Young People & Street Crime

Research into young people's involvement in street crime

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

After a steady rise through most of the 1990s, national figures for robberies rose sharply at the end of the decade and became a matter of increasingly serious concern to policy makers. A major national initiative to tackle the problem was launched early in 2002, with the stated aim of getting the rise under control by the autumn of that year.

There is considerable variation across police force areas, though, and London strongly influences the overall picture; so trends in the capital and a limited number of other forces have come under particular scrutiny. In many areas — but by no means all - a significant factor in the recent rise in recorded street crime has been the increased number of young people, not only as suspects and accused but also as victims. At the same time, the higher figures have reflected a new target for personal robberies: the rise has coincided with the large-scale ownership and public use of mobile phones.

THIS STUDY

The Youth Justice Board had undertaken special analyses of the street crime figures for London in 2000; and, following this, it commissioned the present research in order to establish the *reasons* for the increase in young people s involvement in street crime and the implications of this for all relevant agencies.

The main empirical work was conducted in London in the financial year 2001/2 and comprised two main elements: statistical modelling of borough-by-borough patterns in recorded street crime; and in-depth case studies of four contrasting boroughs. This included focus groups with young people in local schools and interviews with young offenders, as well as some of their parents. Interviews and focus groups were also conducted in the same areas with professionals working with young people, including the police and the staff of youth offending teams (Yots). Additional interviews were held with a small number of victims.

Further work was undertaken with Yots and the police in other areas which were similarly under scrutiny. While it was not possible to cover these areas in the same depth as London, they provided valuable insights into the common underlying factors, as well as issues which were more locally specific.

THE FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

General

The study predated the major street crime initiative of 2002, although its final phase overlapped with the start; but it had already come across examples of useful initiatives in trying to tackle the problem while at the same time identifying how deep rooted were many of the causes. The increase in recorded street crime has significant implications for the future since it suggests that an increasing proportion of young people may go into adulthood with the handicap of a criminal record. However, the impact of this will be greater for some young

people than others. The recorded figures show that those living in certain areas will be worst affected; and the impact will be particularly adverse for young people from black ethnic minorities.

Our statistical modelling explored the relationship between the aggregated annual data for recorded street crime in different London boroughs and data on their social, demographic and economic characteristics. A secondary area of interest was the impact of police activity. The pattern of police searches over the period was erratic and, although it rose sharply by the last months of the study in the context of the street crime initiative, trends of the longer term showed no significant association between the two. A more robust measure of police activity for our purposes was judicial disposals for street crime offences (that is, the numbers of people actually charged or cautioned). These appeared not to have kept pace with recorded offences over the period; and these figures too were added in to the model.

Having taken a wide range of factors into account, including differences in family composition and ethnic make up, two main factors explained differences in the *levels* of street crime between boroughs. These were the level of deprivation (and, in particular, *relative* deprivation) and the extent of population change. The main factor which explained borough differences over the four years from 1998 to 2002 in the *rate of increase* in street crime was simply the numbers of young people involved. Whereas, in the first two years, the deprivation factors at work were related to adults (i.e. measures of employment and income), these changed slightly as the involvement of young people began to account for a higher proportion of the total. From 2000 onwards, the proportion of dependent children living in households with no adult earner had become the most important factor in explaining borough-level differences in street crime. Again, the problem was exacerbated in areas with higher rates of population change and the relatively lower levels of social control this implies.

The rate of judicial disposals made no difference to the model; but this does not mean that they are unimportant and nor is it surprising. For the role the criminal justice system can play is inevitably modest relative to the powerful influence of the economic and social factors at work.

Economic and social factors
Many of our respondents saw the recent trend in street crime in terms of the bullying and taxing which has always gone on among young people. Developments in patterns of consumption, however, meant that this type of activity — which was, for the most part, not previously reported to the police — was now coming to the attention of the criminal justice system. It was inflating the crime figures, as well as increasing the risk to young people of acquiring a criminal record.

These patterns of consumption have to be seen in the context of four main influences on street crime, which also have much wider implications for young people.

