



**HUMAN TRAFFICKING WORKING GROUP**

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**NEWS REPORT**

<b>Headline</b>	Brothel opening ignites tension
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THERE has been a groundswell of opposition to tomorrow's planned "open day" at Toowoomba's new brothel at Harlaxton.

City church leaders have described the event, which will include a sausage sizzle, as "offensive" and "absurd" and feel helpless about being unable to stop Deviations opening.

Pastor Tim Bunch from Garden City Baptist Church, which is located just 450 metres from the brothel, said it was as if Deviations management was rubbing the opening in protestors' faces.

"I don't think (the brothel) is appropriate, full stop, let alone having an open day," he said.

"They're trying to sugar coat an industry that reduces women to a lower standard."

Citilife Church Senior Pastor Jonathan Oastler agreed, saying the open day was "glorifying" the sex trade.

"To have a sausage sizzle is absurd. Who would want a sausage sizzle there?"

"What sort of example are we setting for our kids?"

Both pastors were angry that State Government legislation prevented the Toowoomba Regional Council from rejecting the brothel application.

"The local community and concerned groups like ours basically have no voice," Pastor Bunch said.

Letitia Shelton from Toowoomba City Women was instrumental in organising public protests after an application for the Civil Court brothel was lodged.

But Miss Shelton said the group had no plans to protest tomorrow.

"Obviously we're concerned and disappointed with it all," she said. "But we've done our protest and we're looking at other avenues now."

Miss Shelton would not reveal what the "other avenues" were, but did issue a warning.

"We're not giving up on the fight," she said.

Deviations owner Jim Welch said everyone was entitled to their opinion.

"The open day gives everyone a chance to come in and see this is a safe and secure premises for sex workers."

Football Toowoomba president Greg Stuckey yesterday said no junior soccer team would be benefiting from the sausage sizzle fund-raiser.

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