

Pathfinders are information tools which aim to direct people to further sources of information, including how to find out more, key texts, key websites, and key contacts. They are not aimed to be information about the topic itself.

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Overview

From 29th January 2004, cannabis is reclassified from Class B to Class C. While many believe that this means cannabis has been decriminalised, in fact it has not. Cannabis will still be classed as an illegal substance, and as such production, supply and possession remain illegal.

The reclassification of cannabis is the latest development in a long debate over the legal position of cannabis in the UK, and is one of the biggest developments in British drug policy for 30 years. The rights and wrongs of cannabis use and of prohibiting such use have been the subject of heated debate since the 1960s. Many welcome the change in legislation, while others remain opposed.

This pathfinder will guide you through key texts, articles and websites on the issues in response to cannabis use in the UK: the gateway theory, the legalisation debate and the medical use of cannabis.

DrugScope has written extensively on Cannabis:

[Cannabis Reclassification](#)

[DrugScope information on cannabis](#)

[Cannabis legalization: the public and political debate](#)

[Cannabis misconceptions and myths](#)

[DrugScope's response to the Home Affairs Committee's May 2002 inquiry report](#)

[Does cannabis lead to taking other drugs? The Gateway Theory](#)

[Medical Use of Cannabis](#)

Key Texts

The documents listed here are available from DrugScope Library. To access the material, please phone 08707-743-682 to enquire about document delivery service or to make an appointment. Further information on ordering non-reference material via our document delivery service is available on our website.

Gateway/escalation in the UK

Cannabis. *Cohen J., Hayes G. DrugScope London: DrugScope, 2002. 25p.*

This booklet provides up-to-date information for the professional and general reader on cannabis its history, health effects, short-term and long-term consequences, legal status, prevalence and supply. Possible side effects of cannabis on an individual's mental health are discussed including psychosis and amotivational syndrome. The therapeutic use of the drug is discussed, as is its role in the gateway theory and the

legalisation debate.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 94288

Cannabis and the gateway hypothesis: summary. *Witton, J., Mars S., DrugScope. London: DrugScope, 2001. 4p.*

Summary of a technical paper which examines the gateway theory. The authors explain what the gateway theory is, its history and development, and why it has been used as a justification for past and present government policy in the United Kingdom.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 92282

The road to ruin?: sequences of initiation into drug use and offending by young people in Britain. *Pudney S. London: Home Office Research; Development and Statistics Directorate, 2002. 44p.*

This report presents an analysis of data from the 1998/99 Youth Lifestyles Survey (YLS), a representative sample of young people aged 12 to 30 living in England and Wales. It focuses upon the occurrence and timing of young people's first use of various types of illicit drugs and their first experience of various types of offending. Its aim is to test whether the data collected supports the gateway hypothesis that the use of drugs, such as cannabis, increases the risk of future use of more harmful drugs, such as heroin or cocaine.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 95876

Legislation in the UK

Cannabis: a history. *Booth M. London: Transworld, 2003. xii,354,*

The author charts the history of cannabis from the Neolithic period to the present day. He chronicles the process through which cannabis became outlawed throughout the western world, and the devastating effect that such legislation has had on the global economy. He also demonstrates how the case for decriminalisation remains one of the 21st centuries hottest topics.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 97196 C

Cannabis: a warning. *Maranatha Community. Manchester: Maranatha Community, 2001. 19 p.*

A submission to the Prime Minister, the Home Secretary, the Secretary of State for Health, the leaders of the major political parties, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster and the leaders of the Free Churches by the Maranatha Community. The Maranatha Community believes that there is overwhelming evidence that cannabis should not be legalised. The submission contains arguments and sources papers that argue for the dangers of cannabis.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 94510

Cannabis Britannica: empire, trade, and prohibition. *Mills J. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003. xi, 239p.*

This text explores the historical origins of the UK's legislation and regulations on cannabis preparations before 1928. Drawing on sources from the 17th century onwards from archives in the UK and India, it provides a full history from the Imperial trade in hemp and opium to the time when cannabis first became subject to laws and regulations in Britain. This social and political history examines the extent of the knowledge of the Government and its officials and how it was applied in this time period.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 98603 JL

Cannabis? It's a real killer. *Stuttaford T. From: Times: 31 July, 2001, p.1-3.*

As support grows for the decriminalisation of the so-called soft drug marijuana, Dr Thomas Stuttaford explains why advocates of change need to consider the long-term

consequences - mental and physical - of such a move.
DrugScope Library Document Number: 94423

Cannabis: legalise and utilise: a manifesto and information document. *Buffry A. Norwich: Legalise Cannabis Alliance, 1999. 34p.*

This document presents arguments in favour of the legalisation of cannabis. It outlines the history of cannabis usage for personal, medical, industrial and therapeutic reasons, and the events, which led to the prohibition of cannabis use. The author discusses the potential environmental benefits of the industrial uses of cannabis, and suggests ways in which legalising cannabis might reduce crime. Prevalence and mortality statistics are given, together with a comparison of the personal costs of cannabis with legal and enforcement costs for policing, prosecutions and sentences for cannabis use. Policies and attitudes to cannabis in European nations and in the USA are considered.

