

WITNESS STATEMENT

(Criminal Justice Act 1967, s.9; Magistrates' Courts Act 1980, s.5B;
Criminal Procedure Rules, Rule 16.2)

NICHE Ref. No:

13210122296

URN:

Statement of: PCSO CS0546 ROSS HAMMOND

Date of birth: Over 18

Occupation: Police Community Support Officer

This statement (consisting of: 3 page(s) each signed by me) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything which I know to be false or do not believe to be true.

Signature: Ross Hammond

Date: 12/03/2021

Time and date statement taken: 1708hrs 0n 12/03/2021

Check box if witness evidence is visually recorded (supply witness details on rear)

I am the above named person and am currently employed by West Yorkshire Police as a Police Community Support Officer currently working out of Pudsey Police station.

I've worked as a PCSO for just over a year now and have covered the Armley area of West Leeds since I started. Before working in Armley as a PCSO I had no prior knowledge regarding the area, and had never visited the area, only passing through it while traveling.

Since working in Armley I've gained an understanding of the social makeup of the area. Armley is a predominately white British area with an Asian community and other minorities such as Romanians, Slovaks and Polish. Housing in the area is also varied with mostly terraced houses, large tower blocks, such as the Burnsalls, and large detached properties in the more affluent parts of Armley on Hill Top Road. Many of the properties in Armley are council owned however some are privately owned or rented.

With the rise in minorities in the Armley area this in turn, in particular the Eastern European minorities, has led to an increase in Eastern European shops on Town Street. Town Street itself is made up of these specialist Eastern European shops a national chain stores such as [REDACTED], there's also a [REDACTED] Bank, Post office and a [REDACTED] as well as other convenience stores. There are three pubs along the length of Town Street and many fast food stores such as [REDACTED]. There's only one betting shop [REDACTED].

Armley itself is one of the most deprived areas in Leeds with a higher than average unemployment rate for the Leeds area and high levels of poverty. I've myself witnessed this on many occasions when I've been able to visit members of the Armley community and been able to speak with them inside their homes.

[REDACTED]

Signature: Ross Hammond

Signature witnessed by:

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Continuation Statement of ROSS HAMMOND

A [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Town Street also has an ongoing problem with street drinkers, many of these street drinkers have links to or are themselves rough sleepers, shoplifters and drug users, however there is a group of street drinkers that hang around together almost on a daily basis. These street drinkers will start their day as early as 0800hrs on Armley Moor Park sat on the benches in the middle of the park which has many walkways that pass through it and these benches are like the intersection of said walkways. In the past I've had elderly members of the public approach me and voice their concerns about the group, because they feel intimidated by the group. On these occasions and whenever I've seen the group on Armley Moor Park I've approached them questioned what they were doing and why they were there, many responded by saying they were waiting for their prescription from the chemist ([REDACTED]) which is located on the other side of Town Street from the park. After speaking to them and seizing any alcohol they had on them I would request that they leave the area which they would do.

The group of street drinkers tend to continue further down Town Street throughout the day, meeting up outside [REDACTED] on Town Street next to the junction with Pinfold Lane or sat in the bus stop just in front of [REDACTED] between 1000hrs-1200hrs. I've on multiple occasions seized / confiscated alcohol (almost always beer cans) from the group at this location and reminded them that drinking on Town street isn't allowed. The group often sees officers coming from a distance away from both directions and attempt to conceal the alcohol from officers. The group then moves onto sit on the stone wall or benches outside [REDACTED], on Town Street junction with Gelder Road, at around 1200hrs-1300hrs.

The group also tends to finish up roughly outside [REDACTED], on Town Street junction with Hall Road, or on just outside [REDACTED] on Town Street junction with Theaker Lane, anytime between 1200hrs-1400hrs. The group drink together throughout the day but as the day goes on members of the group fall out with one another and by around 1400hrs onwards the group tends to disperse and members of the group can be found heavily intoxicated, spread out along Town Street, this can be when instances of drunk and disorderly can occur or members of the group pass out on Town Street and as before members of the public approach me and raise concerns about their safety.

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Signature Witnessed by:

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There are also some instances of street drinking in the early hours of the morning from 0000hrs-0400hrs this usually occurs outside the [REDACTED] on Town Street, this has led to Public order occurrences outside the store between said times, this has included racially motivated Hate crimes towards the staff at the store. One of the main reasons why street drinking is so prevalent on Town Street is because of the number of convenience stores and other outlets that sell alcohol all in close range of one another making it easy for the street drinkers to get hold of said alcohol, this in turn makes the area an attractive destination for street drinkers because of the ease of access.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The issues mentioned above have had a major impact on how Town Street and Armley in general is perceived by people from outside the area and the members of public who live in the area. Members of the public, especially elderly members, have expressed to me that they are scared to go on or won't go on Town Street because of the street drinkers, drug usage and general ASB.

Signature: Ross Hammond

Signature Witnessed by: