

Availability

The availability of substances must be of concern to DAATs as what is available on the market will impact upon local trends in substance misuse. The Updated National Drug Strategy 2002 aims to tackle the supply of illegal drugs, Class A substances in particular. The government will tackle supply at every opportunity, internationally, nationally, regionally and locally.

This chapter will present a profile of the drug markets across Cambridgeshire, identifying the variations across the different district council areas. On occasion, a countywide view will be given.

The supply of drugs is identified as occurring at three different levels:

- 1) Street Dealing
- 2) Middle Market Dealing
- 3) Customs and Excise

This audit will be concerned with street level dealing, as this is of most relevance to Cambridgeshire. The term street-level dealing refers to open dealing on the street, but also dealing from business or residential premises.

Enforcement is a key element in meeting this particular aim of the strategy. The police and partner agencies use a variety of tools to tackle street dealing, and the consequences of it.

The phenomenon may lead to high levels of **acquisitive crime**, **violence**, **gun crime** and increases in **begging** and **sex markets** in communities.

The DAAT works closely with the police on this element of the National strategy. Therefore, this audit borrows heavily from documents produced by Cambridgeshire Constabulary, for their own strategic planning and monitoring. The police provided all the data regarding drug crime in this chapter.

National Context

It is assumed that crime is very often committed to fund substance misuse. In particular, acquisitive crimes are understood to have intrinsic links with substance misuse, as individuals commit crime to fund drugs habits. The Drug Interventions Programme (DIP) chapter of this audit indicates the scale at which local offenders are committing crimes that are related to substance misuse. For information on the links between substance misuse and crime, please refer to the DIP chapter.

National Crack Strategy

'Tackling Crack Cocaine: A National Plan' was published in December 2002, in response to the growing problem of crack cocaine supply and use in Britain and in recognition of the impact that crack in particular can have on communities.

New powers have been given to police in order to tackle the consequences of crack cocaine markets. Part One of the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003 relates to the closure of premises that are suspected of being used for the production, supply or use of Class A drugs, and associated with the occurrence of disorder or ASB. The powers have already been used in Cambridgeshire on several occasions and house closures and evictions have been executed.

Local Context

All of the information regarding drug markets and police statistics for arrests and seizures have been obtained from Cambridgeshire Constabulary analysts.

For more extensive information, the Drug Market profiles produced bi-annually on behalf of each police division, give an extensive insight into the drug situation in Cambridgeshire, from the police's point of view. Drug Market Profiles are written in order to inform tactical police tasking and co-ordinating, to ensure that drugs and drug related crime are addressed, in line with the National Policing Plan 2004-07. Class A drugs, in particular crack cocaine and heroin, is one of the priority areas within the force and the Divisional Control Strategies.

Two police divisions cover the Cambridgeshire DAAT area. These are Southern Division, serving Cambridge City, South Cambridgeshire and East Cambridgeshire and Central Division, which serves Huntingdonshire and Fenland District Council areas.

(The map in appendix 1 indicates the police divisional and district council boundaries)

The two divisions will be examined separately, and comparisons and correlations drawn out of what is discovered. Where possible, data will be broken down into specific district council areas.

Recorded Drug Crime Reflects Policing Activity Levels.

It is important to recognise that arrests for Class A drug supply are usually made as a result of extensive intelligence gathering and police investigations. Therefore, the amount of time and manpower dedicated to drugs by the police will impact upon the number of crimes recorded. In the same way, substantial seizures of Class A drugs are usually made in conjunction with timely planned operations, not through opportunistic means. Small amounts may be seized upon search in custody or otherwise but the number of warrants executed will have the most significant impact upon seizure figures. Therefore, figures regarding the amount of drug seizures have not been included in this document. It is felt that comparisons with the previous years figures may not be useful to the DAAT. All of this information is available in the Drug Market Profiles produced by the Constabulary though.

The Police also have intelligence that they gather, and this information helps to create a profile of an area and the drug crime occurring within it. The Drug Market Profiles contain this information. The documents consolidate crime figures, intelligence items and recorded incidents.