DrugScope Library Document Number: CBOARD 86167 not available for document delivery

Cannabis: Special Issue. *Druglink: 16 (special issue), 2001, 51p.*

This special issue contains articles on cannabis which have been published in Druglink since 1977. The back of the front page features a copy of the SOMA advertisement entitled: 'the law against marijuana is immoral in principle and unworkable in practice' which appeared in The Times on 24th July 1967.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 93382

The classification of cannabis under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. *UK. Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs. London: ACMD, 2002. 16p.*

In October 2001 the Home Secretary asked the ACMD to review the classification of cannabis preparations in the light of current scientific evidence. This report considers the most appropriate Class into which cannabis preparations should be categorised based on its harmfulness. It is not concerned with the potential medicinal uses of cannabis which is seen as separate from the classification of cannabis under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. The report is based on a detailed scrutiny of the relevant scientific literature.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 94109

Common Sense on Cannabis: The Conservative Case for Reform. *Lilley P. London: The Social Market Foundation, 2001. 31p.*

Peter Lilley, former Conservative Social Security Minister, makes the overwhelming case for radical reform of the laws on cannabis. The pamphlet argues that reform of the laws on cannabis have become unavoidable as drug use has increased and enforcement of the law has become increasingly problematic. Mr Lilley sets out the Conservative case for liberalizing the cannabis laws based on restoring respect for the law and the value of freedom and moral responsibility.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 91345

Decriminalising the personal use of cannabis in the United Kingdom: Does international law leave room for manoeuvre? *Boister N. From: Criminal Law Review: 2001, p.171-183.*

The Police Foundation's Independent Inquiry into the Misuse of Drugs Act, 1971, proclaimed that the Government has room to manoeuvre in respect of the decriminalisation of the personal use of cannabis. This article explores the extent to which the UN Drug Conventions allow the Government such room. It sets out the specific international obligations binding on the United Kingdom with respect to cannabis, focusing in particular on the obligation to criminalize the possession, purchase and cultivation of cannabis for personal use contained in article 3(2) of the 1988 UN Drug Trafficking Convention. The three potential avenues of permissible

exception to this obligation are examined The article concludes that while constitutional exceptions are unreliable, provision for prosecutorial and penal autonomy in the drug conventions provides sufficient discretion in the application of its international obligations for the United Kingdom to follow the Netherlands and effectively decriminalise the personal use of cannabis without violating international law.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 91693

Honesty, realism, responsibility: proposals for the reform of drugs law.

Walmsley J. Liberal Democrats. Policy Unit. London: Liberal Democrat Publications 2001 26p.

The key proposals for changes in Liberal Democrat policy in this paper include: a Standing Drugs Commission; a Europe-wide review of drugs policy every 5 years; a national policy of non-prosecution for possession, cultivation for own use and social supply of cannabis; re-classifying cannabis, cannabinoids, and cannabis derivatives as Class C drugs; permitting medical use of cannabis derivatives; reclassifying ecstasy from Class A to Class B; ending imprisonment as a punishment for possession for own use of any Class B or Class C drug; creation of a new offence of dealing as defined in the Runciman report; the illegal sale of drugs near schools and other sensitive locations should become an aggravating factor in sentencing the offender; the development of pilot schemes for specialized heroin prescription and treatment clinics; increased resources for treatment programmes; enhanced police use of roadside sobriety tests on suspected drug-affected drivers, combined with a publicity campaign on the effects of drugs on driving ability.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 98675

House of Commons drugs debate 19 October 2001: MP's briefing. DrugScope. London: DrugScope, 2001. 4p.

This briefing was written to inform MPs of key facts concerning the proposed re-classification of cannabis, and to state the position of DrugScope in relation to this matter. The briefing addresses the following points: the current legal and policy stance towards drugs, including cannabis, in the United Kingdom and internationally, the relationship between drugs and crime, treatment and health care for drug users (with specific reference to the findings of the NTORS study), drug experimentation among young people, drug trafficking, and the current government strategy. DrugScope states and explains its position in relation to each point; key facts and figures are used to support these statements.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 92283

Legal cannabis. From: Druglink: 16 (6), 2001, p.7.

Jon Owen Jones, Labour MP for Cardiff Central, has launched a Private Member's Bill that if passed would legalise cannabis. It is due to be debated in the House of Commons in the last week of October, but is unlikely to become law. The Bill seeks to legalise therapeutic and recreational use of cannabis, cultivation and supply.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 92403

The Legalisation of Cannabis: An MP's Briefing for the Private Members Debate: 26/10/2001. DrugScope. London: DrugScope, 2001. 3p.

A copy of a briefing paper and covering letter included in a briefing pack sent out to all MPs prior to the second reading in the House of Commons of the Legalisation of Cannabis Private Members Bill. The briefing paper outlines the arguments for legalisation and those against. Facts and figures on cannabis are included, together with a statement about DrugScope's own position on the legalisation of cannabis.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 92998

Policing cannabis reclassification- easy as A B C. *Monaghan G. From: Druglink: 17 (1), 2002, p.7-9.*

In this news feature DS Monaghan of the Metropolitan Police discusses some of the issues that would need to be considered if the government was to extend the scheme currently piloted in Lambeth of just cautioning those found in possession of a small amount of cannabis. The author argues that if the government does want to adopt a scheme similar to the Lambeth model the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, Police and Criminal Evidence Act(PACE) 1984 and the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 will need to be amended. It is also suggested that the case disposal system should be reviewed. Only once this is all achieved Monaghan argues, will the possession of cannabis be decriminalised. The article discusses powers of arrest, powers of search and models of enforcement in detail.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 93537

Press Briefing: legalisation of cannabis. *Jones J.O. Jones R. Unpublished, 2001. 5p.*

This press briefing was produced by Jon Owen Jones, MP for Cardiff Central, in support of his Private Members Bill calling for the legalisation of the therapeutic and recreational use of cannabis. Issues discussed by the briefing include: ignorance; effectiveness of the existing drugs policy; policing and resources; the legalisation v. criminalisation debate; legalisation as a source of revenue; benefits to criminals; increase in use; medical considerations; international situation.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 92738

Second Special Report: Appendix. Government Reply to the Report of the Independent Inquiry into the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. UK. House of Commons. Home Affairs Select Committee. London: Home Office, 2001. 18p.

This document is the Home Office's response to the Report of the Independent Inquiry into the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 chaired by Dame Ruth Runciman and entitled 'Drugs and the Law' (DrugScope Document No. 87700). The response is published as an Appendix to the Second Special Report with responses provided to each of the recommendations made by the Report including the suggested re-classification of cannabis, ecstasy and LSD; establishment of an early warning system; reviewing certain drug related offences and their penalties; confiscation of assets and use of cautions and fines in relation to drug offences.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 90232

Set it free: the case for legislation is difficult, but the case against is worse. *From: Economist: 28th Jul., 2001, p.15-16.*

In this article the arguments for and against the legalisation of drugs. It is suggested that the legalisation of drugs would lead to increased use for three reasons: the price of legalised drugs would be lower; access to legalised drugs would be easier and the quality of the drugs would be more assured and thirdly the social stigma against drug use would reduce. Its is also suggested that commercialisation may have a role to play too.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 92398

Times they are a-changing: policing of cannabis. *May T., Warburton H., Turnbull P.J., Hough M. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2002. xi,62p.*

This report describes the findings of a study designed to provide a snapshot of the policing of cannabis in England and Wales. It focuses on the offence of possession. It examines the relationship between policy and practice, how offences of possession came to light, how they are dealt with, and the financial and social consequences of current practice. In part, the study draws on the 2000 British Crime Survey and national police sentencing statistics for 1999, but at its heart are detailed case studies of practice in four police divisions (or basic command units). These involved

interviews with police officers and young people, examination of custody records and many hours of observation. The report comes at an important time as changes in the cannabis legislation are likely and, if they occur, approaches to policing will change radically.

The report discusses the social and financial costs and benefits associated with policing cannabis and recommends the reclassification of cannabis from Class B to Class C.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 94274

Legislation - international

An alternative to contemporary forms of drug control. *SchmidtSemisch H., Paul B. From: Journal of Drug Issues: 32 (2), 2002, p.709-720.*

This article analyses the main concepts utilized in non-repressive drug control models. After discussing three models of cannabis control used in the Netherlands, Switzerland and the German federal state of Schleswig-Holstein, the authors present an alternative model that is based on the German foodstuffs law.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 96845

Cannabis condemned: the proscription of Indian hemp. *Kendell R. From: Addiction: Feb., 98(2), 2003, p.143-151.*

Aims To find out how cannabis came to be subject to international narcotics legislation. Method Examination of the records of the 1925 League of Nations' Second Opium Conference, of the 1894 Report of the Indian Hemp Drugs Commission and other contemporary documents. Findings Although cannabis (Indian hemp) was not on the agenda of the Second Opium Conference, a claim by the Egyptian delegation that it was as dangerous as opium, and should therefore be subject to the same international controls, was supported by several other countries. No formal evidence was produced and conference delegates had not been briefed about cannabis. The only objections came from Britain and other colonial powers. They did not dispute the claim that cannabis was comparable to opium, but they did want to avoid a commitment to eliminating its use in their Asian and African territories.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 98113

Cannabis: our position for a Canadian Public Policy. Report of the Senate Special Committee on Illegal Drugs. Volume I, General Orientation: Parts I and II. *Nolin P.C., Kenny C. September 2002. xv, 626p.*

The Senate Special Committee on Illegal Drugs' mandate was to examine Canada's public policy approach in relation to cannabis and assess its effectiveness and impact in light of the knowledge of the social and health-related effects of cannabis and the international context. Part I is a general orientation, covering the work of the Committee, and the changing context of cannabis use in an international sphere. Part II discusses effects, types of use and attitudes to cannabis.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 96038

Decriminalising the personal use of cannabis in the United Kingdom: Does international law leave room for manoeuvre? *Boister N. From: Criminal Law Review: 2001, p.171-183.*

The Police Foundation's Independent Inquiry into the Misuse of Drugs Act, 1971, proclaimed that the Government has room to manoeuvre in respect of the decriminalisation of the personal use of cannabis. This article explores the extent to which the UN Drug Conventions allow the Government such room. It sets out the specific international obligations binding on the United Kingdom with respect to cannabis, focusing in particular on the obligation to criminalise the possession, purchase and cultivation of cannabis for personal use contained in article 3(2) of the 1988 UN Drug Trafficking Convention. The three potential avenues of permissible

exception to this obligation are examined The article concludes that while constitutional exceptions are unreliable, provision for prosecutorial and penal autonomy in the drug conventions provides sufficient discretion in the application of its international obligations for the United Kingdom to follow the Netherlands and effectively decriminalise the personal use of cannabis without violating international law.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 91693

