My name is Penny Lane. I worked on the streets, it's a city outside of London, for years. I worked with a large cross section of girls of all ages and walks of life. About half of them were drug users who were there to fund their habit, as well as housewives to pay the bills, students to pay fees, immigrants because they were not entitled to benefits. I have a disabled child and first went out purely out of the need for money and then because of the inability to get another job because of getting a criminal conviction. I got three. I think the questions for this Inquiry are really strange, it's worded as if you only want one answer. But I'm doing the submission because the law really needs to change to give the ones that want to come off the street a chance to really do that.

1) No, the women shouldn't be criminalised but neither should the men. I think it would just make it more dangerous because everyone would be trying to cover their tracks. You should be able to do what you need to do without being arrested.

2) I'd like to know how the Crown Prosecution Service come to that conclusion. We're at risk of violence but mainly because of rushing and trying to keep things hidden which puts you in more danger. No the whole thing is definately not violence, I do not agree with that at all.

3) What immigrant girls I have met have been there because they need to earn the money. I wouldn't say they've been trafficked, they come and work on the streets in England because they know they can earn more money here. The girls stick in groups and there's normally one or two men with them but I think that's because the area they have to work in is so derelict. I think the girls are more and organised and work with each other. There is the language barrier and if there's any trouble with language they'll send the men over to sort it out. I've never seen any girls who look like they're beaten up or anything.

4) - If they want girls to get out of prostitution decriminalise it so girls can go and get another job without a criminal conviction. I have been unable to apply for work because of this reason and I feel trapped, there isn't an option except to stay. They've got to decriminalise it to give girls the option.
- The only exploiters are the police and the courts. The police arrest and then you are in court and they fine you and then you have to go back out to get the money and then the police arrest you again. It's just one big exploitative circle.

- I don't know whether you can do that there's always going to be a demand and there's nothing wrong with it, its nature. But from what I know, it's the lack of resources whether that's benefits, housing rehabilitation that make girls go out. And once out you get a record and you have to stay out.