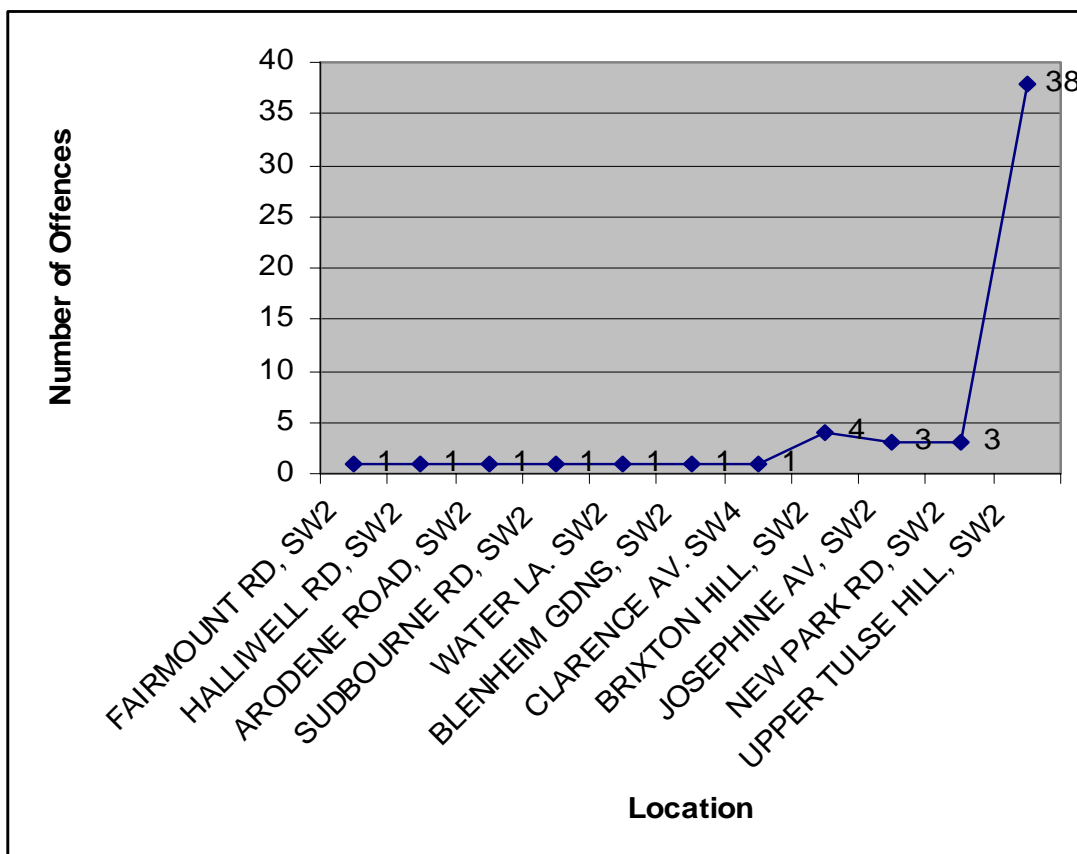
Prostitution adversely affects the health and quality of life, both for those involved in prostitution and individuals living in communities where prostitution exists. Men using prostituted women are often unaware of the health and social consequences of prostitution, choosing instead to consider their actions in isolation to wider society. The course is designed to re-educate men to the realities of prostitution, including detailed information on the health and social consequences of prostitution for themselves and others.

Three quarters of children abused through prostitution had been missing from school (Home Office, Paying the Price. A consultation paper on prostitution, 2004).

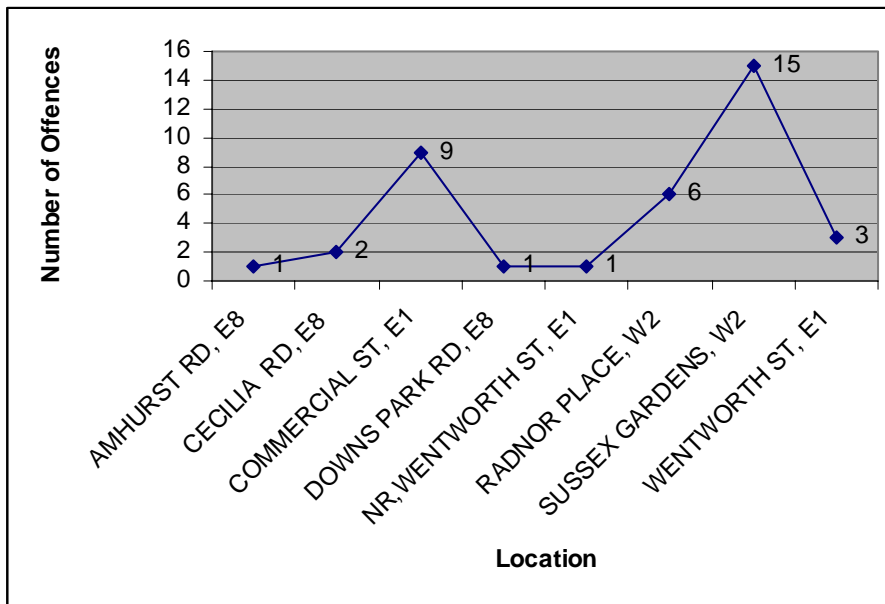
### 6.3 Kerb Crawling Offences (Jan 2006 - Jun 2006)



