

THE HIT PARADE: A DECADE OF DRUG REVELATIONS

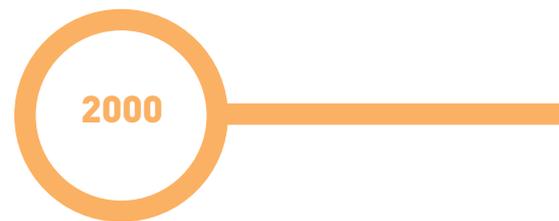
Flicking through 10 years of news stories in *Druglink* magazine, it's easy to see why the media, politicians and the public at large find illegal drugs such an intriguing subject. It is a world, over the last decade, that has encompassed everything from sniffer dogs patrolling school corridors, underground cannabis farms, Portuguese speedballers, pills smuggled into jail in Kinder Eggs, a Met detective with a £500 a week crack and heroin habit and a powder from China masquerading as plant fertiliser which goes by the name 'meow meow'.

The decade kicked off with two stories that would have far-reaching effects on the drugs field. The jailing in 2000 of Ruth Wyner and John Brock for a total of nine years for 'allowing' drug dealing at their Cambridge homeless drop-in centre sent shockwaves through the sector. It sent out a message to every frontline service that if they failed to spot and report what is, by its very nature, a sleight-of-hand and everyday activity among the street homeless population, staff could end up behind bars.

The next year saw the birth of New Labour's 'big idea' to tackle the drugs problem head on. The National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse, set up to act as a quality control organisation for drug treatment services in England, oversaw a substantial increase in the budget for drug treatment. The endgame, right at the top of Tony Blair's personal agenda, was to break the link between drugs and crime.

Meanwhile in foreign lands, Afghan farmers were being offered the chance of getting small amounts of cash in return for ditching their livelihood: growing poppies. But as with a wealth of attempts throughout the 2000s – including the offer of growing saffron and legal opium for purely medical purposes – it was doomed to failure. Wrenching away such an integral element of the peasant economy is maybe on a par with demanding that the western economies make do without the internet. Over in Thailand, the drug trade was less acceptable to the regional authorities, who provoked an international outcry when prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra (who later had a stint as owner of Manchester City FC when he was on the run from his own country) oversaw the extra-judicial killing of 2,200 drug users and dealers by the country's security forces.

Early in the decade there were indications that some UK schools favoured the use of sniffer dogs to nose around children seeking evidence of drug use. But it was an exclusive *Druglink* investigation in 2004 – reported on the front page of the *Times* – which revealed that at least 100 state schools were letting the dogs in. Critics deemed the strategy an infringement of children's rights and (from evidence in the USA and Australia) an entirely ineffective way of keeping kids off drugs. Fortunately, a move in 2006 to introduce drug testing more widely in schools, backed by Tony



Blair, the *News of the World* and some ministers, stalled due to lack of interest and funding.

Druglink, has often reported on the efforts of the enforcement agencies to combat drug dealing and trafficking. Unusually however, we also reported the story of a female detective from the Metropolitan Police who was juggling her career with a £500-a-week crack and heroin habit. In this case it was heartening to report that, she was offered support and counselling – an illustration that some police forces are prepared to deal with addiction issues within the ranks in fair and sensible fashion.

While the national media was seemingly obsessed with the idea that the UK was about to be deluged with an epidemic of crystal meth, the drug trade was going through a dramatic change right under our noses. Over the summer

JANUARY 2000

Hostel workers convicted

'Cambridge Two' Ruth Wyner and John Brock found guilty of 'allowing' drug dealing at their homeless project

news
Hostel workers convicted

A guilty verdict on two hostel workers has serious implications for all those drug services... Ruth Wyner and John Brock of the homelessness charity for the homeless, in Cambridge, were charged under section 44 of the Misuse of Drugs Act... The verdict has many implications for drug workers all over the country...

Barry on the wrong track for Aussies

MAY 2000

New agency for a new era

New organisation DrugScope spells out its aim to further knowledge around what works in drug policy

JULY 2000

NTA proposed by Straw

The Home Secretary announces a new national treatment agency to raise standards

of 2006, Operation Keymer exposed the extent to which cannabis was being grown in commercial quantities by criminal gangs. Cannabis farms were being uncovered everywhere from rented suburban homes to underground caverns in the middle of the Cumbrian countryside. Although drug production was not unknown in the UK (especially LSD in the 1970s) – this was production on the grand scale.

