PROJECT NAME: Red Umbrella (Changing Lives)

Project location: Merseyside

Service overview: Red Umbrella was initially commissioned by the Merseyside Police & Crime Commissioner in 2017 to deliver a service to any individual within the sex industry; inclusive of people in survival sex work, sexual exploitation, street sex work, indoor sex work, camming, lap dancing, porn, and escorts.

The focus is to combat instances of violence and crimes committed against anyone in the sex industry and to bring to justice anyone perpetrating these crimes.

Merseyside is the only police force in the World to treat violence against sex workers as a Hate Crime. With our dedicated, full time police Liaison officer, we will work in partnership to meet the needs of this group. We aim to reduce violence via education, of the public with a focus on statutory services response and offenders to highlight the nature of this Hate Crime.

We offer:

* Support, one to one and group
* Outreach, drop ins across Merseyside, In reach and support for online workers
* Casework
* Specialist ISVA (Independent Sexual Violence Adviser) support
* Trauma and link worker support

We help people to:

* Report crimes against them via the team and/or National Ugly Mugs
* Look at their health needs, physical, mental health, and sexual health
* Educate themselves around safer working, health and safety, harm reduction
* If required, work towards exiting and with local partners, look for alternatives
* Referrals and support to drug & alcohol services, housing providers, safeguarding etc.
* Support to begin to address past and current trauma
* Links to probation, prison, and local hospital’s

People can move on to, Lives free from addiction, less harmful practices via harm reduction, empowerment through knowledge. Family reunification, how to ‘go legal’ as in paying tax if working indoors, camming, lap dancing, escorting or involved in porn. Reduce homelessness and unify families.

How to access: The service is direct access through our Hubs across Merseyside or by self or agency referral.

Key facts

Client group: Male, Female, Trans, over 18 years

Area covered Merseyside

Staff: 1 service manager, trauma lead, 2 specialist ISVA’s, 1 part time trauma worker, 1 outreach link worker, 2 part time outreach workers

Funded by: ADDER (Addiction, Diversion, Disruption, Enforcement & Recovery) and VRP (Violence Reduction Partnership)