

Drug Expert Witness - Professional Experience

Peter Gray

I am a retired Police Officer having worked for Dorset Police for 25 years from August 1990 until November 2015.

2013: I attended and completed the initial Drug Expert witness course at Portishead Bristol. Since completing my course, I have completed hundreds of reports into various levels of supply ranging from social to Organised Crime Group levels.

I also attended a mobile phone extraction course on the XRY kiosk machine. This allowed me to extract the content of mobile phones and providing me with the opportunity to read drug related messages on several different platforms. i.e. SMS, What's app, snap chat and others.

2016-2019: I was employed as an Investigations Officer level 2 (Police Staff) dealing with acquisitive crime interviewing suspects who were committing crime to fund their drug habits. I was the single point of contact for Drug Expert Witnesses in Dorset, and I was in contact with other Experts Nationally.

2019-2025: I was employed as the only full time Drug Expert Witness by Dorset Police based at Weymouth covering the whole County. My role as a full time Drug Expert Witness included reporting on drug cases, completing 100's of Expert reports to assist the Courts. I have attended and provided expert evidence at Crown, Magistrates and Youth Court. I examined mobile phone reports providing my interpretation on the messages and dealer notes. I allocated work to the other drug experts and ensuring all reports were peer reviewed. I was in receipt of all forensic drug reports for the whole of Dorset. This provided me the opportunity to see packaging and purity of all the drugs tested including adulterants. I have been trained in the use of both Nasal and injection Naloxone to assist in the prevention of opioid overdose.

I provided training for drug testers using the EDIT process. I was responsible for allocating specific rooms suitable to conduct drug testing. I ensured all the rooms had Naloxone available for use if needed. I also provided advice to other Drug experts across the Force and on a regional level. I secured funding to purchase 4 electronic drug testing devices and provide training in how to operate them safely. I continue my professional development in relation to drug supply with Independent Drug Expert Alliance.

In 1990 I joined Dorset Police and upon successful completion of my initial training I was based at Poole until 1994, where I conducted uniformed patrol duties. I made numerous arrests for possession of all types of controlled drugs, and I investigated supply of class A and B drugs in the Poole area.

I regularly interviewed detained persons involved in drug supply, production and/or use of controlled drugs gaining an insight into how these drugs were used, sold and with cannabis how it was produced.

I was involved in searching persons, premises and vehicles in relation to drug offences which allowed me to gain knowledge on how drugs were packaged and concealed to avoid detection.

In 1994 I transferred to Weymouth uniform patrol where I performed acting sergeant duties supervising officers investigating controlled drug offences in relation to Cannabis, Heroin, Crack Cocaine, Cocaine, MDMA (ecstasy) and Amphetamine.

I also investigated the supply of controlled drugs smuggled into Dorset prisons at Portland, Dorchester and Guys Marsh. This was conducted by various methods i.e. visitors, compromised staff, delivered by drone, throw overs and recall Mules. This gained me valuable knowledge and experience of the prison regime. Which differs between prisons and normal street supply relating to deal sizes, quality of the product and values.

In 2008 I was successful in my application to become a Detective Constable I was a PIP 2 level trained investigator based in Weymouth dealing with drugs

Possession & supply offences including County lines networks until I retired in 2015.

- a) I was involved and investigated a large number of Cannabis Cultivation grows which included the seizing of evidence and the dismantling of the Cannabis production equipment. Allowing me to gain knowledge in how Cannabis plants are grown/produced from both seed and cuttings, equipment that is used such as high-powered lighting, ballasts, fans, timers, heat shields ventilation and use of nutrients.
- b) These Cannabis grows ranged from small 5-10 plants (personal) to large commercial sized grows consisting of over 2,000 plants.

I Was a licensed search officer with 14 years' experience having been involved in warrants and searches following arrests for drug offences.

- a) During these searches I have located drug paraphernalia and drugs in various types of packaging concealed in secret rooms/compartments, i.e. Hidden behind false walls, electrical sockets, and Immersion heaters, plastic containers sunk into the concrete floor, disguised cans and drugs being buried in the garden or woods nearby.
- b) I have been involved in numerous drugs warrants, pro-active drugs initiatives and investigations into drug supply offences and drug related deaths.
- c) I have stopped and searched persons in the street in connection with possession of controlled drugs throughout my 25-year career. This was either as a result of what I had observed in person or had been informed in the course of my work.
- d) I have searched hundreds of premises, cars, boats and tents in relation to controlled drugs in both my capacity of an Investigator and a search Officer.