Recent Drugs Operations

Several high profile, large-scale operations, targeting the supply of crack cocaine across Cambridgeshire took place in 2003/04. These have affected the figures for arrests and seizures, and the amount of money held in the Recovered Assets Fund. This is the name for the monies accrued through illegal activity that can be seized by police. The money can then be spent on police preventative or operational work or multi-agency projects. A crack cocaine specific treatment service was in part funded by the Recovered Asset Fund in 2003.

The impact the operations had can be evaluated and assessed in varying ways. The number of arrests and the sentences given to the offenders are one measure of success, but it is also beneficial to the DAATs understanding of the nature of drug markets to gain anecdotal data from frontline workers, particularly staff at drug and alcohol treatment agencies.

From reports in the aftermath of the drugs operations it appears that many professionals take the view that they had little or no impact on the availability of drugs, and that the police's expectation that users would be left with no supply and would refer themselves to treatment agencies, was not realised. From a police perspective, the operations were successful but it would be naïve to conclude that they have stopped the supply of crack cocaine. It has been reported in evaluations of the operations that new dealers tend to emerge to 'plug the holes' in the supply networks, almost immediately.

The three operations will be discussed in the relevant sections in this audit.

Southern Division

Current Street Prices and Purity of Drugs available in Cambridgeshire

Drug	UK Average Street Price	Local Price
Amphetamine	£9 per gram	£10
Herbal Cannabis	£72 per oz	£50 per oz (£120 if skunk)
Cannabis Resin	£66 per oz	£50
Cocaine	£54 per gram	£50
Crack Cocaine	£18 per rock	£20 per 0.2 gram rock
Heroin	£61 per gram	£50 per gram (£10 for 0.2 grams)
Ecstasy	£5 per dose	£5 per tablet
LSD	£3 per dose	£3 per tablet

The UK Average was obtained from NCIS (National Criminal Intelligence System) in December 2003, and the local price was estimated by one of the Constabulary's Field Intelligence Officers. This applies to the data for Huntingdonshire also.

These prices are considered to be stable. Heroin and cannabis resin appear to be cheaper locally than the UK average. Since April 2002, when the last Drug Market Profile was produced, the most significant changes are the decrease in the prices of heroin, from £74 per gram to £50 per gram and cocaine, from £77 per gram to £50 per gram. Ecstasy has also reduced in street value, from £11 per tablet to £5. The price reductions are believed to be due to a sustained increase in availability.

That prices are stable and closely match national prices, suggests that the dealers operating in Cambridgeshire have strong links with networks operating in other parts of the UK, and they understand the market on a national scale.

Purity

The average purity of crack cocaine and heroin in Cambridgeshire can be measured by the Forensic science service, from all seizures in given time periods and then compared with the average purity across the Eastern region.

It appears that the purity of crack in both the Eastern region and Cambridgeshire has decreased slightly from October-Dec 2003 and Jan-Mar 2004. The purity of heroin has increased slightly across the Eastern region but decreased slightly in Cambridgeshire. These purity levels relate to the whole county.

However, as the variations between the time periods are slight, they are not seen to be a significant indication of changes in availability of the substances across Cambridgeshire. The purity of heroin varies between 10-50% and crack cocaine, between 40-90%. Therefore, it is not surprising that purity levels are inconsistent over time.

(Southern Division Drug Market Profile, June 2004, p.4-5).

Drug Crime

The drug crime data has been extracted from the force's recording system and the table below shows all drug offences committed between 1s January 2004 and the 31st May 2004.

Offence Type	Number of Crimes Recorded
Possession of Cannabis	212
Production/ Cultivation of Cannabis	21
Supply of Cannabis	14
Possession with intent to supply Heroin	12
Possession of Cocaine	12
Possession of MDMA	10
Possession with intent to supply Cannabis	9
Possession with intent to supply MDMA	8
Possession of Amphetamine	7
Possession of Heroin	4
Possession with intent to supply other Class A	3
Possession of Steroids	3
Possession of Class C other	2
Possession with intent to supply crack	1
Possession of Class B other	1
Total	319

Possession of cannabis was the most prevalent crime. The police feel this may be due to a change in the attitudes of users and dealers, with the changes in the status of Cannabis, as a Class C drug now.