The rapidly maturing market for cocaine in the UK regularly featured on Druglink pages, edged out only very recently with another unexpected phenomenon, the expansion of the drug market onto the internet – spearheaded by mephedrone.

MAY 2001

Upward drift of snow

A flurry of surveys confirm cocaine is continuing its inwards march from the margins of the drug scene

2001

2002

2003

MAY 2002

Plans to stem Afghan heroin failing

An international plan to offer poppy farmers money to stop them growing opium proves unworkable

The drug world offers a fascinating and forever shifting panorama which can often seem remote from the lives of 'ordinary people'. But as our 2009 MORI survey showed, it's closer to home than many would think. The poll found that one in five people in this country – around 10 million – has had a close experience of addiction to illegal drugs.

One thing is certain, the world of drugs is never static, but whatever is coming round the corner, you can be sure that you'll be able to read about – and quite possibly read about it first – in Druglink.

JULY 2003

Worldwide protest at Thai crackdown

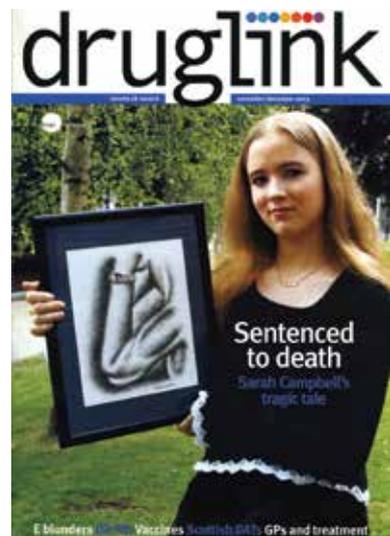
Thai government shamed for killing 2,200 in drug war



NOVEMBER 2003

Sentenced to death

DrugScope launches its Using Women campaign after a series of deaths of vulnerable young women, including drug user Sarah Campbell, in prison



JANUARY 2004

Coke busts fail to dent price

Unpublished Home Office report admits drug busts have little impact on prices

MARCH 2004

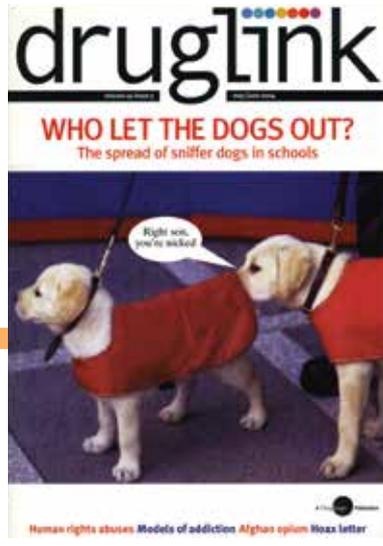
GMC investigates complaints against Stapleford Centre

Seven doctors are investigated over allegations they over-supplied heroin users with methadone

MAY 2004

Who let the dogs out

A Druglink investigation reveals at least 100 schools are using sniffer dogs to search their pupils for drugs



JANUARY 2005

Ukraine faces drug fuelled HIV crisis

UNAIDS reveal nearly 80 per cent of HIV cases in Ukraine are caused by injecting drugs

2004

Goa deaths buried in the sand

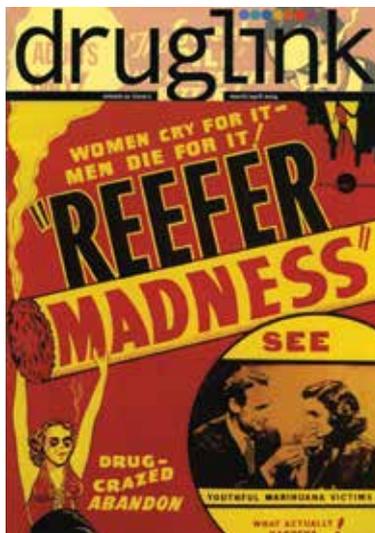
Authorities fail to issue warning after 11 tourists in six weeks die of drug overdoses in the Indian holiday spot

Fungal frenzy fuels summer of psychedelia

Mixmag magazine reveals a sharp rises in psychedelic drugs such as magic mushrooms

Killer cannabis: the return of reefer madness (cover)

