

DRUGS AND THE POLICE



Jimmy Rogers

WERE DRUGS PLANTED?

Jimmy Rogers was walking home with his wife and a few friends one night last August when he was stopped by police.

He was searched in the street, arrested, taken to Cheapside and charged with possessing cannabis.

It was only then that the police recognised Jimmy. Until a few months earlier he had been basketball coach to the Liverpool and Bootle police force.

And now 31-year-old Jimmy, who is coloured and lives in Huskisson Street, is to complain to Liverpool's chief constable that cannabis was planted on him by the officer who arrested him.

In February, Jimmy was acquitted by a Crown Court jury of being in possession of cannabis.

As a character witness, Jimmy had Chief Superintendent Bob Alker, formerly of 'A' division, and manager of the police basketball

Arrest

team during the two years Jimmy coached them.

On the night of his arrest, Jimmy was walking down Sandon Street, not far from his home.

"As I was walking home a big fellow came up to me. He was bigger than me and I'm over six feet and he was in civilian clothes. He put his hand on my shoulder and said: 'Come here, sonny.'"

"I turned round and said: 'Who are you talking to?' He said he was a police officer. I asked to see his identification. He whipped out a card and flashed it and put it back in to his pocket before I could see it properly.

"Then a uniformed officer came up and pointed to his hat with his stick and said: 'Isn't this enough evidence?' " The plain clothes officer, according to Jimmy, was named H. His number was

"I told him I hadn't committed any offence and said I was on my way home. As I turned to go he grabbed me and said: 'Oh are you? Funny guy.'"

Free Press Reporter

"He said he wanted to search me and I let him. He pulled out some letters from inside my jacket pocket, and a comb. Then he put his hand back in and said 'What's this?'"

As far as I could see it was a small piece of silver paper. He started to open it and sniff it.

"Sheila, my wife, said to him: 'You've just planted that.'"

"The police officer then told me he was arresting me because he believed it was cannabis.

"I don't touch drugs and I told the court that in February"

Before beginning to coach the police basketball team in 1968, Jimmy had been a physical training instructor in the army for nine years.

Now Jimmy is making three allegations against police officer H.

1. "Police officer H planted cannabis on me."

2. "He stopped and searched me for no legitimate reason."

3. "I was apprehended and addressed in a provocative manner unbecoming to a member of the police force."

On the night of Jimmy's acquittal he was leaving home to go to the YMCA gymnasium where he coaches a youth team. As he crossed the road a police jeep pulled up. Out jumped four officers. 'Come here,' they shouted to him, 'What's in that bag?'"

When Jimmy explained who he was and where he'd been that day they let him go.

Otherwise he might just have been on his way to Cheapside again.

Their own judge and jury

An enquiry has begun into the case of Lennie Cruickshank who alleges the police beat him up and planted drugs on him early one morning.

But complaints about police drug planting, harassment and racial prejudice have not ended, despite news of this investigation.

Nor has faith in the police grown.

Not surprisingly. For Alderman A.B. Collins, chairman of the Liverpool and Bootle Police Authority, stated quite plainly:

'In my view [the] allegations are totally unfounded and I will prove them unfounded.'

Few people believe the enquiry will be impartial. Whenever there are complaints against the police they are always investigated by other policemen — not an independent body.

Lennie's case is no exception. So the residents in Toxteth would not be surprised if the facts were quietly swept under the carpet.

An independent enquiry into the police behaviour on Merseyside is urgently needed.

Lennie was acquitted in the Crown Court after a week-long

trial. Several aspects of the police evidence were torn to shreds.

And the charge of possessing cannabis was almost forgotten as policeman after policeman was questioned.

We also report on this page that Jimmy Rogers — the police's own basketball coach — alleges that drugs were planted on him. Even a chief superintendent acted as his character witness.

Again there is the front page story about Kirkby police treating a kids' party as a major threat to law and order.

A host of policemen, five panda cars and a black maria were called to deal with women and children.

Until these and other complaints are investigated by an independent body, people in some areas will fear the police as much as criminals.

Slum areas lose out

The inner city areas are normally the deprived areas. It's no exception in Liverpool.

Most people would readily agree that these decaying areas need more aid — a concentration of financial resources.

