**Factsheet** 

 **Cannabis**

Cannabis is a Class B controlled drug under Part II, Schedule 2, of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 (MDA 1971). As such, it is unlawful to possess, supply, produce, import or export this drug except under a Home Office licence.

If you have a medical reason for using cannabis, you will be prescribed a “cannabis-based” product by way of a nasal spray approved by the Home Office.  The smoking of cannabis remains prohibited even for medical purposes.

Under section 23 of the Misuse of Drugs Act, if a constable has reasonable grounds to suspect that any person is in possession of a controlled drug in contravention of this Act or of any regulations made thereunder, the constable may—

1. search that person, and detain him for the purpose of searching him;
2. search any vehicle or vessel in which the constable suspects that the drug may be found, and for that purpose require the person in control of the vehicle or vessel to stop it;
3. seize and detain, for the purposes of proceedings under this Act, anything found in the course of the search which appears to the constable to be evidence of an offence under this Act.

The odour from smoking cannabis is a sickly-sweet smell that is often offensive to those subjected to it, making it both unpleasant and illegal.

It is also an offence to cultivate any plant of the genus Cannabis except under a Home Office licence.

**Signs of cannabis cultivation**

## Cannabis has a strong and sickly-sweet smell when grown, different to the smell when it is smoked

## There may be a constant buzz of ventilation or large ducting tubes protruding out of windows

* Windows may be blacked out (either using heavy plastic or heavy fabric on windows, usually hidden by nets, curtains or blinds)
* Unsociable comings and goings
* Strong and constant lighting day and night in the attic, roof space, basement or other rooms
* Cables, electrical wiring tampered with and bypassed circuitry
* Bin bags full of vegetable material being thrown away. Stalks and roots of cannabis plants are discarded when plants are harvested.
* Other signs include reflective material i.e. tin foil and bags of soil or fertiliser

**What should I do if I think there is a cannabis farm?**

* You can phone Staffordshire Police on 101, or online at www.staffordshire.police.uk
* Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.
* If the property is owned by Tamworth Borough Council, you can ring us on 01827 709709
* Never approach a cannabis farm yourself – some have ‘wired’ doors and windows to stop rival dealers from stealing their property
* Get as much information as you can (address, names if you have them, car registration details of visitors)
* Don’t delay! – tell somebody.