Media hype over the cannabis-violence link is not backed by the evidence, a Druglink investigation finds



2005

Cocaine as currency

The part of Colombia where groceries and sexual health checks are paid for with cocaine



JULY 2004

Recreational heroin use 'a reality'

JRF study finds cohort of non-problematic heroin users

Referral shortage shuts children's rehab beds

Two kid's drug rehab units forced to shut as referrals dry up

SEPTEMBER 2004

Cop on the rocks

Exclusive interview with a former Met detective with a £500 a week crack and heroin habit



SEPTEMBER 2005

K is for ketamine

The Druglink Street Drug Trends survey finds ketamine use is one the rise

JULY 2006

Injecting rooms rejected

Home Office rejects out of hand a recommendation by independent working group

SEPTEMBER 2006

Alarm over rise in speedball use

Surveys reveal an increase in mixed heroin-crack injecting

2006

2007

Image injection

The Druglink Street Drug Trends survey finds a rise in steroid injecting by young men

news analysis



Image injection

Steroids, speedballing and £30 bags of heroin are on the rise, while LSD and crystal meth are off the radar. With a special focus on growing steroid use among young men, Max Daly takes a look at the results of this year's UK-wide drug price survey

EXCLUSIVE

Why did the Home Office "reluctantly" pay out £750,000 to 197 inmates who claimed they had been forced to go 'cold turkey' while in British prisons? Max Daly on the inside story behind a case which left the British media dumbfounded.

Turkey shoot

Legal advice given to Prison Minister Gerry Sandiford and seen by Druglink reveals it was the Prison Service's "appalling" record of clinical negligence in dealing with drug-dependent inmates that left the government at a loss as to what to do next.



The advice outlined how prisoners were left to detoxify away from healthcare units and in some cases that in cold withdrawal, caused in their own words.

There was inadequate assessment of incoming prisoners and little attempt was made to help them with their drug history.

and medical opinion that the court will see what actually happened in each of these cases rather than what ought to have happened, and the Home Office will lose.

"There is clear clinical negligence and I recommended that these small scale claims are settled as soon as possible in order to minimise costs and publicity."

But despite the decision by the Home Office to write out of court, the test case involving six current and former prisoners caused massive publicity, with tabloid headlines such as 'They Hey We're the Junkies', then behind the scenes the jokers get to drug, transport...

JULY 2007

Crystal myth

Druglink investigation finds the crystal meth 'epidemic' is figment of the media's fevered imagination

EXCLUSIVE

The epidemic we are told is spreading on the edge of a crystal meth epidemic. But the reality couldn't be more different. Max Daly investigates the truth behind Britain's 'legendary' drug.

Crystal myth

Several individuals have used it (British cocaine) and this is the general opinion of the majority of those interviewed. The most common response to the question of whether there was an increase in the use of crystal meth was no. In fact, the majority of those interviewed said that the use of crystal meth had decreased since the early 2000s. This is in line with the findings of the Druglink Street Drug Trends survey, which found that the use of crystal meth had decreased since 2006.

It is often said that the use of crystal meth has increased since the early 2000s. However, this is not the case. In fact, the use of crystal meth has decreased since the early 2000s. This is in line with the findings of the Druglink Street Drug Trends survey, which found that the use of crystal meth had decreased since 2006.



JANUARY 2007

Turkey shoot

Legal advice leaked to Druglink reveals Prison Service's "appalling" record of clinical negligence that prompted £750,000 pay out to 'cold turkey' inmates

One drop too many

A string of GBL and GHB-led hospital admissions and a death sends a clear warning to south London's gay clubbing scene

MARCH 2007

Plant warfare

Druglink investigation reveals for the first time the prolific nature of Britain's cannabis cultivation industry



Plant warfare

Police are stepping down cannabis cultivation in the UK. A bid to ban the use of cannabis in the UK. Max Daly investigates the growing cannabis industry in Britain.