Drug war heresies: learning from other vices, times and places. *MacCoun R.J., Reuter P. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2001, xvi, 479p.*

This book provides a multidisciplinary analysis of how the United States should decide on the legal status of cocaine, heroin and marijuana. It draws on data about the experiences of Western European nations with less punitive drug policies as well as new analyses of America's experience with legal cocaine and heroin a century ago, and of America's efforts to regulate gambling, prostitution, alcohol and cigarettes. It offers projections on the likely consequences of a number of different legalization regimes and shows that the choice about how to regulate drugs involves complicated tradeoffs among goals and conflict among social groups. The book presents a sophisticated discussion of how society should deal with the uncertainty about the consequences of legal change. Finally, it explains, in terms of individual attitudes toward risk, why it is so difficult to accomplish substantial reform of drug policy in America.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 98613 JM

Special issue: regulating cannabis: comparative perspectives. *Jacobsen M. International Journal of Drug Policy: 1999, 10(4), 271-352.*

This special issue of the journal comes out of a daylong conference, 'Regulating cannabis: options for control in the 21st century', held in London on September 5, 1998. The meeting brought together speakers in an attempt to clarify how law enforcement across countries handles cannabis offences and to draw a cleared picture of the legal and regulatory environments of Holland, California, Australia, Canada, South Africa, Switzerland and Germany. DrugScope Library Document Number: 86543

Policy in the UK

Cannabis culture: we're all going to pot. *Matthews P. Observer: 1999, 15 Aug., Unpaginated.*

In this article, the author suggests that, as soft drugs cross the generation gap MPs are alone in keeping legalisation a taboo subject. The author also looks at the history of drug policy and drug prohibition in the UK.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 86719

Common sense on cannabis. *Lilley P. Social Market Foundation London: Social Market Foundation, In: High time for reform: drug policy for the 21st century. Chen S., Skidelsky R. 2001. p.71-86.*

In this article the author argues that the decriminalisation of cannabis is inevitable and is in fact happening by default with fewer prosecutions of cannabis users. He suggest that whilst cannabis does have some adverse health effects the arguments for criminalisation do not stand up to scrutiny. It is argued that the situation is clouded further by the moral concerns around drug misuse and a failure to distinguish properly between soft and hard drugs. The chapter then discusses patterns current patterns of use, current law and the history of UK policy on cannabis use. This is then followed by an examination of the arguments for criminalising cannabis, the more liberal approach of the Dutch and the liberalisation of attitudes towards cannabis use.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 94415 JL

The domestic cultivation of cannabis. *Joseph Rowntree Foundation., South Bank University. Criminal Policy Research Unit., King's College, London. National Addiction Centre. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2003. [4]p.*

This study found that domestic cultivation of cannabis has been on the increase and as much as half the cannabis consumed in England and Wales may be grown here; much cultivation is on a small scale for personal use; there is a thriving legal business in cannabis seed and growing equipment; the police and courts vary widely in how they deal with offences of cannabis cultivation; United Nations conventions permit cultivation for personal use to be dealt with by means other than punishment such as education, treatment, counselling and warnings; several developed countries have decriminalised or plan to decriminalise cannabis possession for personal use.
DrugScope Library Document Number: 97364

A growing market:the cultivation of cannabis for personal use. *Hough M. Warburton H., Few B., May T., Man L., Turnbull P.J. London: Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2003. xiii, 45p.*

This report examines the domestic cultivation of cannabis in England and Wales. Traditionally cannabis has been imported into the country by drug traffickers, but the extent of home cultivation has grown rapidly over the past decade, and home growing now accounts for a significant amount of cannabis consumed in this country. This study identifies why different people become involved in the home-growing of cannabis - ranging through the medicinal, social and commercial - and considers the implications for policing the different groups. It examines approaches taken to tackling cultivation in various other countries and considers how the United Nations' Conventions on illicit drugs affect domestic policy in this area. The study draws on a small-scale survey of growers, a survey of police forces and on desk research. The report concludes with a summary of key findings and draws out implications for policy. The study also includes a small number of illustrative case studies
DrugScope Library Document Number: 97195

High time for reform: drug policy for the 21st century. *Social Market Foundation. Chen S., Skidelsky E. London: The Social Market Foundation, 2001. 138p.*

The collection of essays in this book provide a critique of UK and international drug policy. Experts from a range of disciplines including history, psychiatry, social policy and economics highlight the problems currently facing UK drug policy and suggest ways forward for change. Issues debated include: history of UK drugs laws; soft drugs, addiction and free will; theories of addiction; drugs and poverty; drugs and prisons; decriminalisation of cannabis; supply reduction and heroin prescribing.
DrugScope Library Document Number: 94409-94417 JL

Honesty, realism, responsibility: proposals for the reform of drugs law. *Walmsley J. Liberal Democrats. Policy Unit. London: Liberal Democrat Publications 2001 26p.*