The messages young people received about the importance of their image were one of the most important *cultural factors* at work; but the style and the status objects associated with this image had constantly to be changed and updated. Young people judged each other

according to these standards; and they knew that being unable to meet them could make one vulnerable to being picked on by others. The mobile phone currently was one such status object but it had additional cultural significance as a form of communication among young people. Meanwhile other factors at work related to aspects of youth culture which tended to glamorise violence; and the fashion for carrying knives and other weapons in part reflected this.

In this context *economic factors* came strongly into play as a catalyst for offending since most young people were unable to finance the image they needed without parental help. Where this was not available — and where the imperative to conform was nonetheless overwhelming — the only option was to acquire these things illicitly in one of three ways. You could steal them yourself; or you could buy them knowing they had been stolen; or you could steal things, sell them and use the proceeds from the sale to finance your style. That is, increasingly important juvenile markets were growing up for stolen goods or financed by them in parallel with the growth in the legitimate market for these status objects.

Gender-related factors tended to inhibit girls offending relative to boys. They also reduced the likelihood that those who achieved their image without paying for it would do this by getting involved in street crime; and they reduced the risks of girls getting caught. Many of the factors which made boys more vulnerable, by contrast, tended to be the other side of the same coin; and they seemed to be compounded by factors related to their establishing their identity *as* boys. Some seemed to need to do this by negative reference to the female model represented by mothers, sisters and girls in general; and they also tended to seek male approval.

For many boys whose contact with adult men was relatively limited, the most readily available source of male approval was older boys; and, in some areas, the few successful men who might serve as adult male role models might be known to fund their lifestyle through crime. Both factors could increase the likelihood of the boys being recruited in turn. However, a further issue of concern in this context was that girls themselves might be contributing to the replication of this cycle by choosing to have babies:

a) without any expectation of ongoing paternal involvement in the children s lives; and
b) despite the evidence that economic stress tends to be much greater in families headed by single mothers.

Added to this, given the highly localised nature of the problem, *area* had an important influence in several different ways; and its implications are drawn out more fully below.

Young people ran the risk of being labelled by *area*; but the opportunities for street crime also varied by area. While the largest number of young people with the economic motivation to commit street crime tended to live in the most deprived areas, the numbers of available targets in these areas varied. In some deprived areas, visitors, people who were temporarily resident or those who had moved into gentrified pockets might offer rich pickings. That is, street crime tended to be lower in areas few people travelled to and where the residents were unremittingly poor.

So some young people from the more deprived areas might target other areas with larger numbers of relatively affluent people, whether resident or present only temporarily (as tourists, for example, or for work or leisure). The youngest offenders, though, tended to be more physically tied to their own immediate area. In general, identification with one s own area could itself influence levels and patterns of street crime; and those who did not belong tended *de facto* to be more likely to be targeted.

Personal factors

Our interviews with young people convicted of street crime added insights to the information we got from looking at a larger number of case files and from interviews with parents and carers, as well as professionals with experience of working with young offenders.

Although we were not able to interview young people who had been sentenced to custody, those we spoke to included both males and females of different ethnic origins. Few were involved *solely* in street crime, even though they might not have been caught for other types of offending; and one young man explicitly acknowledged that he had now turned to vehicle and other crimes as a result of the attention currently being given to street crime. All the cases we looked at were characterised by some of the factors well recognised as being at higher risks of becoming involved in offending, including their family backgrounds and personal characteristics, such as learning difficulties and impetuosity. Individual cases, though, bring out the extent to which offending even among those with high risk scores may nonetheless also be triggered by particular circumstances.

In particular, accounts of family relationships often appeared to involve separation and loss (including as a result of migration). The theme of absent fathers featured strongly in the cases of several young men; and most were alienated from mainstream education, particularly after moving to secondary school — although in references to pupil referral units several described the ethos in them as far more congenial.

The immediate motives for street crime were not always to do with acquisition. It seemed to be a way of affirming their tough image to others; some enjoyed the sheer buzz (including the aspect of violence); and it could also be an assertion of territorial rights. Victims were often people they designated as other than themselves — especially in terms of being posh and/or better off materially but also if — by contrast with the image of themselves the offenders sought to portray — the victims were weak or, in some specific way, *other* than cool .