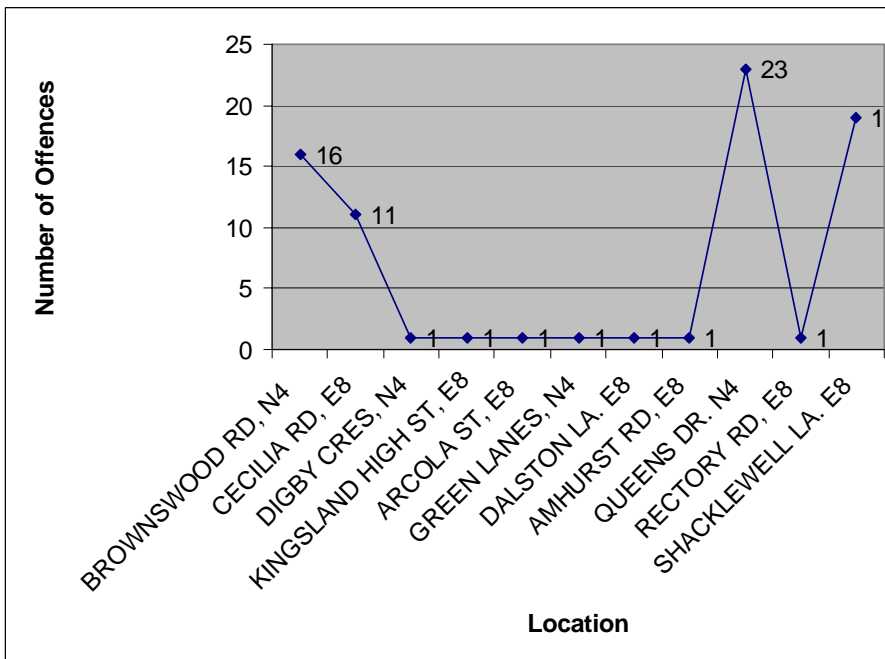
### 6.4 Brixton



### 6.5 CO14

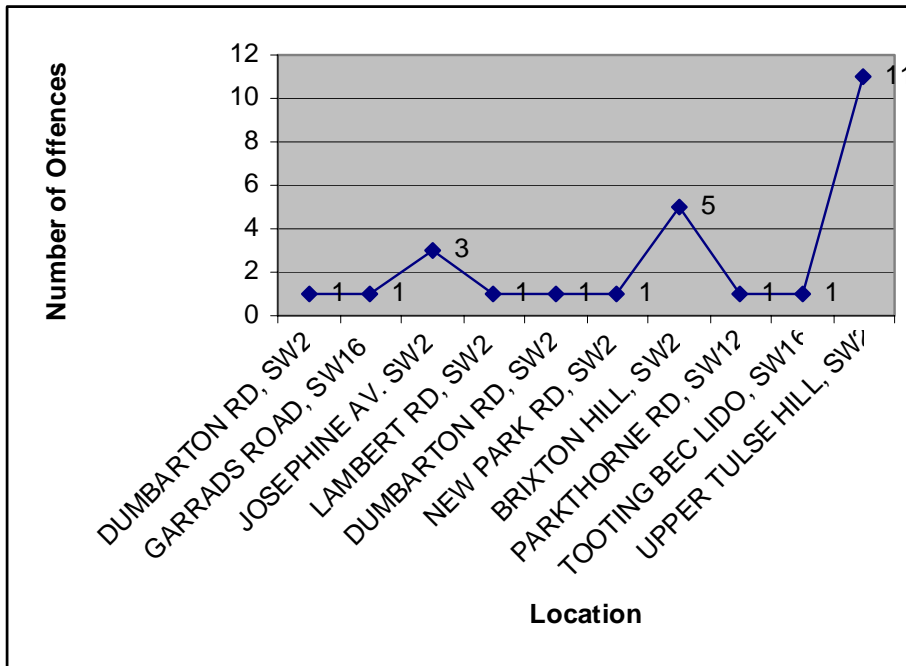


### 6.6 Hackney

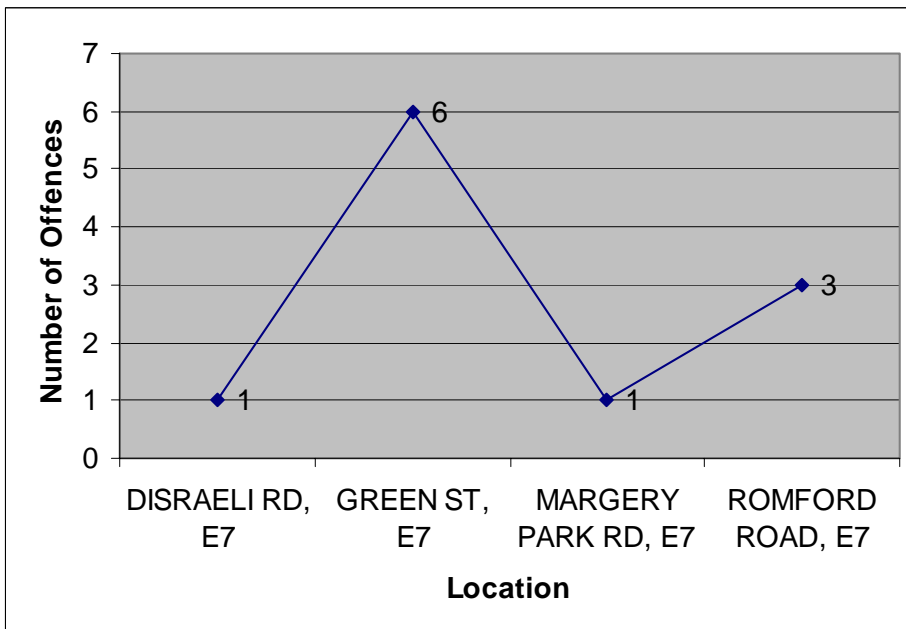




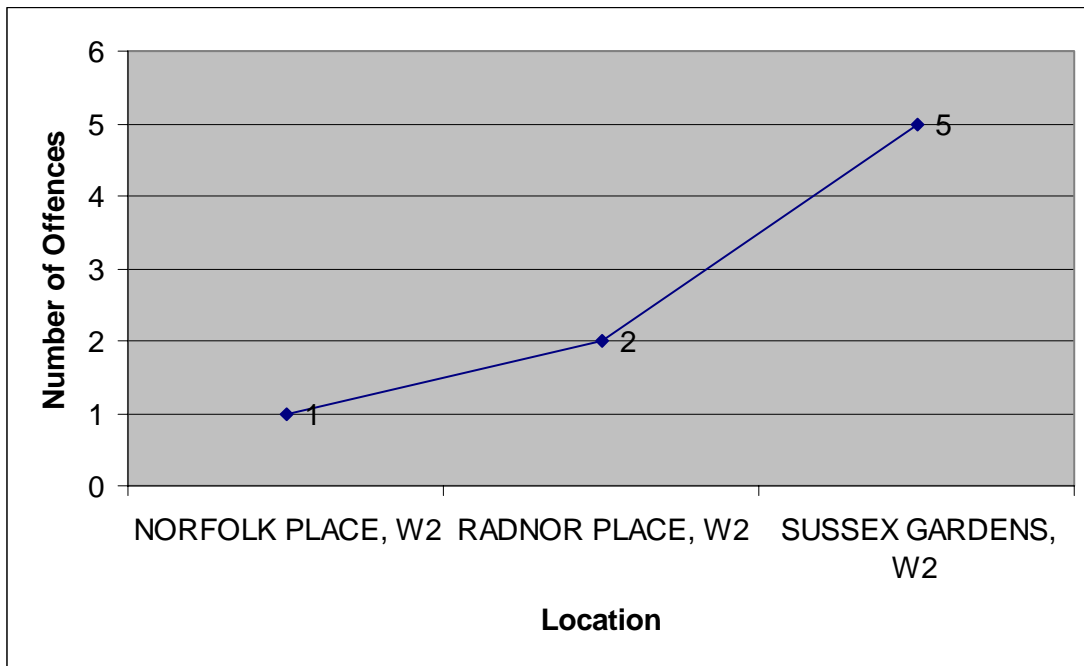
### 6.7 Lambeth



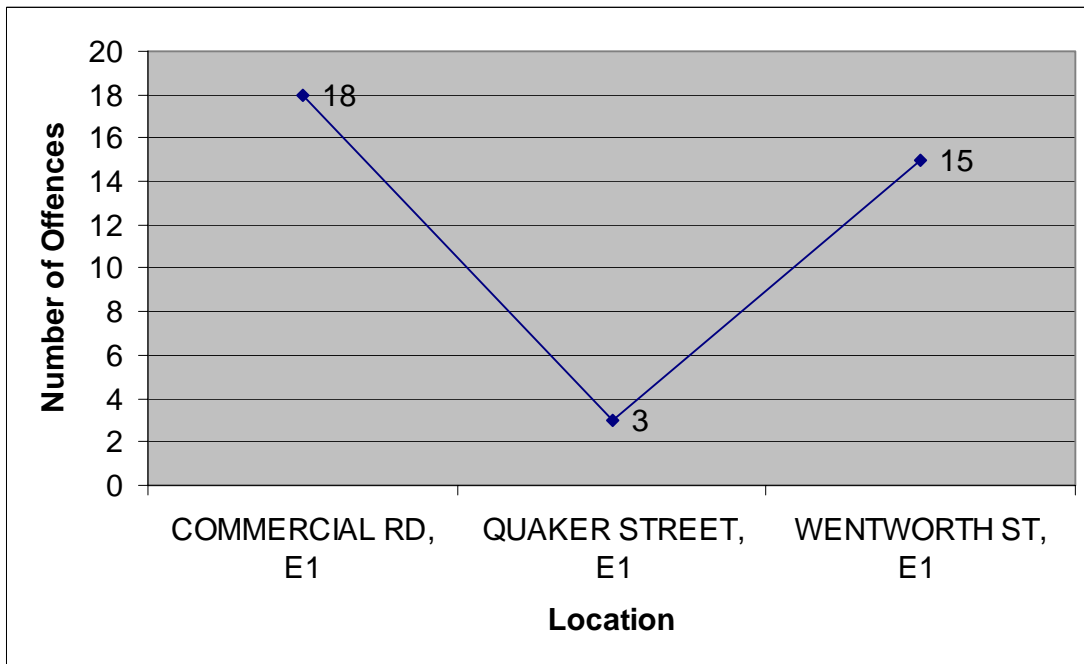
### 6.8 Newham



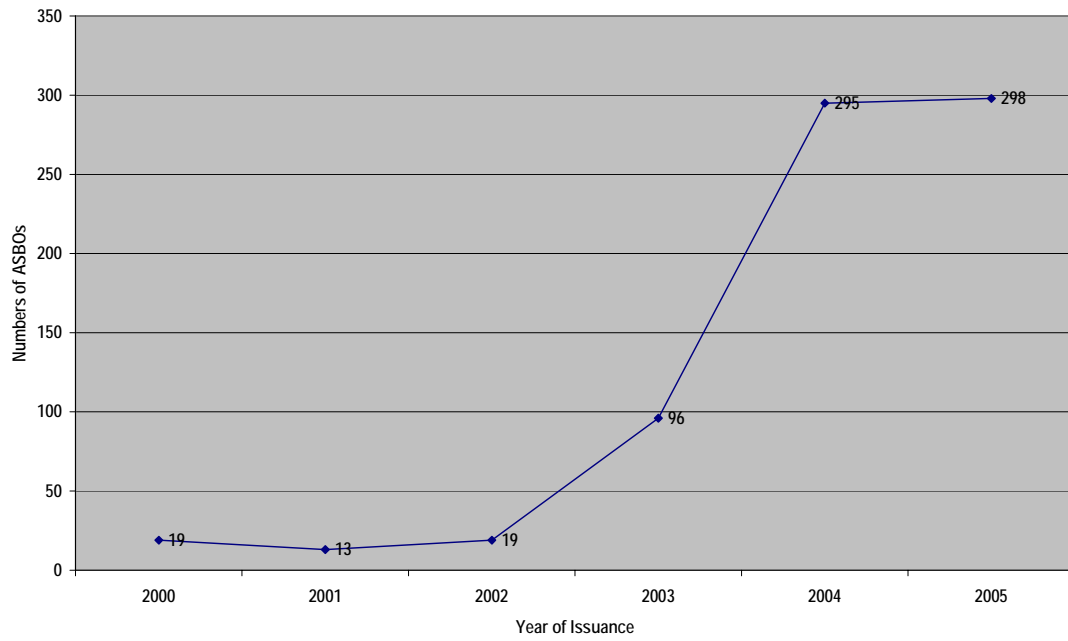
### 6.9 Paddington Green



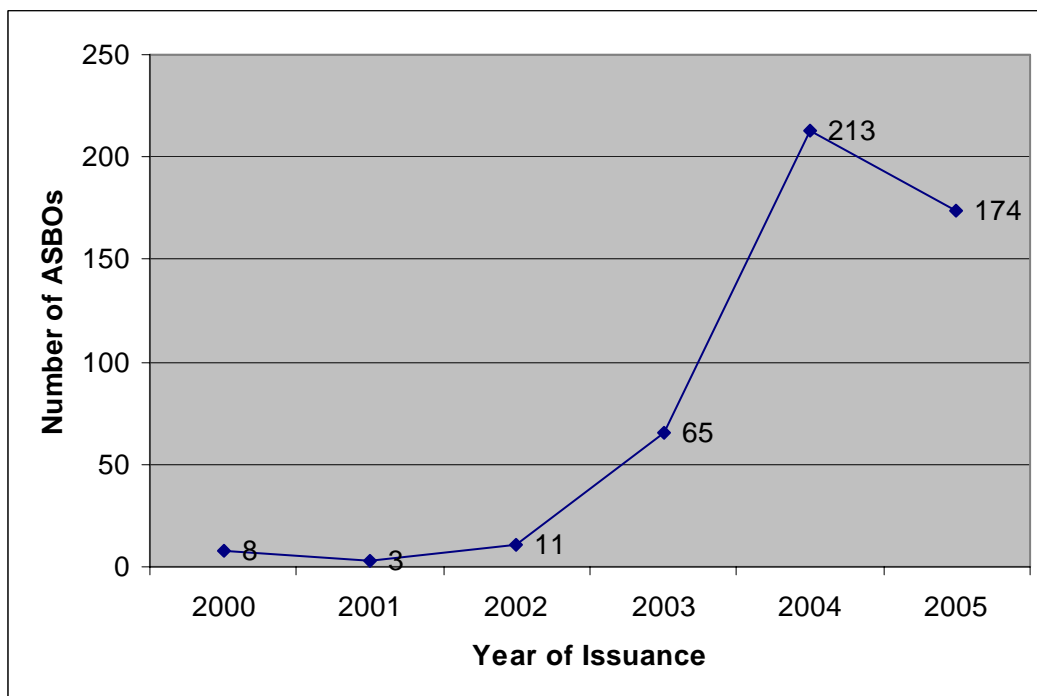
### 6.10 Tower Hamlets



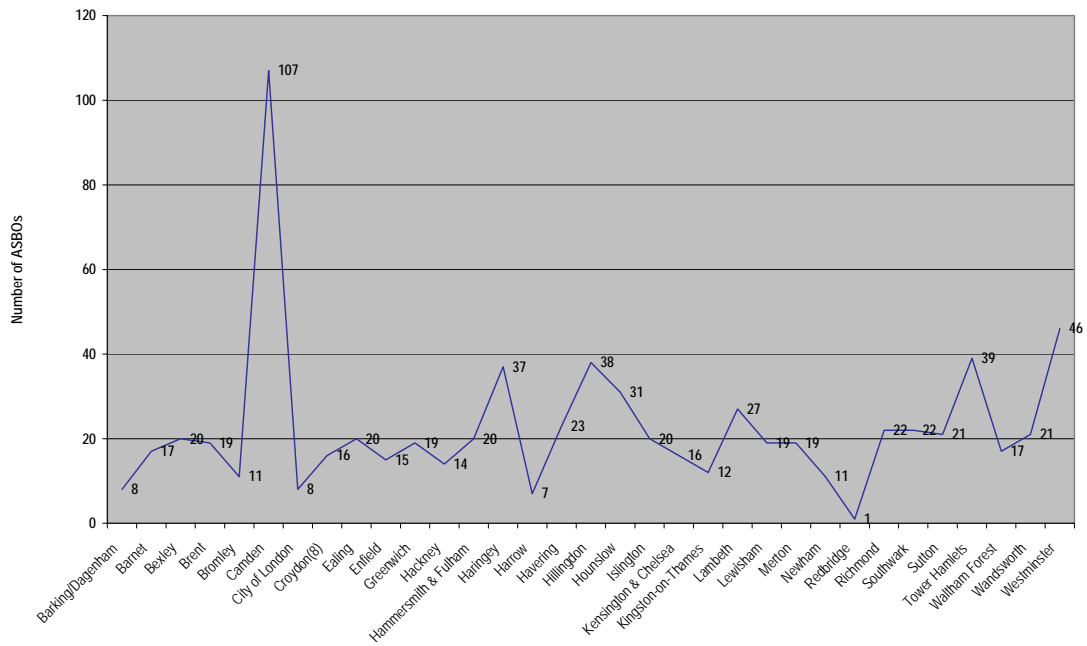
### 6.11 London ASBO Issuance (All Ages)



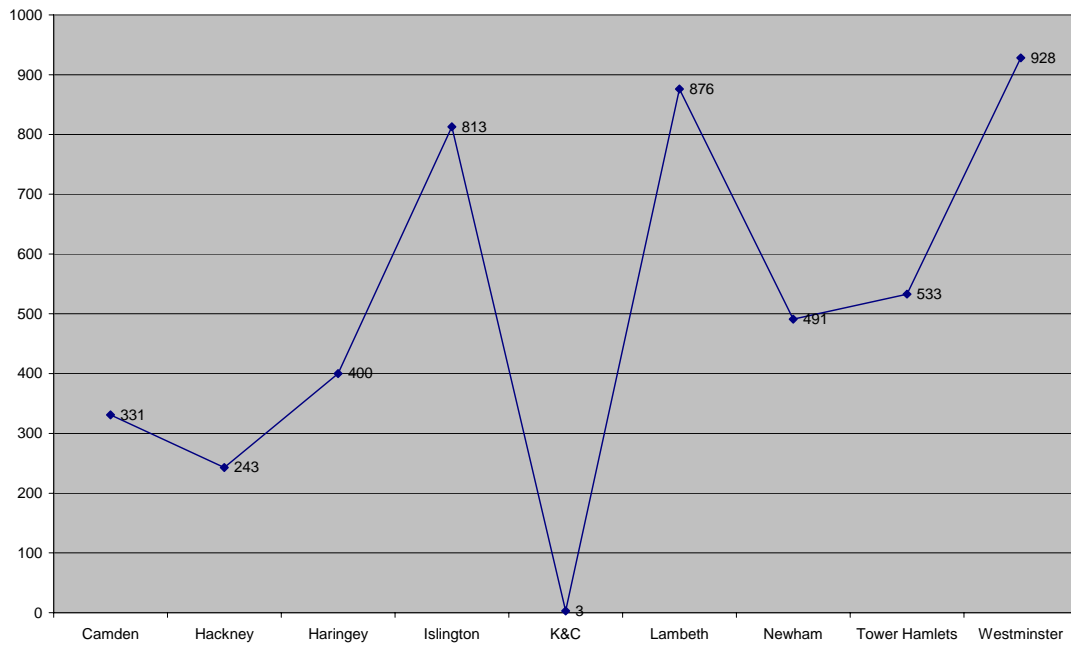
### 6.12 London ASBO Issuance (Adults)



