# Liverpool cannabis gang sentenced to over 28 years in prison



A group of eight men from Liverpool has been sentenced to a total of over 28 years in prison following a covert operation by Nottinghamshire Police that uncovered their involvement in a large-scale cannabis cultivation scheme. The group allegedly posed as legitimate workmen, using a registered electrical company, Elev8 Civils and Utilities Ltd, to dig up roads and illegally connect properties to electricity mains.

The operation, which was active between November 2023 and February 2024, involved the illegal diversion of electricity at 54 sites across the country. The gang is believed to have supplied power to numerous cannabis farms, some of which were reportedly managed by organised crime groups based in Albania. Nottinghamshire Police became suspicious after noticing the group digging on High Street in Mansfield Woodhouse on January 29 last year, when an off-duty officer raised concerns about their activities.

The officers, PCs Pete Gardiner and Luke Bettridge, questioned the workmen about their actions. They found the explanation—searching for a water leak—potentially dubious, especially after Gardiner noticed Graham Roberts, one of the suspects, wearing trainers instead of the more appropriate work boots. Gardiner referred to this as "an instant red flag" that led to Roberts being arrested on suspicion of unlawful electricity extraction and criminal damage.

Following his arrest, it emerged that Roberts was already known to authorities and part of a more extensive national investigation led by the North West Regional Organised Crime Unit. He was linked to the conspiracy that utilised Elev8 Civils and Utilities Ltd as a cover to facilitate the production of cannabis in various commercial and residential properties without raising suspicion through high utility bills.

The gang utilised advanced tools, including a GPS-enabled scanning device designed to find underground power cables, which provided crucial evidence of their activities. It was discovered that they had illegally extracted electricity valued at over £253,980 and that the operations contributed to cannabis worth approximately £7 million.

During the hearing at Liverpool Crown Court on March 6 and 7, the sentencing revealed the roles of the main conspirators. Ross McGinn, aged 33, received a sentence of 5 years and 4 months for his role in orchestrating the gang’s operations. Andrew Roberts, 42, was sentenced to six years for his role as a company director. Graham Roberts, aged 47, known as "Ganny," was handed a 5-year and 3-month sentence as the skilled worker physically connecting cables to the premises.

Other members of the group also received varying sentences, reflecting their differing levels of involvement. Greg Black was sentenced to 3 years and 9 months, Lewin Charles to 2 years and 8 months, Aiden Doran received 3 years, Jack Sherry was given a 1-year and 10-month suspended sentence, and Colin White received 2 years and 6 months.

Judge Potter, during sentencing, addressed the defendants' disregard for the impact on communities due to the drug trade and noted that their actions had been driven by greed. He remarked on the scale of the operation, highlighting that each cycle of cannabis cultivation could consume approximately £250,000 worth of electricity, with the potential yield being valued between £7 million and £21 million.

The judge expressed that the defendants had motivating factors beyond immediate financial gain and acknowledged their family support and low risk of reoffending, while emphasising the long-term consequences of their actions.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)