While most claimed to aspire to legitimate success in the long term, they tended to be vague about how they might achieve this; and few were well placed to do so. Those who had not yet been to prison were, however, exercised by the fear of a custodial sentence; but a girl in one of the poorest boroughs painted a grim scenario of young people in that area. Her friends not only lacked qualifications but were effectively illiterate. Echoing some boys in the same area, she described these girls as looking on their involvement in robbery by now as a form of earning .

IMPLICATIONS

It will not be easy to counter the cultural and economic influences at work, especially as technological advances continue to produce new status objects which young people will want but many will not be able to afford; but the importance of area cannot be overstated in this context.

The risk for the same young person of getting involved in street crime may be very different depending on where they happen to live. Our qualitative data reinforce the findings of our statistical modelling in highlighting the interaction between individual and area factors in increasing the risk of offending. At its simplest, deprived areas where crime is high are also areas with much higher than average numbers of young people whose personal circumstances put them individually at greater risk of becoming involved in crime. Those affected also come disproportionately from the minority ethnic groups who are most likely to be concentrated in these areas (although ethnic differences in patterns of offending persist even within this.)

The criminogenic factors in their environment add to the individual risks for young people in these areas — not least because of the peer group norms they produce; and the problem may further be exacerbated in areas where social cohesion is weakest. In these areas the need for support from the statutory sector is therefore likely to be most acute, for example, in terms of social services support, healthcare and educational opportunities. Yet it is here also that the relevant agencies may themselves be at their weakest, with high vacancy and turnover rates reflecting the stress of work in these types of area and adding in turn to the stress of staff in post. All of this may have a knock on effect to lowering the quality of services available to young people in areas where disproportionate numbers are in need of them.

The report concludes that any meaningful solutions to the rise in street crime will be long-term and will require a sustained strategy which will involve a coherent and collaborative approach by a range of relevant agencies. The strategy should aim to:

- reinforce the protective factors at work for many young people (even in very difficult circumstances);
- try to identify and meet the needs of those who appear to be at risk at any given time (without adding to these risks by labelling them); and
- ensure that those responsible for street crime, once caught are treated in ways which reduce the likelihood of their re-offending.

That is, the strategy will need to focus on prevention and will need to be implemented within a framework which facilitates multi-agency working to achieve common goals. The most obvious structures for this purpose are the local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs). Given the importance of area and the link with deprivation, Neighbourhood Renewal initiatives should also provide an important vehicle for action where these are established.

Against this background, our remit was specifically to address the implications for local authorities, the police and the Yots, having explored their role throughout the study through our interviews and, to some degree through observation also.

Local authorities

The role of Chief Executives has tended to be overlooked, but it may be critical in many areas, for they have the power to insist on the necessary co-operation between the relevant local authority departments, as well as between the local authority and other, outside agencies.

Social services departments featured little in the potentially useful initiatives we came across. Rather, they tended to be perceived in many places as failing, on balance, to provide the necessary support to those working with young people convicted of street crime, or to the young people themselves and their families.

A further, recurrent area of concern was the lack of appropriate youth service provision in general — and especially in areas where large numbers of young people spent large amounts of time on the streets with insufficient legitimate and affordable outlets for their energy.

The role of schools is crucial for this age range; and a high proportion of incidents are directly associated with the end of the school day. However, schools face many conflicting demands; and particular difficulties in tackling street crime have included the premium set on academic attainment, along with the relative lack of alternative provision or support in dealing with disruptive pupils. Traditionally, many have been reluctant to admit to problems within school, to call on outside help in dealing with them or to accept any responsibility for pupils behaviour outside school.

High levels of pupil absence contribute to offending; and official exclusions represent only the tip of this iceberg. However, the study also identifies the transition from primary school into secondary school as a critical moment which has tended largely to be overlooked until recently. Alienation from education among young offenders often seems to set in at this stage, triggering disruptive behaviour (in school and out), along with truanting and co-optation by older boys. At the same time, increasingly high numbers of those who remain in the school system remain in education after the statutory school leaving age and this is particularly true of people from minority ethnic groups. Yet this may create problems of its own where parents are unable or unwilling to support their children financially.

Nonetheless, there were examples of schools taking strong and consistent approaches to tackling the problem in the short term. Meanwhile, various forms of extended school build on a well-established tradition of community schools, as well as taking a holistic approach to meeting the needs of young people in addition to ensuring they realise their academic potential. Some Pupil Referral Units appear to be successful in addressing the behaviour of those at greatest risk, while a range of initiatives within the education mainstream — from buddying schemes to schools councils - also had obvious potential to contribute to the strategy.