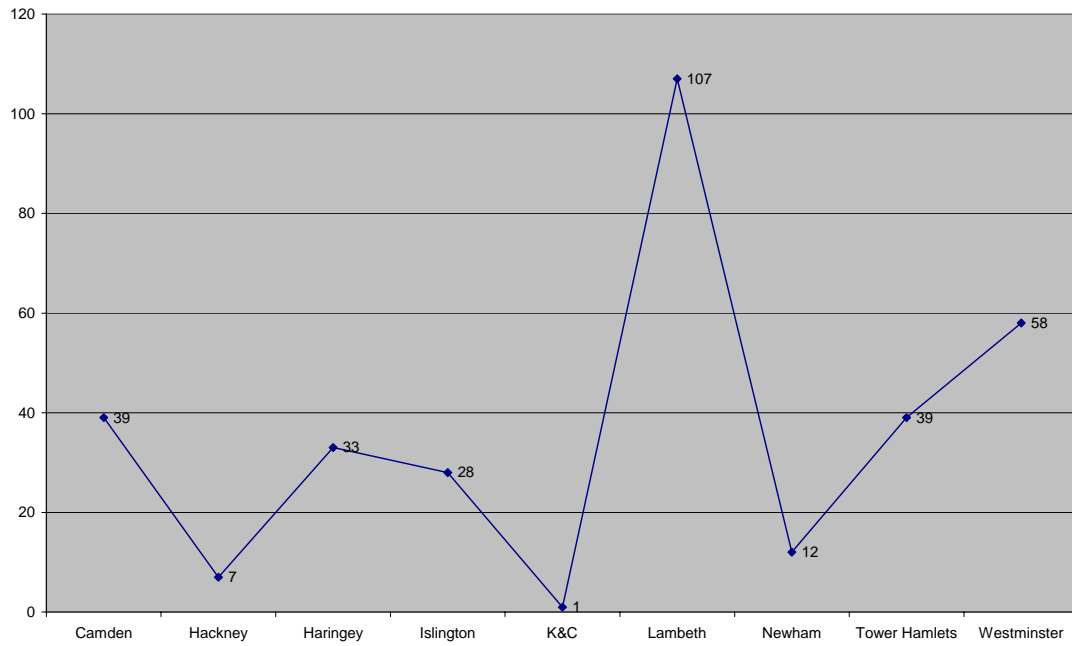
### 6.13 London ASBO Issuance by Borough



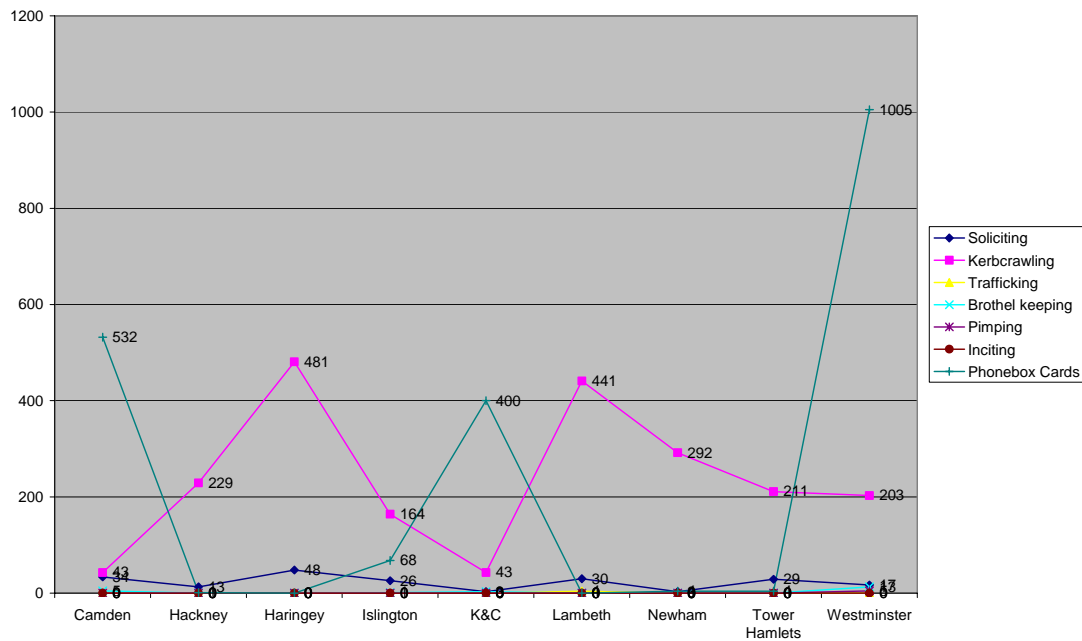
### 6.14 Offences of Loitering for the Purpose of Prostitution (2003-2006)



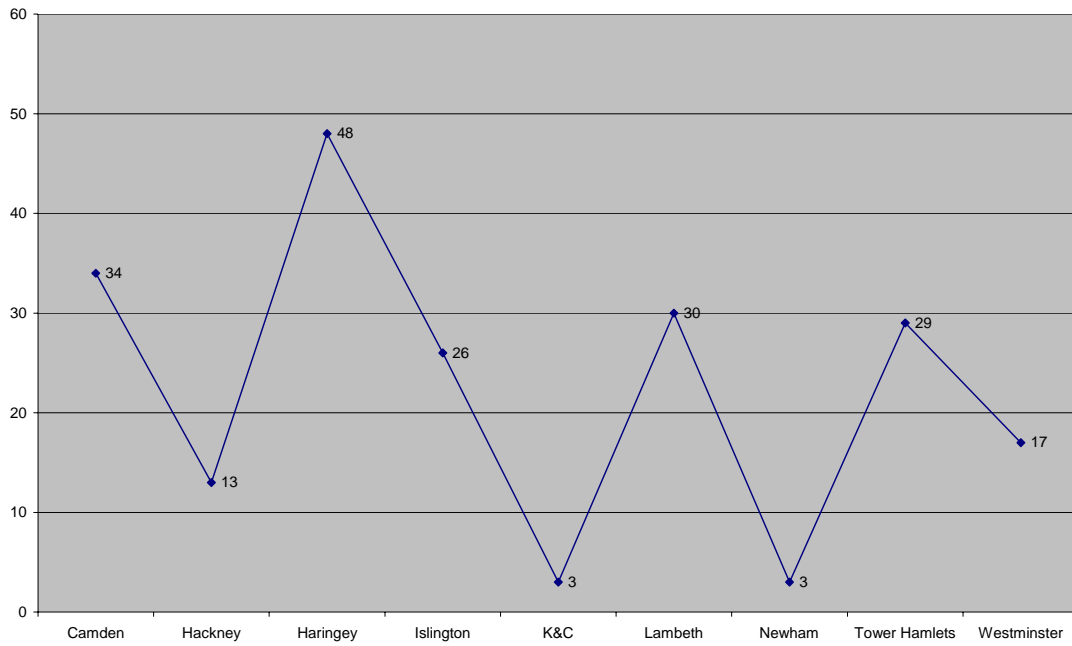
### 6.15 Offences of Soliciting for the Purpose of Prostitution (2003-2006)



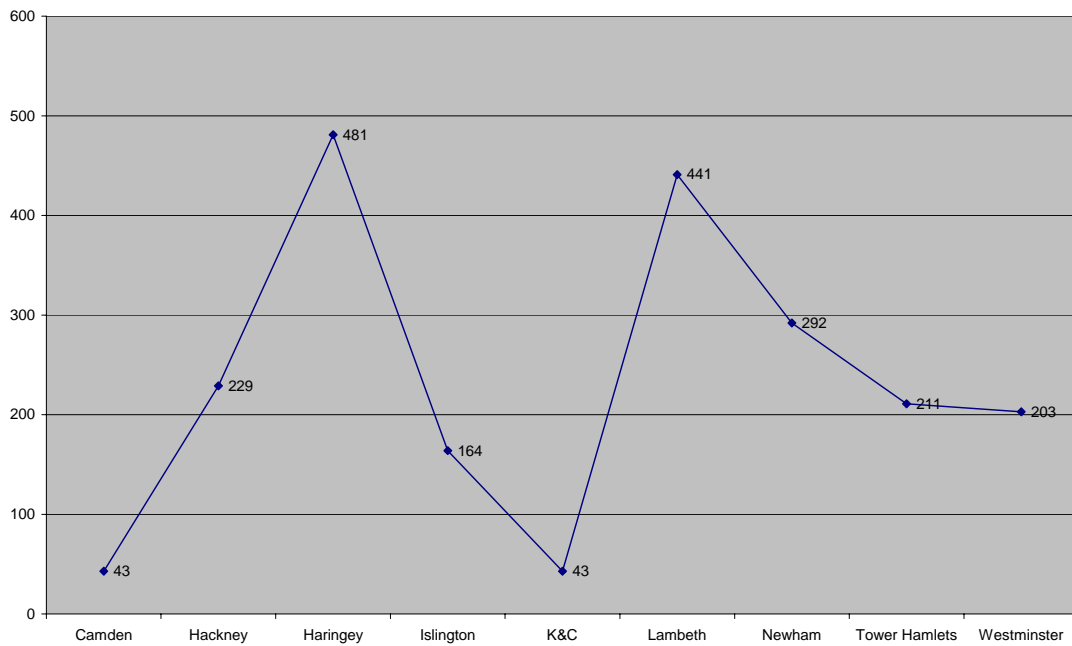
### 6.16 All Prostitution Offences (2001-2006)



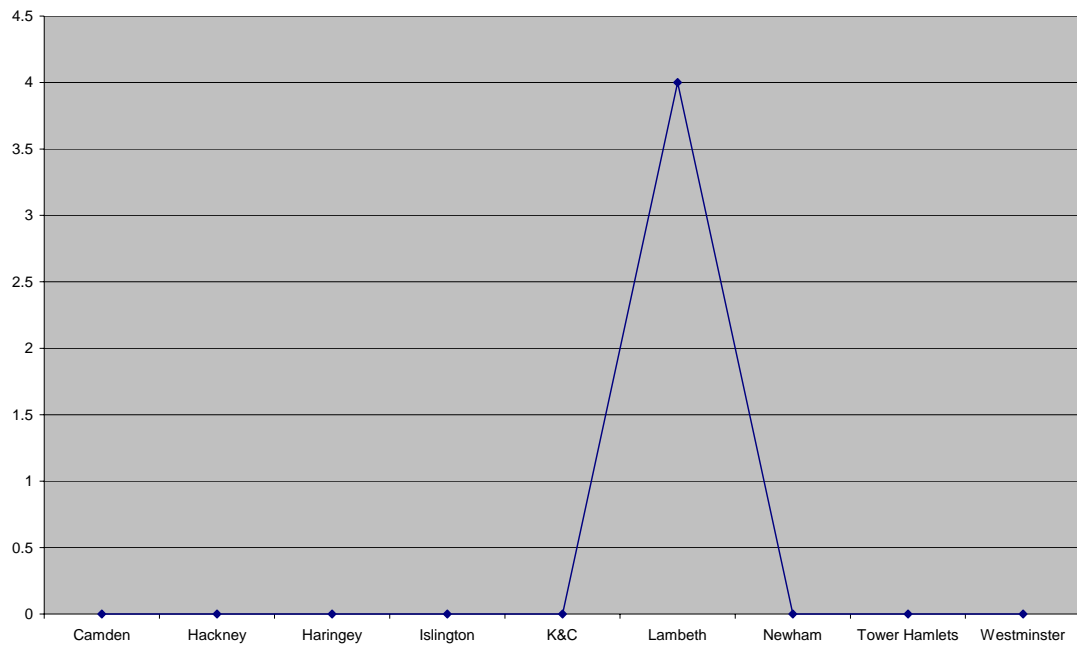
### 6.17 Soliciting Women for Prostitution (2001-2006)



