

■ Sex worker group gets interdict

Brothel clampdown

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THE campaign against sex workers has led to the shutdown of two brothels in Goodwood after an undercover collaborative effort from the city's Vice Squad and South African Police.

With eight sex workers arrested on Friday 16 October, the City of Cape Town has signalled that it will intensify its fight against prostitution.

Mr Neil Arendse, spokesperson for Specialised Law Enforcement Services thanked the members of the public who alerted the authorities to the brothels.

"On Friday we arrested five ladies who had previously been profiled," explained Arendse.

Sex workers who are arrested by the Vice Squad are initially fined R500 for a first offence, R1 000 for a second offence and R1 500 for a third offence.

He said: "Members of the two teams visited the brothels for verification purposes and were offered a variety of sexual services for payment."

Friday's raid saw the sex workers' clients disperse when the squad and police officers arrived on the scene.

"When we took the women into custody, the would-be clients left in a hurry providing a variety of innovative explanations to justify their presence," explained Arendse.

Meanwhile, the Sex Worker Advocacy Task Force (Sweat) won a court interdict against the police, preventing them from harrasing sex workers if there was no intention to prosecute them.

Arendse has insisted that his squad was definitely not harrasing the city's sex workers on the recent raid.

Sex workers who are arrested for

a fourth time, are prosecuted on the grounds that they are engaged in prostitution which remains a criminal offence.

Arendse added: "If we catch someone on the road engaging in

sexual intercourse then of course we'll arrest them in terms of the by-law which prohibits sex in public spaces."

The squad last week arrested 23 "night-time streetwalkers" in

Goodwood who were all profiled and released on a notice with fines totalling R14 500.

Police spokesperson Billy Jones said arresting sex workers formed part of their crime intelligence

gathering.

He added that the fines issued to the arrested women did not mean a criminal record, which is only acquired once a prostitute has been found guilty in court.