The key proposals for changes in Liberal Democrat policy in this paper include: a Standing Drugs Commission; a Europe-wide review of drugs policy every 5 years; a national policy of non-prosecution for possession, cultivation for own use and social supply of cannabis; re-classifying cannabis, cannabiniols, and cannabis derivatives as Class C drugs; permitting medical use of cannabis derivatives; reclassifying ecstasy from Class A to Class B; ending imprisonment as a punishment for possession for own use of any Class B or Class C drug; creation of a new offence of dealing as defined in the Runciman report; the illegal sale of drugs near schools and other sensitive locations should become an aggravating factor in sentencing the offender; the development of pilot schemes for specialized heroin prescription and treatment clinics; increased resources for treatment programmes; enhanced police use of roadside sobriety tests on suspected drug-affected drivers, combined with a publicity

campaign on the effects of drugs on driving ability.
DrugScope Library Document Number: 98675

Queen Victoria's cannabis use: or, how history does and does not get used in drug policy making. *Berridge V. From: Addiction Research & Theory: Aug. 11(4), 2003, p.213-215.*

This editorial discusses the use of history to influence and inform drug policy and argues that although drugs policy is in need of an historical context, at the moment, historical analysis emerges out of the needs of specific policy agendas.
DrugScope Library Document Number: 97821

Times they are a-changing: policing of cannabis. *May T., Warburton H., Turnbull P.J., Hough M. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2002. xi,62p.*

This report describes the findings of a study designed to provide a snapshot of the policing of cannabis in England and Wales. It focuses on the offence of possession. It examines the relationship between policy and practice, how offences of possession came to light, how they are dealt with, and the financial and social consequences of current practice. In part, the study draws on the 2000 British Crime Survey and national police sentencing statistics for 1999, but at its heart are detailed case studies of practice in four police divisions (or basic command units). These involved interviews with police officers and young people, examination of custody records and many hours of observation.
DrugScope Library Document Number: 94274

Understanding marijuana: a new look at the scientific evidence. *Earleywine M. Oxford: Oxford Univeristy Press, 2002. xii,326p.*

The author gives a review of the scientific background to the medical and recreational use of cannabis, ranging from basic biological mechanisms of action, to promising approaches to the prevention and treatment of marijuana problems. Topics covered include medical use, impact on thought and memory, law and policy, subjective effects, stepping stones and gateways, and social problems.
DrugScope Library Document Number: 96712 DK

Policy - international

An alternative to contemporary forms of drug control. *SchmidtSemisch H., Paul B. From: Journal of Drug Issues: 32 (2), 2002, p.709-720.*

This article analyzes the main concepts utilized in non-repressive drug control models. After discussing three models of cannabis control used in the Netherlands, Switzerland and the German federal state of Schleswig-Holstein, the authors present an alternative model that is based on the German foodstuffs law.
DrugScope Library Document Number: 96845

Cannabis, social control and exclusion: the importance of social ties. *Suissa A.J. From: International Journal of Drug Policy: 12 (5-6), 2001, p.385-396.*

This article analyzes psychosocial issues related to social exclusion created by the illegality of cannabis. The paper is divided into three parts. First, it provides a historical portrait of the penal approach to this social exclusion while focusing on the main recommendations of various international commissions in respect of cannabis consumption and the importance of social ties. Second, it explores how coffee shops in the Netherlands constitute a space where cannabis consumers can be, to a certain point, demarginalized and in which social ties can be created without punishment or incarceration. Finally, the paper suggests some conditions for empowerment and invites social practitioners to pass from a psycho-relational to a psychosocial therapeutic system in order to avoid negative social labeling and social exclusion.
DrugScope Library Document Number: 93176

The complete illustrated guide to cannabis. *Brownlee N. London: Sanctuary, 2003. 167p.*

Cannabis is a drug surrounded in controversy, hailed as a medicinal wonder-drug and villified as a social menace. Looking at the drug in all its many guises, this guide neither preaches the benefits of the drug nor condemns its ills, but lays out the facts in a straightforward, objective way.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 97561 DK

The decline of Dutch drug policy?: lessons to be learned. *Garretsen H.F.L. From: Journal of Substance Use: Mar., 8(1), 2003, p.2-4.*

For many years, many saw the Dutch Drug Policy as a liberal and successful policy and policy makers from many other countries wanted to 'go Dutch.' Harm-reduction measures and the tolerant Dutch attitude towards cannabis products have drawn international attention, positive and negative. However, things are changing rapidly. Dutch citizens no longer accept the present policy. Many harm-reduction measures are under pressure. It is argued that a new drug policy should pay more attention to the position of the so-called third party, those who suffer most from issues like drug-related nuisance. It is possible that within a few years those who are in favour of a liberal drug policy will not go Dutch, but will perhaps have to turn to other countries, for instance, the UK. However, those responsible for drug policies should learn from the latest developments in the Netherlands too.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 97484

Decriminalisation of cannabis use in Switzerland from and international perspective: European, American and Australian experiences. *Maag V. From: International Journal of Drug Policy: June, 14(3), 2003, p.279-281.*

Public views on criminalisation or decriminalisation of drug use are rarely based on scientific evidence. Preconceived notions about the acceptance or tolerance of the use of narcotics in comparison are more influential. The decriminalisation of cannabis is currently being discussed and revision of the Swiss law on narcotics is pending. The Swiss Federal Office of Public Health (SFOPH) commissioned three international experts to provide a critical assessment of the experience gained in other countries with decriminalisation of cannabis use. DrugScope Library Document Number: 98428

Drug war heresies: learning from other vices, times and places. *MacCoun R.J., Reuter P. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2001, xvi, 479p.*

