

PE:ER Project Newsletter

No. 1, November 2009

The PE:ER Project (Prostitution Exiting: Engaging through Research) began in June 2009, a joint research project between Eaves and London South Bank University (LSBU) to assess the effectiveness of interventions designed to support women in England who want to leave prostitution. Since then, we've been developing a research project that is academically robust, yet still places the needs of our research participants – women involved in, exiting or exited from prostitution – at the centre of our approach.

Our progress so far

- ❖ As a team, we've read, discussed and reflected on the existing literature on exiting prostitution and research methodologies and ethics for working with vulnerable women.
- ❖ We've developed research tools for interviewing women exiting from prostitution, a schedule of interview questions for practitioners, and a community survey.
- ❖ We've completed the pilot stage of the research and have received full ethical approval from LSBU.
- ❖ We've had a full day of training in techniques for interviewing vulnerable women, led by Diane Martin, founder and director of Trust, a specialist support service in South London.
- ❖ We've consulted with women who have exited from prostitution about the research tools, incorporating their feedback into the final versions of the tools.
- ❖ We've conducted 17 interviews with women involved in, exiting or exited from prostitution.
- ❖ We've ensured all women who have participated in the research have been fully supported, signposting them into further support where required.
- ❖ We've conducted 19 interviews with practitioners working with women exiting from prostitution.
- ❖ We've recruited our Advisory Group and held our first Advisory Group meeting.
- ❖ We've recruited three Volunteer Research Assistants and one Volunteer Research Intern to the project. Our volunteers, Linnéa Osterman, Saskia Albers and Sophie Howes started with us in September and October, and our intern, Laura Brown, started in November.

Where we've been

In August, Helen Atkins, Lisa Reynolds and Shannon Harvey spent two days in Doncaster and Sheffield, conducting interviews with women who have exited from prostitution and practitioners working with women in prostitution. Helen and Lisa also spent a day in Newcastle, again doing interviews with women involved in prostitution and with practitioners. Thanks to Streetreach, SWWOP and the GAP Project for hosting us in their services for these days.

In September, Helen, Lisa and Shannon spent three days in Leeds and York conducting interviews. Thanks to CRI, Leeds City Council's ASBU, CROP and Compass for hosting us, and particular thanks to TWP who organised a drop-in session for us in their wonderful centre.

In London, we've spent a day at Trust in Lambeth, have attended several drop-in sessions at Women at the Well in Kings Cross, and have visited the NSPCC, Blenheim CDP and the HMPS Women's Awareness Staff Programme. Thank you to all these services who have generously given their time to be interviewed as practitioners and facilitated us to conduct interviews with the women who access their services.

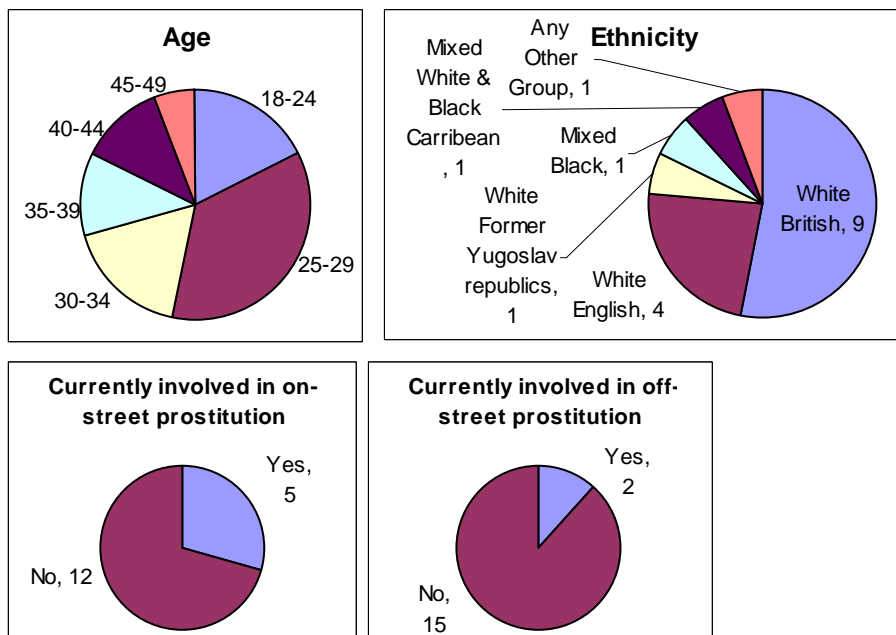
What's happening next

Over the next 6 months, we're planning to:

- ❖ Finish the first round of interviews with women exiting prostitution (around 130 more interviews), and begin analysing the data collected.
- ❖ Deliver the community survey to around 3,000 addresses in 3 locations: Paddington in London, Leeds and Southampton.
- ❖ Begin implementation of the peer mentoring component of the project.

Our research sample

So far, we've conducted interviews with 17 women who are, or have been, involved in prostitution. This is what the current sample looks like.



Thank you!

Thanks to all the projects that have so generously given us their time and shared their expertise so far. We know that you are all over-stretched and under-funded, and we are incredibly grateful that you've taken time out of your busy days to contribute to this research.

Eve at Action Housing, Sheffield
Amanda at the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit, Leeds City Council
Maggie at Evolve, Blenheim CDP, London
Angela and Alison at Compass, York
Amanda and Charlotte at CRI, Leeds
Aravinda, Rachel and Pauline at CROP, Leeds
Laura, Kelle and Emma at Tyneside Cyrenians GAP Project, Newcastle
Anna and Gill at HMPS Women's Awareness Staff Programme, London
Steph at M25 Housing & Support Group, Doncaster
Stuart at New Beginnings, Doncaster
Rebecca at the NSPCC's Sexual Exploitation Service, London
All our colleagues at the POPPY Project, Eaves, London
Jane at Shelter, Leeds
Marilyn and Jil at Streetreach, Doncaster
Sali, Rachel and Emma at SWWOP, Sheffield
Cathy and Clare at Together Women Programme, Leeds
Di at Trust, London
Sarah at Turning Point/SWWOP, Sheffield
Amy, Helen and Lynda at Women at the Well, London

Our special thanks to Rebecca and Bianca, both women who have exited from prostitution, who provided thoughtful, critical feedback on the research tools.

And finally, our biggest thanks to the 17 women who have shared their stories with us so far. This research is only possible because of your generosity and openness. Thank you.

Contact Us

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PE:ER close up

Linnéa joined the PE:ER team in September as a Volunteer Research Assistant, working 2 days per week.

I joined the PE:ER Project because... I believe it is a greatly valuable project that fills an important gap in the current literature in regards to understanding the process of exiting prostitution. Additionally, this role allows me to further develop my research abilities, as well as gaining direct insight into the women's charitable sector.

What I like most about working on PE:ER is... getting the opportunity to work with such a diverse, devoted and experienced research team, in which knowledge and skills are positively shared to facilitate focused, purposeful and continuous development of the project.

As well as volunteering with PE:ER, I... work within a variety of research-related environments, with the aim of returning to postgraduate studies within the not too distant future.

Over the Christmas break, I'm looking forward to... going back home to Sweden to see my family and hopefully enjoy a lovely white Christmas!