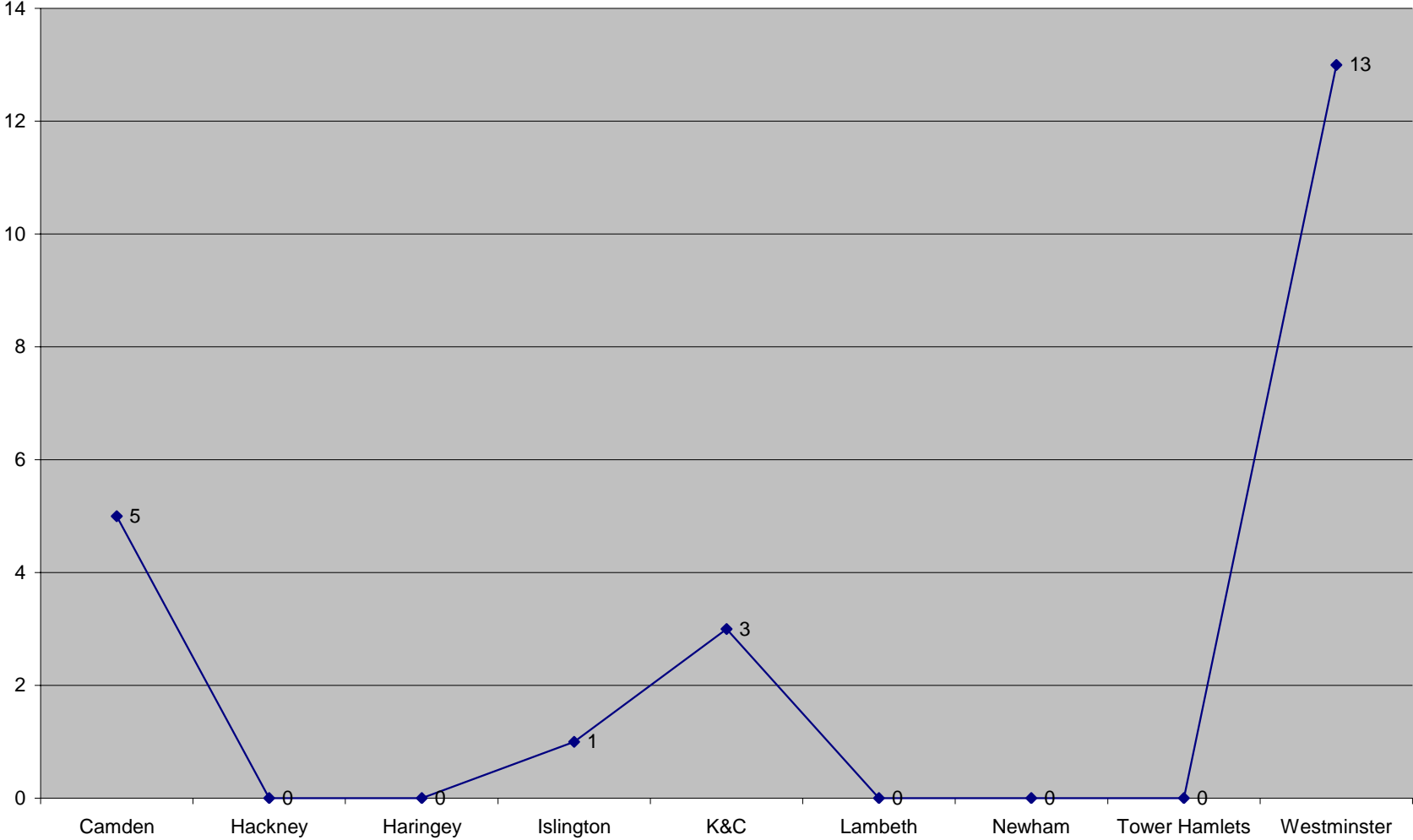
### 6.18 Kerb Crawling for Prostitution (2001-2006)



## 6.19 Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation (2001-2006)

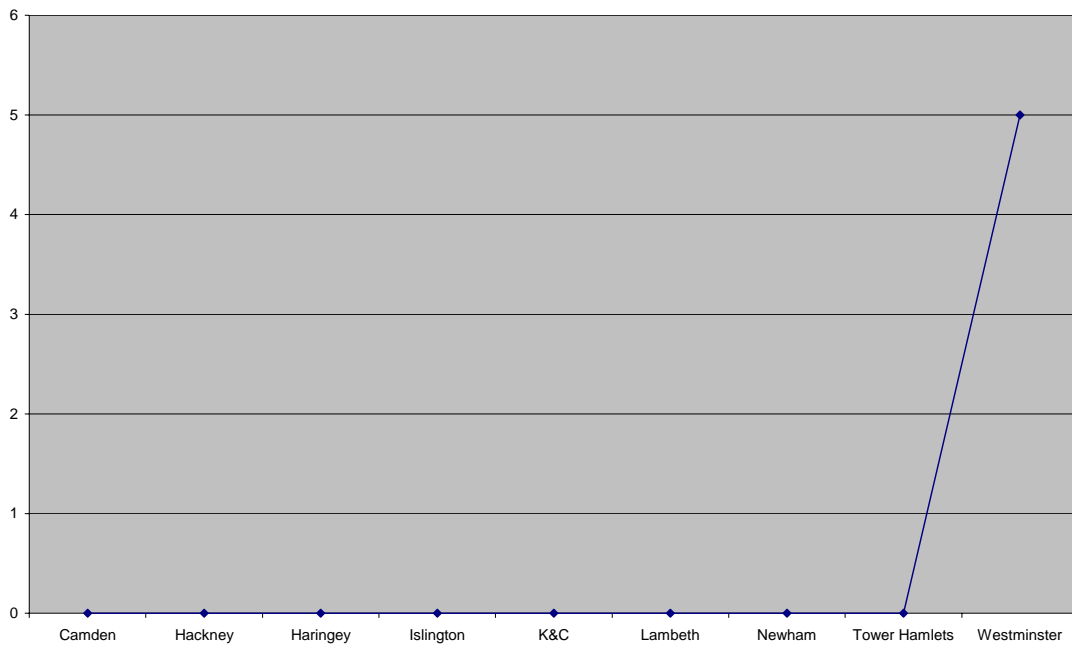


6.20 Brothel Keeping (2001-2006)

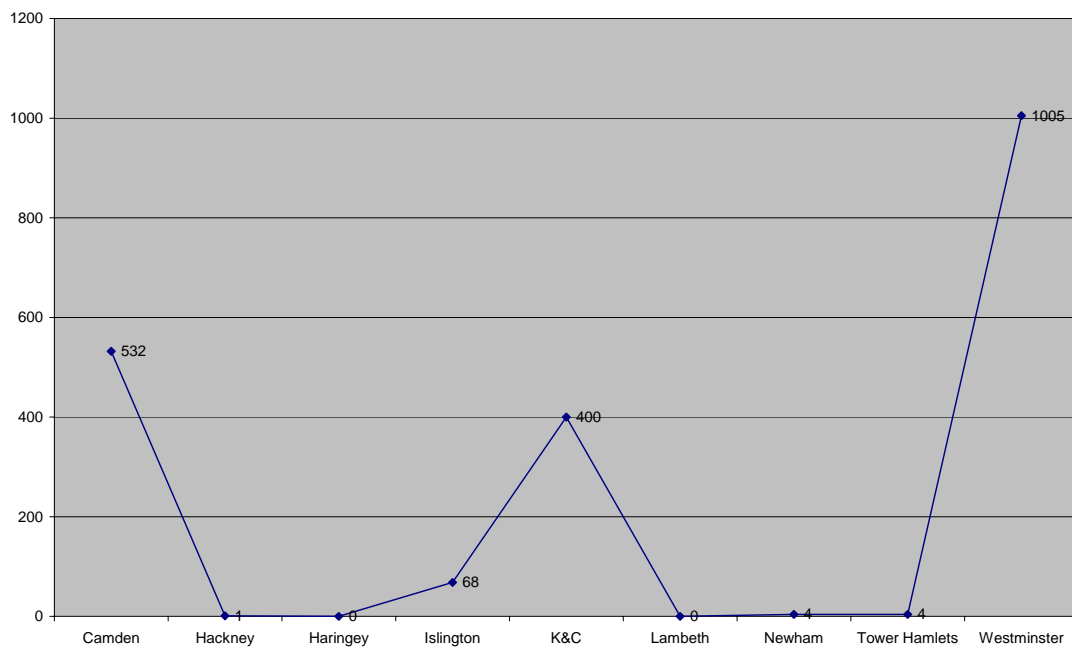




### 6.21 Pimping – Controlling Prostitution for Gain (2001-2006)



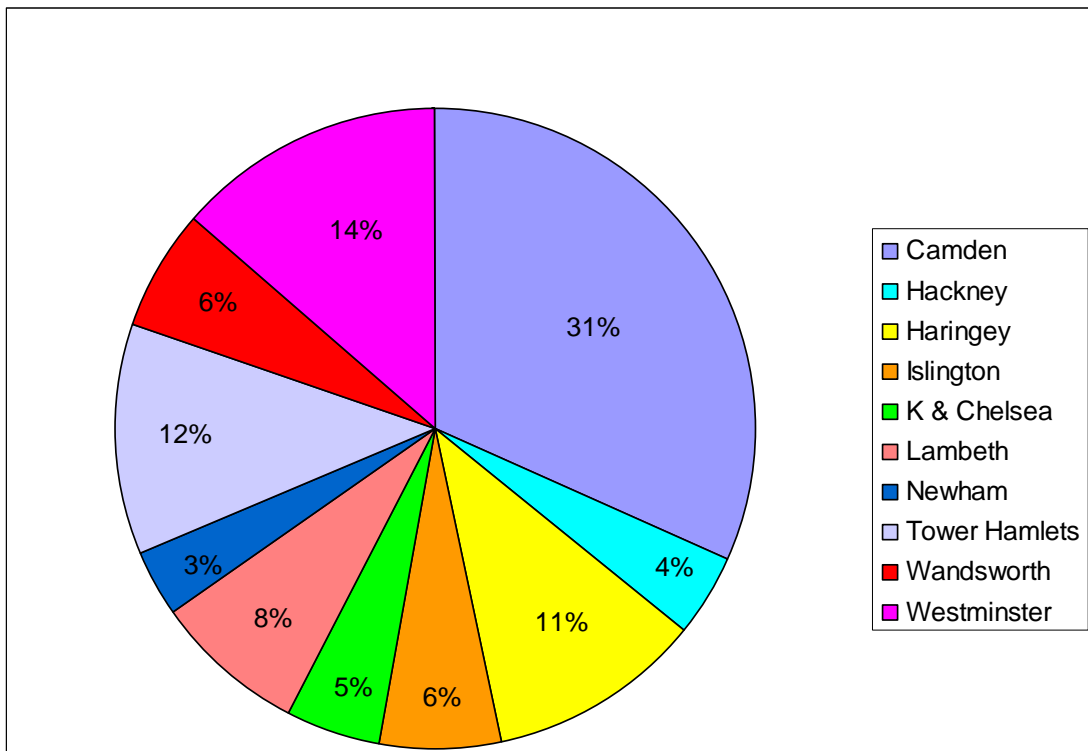
### 6.22 Phone Card Offences (2001-2006)



**6.23 Key Boroughs for Street Prostitution**

REF	Camden	Croydon	Hackney	H&F	Haringey	Islington	K&C	Lambeth	Newham	Tower H	Wandsworth	Westmin
Met	•		•		•	•	•	•	•	•		•
CO14	•	•	•		•		•	•	•	•	•	•
SITC	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•

### 6.24 ASBOs by Borough (includes all offences)



## 6.25 Kerb Crawling Offences: Venues MPS (Jan 2006 - Oct 2006)

Barnet	1
Brixton	56
Camden	1
Clubs & Vice	38
Enfield	2
Hackney	76
Haringey	4
Kennington	1
Kilburn	1
Lambeth	30
Lewisham	1
Newham	11
Paddington Green	8
Peckham	2
Redbridge	1
Streatham	7
Tooting	1
Tower Hamlets	36
<b>Total</b>	<b>277</b>

## **7. Hackney Case Studies - Arrests (Hackney, 2004-2006)**

### **7.1 Women in Prostitution**

- In 2004-2005, 54 women were arrested an average of 1.72 times (n=93) for loitering or soliciting for prostitution.
- The majority of women were only arrested once (just over three-fifths, 61%, n=33) with a small number of women who were arrested five or more times (3.7%, n=2).
- 2005-2006 showed a significant decrease in arrests of women for prostitution-related offences. Sixteen women were arrested once, and one woman was arrested twice (n=18 arrests). These figures suggest that recent policy calls for a victim-centric approach to women in prostitution have begun to filter through to grassroots.