(Southern Division Drug Market Profile, p 19)

National Statistics are pointing towards a downward trend in the number of arrests for this offence, due to the reclassification of cannabis. The Home Office announced a decrease of 33% in the number of people arrested for possession of cannabis, since the reclassification in January 2004. This announcement was made by Home Office Drugs Minister, Caroline Flint, on 29th July 2004.

The British Crime survey also shows reductions in the number of people claiming to have used cannabis (British Crime survey, 2003).

Issues Identified in Southern Division

- The crack cocaine market appears to be very well organised and run as a business, as opposed to being chaotic and involving users.
- Dealers often offer 'special offers' of free or reduced price crack cocaine with the purchase of heroin.
- This demonstrates that dealers may be selling both substances and that there is likely to be a great amount of poly-drug use amongst their customers. This supports qualitative information presented in the treatment chapter of this audit, and supported by drug workers at local treatment agencies.
- Police information regarding the packaging of substances also provides evidence that simultaneous dealing in heroin and crack is occurring. Intelligence across the county states that drug dealers wrap crack in plastic and heat-seal it, so that their runners can transport it safely in their mouths. Recently, it has been found that heroin has been packaged in the same way by suppliers. This may indicate a crossover in the networks of dealers.

(Source, Central Drug Market Profile, June 2004, p. 5).

Southern Division now have a dedicated thematic drug team. This is likely to increase the number of arrests; seizures and the level of knowledge the police have about existing markets and dealers.

Operation Ortolan/ Eagle

These were both operations that targeted crack cocaine suppliers in Cambridge City. Operation Ortolan was undertaken in 2002 and was an intelligence led operation, designed to target known crack dealers on a rolling basis. It involved a continual programme of raids on dealers' addresses and subsequent arrests.

The main outcomes of Ortolan were that eleven dwellings were raided, 39 people were arrested for supply or possession of crack cocaine and approximately £100,000 worth of drugs were seized.

Operation Eagle was undertaken in 2003 and was a covert operation, which employed under cover officers to act as test purchasers. Operation Eagle involved intelligence gathering that took place over a two-month period. Officers purchased drugs from street dealers in order to gather evidence to arrest people. The arrest phase lasted for three days in June 2003. Approximately 40 individuals were arrested. DNA from saliva traces found on cling film wraps that drugs were sold in was often the means by which individuals were identified and arrested.

The assets recovered during the operation were used to fund a crack cocaine acupuncture service at The Bridge in Cambridge City, details of which can be found in the Treatment chapter.

The markets operating in different parts of Southern Division have similarities and differences, but are not one and the same.

Cambridge City

The geographical location of Cambridge and the good transport infrastructure means that the city is within close travelling distance to London and the West Midlands. This makes the transportation of drugs into the city in particular, very easy. City centres tend to be affected, as dealers prefer to operate in areas of high population density.

Intelligence suggests that there are several networks associated with the supply of drugs in Cambridge. It is thought that they all originate from London.

The dealers are not thought to be users themselves.

The green areas of the city are particularly attractive to dealers and users, as they are not usually covered by CCTV.

The city centre sectors accounted for 84% of all 319 drug crimes recorded between 1/1/04 and 31/5/04. 35% of these offences related to searches at Parkside Polcie Station, therefore, the drugs could have originated from anywhere within the police Division.

Ely

The geographical location of Ely and the good transport infrastructure means that the city is within close travelling distance to London and the West Midlands. This makes the transportation of drugs into the city in particular, very easy.

There is believed to be a collection of local user/dealers in Ely who work together.

There is less crack cocaine available in Ely than in Cambridge, but potentially, the dealers operating in Cambridge are beginning to travel to Ely too.

According to police figures; the number of recorded drug crimes in Southern Division between 1/1/04 and 31/5/04 was 319. Of these, 11 occurred within East Cambridgeshire. The police do not have any information regarding crack cocaine or heroin supply in any of the rural sectors within East Cambridgeshire.

South Cambridgeshire

Sawston is believed to have its own network of dealers selling cocaine, who have links to Cambridge but also to other areas.

According to police figures; the number of recorded drug crimes in Southern Division between 1/1/04 and 31/5/04 was 319. Of these, 39 occurred within South Cambridgeshire.

The police do not have any information regarding crack cocaine or heroin supply in any of the rural sectors within South Cambridgeshire.

Prostitution and Drug Use

The last police Strategic Assessment highlighted strong association between crack and prostitution, and the Communities chapter of this audit makes reference to the local situation.

According to the police, Histon Road, Mitchams Corner, Chesterton Road and Victoria Road are 'hotspot' areas for prostitution. The suspects involved in this activity are believed to be involved in crack use. One of the CBMs for the Arbury area replied to the question, *'What are your specific areas of concern regarding substance misuse on your beat?'* with the following statement about drug using and supply and its connections with prostitution. She spoke of a few addresses in particular,

"A lot of comings and goings at all times of day and night...Also prostitution is a problem in Histon Road. Most of the girls involved are drug addicts - vehicles seen at...two addresses (and) there are a lot of comings and goings.."

CBM, North Sector, Southern Division, 2004.

Central Division

Central Division will be looked at in two sections, according to District Council area.

The drug networks in Central Division are generally geographically based. There tends to be very little crossover between the Fenland and Huntingdonshire ends of the division.

Key Features of Drug Markets

Huntingdonshire

- There is an emerging crack network in Huntingdon, that is business driven, supply led, organised and very controlled. This is very different from previous networks that have been seen within Central Division. Generally one dealer controls the network and they have runners operating on their behalf.
- In the 2002 Drug Market Profile, there was no mention of Jamaican drug dealers travelling from the London area, which is the pattern that is being observed in 2004. This shows how fluid drug markets are and how drug intelligence needs to be monitored for changes and new targets.

- The cocaine and heroin networks that are operating in the area are much more chaotic, with a small group of middle level dealer/ users operating in Huntingdon and supplying a choice of drugs in response to demand.
- The majority of crack cocaine dealing within Central Division occurs in Huntingdon, with a focus around the Oxmoor area.
- In general, the drug market in Huntingdonshire appears to be closed, with dealing from residential addresses or a method of meetings.
- It is believed that there is a potential link between robbery and crack cocaine and heroin use in Huntingdonshire, as well as intelligence that links Class A drug use with acquisitive crime.
- Dealers often offer 'special offers' of free or reduced price crack cocaine with the purchase of heroin.
- This demonstrates that dealers may be selling both substances and that there is likely to be a great amount of poly-drug use amongst their customers. This supports qualitative information presented in the treatment chapter of this audit, and is supported by drug workers at local treatment agencies.
- Police information regarding the packaging of substances also provides evidence that simultaneous dealing in heroin and crack is occurring. Intelligence across the county states that drug dealers wrap crack in plastic and heat-seal it, so that their runners can transport it safely in their mouths. Recently, it has been found that heroin has been packaged in the same way by suppliers. This may indicate a crossover in the networks of dealers.
- Besides crack and heroin, cannabis dealing is prominent in Huntingdonshire. The majority of offences involve cannabis, which is to be expected, despite the reclassification of the substance and the focus from Central Government on Class A drugs.

(Central Drug Market Profile, June 2004, p. 5).

Operation Laker

This operation was executed on the Oxmoor Estate, Huntingdon, by Central Division police. It was funded by Communities Against Drugs (CAD) money, which is given to DAATs and CDRPs by Central Government. To briefly summarise, the operation occurred between May and July 2003. Undercover police officers were deployed as test purchasers. May was the file preparation phase, where any intelligence on suspects was collated. In May and June, arrests were made and in July the court appearances took place. In 30 days of going out and trying to buy drugs, the officers made 41 'scores'. In total, the police spent £1350 on drugs. £800 bought 40 rocks of crack cocaine, at £20 each, at 38%-100% purity. £490 bought 33 wraps of heroin, at 15%-30% purity. £60 bought 2 wraps of cocaine at 74%-80% purity.

