

As the Police Silver Commander for the Secret Garden Party, it is my role to tactically deliver the strategy set by my Gold Commander. His overarching strategy included the intentions of the police; namely, to safeguard, to work in partnership, to prevent and detect crime.

At my first meeting with Dr Fiona Measham, and, indeed, upon hearing about The Loop, I saw an opportunity to safeguard; to minimise the risk of harm to festival-goers.

At a tactical level, having led the policing operation concerned with the Secret Garden Party for many years, I thought that the range of harm reduction measures already in place was fairly extensive. Certainly, for several years we [the police] have drug-tested on site and provided information as to what has been seized or found to reduce harm.

However, The Loop goes further!! Using the same drug-testing equipment as that used by Cambridgeshire Constabulary, individuals can learn from professionals the exact nature of the substance that they have provided for testing. It is real front-of-house stuff, and, as evidenced by the figures, many individuals, once they had heard from the drug workers, indicated their intention to dispose of their remaining substances.

Like the Gold Commander for the Kendal Festival I will work with my police colleagues and others to do everything that I can to prevent controlled drugs coming onto the site; to detect and prosecute those intent on supplying.

That stated, and, indeed, despite large numbers of confiscations, seizures and finds, it is reasonable to suppose that some substances will get on site. 'The Loop' provides an additional layer of safeguarding and protection.


At the conclusion of this year's policing event my Gold Commander commented: - *"All my conversations with organisers and partners were very positive!! Work was exceptionally innovative around safeguarding and harm reduction. The approach taken around drugs and 'The Loop' has attracted significant positive media interest. True partnership working centred on pragmatism and harm reduction"*.

Laura Hunt


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