### **7.2 Kerb Crawlers**

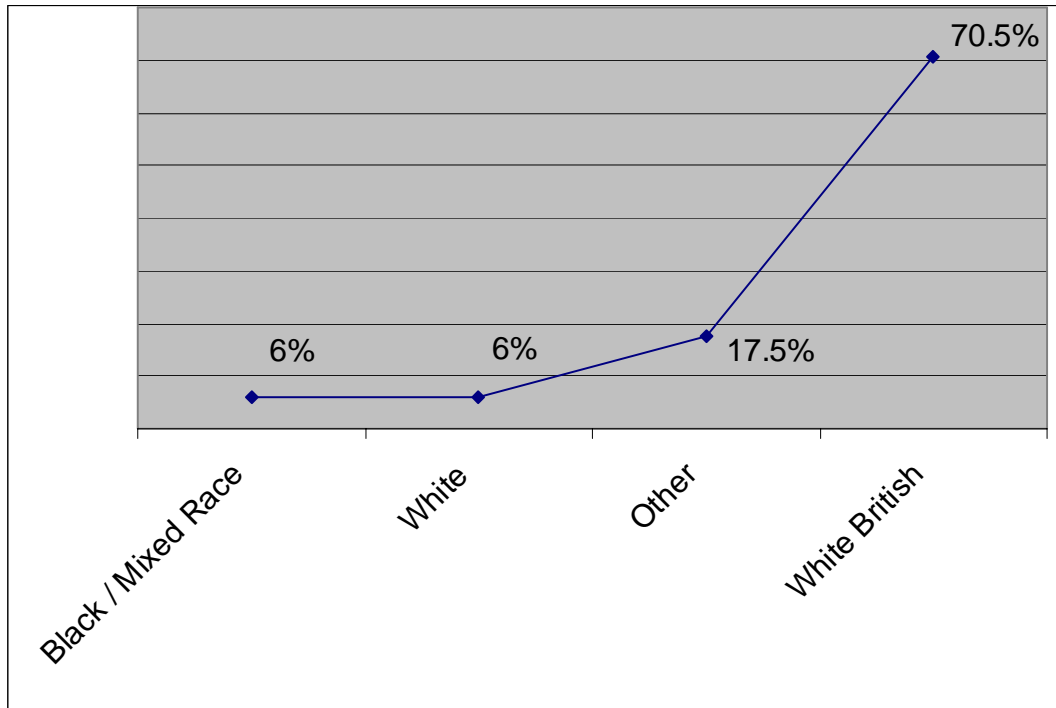
- In 2004-2005, 42 men were arrested 42 times for kerb crawling, indicating the ability of buyers to easily relocate when necessary.
- Compared to the number of arrests against women for prostitution-related offences (n=93), less than half that number of arrests (n=43) were made against men for kerb crawling during the same period.
- The discrepancy between arrests of men and women - in the same area, during the same period - highlights the freedom of movement, security and discretion enjoyed by a male buyer travelling via car, in contrast to the vulnerability of a female prostitute standing on the street.

### **7.3 Persistent Buyers**

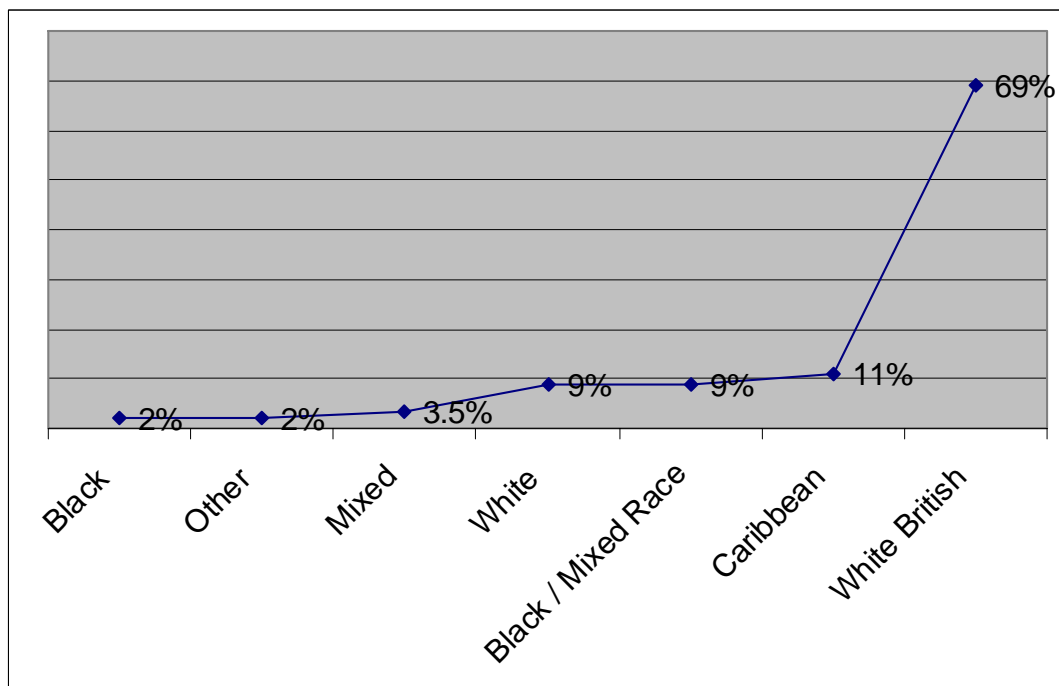
- In 2004-2005, only one man was arrested for persistent soliciting followed by a 95% increase in 2005-2006, when 21 men were arrested a total of 22 times.
- This dramatic rise in arrests for buyer solicitation denotes a gradual shift in policy from the traditional stance of criminalising prostituted women to a more victim-focused approach to tackling prostitution, by acknowledging male buyers as the root cause of demand for commercial sex acts.

## 8. Ethnicity (Hackney, 2004-2006)

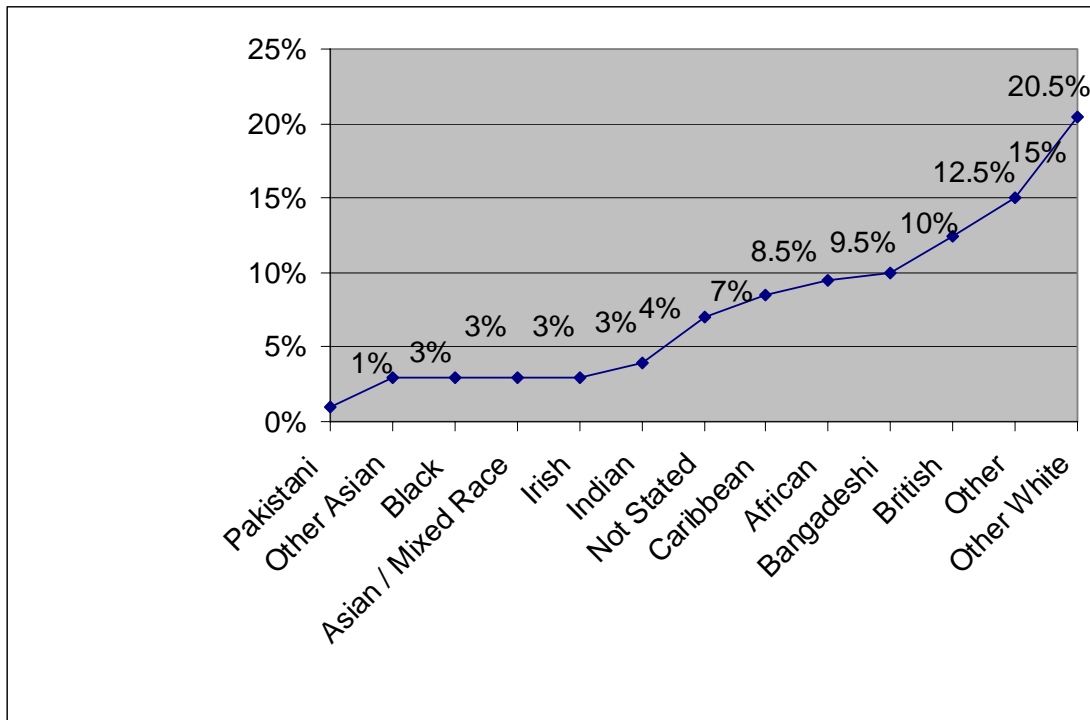
### 8.1 Ethnicity of Women Arrested for Prostitution (2005-2006)



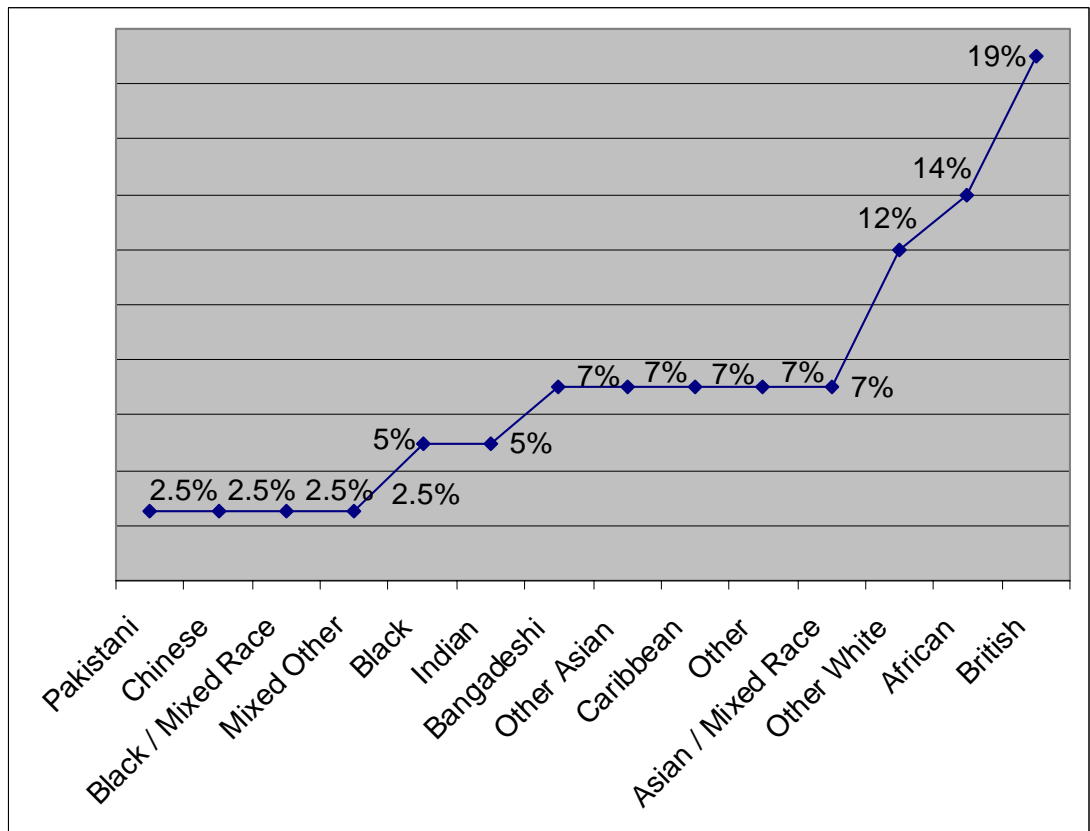
### 8.2 Ethnicity of Women Arrested for Prostitution (2004-2005)