I am assisted in my experience by being in regular receipt of information from such organisations as the Crown Prosecution service, Eurofins Forensics and Socotec forensics, drugs analysts, Internet sites, Intelligence from Police systems, financial investigators, test purchase operations, and National Police Organisations and Police drug intelligence.

I also remain informed of drug trends through training events, written publications, the Internet and DEWVA annual conferences and frequent regional seminars.

I was a member of the Drug Expert Witness & Valuation Association until 2025.

I have been trained in Evidential Drug Identification by LGC forensics. I am authorised to test Cocaine, Heroin, Morphine, Amphetamine, MDMA and Ketamine.

This provides me the opportunity to examine the different types of packaging used and deal sizes. I have been trained in the use of TruNarc & First Defender infra-red spectroscopy and the Bruker Alpha & True Defender FT-IR Spectrometers to analyse solids, liquids and gases.

I tested and examined seizures of controlled drugs including separating wrappings and examining individual deals.

I attend drugs expert meetings and presentations within my area and collaboration to continue with development and current pricing and trends within the drugs world.

I have attended a Home Office licensed establishment where I have seen the growth and study of cannabis plants and a practical exercise in the production of cannabis resin.

In Sept 2017 I attended LGC Laboratory where I was able to see current drugs available on the market and the production of these drugs. I was shown how to manufacture crack cocaine using a microwave.

In 2017 & 2018 I prepared the drug strategy for Bestival music festival and organised the drug expert witnesses and planned on how we would deal with any

drug offences and set the limit for possession with intent to supply offences. I also attended Bestival music festival 2017 & 2018 where I saw and dealt with hundreds of seizures of controlled substances. I was able to field test these items which included Ecstasy, MDMA, Cocaine and Ketamine. I have seen LSD dots or blotters and Psilocybin Mushrooms. I have spoken to detained persons concerning the effects and pricing of these drugs gaining first hand current knowledge.

I have attended the Isle of Wight Music Festival in Hampshire in June 2018, Boomtown Festival in August 2018 and Reading Festival in August 2023 where I saw drug seizures and searches carried out by Security on site. I was a member of the Drug Expert Festivals Group where current trends and intelligence is shared covering the music festivals across the UK.

I have visited TICTAC which is an organisation dealing with the identification of, pills, tablets & capsules.

I have been trained by TICTAC in the identification of Pills, Tablets & Capsules using Tic Tac Pro a software program which allows me to search the manufactured markings, size, weight and colouring in order to identify it against their database of 35,000 medicines and drugs, which is updated twice a year.

During the COVID-19 pandemic I have kept in regular contact with other drug expert witnesses and others associated with drug work, via telephone, email and teams/ zoom video meetings. These meetings covered the South Coast area to discuss trends, prices, methodology used by those involved in drug supply.

I completed a CDLO (Controlled Drug Liaison Officer) Initial course in November 2021 and a refresher course in 2023. I am authorised to witness the destruction of controlled drugs and inspect controlled drug storage and inspect controlled drug registers. I Participated in Local intelligence Network meetings with the NHS and other health organisations. During these meetings we discussed cases of drug diversion/abuse by health care professionals. I ensured that patient safety was paramount by organising appropriate action and outcome after interviewing the health care professionals involved.

I completed a OCG (Organised Crime Group) training course held at Exeter in December 2021. This course provided me with an insight and a detailed understanding of Heroin and Cocaine from the point of production to the end supply at street level within the United Kingdom. The course covered routes of importation, finances, roles within the supply chain and methods of concealment. This allowed me to produce reports into importation by Organised Crime Groups (OCG'S).

I prepared and presented a presentation on the current controlled drugs used by young persons to a group of Paediatric Consultants at Poole Hospital in June 2024.

I attended Independent Drug Expert Alliance CPD training held on-line in March 2025.

QUALIFICATIONS HELD & TRAINING COMPLETED

August 2008: Level 2 Investigation Course – Dorset Police Training

September 2013: I attended and successfully completed the Home Office approved National Drugs expert Witness Course at Portishead Police training and development Centre, Bristol.

November 2013: I attended the DEWVA national conference subjects covered

- * update on the global drugs market from the NCA

- * International drug importation routes.

December 2013: I attended a mobile phone extraction course using XRY Kiosk provided by Micro Systemation.

November 2014: I attended the DEWVA national conference subjects covered

- * update on the global drugs market from the NCA

- * International drug importation routes.

November 2015: I attended the DEWVA national conference subjects covered

- *update on the global drugs market from the NCA

- * International drug importation routes.

November 2016: I attended the DEWVA national conference subjects covered

- *Expanding knowledge of Chemsex, and the use of dating apps to purchase/sell drugs, and to invite attendees to sex parties that involve the use of controlled drugs.

- *Update on the global drugs market from the NCA.