This book provides a multidisciplinary analysis of how the United States should decide on the legal status of cocaine, heroin and marijuana. It draws on data about the experiences of Western European nations with less punitive drug policies as well as new analyses of America's experience with legal cocaine and heroin a century ago, and of America's efforts to regulate gambling, prostitution, alcohol and cigarettes. It offers projections on the likely consequences of a number of different legalization regimes and shows that the choice about how to regulate drugs involves complicated tradeoffs among goals and conflict among social groups. The book presents a sophisticated discussion of how society should deal with the uncertainty about the consequences of legal change. Finally, it explains, in terms of individual attitudes toward risk, why it is so difficult to accomplish substantial reform of drug policy in America. DrugScope Library Document Number: 98613 JM

"Have a piss, drink Ogogoro, smoke Igbo, but don't take Gbana" - hard and soft drugs in Nigeria : a critical comparison of official policies and the view on the street. *Klein A. From: Journal of Psychoactive Drugs: 33 (2), 2001, p.111-119.*

This article, by giving voice to Nigerian drug users, is an attempt to dispel some misconceptions about drug use and abuse, and to widen the debate surrounding African drug control. DrugScope Library Document Number: 92034

Rainbow vice : the drugs and sex industries in the new South Africa. *Leggett T. London: Zed Books, 2002. x,206p.*

The fast growing drug culture in the new South Africa is tightly linked to the world of commercial sex and in conflict with a profoundly Christian population. Here, the author shows how varied, across the different ethnic groups, the drug scene is. He pays special attention to South Africa's very own (and widespread) indigenous dagga (cannabis) and the much newer Mandrax (or 'buttons'). DrugScope Library Document Number: 95622 KM

Reducing the harms caused by cannabis use: the policy debate in Australia. *Hall W. From: Drug and Alcohol Dependence: 62 (3), 2001, p.163-174.*

The debate about cannabis policy in Australia has revolved around the harms that cannabis causes to users and the community, on the one hand, and the harms that are caused by the prohibition of its use, on the other. This paper assesses evidence on: (1) the harms caused to users and the community by cannabis use (derived from the international scientific literature) and (2) the harms that arise from prohibition (as reflected in Australian research). The most probable harms caused by cannabis use include: an increased risk of motor vehicle accidents; respiratory disease; dependence; adverse effects on adolescent development; and the exacerbation of psychosis. DrugScope Library Document Number: 91261

Therapeutic use in the UK

Are cannabinoids an effective and safe treatment option in the management of pain? A qualitative systematic review. *Campbell F.A., Tramer M.R., Carroll D., Reynolds D.J., Moore R.A., McQuay H.J. From: British Medical Journal: 323 (7303), 2001, p.13-16.*

Objective To establish whether cannabis is an effective and safe treatment option in the management of pain. Design Systematic review of randomised controlled trials. Conclusion Cannabinoids are no more effective than codeine in controlling pain and have depressant effects on the central nervous system that limit their use. Their widespread introduction into clinical practice for pain management is therefore undesirable. In acute postoperative pain they should not be used. Before cannabinoids can be considered for treating spasticity and neuropathic pain, further valid randomised controlled studies are needed. DrugScope Library Document Number: 92596

Cannabinoids in clinical practice. *Williamson E.M., Evans F.J. From: Drugs: 60 (6), 2001, p.1303-1314.*

DrugScope Library Document Number: 91140

Cannabis UK. *From: Hansard: 9 Jan., 2001, Col.862W.*

Outlines that the Government have approved a number of clinical trials for evaluating the therapeutic potential of cannabis and discusses why the Government feel these trials are needed before the law can be changed. DrugScope Library Document Number: 93435

Cannabis. Green J. *London: Pavilion, 2002. 256p.*

An illustrated history of cannabis - its production, use and the attitudes of the public and governments to it. Chapters deal with its origins and nomenclature; recreational use; medicinal use and legislation and control in the UK and internationally. 50 pages of appendices provide a list of medical uses; a description of its horticulture; a detailed glossary; and a chronology from 6000BC to 2001AD. DrugScope Library Document Number: 97384 C

Cannabis or health? Ashton H. From: *Current Opinion in Psychiatry*: 15 (3), 2002, p.247-253.

Prevalence of recreational cannabis use has risen in many countries. Users are starting younger, continuing for longer and preferring more potent plant preparations. Such use is likely to increase cannabis-associated risks, which, on present evidence, include vehicle and other accidents, dependence, exacerbation of psychosis, impairment of adolescent development and school performance, respiratory disease and perhaps progression to other illicit drugs. Devising effective control policies is difficult, but perhaps greater efforts should be directed towards reducing prevalence and providing treatment for dependent users. Increased knowledge of the way in which plant cannabinoids interact with endogenous cannabinoid systems has helped to explain some of the adverse effects of cannabis and has also opened the way to therapeutic uses. Pure plant cannabinoids and synthetic analogues have a potential role in the treatment of pain conditions, spastic disorders and in palliative care, and give promise of future benefits in a range of illnesses.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 96050

Cannabis series - the whole story: part 4: the medicinal use of cannabis pre-prohibition. Mathre M.L., Krawitz M. From: *Drug and Alcohol Professional*: 2(2), 2002, p.3.-7.

Although Cannabis has been used as medicine since ancient times, its use did not become popular in Europe or the US until the 1840s, after research of its therapeutic value began appearing in the medical literature. From 1840-1900 there were more than 100 articles published that recommended Cannabis for one disorder or another. This article tracks these historical recommendations.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 95801

Hidden dangers of 'softest drug'. Moriarty R. From: *Metro*: 1 Feb., 2001, p.9.

