

The expert

Dave Francis was different. He was a black expert on drugs, and he was the leader of Addaction. This was a group in Nottingham, worried about crack. Their job was to find out about drug dealing, and to cut it down.

Francis started off as an armed robber. He had been convicted of 30 offences, including theft, having guns, and possessing drugs. Then he said he had become a Christian and changed. He knew about drugs, and he could help them. They gave him a job, and a budget of £170,000. He became an expert, and spoke to senior policemen and MPs.

What they didn't know was that Francis was also a dealer. He was supposed to be paid £21,000 a year. But he drove a £50,000 Mercedes and owned two houses. He had diamonds drilled into his teeth, and wore a watch worth £30,000.

Drug addicts would come to the team, trying to get off drugs. Francis sold them crack cocaine and heroin. He also dealt in stolen goods, and sold guns. He let his office be used for drug-taking, and took on another dealer as his deputy.

Some people were worried, and complained. Other drugs experts suggested he might be a crook. There was an enquiry, but they could find no evidence. Francis was meant to be finding out about drugs, talking to dealers. That was his job. So he had the perfect cover story.

The complaints were not properly followed up. People who criticised him were accused of being racist. His bosses said he was doing a good job, and should be left alone. The true story only came out through "The Guardian" newspaper. Francis resigned from his job, but he carried on as a dealer.

The police suspected this, and started to follow him. They caught 135 people, who were friends of Francis, or working for him. Francis was found guilty of dealing in heroin. He was jailed for seven years.