The results of the operation were that 23 people were arrested, 21 pleaded guilty and all were sentenced to between 4.5-7 years in prison, for supplying Class A drugs or allowing premises to be used for the production and supply of Class A drugs.

The police interpret the outcomes as successful, but also readily acknowledge that drug supply has not ceased in the area. The quotes below were taken from the CBM survey conducted in June 2004, almost a year after the operation.

"There are a number of heroin addicts who regularly steal to fund their habit. These addicts are now also using 'crack cocaine' supplied by organised dealers who travel through to Huntingdon from London"

CBM, Oxmoor, 2004

"a recent influx of yardie' type dealers from London have brought 'crack' to the Oxmoor and this is now being noticed by friends/families of those using. It is far more 'addictive'."

"The new arrivals 'yardies' from London are harder to target by Police as they are experienced and only carry one deal at a time in their mouths, even if caught with drugs the amount is small. We need more test purchase/undercover operations to secure convictions."

CBM, Oxmoor, 2004

Price and Purity of Drugs in Huntingdonshire

Drug	UK Average Street Price	Local Price
Amphetamine	£9 per gram	£10 per gram
Herbal Cannabis	£72 per oz	£50 per oz
Crack Cocaine	£18 per rock	£20 per 0.2 gram rock
Cocaine		£50 per gram
Heroin	£61 per gram	£50-60 per gram
Ecstasy	£5 per dose	£5 per dose

The table above indicates that current drug prices appear to fall in line with national averages but that cannabis and heroin do appear to be a bit cheaper in Central Division than the national average.

Purity

The average purity of crack cocaine and heroin in Cambridgeshire can be measured by the Forensic Science Service, from all seizures in given time periods and then compared with the average purity across the Eastern region.

It appears that the purity of crack in both the Eastern region and Cambridgeshire has decreased slightly from October-Dec 2003 and Jan-Mar 2004. The purity of heroin has increased slightly across the Eastern region but decreased slightly in Cambridgeshire. These purity levels relate to the whole county.

However, as the variations between the time periods are slight, they are not seen to be a significant indication of changes in availability of the substances across Cambridgeshire. The purity of heroin varies between 10-50% and crack cocaine, between 40-90%. Therefore, it is not surprising that purity levels are inconsistent over time.

(Southern Division Drug Market Profile, June 2004, p.4-5).

Drug Related Crime

Huntingdon, along with Wisbech, has the highest number of drug related incidents reported to the police. Huntingdon town centre beat seems to suffer the most. This is likely to be due to a recording practice, and the exact location of offences will be unrecorded. It may also be linked to night-time disorder, which is more commonly reported as occurring in urban centres.

Qualitative Research Findings

The CBM survey 2004 had some interesting findings relating to substance misuse and the impact on communities the officers work in. References were made to fear of crime intimidation, and ASB. These findings can be found in the Communities chapter of this audit.

There were reports of 15-18 year olds congregating and smoking cannabis in public areas such as parks. This behaviour may result in criminal damage to those areas and fear in the community, through intimidation.

Respondents to the survey also mentioned dealing from specific addresses that causes ASB, with people visiting the addresses at all times throughout day and night in order to purchase or use drugs.

Other Consultation Findings Regarding Availability

Please see the other chapters of the audit for general opinions on the types of drugs that are being used. These relate, either directly or indirectly to the availability of substances in each area. They are expressions of the situation, as witnessed by those working on the 'frontline', of drug use that is occurring.

Fenland

There were 46 drug offences recorded in Fenland between 1/1/04 and 31/5/04. 31 of these were in Wisbech sector. Offences mostly involved cannabis, but heroin and cocaine related offences occurred in significant numbers. There is no mention of a crack cocaine market in Fenland in the Drug Market Profile. This does not mean that there is not one in existence, but it may be that little is understood about it, or that police resources have been concentrated in Huntingdonshire and not Fenland when it comes to crack cocaine targeted operations and intelligence gathering.