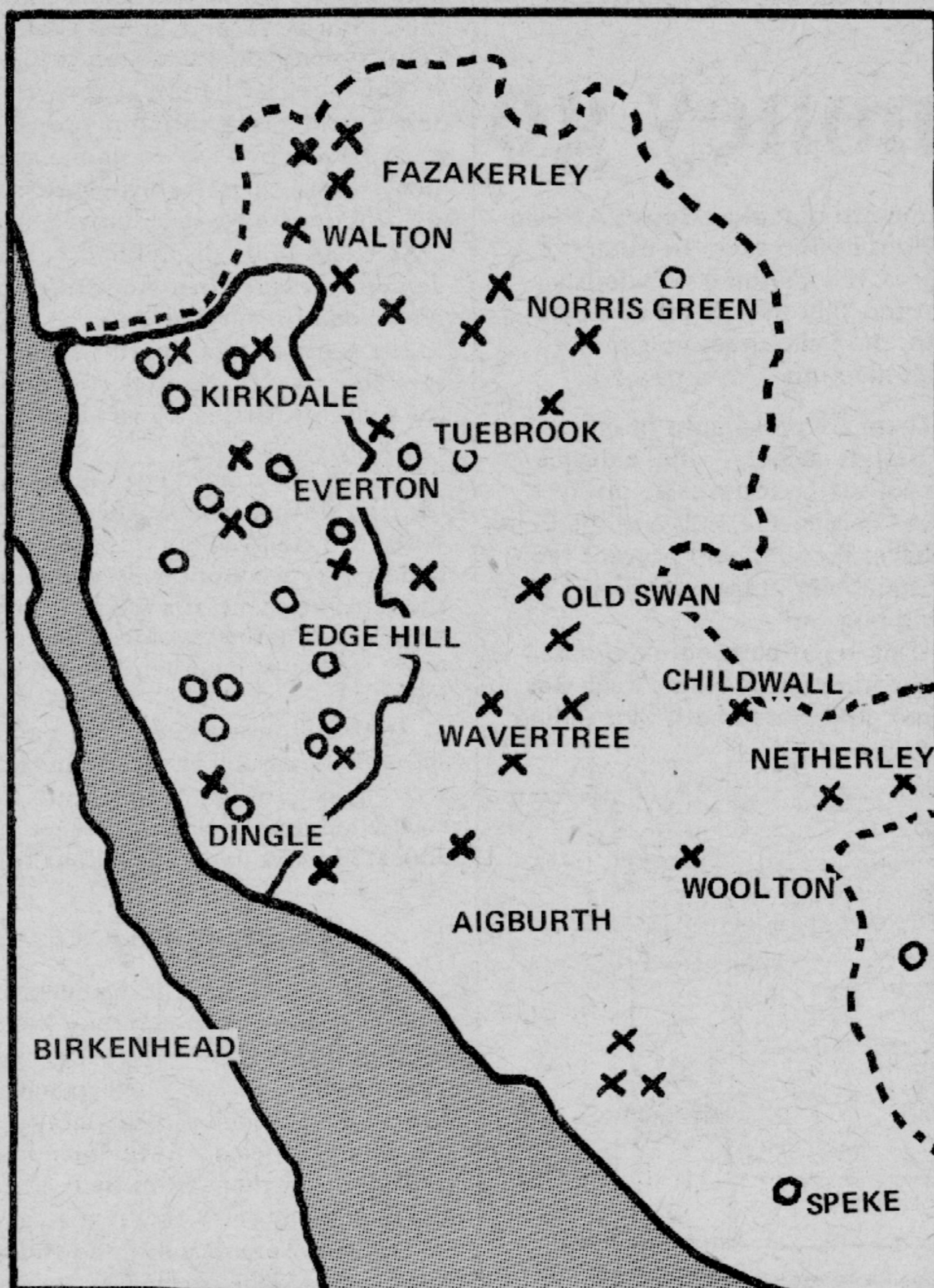
Or so you would have thought. The above map is very revealing about which areas of Liverpool get priority treatment when it comes to the distribution of aid.

It shows that the overwhelming majority of local authority-provided summer play schemes are not in the areas where they are most needed...and where play space is limited.

Instead, in the overcrowded inner areas community councils, residents groups and other voluntary bodies have to organise their own schemes (marked in circles on the map).

While the local authority schemes (crosses on the map) run in a belt around and outside the deprived and forgotten areas.

Perhaps the fact that most councillors live in suburban areas explains why the Corporation aid is concentrated there. And not in the crumbling city areas where they are desperately wanted.



Key to repair code

Council house tenants who make a request for repairs are normally given a slip of paper with a code number.

The code, for those who understand it, tells how long the tenant will have to wait for the repair. Unfortunately most people don't understand it and are kept in suspense for days and weeks on end.

To clear up people's doubts, the Free Press has obtained the key to the code. It is as follows:

- PRIORITY ONE**
Repair within 24 hours.
- PRIORITY TWO**
Repair within 3 days.
- PRIORITY THREE**
You may have to wait four weeks.
- PRIORITY FOUR**
Could take ten weeks or more.

Many people don't get a slip when they put in for repairs. If you aren't offered one be sure to ask for it—it's the only way to be certain your complaint is going to be seen to.

A load of balls....

One of the rules of American football states that helmets must not be painted to look like footballs, after a conniving coach had his side emerge from the huddle and race up the field, each man carrying his helmet under his arm. They all looked like balls. One of them was.



Three women who tested 'feminine' deodorant sprays for Moneysworth magazine found that one brand, Massengill, will kill cockroaches;

Free cars for the workers... Did you know that firms can now spend up to £4,000 on each car they buy and set the whole amount against tax? The doubling of the allowance was one of the less publicised 'benefits' to come out of the budget.

Britain is to spend £6½ million on military bands this year, according to the 1971 defence estimates. This is more than the sum allocated for the Government's entire urban aid programme over the same period.



Baby's first prison. Under the Children and Young Person's Act of 1969, approved schools are to be renamed "community homes". As the saying goes — a rose by any other name would smell as sweet.

Soft drink and ice cream sellers did good business when a crowd of 150,000 people turned out in Lagos to watch the execution of three men convicted of armed robbery. The execution rate in Nigeria is now one of the highest in the world — fast approaching that of South Africa.

In a drive against Communist insurgents in south-west Burma government forces captured 257 firearms and elephants.

The American Defence Department reports that the amount of 'fragging' in Vietnam has almost doubled in the last year. The number of incidents rose from 96 in 1969 to 209 in 1970. 'Fragging' is G.I. slang for throwing a fragmentation grenade at an officer.