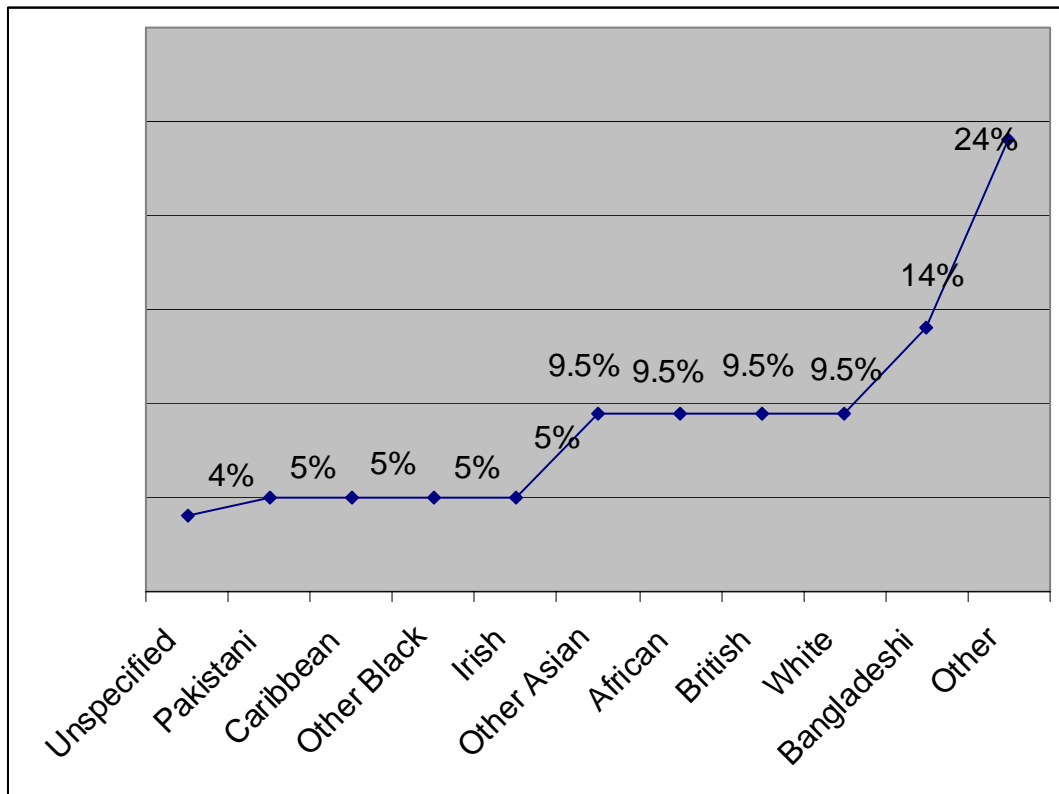
### 8.3 Ethnicity of Kerb Crawlers Arrested (2005-2006)



### 8.4 Ethnicity of Kerb Crawlers Arrested (2004-2005)



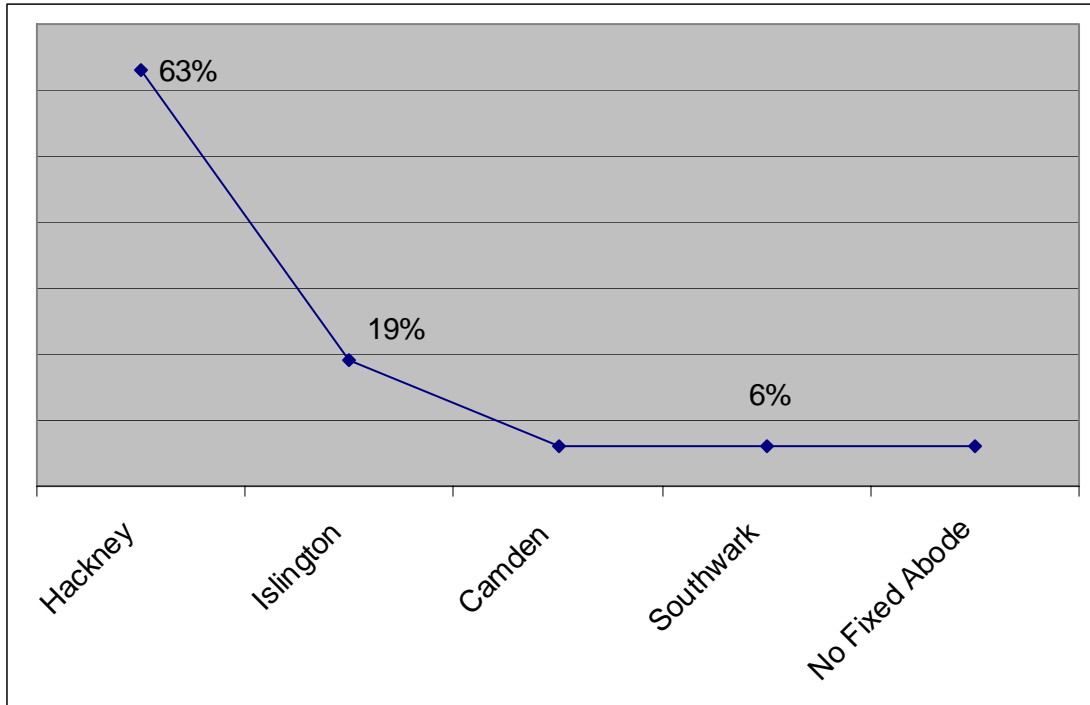
### 8.5 Ethnicity of Persistent Buyers (2005-2006)



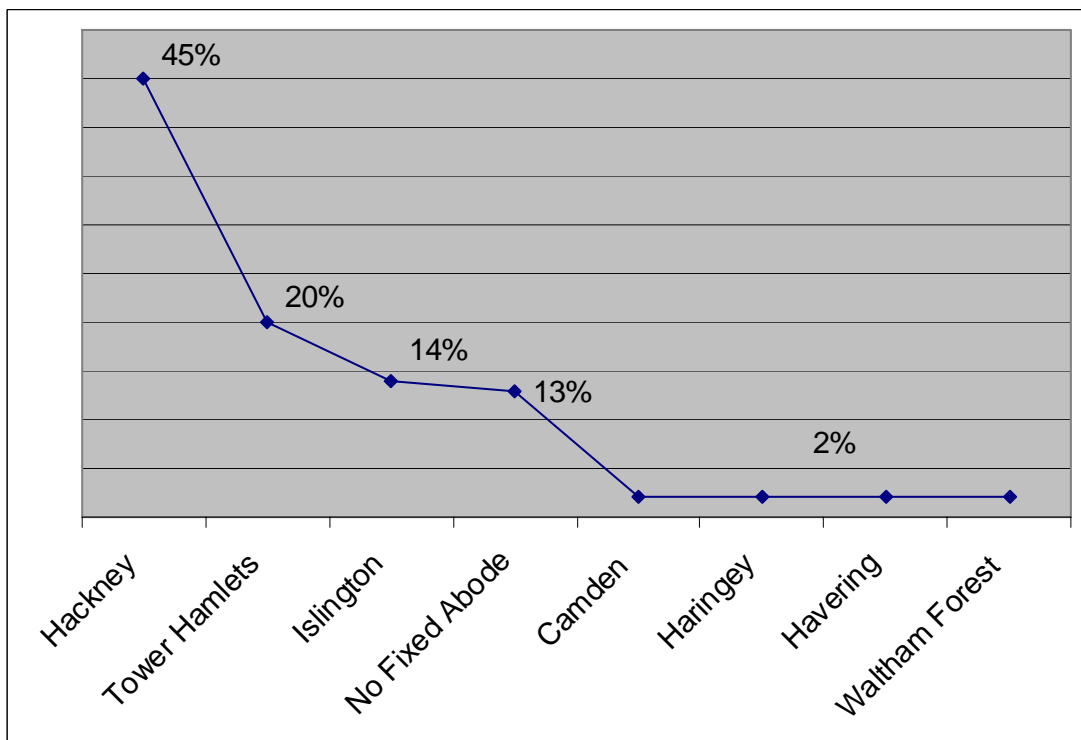


## 9. Residency (Hackney, 2004-2006)

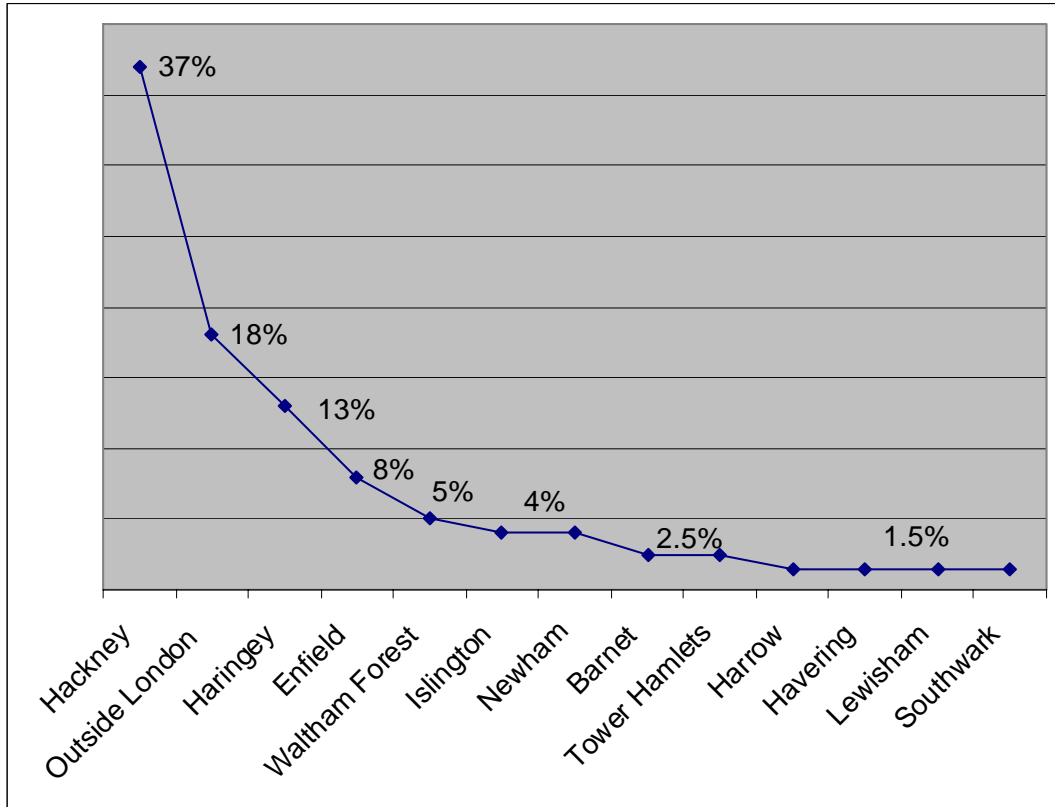
### 9.1 Residential Borough of Women Arrested for Prostitution Offences (2005 to 2006)