Brief article which discusses the findings of two studies into cannabis, one of which suggests that using the drug could lead to the impairment of perception, motor skills, and reaction times. The other study suggests that cannabis could be used as a therapeutic agent in the treatment of cancer and multiple sclerosis.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 92535

A homelie herbe: medicinal cannabis in early England. Crawford V. From: *Journal of Cannabis Therapeutics*: 2 (1), 2002, p.71-79.

Cannabis is often regarded as a substance alien to British culture until the 1960s, at which supposed point of introduction it functioned as a marker of subversion. In fact cannabis was used as a medicinal herb by the Anglo-Saxons, and highly valued during the Tudor and Stuart periods. It remained in the British *Materia medica* through the 18th and 19th centuries, being well regarded by orthodox doctors. However, the type of cannabis grown in England was probably less rich in psychotropic cannabinoids than plants grown in the East.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 95516

A smoking gun?: the impact of cannabis smoking on respiratory health.

British Lung Foundation. London: British Lung Foundation, 2002. 15p.

This report sets out to identify existing scientific and medical research on cannabis smoking and respiratory health. It identifies what conclusions it is possible to draw from the existing evidence and highlights gaps in our knowledge which require further research. The report shows that three cannabis joints a day cause the same damage to the lining of the airways as 20 cigarettes. A Smoking Gun? also shows that the health dangers of cannabis have substantially increased since the 1960s, due to increased amounts of THC in the cannabis consumed today. As a result longitudinal studies from 40 years ago cannot be taken as accurate.

DrugScope Library Document Number: 95853

Therapeutic aspects of cannabis and cannabinoids. *Robson P. From: British Journal of Psychiatry: 178, 2001, p.107-115.*

Background: Review commissioned in 1996 by the Department of Health (DOH).
Aims: Assess therapeutic profile of cannabis and cannabinoids. Results and conclusions: Cannabis and some cannabinoids are effective anti-emetics and analgesics and reduce intraocular pressure. There is evidence of symptom relief and improved well-being in selected neurological conditions, AIDS and certain cancers. Cannabinoids may reduce anxiety and improve sleep. Anticonvulsant activity requires clarification. Other properties identified by basic research await evaluation. Standard treatments for many relevant disorders are unsatisfactory. Cannabis is safe in overdose but often produces unwanted effects, typically sedation, intoxication, clumsiness, dizziness, dry mouth, lowered blood pressure or increased heart rate.
DrugScope Library Document Number: 91139

Therapeutic uses of cannabis: with evidence. *UK. House of Lords. Select Committee on Science and Technology. London: TSO, 2001. 34p.*

This report presents the evidence and findings of an inquiry convened to examine the current state of research into the therapeutic uses of cannabis, the roles of the Home Office and the Medicines Control Agency in the licensing of cannabis-based medicines, and more recent issues relating to the prosecution of therapeutic cannabis users.
DrugScope Library Document Number: 93250

A token' gesture: why the joint will prevail. *Coomber R. From: Druglink: 18 (1), 2003, p.20-21.*

Despite successful trials of synthetic cannabis, it is still no match for the drug itself. This article discusses why the availability of pharmaceutical cannabis preparations will not prevent the smoking of cannabis by therapeutic users.
DrugScope Library Document Number: 97224

Understanding marijuana: a new look at the scientific evidence. *Earleywine M. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002. xii,326p.*

The author gives a review of the scientific background to the medical and recreational use of cannabis, ranging from basic biological mechanisms of action, to promising approaches to the prevention and treatment of marijuana problems. Topics covered include medical use, impact on thought and memory, law and policy, subjective effects, stepping stones and gateways, and social problems.
DrugScope Library Document Number: 96712 DK

Using cannabis therapeutically in the UK: a qualitative analysis. *Coomber R., Oliver M., Morris C. From: Journal of Drug Issues: Spring, 33(2), 2003, p.325-356.*

Thirty-three therapeutic cannabis users in England were interviewed about their experiences using an illegal drug for therapeutic purposes.
DrugScope Library Document Number: 97858

How to find out more....

Searching the Library database

Try using these Keywords to do a subject search:

• Cannabis

This keyword will find items on cannabis no matter how they are spelt - e.g. it will find all variations of marijuana.

- **Cannabinoids**
- **THC**

Remember you can use the '&' symbol to combine words. For example combine your search with:

- Keywords for Country names such as 'UK', 'England' or even cities such as 'London' to find information on cannabis use in a particular geographical area
- Keywords for age groups such as 'adolescents' or 'adults' to find information on cannabis use in a particular age group;
- Use 'therapeutic use' & 'cannabis' to find articles on the use of cannabis to treat medical conditions such as multiple sclerosis
- Use legislation or legali* to find articles on cannabis legalisation. Using legali* will find legalise, legalize, legalization and legalisation

Websites & Contacts

Drugs.Gov

Information on the reclassification of cannabis, including FAQs, background information, and links to downloadable resources on reclassification aimed at young people.

