

### WITNESS STATEMENT

(Criminal Justice Act 1967, s.9; Magistrates' Courts Act 1980, s.5B;  
Criminal Procedure Rules, Rule 27.2)

NICHE Ref. No:

URN:

**Statement of:** CHRISTOPHER ANTHONY DAVEY

Date of birth: Over 18

Occupation: POLICE OFFICER

This statement (consisting of: 4 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: PC 4513 DAVEY

Date: 11-03-21

Time and date statement taken: 1400 11-03-21

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

I am the above named Police Officer currently working within the Leeds West Neighbourhood Policing team.

My role in the team is being the Armley Ward manager. I have been the Ward manager for Armley for around 15 years and I have a wide range of experience in the neighbourhood policing field. Prior to this I was a patrol officer for ten years where I covered the Armley and Bramley areas.

The Armley area is quite a commercially deprived area and is mainly a residential area, of which most are council owned properties. There is also a lot of private rented houses which have been converted in to bed sit type flats. The unemployment number is very high in the Armley area. There are a few commercial areas, one of which is Town Street, Armley, which I will speak more about in the statement. There are some large tower blocks in the Town Street area which were mainly used to house elderly occupants so they could be within easy reach of Town Street and services offered there.

When I first started work as a police officer in the mid 1990's most people that lived in the area were of white British background. Over time, there has been an increase in the minority backgrounds which includes, Romanian, Polish, Slovak and Czech Republic who have settled in housing in and around mainly the Town Street Area.

One of the main areas of Armley is Town Street. This used to be the social hub of the community. There was a library, a one stop shop which is where the Council services are situated, a Sports centre, several doctors surgeries and chemists, an amusement arcade, 4 pubs and a club, and a wide variety of shops and commercial services covering anything you may need to buy. There is also a small park land which is called Armley Moor.

Over time many of shops, pubs and other commercial services have closed. In their place are a number of take away shops and also off licences many of which are of eastern European name.

Over the years I have worked there I have seen a steady decline in the Town street area. From the number of people using the shops and its facilities to the general appearance of the buildings and surrounding properties.

[REDACTED]

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Signature witnessed by:

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Continuation Statement of DAVEY

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[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

Over the past few years 5 years there has been a large increase in 2 specific anti-social behaviour areas, street drinking and drugs usage.

Street drinking on Armley Town Street has become a large issue. I believe this is linked to the number of off licences in the area. On my last count I think there was around 15 to 20 off licences situated in a square mile of Town Street. Most of these sell cheap strong alcohol, many of which have offers of cheap alcohol, so much so that the public protection order which forbids people to be drinking alcohol from an open vessel on Town Street and the surrounding area has been extended for a further 3 years.

It is very hard to measure the actual times that police officers have seized drink from people drinking as the offence is only fully committed if the person drinking the alcohol does not hand the drink over to police officers or police community support officers. Most of the street drinkers know this and hand the alcohol over to officers so it can be disposed of. This is why most people drinking in the area only buy 1 tin or 1 bottle at a time as they know there other alcohol would be seized.

It has become the norm for people to buy a single tin of alcohol and then standing or sitting in groups in and around Town Street. These can often be as large as 8 or 9 people. This can be very intimidating to elderly and young people. The street drinkers are of all nationalities which includes British, polish, Czech republic and Slovaks, however if you often speak with local British residents they often states it's the foreign nationals that are street drinking, which is clearly not the case.

Street drinking is an all year issue but due to the weather conditions it increases immensely in the spring and summer months. The main times for street drinking are often morning from as early as 0700 hours though to early afternoon. However, you can travel along Town Street at 2300 hours and you can see people street drinking.

As people are drinking on Town street and the surrounding areas the police service will get numerous calls to service for various criminal offences which include, drunkenness, assaults, public order, shopliftings and lots of anti-social behaviour which comes in lots of forms. It could be shouting and swearing, sleeping in shop doorways, falling and injuring themselves, obstructions, spitting, vomiting in shop doorways, littering, urinating and generally being abusive. This clearly affects the shop owners and also shop users as well as local residents and other businesses.

There is a number of regular street drinkers which I would estimate to be around 20 to 25 who will drink in and around Town street but there are also others that attend the Town street area for various reasons and often then start to drink on the streets. There is a drug and alcohol referral service that runs sessions nearby which brings drugs users and also alcohol users to the area from all parts of Leeds. People attending there often make new links to the area and in turn start to drink on the streets of Armley.

Some of the main areas where the drinkers congregate is at the junctions of Hall Road and Town street. This is nearby to a number of the off licence shops. There was previously benches that were placed there for shoppers to use by the council but they were removed a few years ago as street drinkers were often using them and falling asleep on them and committing criminal offences near to them. This stopped the local residents from using the benches.

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Continuation Statement of DAVEY

Another area where the street drinkers congregate in is Armley Moor. Again there are benches situated in the centre of the Moor and often you can have up to 8 people there drinking. The police have had repeated calls for people there drinking and being abusive. Local residents will avoid the area for fear of being abused or suffering from their anti-social behaviour.

Over the past few years I have attended a large number of public meetings and I have lost count the number of times that I have been asked questions regarding street drinkers and that the member of the public has gone on to say "because of the street drinkers I don't go to Armley Town Street anymore" or something along those lines. Many residents have spoken to myself stating that they think Town Street and the local area is a dangerous place because of the drinkers and the druggies and people will not venture out after dark as they fear for their safety.

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Continuation Statement of DAVEY

I feel that having worked in the Armley area for over 25 years as a police officer that I have a good knowledge of the area, the residents, the businesses, the areas issues and the community as a whole. In my opinion, the area has a lot more negative issues now than it had around 5 to 10 years ago. I have highlighted the 2 main issues in my opinion, however, there are other issues that clearly impact the area.

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