White lines, blue collar

Cocaine permeates into working class culture, such as working men's pubs and building sites

SEPTEMBER 2007

Prisons rife with subby abuse

Heroin substitute pill is the new drug of choice for prisoners in the north west

Prisons rife with 'Subby' abuse

Exclusive Max Daly

A heroin substitute pill is becoming the new recreational drug of choice in a growing number of British prisons. The illicit market in Suboxone, used to wean people off heroin, has been rapidly expanding inside British jails over the last few years. But the full scale of its popularity in prisons was only revealed after worried Prison Service bosses added Suboxone to the banned list for the second time in 2007. Although the Ministry of Justice has refused to publish the results of the survey, Druglink Street Drug Trends 2007 survey is...



near to prison leavers returning to the streets with a taste for the drug. Significant levels of Suboxone use among people leaving jail and entering drug services was picked up in the Druglink Street Drug Trends 2007 survey in...

Skunk: potency doubles

Latest studies debunk exaggerated claims of cannabis strength

Cannabis factory kids: the victims of modern slavery

Trafficked Vietnamese children found in cannabis factories are being unjustly jailed

Bash street kids

Druglink Street Drug Trends survey reveals the emergence of a two-tier market in cocaine



Bash street kids

The cocaine and ecstasy markets are splitting in two, with young people and students being the major consumers in an expanding industry in cheaper, lower quality products. Max Daly takes a look at the results of this year's UK-wide drug trends survey

NOVEMBER 2007

Sharp rise in army cocaine use

The number of soldiers testing positive for cocaine increases

Boom and bust

A Druglink investigation into the way drug markets bounce straight back after major police successes in taking out big gangs



Boom and bust

2005 police smashed the T Business, Ipswich's dominant drug dealing gang. As the gang await sentencing later this month, Max Daly reports on the 'conveyor belt' nature of drug enforcement taking place across the UK.

Fishing with dogs

The use of sniffer dogs to detect drugs on commuters is on the rise – and it could infringe our rights

JANUARY 2008

The hunt for the truth on treatment

A special 16-page pullout by Mike Ashton addressing the rise of the 'new abstentionists'

MARCH 2008

In the belly of the dragon

Investigation into Beijing's surprisingly open drug markets

2008

2009

MAY 2008

Hospitals see rise in cocaine overdoses

The number of hospital admissions for cocaine poisoning rose four-fold in eight years

SEPTEMBER 2008

Police target bash industry

Police area battling to contain a thriving and lucrative new drugs market – in the chemicals used to cut cocaine

Police target 'bash' industry

EXCLUSIVE
Max Daly

Police are battling to contain a thriving and lucrative new drugs market – in the chemicals used to cut cocaine and heroin. The market in cutting agents, known on the street as 'bash' or 'twack', has become an established sector. Criminals have started selling illegal drugs to deal solely in the chemicals, which are legal to buy and sell. Tweakers such as the anasthetic 'bassacaine, the most common substance used to cut powder cocaine, are sold to dealers if they want to make a worthwhile profit. 'Swiss, who describes himself as a 'user' between cocaine and adolescent diabetes, told Druglink: 'Dealing is smart: it's more attractive than dealing in illegal drugs because it's more profitable and it's 'cleaner. You can't get caught'.



changed with conspiracy to supply drugs, although the courts have to be convinced that the chemicals would have been used to mix with drugs. However, cutting agents are being treated as actual cocaine in the police's evaluation of how much a haul would be worth on the street. But, as enforcement agencies clamp down on the trade in cutting agents, which still include anasthetics like procaine and phosocaine, cocaine and heroin – a substance goes to cut cocaine

Ecstasy: but not as you know it

Tests reveal that around half of pills sold as ecstasy contain no MDMA and are instead made up of BZP

Red, white and blues

Druglink Street Drug Trends survey finds big rise in illicit diazepam

NOVEMBER 2008

Caution urged over Barbie drug

Artificial tanning and weight loss drug Melanotan is being injected by rising numbers of men and women in the north east

JANUARY 2009

K Mart

A Druglink investigation finds that despite being made illegal in 2006, ketamine use is growing and becoming more problematic

Lost in transition

How a drug service in Stockport is at the forefront of a shift in the drug using habits of under-25s

MARCH 2009

Mephedrone: the future of drug dealing?

The legal internet high that looks set to change the way drugs are bought and sold



MEPHEDRONE: THE FUTURE OF DRUG DEALING?

Chemists are staying one step ahead of drug laws by toying with the chemical make-up of illegal stimulants such as ecstasy, speed and crystal meth to make an increasingly popular range of legal highs. Mike Power reports on the substances that look set to change the way drugs are bought and sold.

Powder keg?

Is the mix of cocaine and alcohol a recipe for violence?

MAY 2009

Chasing shadows

Police are yet to convict one drug dealer for selling outside a school – three years after Labour brought in a new law to tackle the 'scourge'.

Crossing the line

What happens to drug workers who are themselves struggling with drug problems?

Damaged goods

How one heroin addicted asylum seeker was maltreated by our health system



2010

JULY 2009

1 in 5 have close ties to drug abuse

DrugScope/ICM poll finds the public is closer to drug problems than we think

SEPTEMBER 2009

Junk!

Druglink Street Drug Trends survey reveals Britain's low grade drug market

JANUARY 2010

Orient express

Two investigations into the rural explosion in mephedrone use and the trail from Chinese labs to UK doorsteps

One in five has close ties to drug abuse – new poll

EXCLUSIVE

More than 9.5 million people – one in five adults in the UK – has close experience of addiction to illegal drugs, according to a new ICM poll. One in six people has a close friend or relative who has had a serious drug problem, while one in 50 – more than 2.2 million – have themselves been addicted to drugs.

What does the public really think about addiction and its treatment? **81%** **77%**

NEWS

GBL/GHB addiction cases emerge in UK

EXCLUSIVE Max Daly

Doctors are warning of the emergence of an increasing number of people seeking help for severe physical addiction to the Class C liquid solvent GBL and its legal precursor GBL.

Treatment services in Manchester, London, Lancashire, Yorkshire and Sussex have reported that in the last six months they have seen a growing number of people arriving at hospitals and detox services with what one doctor described as "horrible" dependencies. The phenomenon is so new there is no guidance for doctors on how to detox patients.

"I have not seen physical addiction like this with any other drug apart from alcohol," Dr Catherine Muijen, a consultant psychiatrist at Manchester Drug Service (MDS), told Druglink.

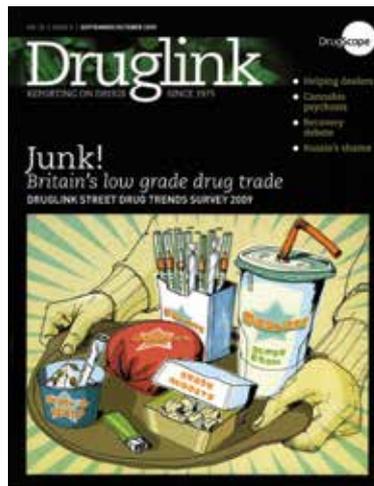
"It is extremely difficult for people who are addicted to stop using GBL/GHB, because withdrawal can cause acute anxiety, psychosis, tremors and sweats. Some people need to walk up to drink it every two hours. And helping people from these drugs is



the problem that he is setting up a specialist unit to deal with GBL and GHB addiction cases.

"We are seeing an increasing number of people presenting at our services with it. I am extremely concerned that we do not have a coordinated response to it because the drugs have such a very severe withdrawal."

GBL – which converts to GHB in the human gut – has been at the centre of media attention over the last three years after being linked to the death in April 2007 of a 21-year-old medical student. Her mother is calling on the media to make the drug less



NOVEMBER 2009

Bosses deny leading Lighthouse onto rocks

A major Merseyside drug charity collapses in financial meltdown

Polydrug cocktails prolific in booming drug dance scene

The death of Britain's dance drug scene is much exaggerated

Collision course

The sensational sacking of Professor David Nutt was on the cards since 2001

MAY 2010

Birth control

A US project which pays drug users to stop having babies arrives in Britain

Derry's drug vigilantes

Why dealers are being gunned down in Northern Ireland

NEWS FEATURE

DERRY'S DRUG VIGILANTES



Ray Coyle was gunned down as he chatted to customers at his city centre shop in Derry. His crime? Selling legal highs. Max Daly reports on how dissident Republican groups are using the region's historical distrust of drug dealers to drum up support in Northern Ireland's still-fragmented working class communities.

Of all the cities in the world, Derry is the most violent. It is the only city in the world where the death toll from drug-related violence is higher than the death toll from terrorism. It is the only city in the world where the death toll from drug-related violence is higher than the death toll from terrorism. It is the only city in the world where the death toll from drug-related violence is higher than the death toll from terrorism.

GBL/GHB addiction cases emerge

Doctors warn they are seeing rising numbers of people seeking help for severe physical addiction to liquid solvents