The drug market appears to be closed, with drugs sold from residential addresses, after arrangements have been made over the telephone. There are some reports of dealing from public houses though. Local officers report that heroin and cocaine are often packaged in paper or tin foil, not in the same manner as the drugs are packaged in Southern Division or Huntingdonshire.

There are some suggestions, via intelligence, that there may be an issue of drug related illegal immigration in Fenland

Op Morpheus

This operation took place in Fenland. It culminated in a day of arrests in April 2004. It took place in the Wisbech area of Cambridgeshire as part of an investigation into drugs trafficking and serious and organised crime. 300 police officers executed 32 search warrants and arrested 15 individuals.

The operation ran for two years. Intensive observation and intelligence gathering led to the arrests of several members of the same family. Large quantities of cocaine and cannabis were seized. It is known that drugs were dealt from their home address. It is perceived that the arrests will have a significant impact upon the availability of these substances in Wisbech, as those involved played a pivotal role in the local drug market.

The gap is likely to be filled quickly however, as has been seen in other areas of the county, with police sources and drug workers reporting that drug markets have been up and running again shortly after large seizures and arrests on a large scale.

Price and Purity of Drugs in Fenland

Drug	UK Average Street Price	Local Price
Herbal Cannabis	£72 per oz	£50 per oz
Cocaine	£54 per gram	£50 per gram
Crack Cocaine	£18 per rock	£20 per 0.2 gram rock
Heroin	£61 per gram	£50-£60 per gram
Ecstasy	£5 per dose	£5 per tablet

The table above indicates that the prices of most drugs appear to be in line with the prices around the rest of the UK. However, cannabis and heroin in particular are currently cheaper in the Fenland area than the national average price. This would suggest that these substances are easily available.

Purity

The average purity of crack cocaine and heroin in Cambridgeshire can be measured by the Forensic Science Service, from all seizures in given time periods and then compared with the average purity across the Eastern region.

Purity is usually linked to availability and as availability increases, purity will also increase, due to increased competition amongst dealers.

It appears that the purity of crack in both the Eastern region and Cambridgeshire has decreased slightly from October-Dec 2003 and Jan-Mar 2004. The purity of heroin has increased slightly across the Eastern region but decreased slightly in Cambridgeshire. These purity levels relate to the whole county.

However, as the variations between the time periods are slight, they are not seen to be a significant indication of changes in availability of the substances across Cambridgeshire. The purity of heroin varies between 10-50% and crack cocaine, between 40-90%. Therefore, it is not surprising that purity levels are inconsistent over time.

(Southern Division Drug Market Profile, June 2004, p. 4-5)

Emerging Issues from Data

The Treatment Chapter of the audit highlighted that there is a higher percentage of people in treatment for amphetamine misuse in Fenland than in any other district council area. This is not supported by the Central Division Drug Market Profile, as there appears to be no local intelligence regarding the availability, purity or price of amphetamines in the Fenland area.

Qualitative Research Findings

The CBM Survey 2004 identified ASB, due to young people congregating in public play parks and dealing occurring at residential addresses, as two potential availability issues that are impacting upon the community in Fenland.

Please refer to the Communities and Young People Chapters of this audit for further information from qualitative research findings.

Countywide

Media Coverage/ Public Perception of Policing of Class A drugs

An important element of the drugs operations that have taken place across Cambridgeshire is the high profile media coverage they generated. In an evaluation of Operation Ortolan and Operation Eagle, the reasons for this are summarised. The media coverage was planned in advance to increase the perceived risk of detection amongst those dealing in crack cocaine in Cambridgeshire, as well as to reassure the public that police action was being taken. Analysis of newspaper coverage of these operations in The Cambridge Evening News show that articles were printed that made reference to them on 27 separate days between July 2002 and November 2003. There is no way of judging the effects that this coverage may have had on awareness raising for drug dealers or the public, but we can see that it received a substantial amount of reporting.

Public Perception

Public Perception of substance misuse is important to the police and other agencies, and is something that many other sections of this audit refer to. With regard to policing of drugs, the public want to feel that the police are taking the problems that are important to them seriously. In some areas of Cambridgeshire, the problems they experience with regard to drug supply may be on a different level and scale to those experienced in another area, but they will provoke the same fear and demand for a response from the police.