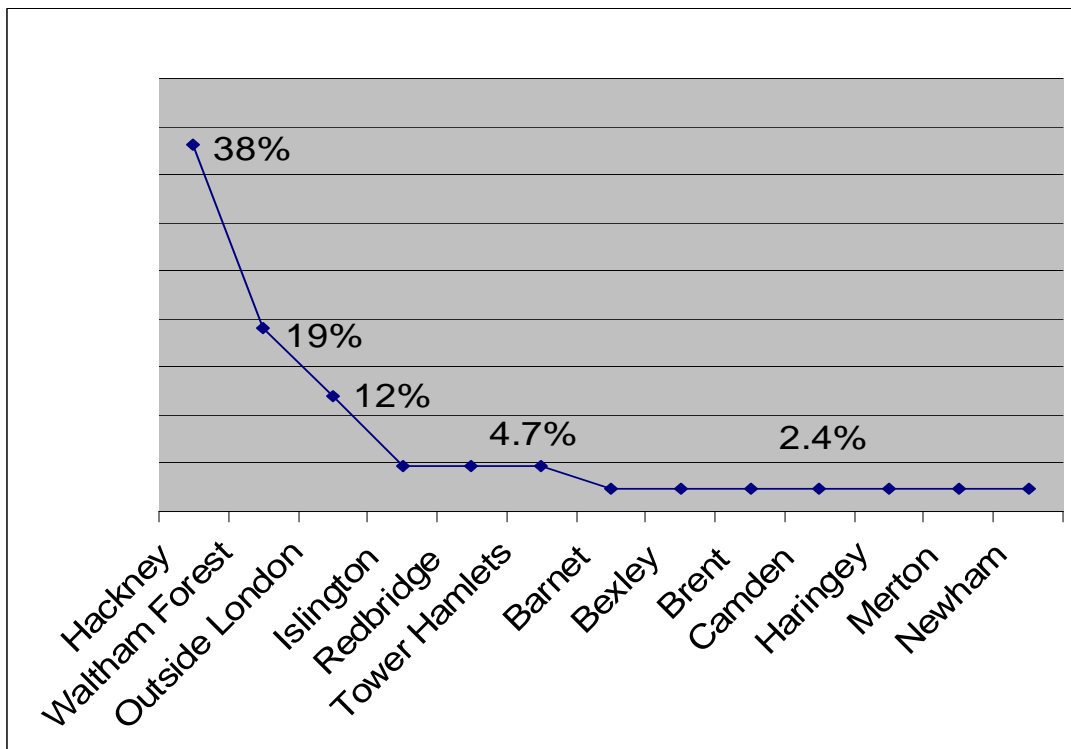
### 9.2 Residential Borough of Women Arrested for Prostitution Offences (2004-2005)



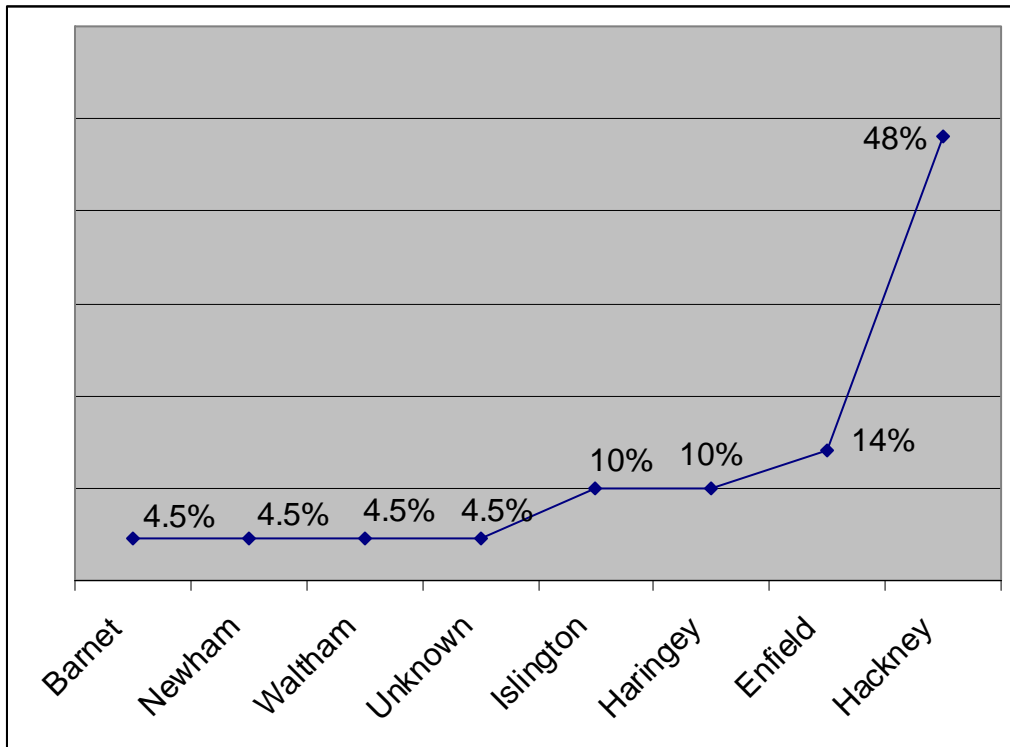
**9.3 Residential Borough of Men Arrested for Kerb Crawling (2005-2006)**



**9.4 Residential Borough of Men Arrested for Kerb Crawling (2004-2005)**



**9.5 Residential Borough of Men Arrested for Persistent Solicitation (2005-2006)**

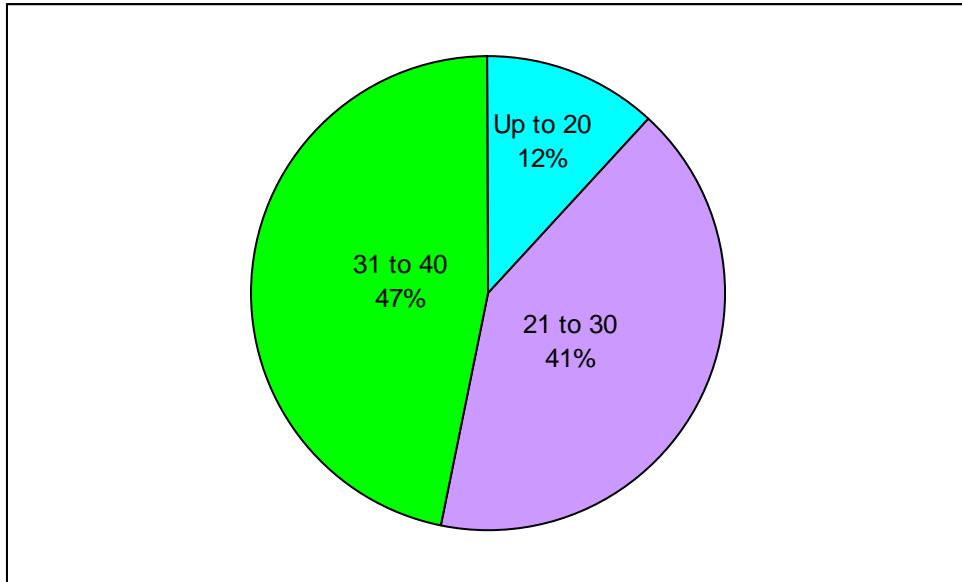


**9.6 Residential Borough of Men Arrested for Persistent Solicitation (2004-2005)**

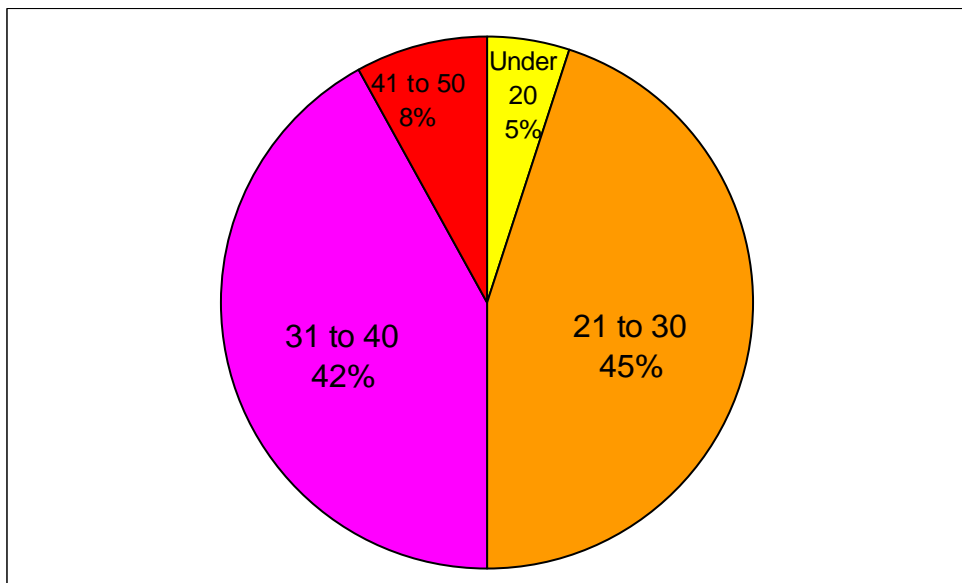
- One man was arrested for persistent soliciting in 2004-2005, who resided in the borough of Southwark.

## 10. Age (Hackney, 2004-2006)

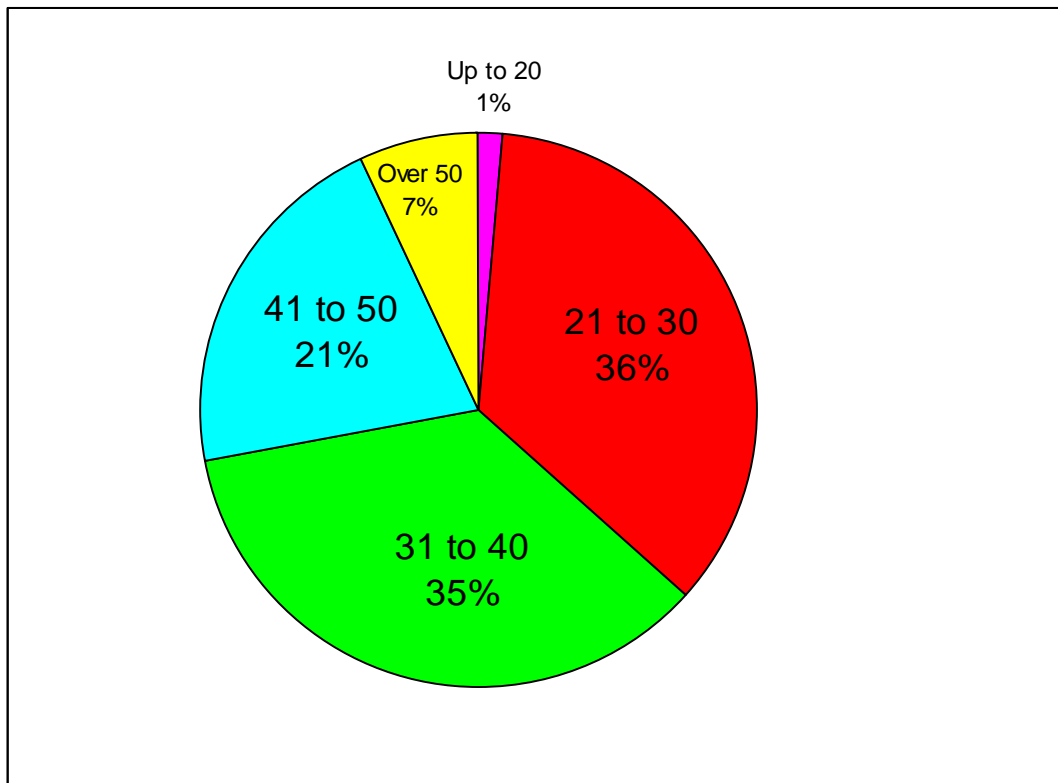
### 10.1 Age of Women Arrested for Prostitution Offences (2005-2006)