<http://www.drugs.gov.uk/NationalStrategy/CannabisReclassification>

UK Cannabis Internet Activists

UKCIA is the website of the British Legalise Cannabis Campaign. It was formed in 1995, and provides historical, medical, legal, and campaigning information about cannabis. Its primary aim is to see cannabis use legalised. As well as campaigning information, UKCIA has a library, containing news, research, contacts and law items - some of which can be searched through a comprehensive database.

www.ukcia.org

International Association for Cannabis as Medicine

This site gives a reviewed synthesis of science-based information about medical and side effects of oral and inhaled cannabis products in relation to various indications. It is aimed at patients, physicians and scientists.

www.acmed.org

Independent Drug Monitoring Unit

The IDMU aims to provide impartial advice and information on issues surrounding illegal drugs. The site features sections on recent developments in medical cannabis, and Cannabis prices in the UK.

www.idmu.co.uk

Medical Marijuana Co-operative

This website is both a campaigning and information site. It aims to inform the general public and policy makers of the medical benefits of marijuana, and to let them know that the organisation is openly campaigning for the legalisation of cannabis.

www.greenhosting.co.uk/mmco

Legalise Cannabis Alliance

The LCA provides its political party manifesto, but also a news section that provides

links to stories in local newspapers around the UK, a message board and background briefings on the legal position with regard to Cannabis in the UK.

www.lca-uk.org/

Cannabis Campaigners' Guide

The Cannabis Campaigners' Guide is a website devoted to assisting people to lobby their MPs, parliament and others to support the legalisation of cannabis. There is a wealth of information about the history, culture and effects of cannabis, together with full text studies and research, links to news items, and online statistics.

www.ccguide.org.uk

Cannabis.net

A selection of online essays and images about cannabis.

www.cannabis.net

The Vaults of Erowid Cannabis Vault

Includes images, articles and factsheets on many different aspects of cannabis use.

<http://www.erowid.org/plants/cannabis/cannabis.shtml>

New Scientist - Marijuana Special Report

<http://www.newscientist.com/hottopics/marijuana/>

International Cannabinoid Research Society

The International Cannabinoid Research Society is dedicated to research in all fields relating to the Cannabinoids, from receptor studies and medicinal chemistry to treatment and prevention of marijuana abuse.

<http://cannabinoidsociety.org/>

CCNEWZ

The UK Marijuana Magazine. CCNEWZ provides the a regular update of world news & information on the subject of Cannabis and its Prohibition.

<http://www.ccnewz.com/>

Marijuana Anonymous, is the website of a self-help organisation set up to support marijuana users who wish to stop using. Marijuana Anonymous uses the basic 12 Steps of Recovery founded by Alcoholics Anonymous. The site includes a series of FAQs and details of relevant literature.

<http://www.marijuana-anonymous.org/>

Drug Reform Coordination Network (DRC), homepage provides links to a variety of drug policy reform topics, including a tour of the 'war on drugs' and news bulletins. Also the DRC public policy reading room, includes policy documents and media articles. druglibrary.org site presented by DRCNET, "the worlds largest online media library of drug policy" includes links to information on media awareness, the Schaffer library of drug policy with search engine, Carl Olsen's marijuana archive, the Cannabis Research Library and other policy resources.

<http://stopthedrugwar.org/index.shtml>

Evidence based answers to cannabis questions

Information from the Australian National Council on Drugs

<http://www.ancd.org.au/current/current12.htm>

Cannabis in Multiple Sclerosis Trial

This is the largest trial of cannabis treatment in Multiple Sclerosis. It is funded by the Medical Research Council with no commercial backing or interest other than the provision of the medication by Solvay Pharmaceuticals and the Institute for Clinical

Research, Berlin.

<http://www.cannabis-trial.plymouth.ac.uk/>

Current Controlled Trials

Database of controlled trials in the UK. Use this database to search for medical cannabis trials

<http://www.controlled-trials.com/>

Inquiry into the public health strategies related to cannabis use and the most appropriate legal status (New Zealand)

<http://www.clerk.parliament.govt.nz/Content/SelectCommitteeReports/i6c.pdf>

GW Pharmaceuticals

GW Pharmaceuticals is licensed by the UK Home Office to work with a range of controlled drugs for medical research purposes. The Group's lead programme is the development of a product portfolio of non-smoked prescription medicines derived from cannabis, including Sativex®, to meet patient needs in a wide range of therapeutic indications.

<http://www.gwpharm.com/>

Press Articles

BBC: Doctors' fears at cannabis change 21st January

The British Medical Association has launched a last minute attack on the government's decision to downgrade the criminal status of cannabis.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk>

The Times: How big a problem is cannabis-induced psychosis? 7 January 2004

Weeks before the drug is downgraded from Class B to Class C this article in the The Times presents evidence that cannabis-induced psychosis is the biggest problem facing inner city mental health services.

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk>

The Times: Cannabis: high and lows Debate

Faced with new evidence that cannabis can cause psychosis, should the Government think again about reclassifying it?

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk>

The Times: Parenting: Different class, same problem

Cannabis is soon to be graded as only a class C drug but new evidence points to its dangers, so what advice should parents give children?

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk>

Observer: Haze of confusion hangs over dangers to health

From the end of this month cannabis will be reclassified as a class C drug, alongside tranquillisers and steroids. But does anyone really know what the dangers of smoking dope are?

<http://observer.guardian.co.uk>

Observer: Why I ditched my liberal views on dope

Sue Arnold wanted to legalise cannabis - until the drug triggered a psychotic episode in her son.

<http://observer.guardian.co.uk>