Ealing Council is pursuing a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) to silence pro-lifers outside the Marie Stopes abortion centre on Mattock Lane. The Council has endorsed the lie of the pro-abortion Sister Supporter group that pro-lifers harass and intimidate women.

This is not true and is defamatory. If pro-lifers did any such thing, then they would be arrested and prosecuted under existing legislation. But that’s the lie that’s being told.

As Ealing police Inspector Mark Hughes recently confirmed, in 23 years "there have not been any arrests” connected to pro-life vigils.

Councillor Ranjit Dheer has described pro-lifers as "committing anti-social behaviour". This is not true and is defamatory. It’s a completely novel concept in 2018 to classify traditional public pro-life activities as 'anti-social behaviour'.

Such activities have been going on for decades and have always been recognised as legitimate and lawful public activities; they have never been viewed as anti-social behaviour before now. So what’s changed?


Until 2018, nobody has seriously attempted to define pro-life activity as anti-social behaviour (ASB). But now, enemies of British liberty – and, very obviously, enemies of pro-lifers – are seeking to hijack ASB law in order to criminalise pro-lifers.

Pro-life vigils have been taking place outside the Marie Stopes abortion centre on Mattock Lane in Ealing for at least 23 years.

There were no complaints to Ealing Council about pro-life activity on Mattock Lane prior to the formation two years ago of the local pro-abortion group Sister Supporter (SS).

The SS have only one purpose: to silence or sabotage all public pro-life activity.

The only problem to have arisen in Ealing is that of pro-abortion activists stirring up trouble as part of their ideologically-motivated efforts to silence the pro-lifers with whom they disagree.

Currently, several pro-life groups operate at this location, including The Good Counsel Network, The Ealing Pro-Life Group, The Helpers of God’s Precious Infants and 40 Days For Life. (Other pro-life persons, not belonging to these groups, also sometimes attend at this location.)

Over the years, hundreds of pregnant mums have received help from these pro-life groups.
Pro-life groups do not block access to the abortion centre, or otherwise block the pavement, and they do not shout at or touch anybody, or speak rude, abusive or threatening words. On the contrary, the way pro-lifers manifest to people is peaceful, loving and compassionate. Information given out by the pro-life groups is factual.

Unlike the pro-abortion SS, the pro-life groups do not use noisy amplification, do not congregate in large numbers in a line immediately outside the abortion centre entrance, and do not film/record people entering/exiting the abortion centre.

Marie Stopes and the SS tell a lot of lies about pro-lifers’ speech and conduct. For example, pro-lifers do not and would never call anybody "murderer" in the street, as is falsely alleged.

(Whilst it is the standard, orthodox pro-life position that, morally-speaking, any direct abortion is an act of murder, there is a right time and place for saying so – such as, for example, in a pure protesting or lobbying context, or a context of journalism, etc – and it would obviously not be helpful to speak of murder when seeking to counsel pregnant mums face-to-face.)

The four pro-life groups identified above do not display graphic images of abortion on Mattock Lane (though to do so is not unlawful). This is because graphic images might hinder efforts to offer counselling to pregnant mums. These pro-lifers don't go to Mattock Lane to protest against abortion or to educate the general public (in which circumstances, the use of graphic displays are legitimate) but rather to *pray for* and to *offer counsel to* pregnant mums – help and information that won't be offered inside the Marie Stopes abortion centre.

Pro-lifers are not harassing women outside the Marie Stopes abortion centre on Mattock Lane. There is no problem of pro-lifers engaging in anti-social behaviour; peaceful public prayer vigils are not a form of anti-social behaviour. There is therefore no need for the introduction of a PSPO buffer zone to protect people from pro-lifers, because pro-lifers aren't harmful or dangerous to anybody (hence why there is no evidence to that effect).

The only purpose a PSPO buffer zone would serve – the only real reason why one is sought – is to attempt thereby to silence and demonise pro-lifers, because of political opponents' ideological objection to the lawful freedoms of speech and assembly of peaceful pro-lifers.

The main effect of the buffer zone – assuming pro-lifers comply with the PSPO, or can be forced to by the police – will be to deny to pregnant mums the services and advice which only pro-lifers offer, with the result of abortions taking place which otherwise would not. The main effect of the buffer zone will be preventable suffering, misery and death.

The PSPO will also likely risk encouraging and legitimising violence against pro-lifers in public, because the PSPO will criminalise pro-life activity and compel the police to treat pro-lifers as criminals, thus sending out the message to the general public that
the State says pro-lifers are anti-social criminals who ought to be treated as such.

The PSPO amounts to unjust, bad law. The proper response of pro-lifers targeted by this bad law is to oppose and defy it, by means of legal appeal and civil disobedience, in the interests of both life and liberty.

By Richard Carvath. 16 February 2018.