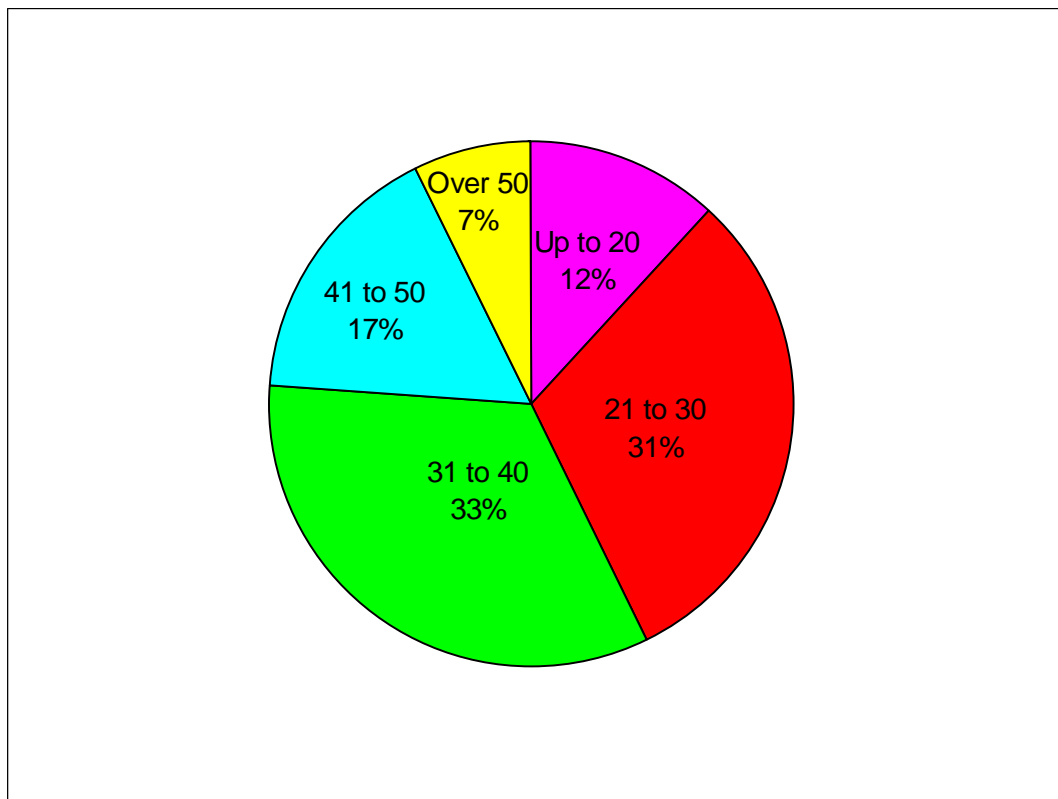
### 10.2 Age of Women Arrested for Prostitution Offences (2004-2005)



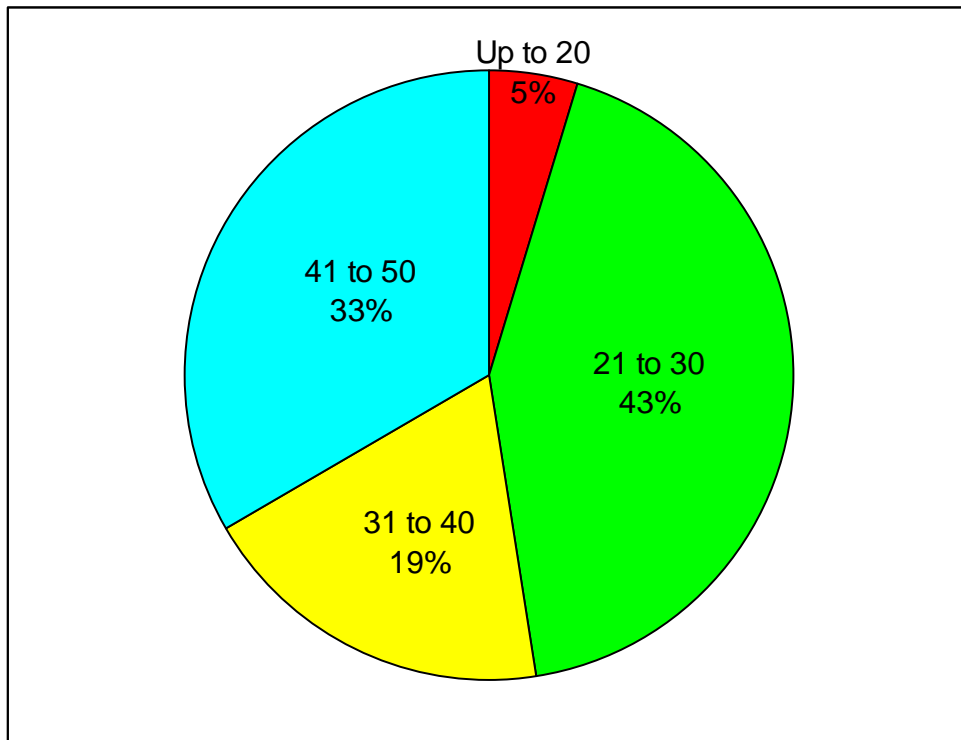
### 10.3 Age of Men Arrested for Kerb Crawling (2005-2006)



### 10.4 Age of Men Arrested for Kerb Crawling (2004-2005)



### 10.5 Age of Men Arrested for Persistent Solicitation (2005-2006)



### 10.6 Age of Men Arrested for Persistent Solicitation (2004-2005)

- One man was arrested for persistent soliciting in 2004-2005, who was aged between 31-40 years old.

## 11. Conclusions and Recommendations

### Conclusions

Although there is evidence that street prostitution is diminishing (as opposed to off-street prostitution – such as private flats and brothels – which is on the increase), there are still several areas in London where it is occurring on a regular basis. Where there is street prostitution, there is abuse of women, and related crime such as drug dealing, street robbery and violence. Evidence provided by a small number of outreach agencies suggests that police routinely ignore street prostitution unless responding to complaints from the public, and that when they do respond, the women are disproportionately targeted compared to the buyers, partly because they are far more visible.

Although street prostitution is an extremely dangerous activity for the women involved, with murder, rape and sexual assault being viewed as ‘occupational hazards’ (Broadfoot, 2005), there is still mistrust of the police by the women, with many choosing not to report assaults against them.

Not enough is being done to tackle demand, either by police or local authorities. Whilst ASBOs are routinely issued to women in street prostitution, so far only three have been issued to men in London for kerb crawling. Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs) which are not legally binding, and are more likely to be issued to men buying or attempting to buy sexual services.

Whilst some kerb crawlers are charged with the offence and appear in court, they are merely fined and warned not to repeat their behaviour. Women, however, are stigmatised and doubly punished by being labelled a “common prostitute” if they have more than one conviction for soliciting.

Although there is much complacency about the existence and prevalence of street prostitution, residents living in and around ‘red light’ areas focus much of their anger and disgust on the women, as opposed to the pimps and buyers.

## Recommendations

- Government-funded public education campaigns focusing on prostitution as abuse of women, and highlighting the role of men in creating the demand, to be developed and implemented in accordance with recommendations in *Paying the Price*;
- Develop comprehensive exit strategies for women wishing to leave prostitution;
- Introduce appropriate penalties for buyers, such as those embodied in the Swedish model which criminalise the buying and attempted buying of sexual services;
- Decriminalise the selling or attempted selling of sexual services;
- Improve policing of street prostitution by re-introducing dedicated teams of police officers to patrol the areas (similar to the former 'vice squads');
- Stop the issuance of ASBOs to women in street prostitution, thereby removing the threat of prison to victims of crime<sup>7</sup>;
- Better prosecution of pimps and other exploiters involved in the street prostitution scene;
- Instant access to drug and alcohol counselling and rehabilitation for women;
- Review the housing needs – both temporary and long-term – of women in prostitution;
- Provide compulsory re-education courses for kerb crawlers run on feminist principles<sup>8</sup>;
- In areas where street prostitution exists, ensure the availability of outreach and drop-in services for women, which should provide health care, harm reduction *and* exiting services;
- Run primary prevention / educational programmes as part of the school curriculum to prevent young people being groomed / coerced into prostitution.

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<sup>7</sup> The National Police Vice Conference, chaired by Dr Tim Brain, ACPO lead on trafficking and prostitution, recognises women in the sex industry as 'victims of a crime'

<sup>8</sup> Which means an understanding of prostitution as violence and abuse of women, and a critique of myths surrounding prostitution such as "it is inevitable", and "men need to buy sex"



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## **Appendix 1**

### **OUTREACH ORGANISATIONS – DATA ACCUMULATION**

The following organisations (which are involved in outreach work to varying degrees) were contacted repeatedly between January 2006 and October 2006.

Addaction  
Ambrose King Centre  
Barnado's Young Women's Project  
Central London Action on Street Health  
Courtyard Clinic  
Docklands Outreach  
Door of Hope  
Drug & Alcohol Service for London  
Ealing Contact & Assessment Team  
Healthy Options Team  
Lifeline  
Mainliners  
Mortimer Market Centre  
New Horizon  
National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty towards Children  
Open Doors  
Praed Street Project  
Prostitute Outreach Workers  
Safe Exit Tower Hamlets  
Sexual Health On Call  
St Mungos  
Streetlink  
Street Matters  
Streetwise Youth  
The Blenheim Project  
The Broadway  
The Nia Project  
The Space KC  
Trust  
U-Turn  
Wandsworth Women's Aid

Only Streetlink in Streatham and Healthy Options in Newham were willing to be accompanied on outreach visits for observational work. No organisations were willing to share data. However, scores of telephone conversations took place, containing anecdotal information concerning street prostitution across London, some of which is contained in this report.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Hackney**

Observations took part on Amhurst Road and Shacklewell Lane, E8, between the hours of 9pm and 12am, in early December, 2006.

Women: Five women selling sex were observed – two on Amhurst Road and three on Shacklewell Lane. One appeared to be black mixed-race, and the others white. The age of the women was unclear, but all appeared to be older than 18 and younger than 30.

Kerb crawlers: Fifteen cars were spotted between the two localities which appeared to be kerb crawling.

Police: One unmarked police car and one squad car were spotted on Amhurst Road. No police presence was noted on Shacklewell Lane.

Neighbourhood/community protest or intervention? None observed.

### **King's Cross**

Observations took part around the station concourse, and on York Way, between the hours of 8pm and 11pm, in late November, 2006.

Women: Fifteen women selling sex were observed in the general vicinity. Two appeared to be black/black mixed race, one Asian, and others white.

Kerb crawlers: Forty cars were spotted in the general area which appeared to be kerb crawling.

Police: One car was stopped by a marked squad car. After a brief conversation, both cars drove away from the area. Two other marked squad cars were spotted in the area.

Neighbourhood/community protest or intervention? None observed.

Additional observations? The women appeared to be doing “hand to mouth” drugs transactions. On a number of occasions the women would appear from the car park area on the back of York Road and approach one of a number of men standing on the corner of Birkenhead Street – a known location for crack cocaine and heroin dealers.

### **Streatham**

Observations took part on Garrads Road, Streatham and Tooting Common, Bedford Hill, Brixton Hill, between 8pm and 10.30pm in late October.

Women: Two women on Brixton Hill, five women on and around Streatham Common and two on Garrads Road. One woman was observed going into a

man's car which was parked in a car park of a sports centre, and leaving after 15 minutes.

Kerb crawlers: Seven in total, in the streets aforementioned, were observed.

Police: No police cars near the area were observed.

Neighbourhood/community protest or intervention? None observed.

## **Newham**

Observations took part, alongside Healthy Options Outreach Team, in the following locations: Forest Gate, Green Street, Romford Road, Commercial Street, Wheler Street, Commercial Road on three consecutive evenings between the hours of 8pm and 10.30pm in May and June, 2006.

Women: Five women on evening one, five women on evening two, and 6 women on evening three were observed in the areas notorious for street prostitution.

Kerb crawlers: One car was spotted.

Police: One police car spotted. Officers were speaking to a small group of women involved in prostitution about a missing woman from the area.

Neighbourhood/community protest or intervention? None observed.

Additional information: There was evidence of one woman being under the control of traffickers. Project workers pointed out a young woman being transferred from one man's car to another, in order to "avoid police detection".