These comments were made by CBMs in their responses to the 2004 survey

"(There is) fear in community"

CBM, Eaton Ford/Eaton Socon, Huntingdonshire.

"Fen Drayton particularly is very concerned as it is a small quiet village so the problem appears to be a lot worse than it is"

CBM, Swavesey, South Cambridgeshire

"The Inspector here tried to adopt a policy of 'warrant a week', which, while it was good, it was difficult to quantify whether it was having the desired effect. As one was knocked out, so another would appear to take its place."

CBM, Ely, East Cambridgeshire

"High impact warrants in full view of local communities after acting on their information is sure to bring more confidence in the police."

"More police led drug operations in the rural area rather than the city could have a big impact on my beat."

CBM, Sawston, South Cambridgeshire

Anti-Social Behaviour Related to Crack Houses

It is nationally recognised that crack cocaine dealing has tendencies to lead to problems with ASB, as premises are used for supplying the drug from. Locally, there have been situations where dealers have entered the county and preyed on vulnerable people, in order to use their homes to conduct their business from. There have also been instances of the registered tenants of properties being the individuals causing the ASB and doing the dealing themselves. (Please see Drug Market Profiles for further information).

Section One of the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003 enables the Closure of Premises used in connection with the production, supply or use of Class A drugs and associated with the occurrence of disorder or serious nuisance. National guidelines and recent guidance produced by Cambridgeshire Constabulary state that all relevant agencies should be consulted before a closure takes place. Such agencies include the district council, social services, housing providers, arrest referral and education. This work can be assisted by the DAAT Co-ordinator to ensure all relevant agencies have been contacted.

Two such closures have taken place since the powers were introduced in April 2004. These took place in March and in Cambridge City and in both cases there has been a noticeable reduction in Anti Social Behaviour for the community.

Conclusion

There are significant similarities and differences between the drug markets in the District Council areas. To summarise:

- Southern Division has clear crack cocaine markets operating in Cambridge City and Ely. These are the two areas where most of the problems are centred. The dealers are mostly not local and are not drug users themselves. Good transport infrastructures may contribute to other factors that make Cambridge and Ely attractive places for dealers to target. The market is closed and well organised.
- In Central Division Huntingdon has an emerging crack cocaine market that is also closed, operating from residential addresses and with deals usually being made over the telephone, and a meeting place arranged.
- The heroin markets appear to be more chaotic in all locations
- Crack cocaine and heroin are being sold by the same dealers in some cases
- The purity of heroin and crack cocaine are high in Cambridgeshire, with heroin purity having increased slightly recently, whilst the purity of crack cocaine has decreased slightly.
- Fenland differs in that the police do not report an established crack cocaine market as being in existence, to their knowledge.
- The heroin and cocaine that is sold in Fenland is not wrapped in the same manner as the drugs in Huntingdonshire or Southern Division. This points to their being clearly distinct suppliers and no crossover into Fenland by Jamaican dealers known to be operating in the other areas.
- The issue of drug related immigration was highlighted as significant to Fenland. Work will be progressed in this area in future.

Issue: Drug Markets must be constantly disrupted

- At present action to tackle drug dealers is dependant upon resources available. Often giving the market time to recover and grow before it is disrupted again.
- To combat supply effectively requires consistent police resources.

Recommendation: Resources are provided to enable the police to tackle Class A Drug Supply

- Tackling the supply of Class A drugs is seen as a priority by the police and partner agencies
- Relevant funding streams support action to tackle the supply of Class A Drugs, including Basic Command Unit Funding and CDRP Building Safer Communities Funding.

Issue: Multi Agency Involvement where appropriate

- A number of agencies and individuals can contribute to efforts to tackle drug supply, however many are unaware of the contribution they could make
- Agencies are available to assist with the after effects of significant drug operations, however, these agencies need to be appropriately involved throughout the operation.

Recommendation: All relevant agencies are involved as appropriate

- Links established between the police and other relevant agencies to ensure appropriate multi agency input where required.