- *International drug importation routes.

- *Cannabis ID & Yield Calculation, Defence Expert role/legal updates/ National & International drug trafficking/SCRA.

November 2016: The Home Office approved course in the use of Drug Testing kits for the EDIT process presumptive identification of Heroin, Cocaine, Crack cocaine, MDMA, Amphetamine and Ketamine.

November 2017: I attended the DEWVA national conference subjects covered Continued provenance of Chemsex,

- *Update on the global drugs market from the NCA.

- *International drug importation routes.

- *Cannabis ID & Yield Calculation, Defence Expert role/legal updates/ National & International drug trafficking/SCRA.

April 2018: I attended Regional Expert meeting subjects covered
Regional Drug Expert meeting.

*County Lines – UC operations and trafficking tactics.

*Phone interpretations.

*Prison drug culture, usage, pricing and trafficking.

*Social drug misuse.

*Barristers expectations.

*Prison Drugs.

*Crypto currency and Dark web knowledge.

*County lines and Operation Hazel.

*Barrister Expectations of Drug Expert at Court.

June 2018: I attended a overdose intervention and prenoxad injection trainers' course
at Dorset HQ provided by Martindale Pharma.

June 2018: I attended Isle of Wight Festival to observe and liaise with Police, security
and drug testing. To speak with persons attending the festival about drug use.

August 2018: Trained in the use of Bruker Alpha-Analyser to test Ketamine,
Mephedrone and other chemical-based drugs.

August 2018: I attended Boomtown Festival to observe and liaise with Police, security
and drug testing. To speak with persons attending the festival about drug use.

August 2018: Trained in the use of the Thermofisher TruNarc handheld drug detection
device by Hazmat, for the detection of Mephedrone and Ketamine.

November 2019: I attended the DEWVA national conference subjects covered

*Steroids.

*NCA Global Drugs Market update.

*Production & Economics of Cannabis Oils, concentrates and edibles (David Potter)

*Drugs in Prison.

*County Lines update.

April 2021: trained in the use of the Thermofisher Tru-Defender handheld drug
detection device

November 2021: I attended the DEWVA national conference subjects covered

*Dr David Potter and cannabis derivatives.

*A Judges perspective from HHJ Francis Sheridan.

*Experiences of a reformed drug user – George Charlton.

*The WEDINOS project – a website publicly publishing the forensic analysis of controlled drug, revealing the true contents of drugs.

*Bond Solon update.

November 2021: I attended a Controlled Drug Liaison Officers (CDLO) course at GMP headquarters Manchester.

December 2021: I attended and completed a 4-day drugs trafficking and organised Crime course at Middlemoor Police HQ Exeter.

This course gave me an understanding of how Heroin and Cocaine are supplied from the point of production down to street level within the United Kingdom. The course covered routes of importation, financial costs, roles within the supply chain and methods of concealment.

March 2021: I completed the Detectachem training for the use and training delivery of the Mobile Detect drugs identification kits.

July 2023: Completed a Opiate overdose recognition/Nasal Naloxone administration course.

August 2023: I attended Reading Festival to observe and liaise with Police, security and drug testing. To speak with persons attending the festival about drug use.

November 2023: I attended the DEWVA national conference subjects covered Opening from Chief Constable Lucy D'orsi QPM

*NCA Global Drugs Market update – Andy Mason.

*The importance of Peer Review – Julie Jenkins, Drug Forensic Scientist.

*The legal obligations of an Expert Witness – Claire Pickthall and Sarah Peters.

*New and emerging Psychoactive Drug Trends – Ren Masetti (NHS Foundation Trust).

*Drugs in Prison – Rachel McGough & Anna Smith (HMPPS).

*Dark Web Drug Pricing – Alex Hudson, NCA Operation Dice).

*Recreational Drug Trends – Drugs work in clubs – Neil Brooks (CGL).

November 2024: I attended the DEWVA national conference subjects covered

*Update on the global drugs market from the NCA

*The growth of synthetic opioids from Professor Jon Cole

*The history and impact of Albanian Organised Crime Groups in the UK drugs market – Tony Saggars

*Disclosure Obligations by Claire Pickthall and Sarah Peters

*Legal updates from Bond Solon (Nick Deal)

*Drugs in Prison – HMPPS

*Input and update from Alex Fisher regarding legal/medical cannabis (Grow Pharma and IPS Pharma)

March 2025: I attended on-line CPD provided by Independent Drug Expert Association (IDEA) covering the following topics:

- Custody Expert Witness
- Disclosure for Experts
- Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking
- Ketamine: From Synthesis to Street, and Beyond
- Cannabis Yield Assessment Variations