The police

Many of the best examples of preventive initiatives identified by the research were police led. However, there are tensions here also between the police s operational role and work which is more community-orientated and these have been highlighted in the context of street crime.

The priority of achieving short-term gains could undermine the medium to long-term goals of building trust and confidence among young people who are the citizens of to-morrow.

In this context, the study identifies the increased use of search powers in London as a cause for concern, especially when the numbers searched rose by a third over a two year period to May 2002 for whites, but more than doubled in the case of ethnic minorities. Yet this rise appears to have relatively little to do with street crime since drugs remained by far the largest category of searches; and its proportion increased over the period while the rise in searches for stolen property (whether or not from street crime) was lower than average.

It is particularly important to resolve these tensions rather than allow them to undermine promising initiatives on the part of the police, including the development of holistic youth strategies and increased schools involvement. However, the report also identifies dilemmas in relation to an enhanced role for the service in schools; for the crime recording system which came into place on 1 April 2002 would require these officers formally to record any allegation made to them of a possible offence. This might inhibit young people from opening up to them and could similarly cause difficulties for their partners in passing on sensitive but important information.

Youth offending teams (Yots)
The Yots were effectively in their infancy at the time of the study: there was considerable variation between them from the outset; many had had to expand rapidly; and the policy environment they worked in had been changing while they tried to bed down. The study found scope for strengthening their performance particularly in the following areas.

The Yots involvement in general preventive work is particularly variable and so is the extent of their involvement with other partners in the CDRPs. In principle, they could usefully extend their preventive role in a number of ways, including by providing more support to young people on bail and to the families of the young people they supervise. In practice, though, the funding for such work is rarely available and, in any case, the level of funding varies considerably between Yots.

Many of the young people they supervise could benefit from more intensive work and from the Yots having more flexible working hours. A more systematic approach is also needed to closure at the end of people s sentences and ongoing provision for young offenders where needed. Otherwise any benefits of their supervision may dissipate once they are thrown back on their own devices. (Housing provision is a particularly important area of need which Yots and partner agencies alike find very difficult to meet.)

However, there is also scope for improving self-management by many Yots, especially if they made more analytical use of the data they hold; but this, in turn, would require more consistency both in record keeping and data entry.

Other agencies
Many other agencies also have an important contribution to make to the success of the coherent, long-term strategy which is needed, including organisations in the voluntary and

private sector. However, the report singles out for particular mention three other agencies of the criminal justice system.

The courts could be more consistently supportive of the Yots in the case of young people breaching orders; but magistrates in particular need to be able to demonstrate that their decision making is consistent. It would be helpful if this were systematically monitored.

While the threat of prison is the single most effective deterrent to those at greatest risk, the reality may be counterproductive. Where a custodial sentence is appropriate, the offender should be expected to benefit from the education, training and other programmes available inside and appropriate arrangements need to be made for them on their release. The inadequacy of current provision, in general, in all of these areas contributes significantly to re-offending, particularly among young offenders.

Finally, the legal profession needs seriously to review its responsibilities in relation to young people, especially as offenders, as victims and as witnesses. At present, it appears to contribute significantly to the view of some that the system is a lottery rather than a vehicle for justice.

IN CONCLUSION

The study identifies many impediments to tackling street crime by young people and its causes. These include the different priorities of the potential partners and the imperative on each to meet individual targets which are not necessarily compatible with each other and which militate against achieving the co-ordinated strategy which will be needed. However, by the end of our research in mid 2002, the street crime initiative was underway and many of our respondents recognised that it was breaking down long-standing barriers and catalysing co-operation.

Street crime, though, cannot be tackled in isolation from other forms of offending by young people or from the wider developments in their lives. So it must be hoped that the initiative will prove to have been a catalyst for the development of the sustained, coherent approach which will be needed if the issues it raises are to be tackled effectively over the long-term.

CHAPTER 1 BACKGROUND

THE CONTEXT: RISING CONCERN ABOUT STREET CRIME

Against a backdrop of falling figures for recorded crime in England and Wales, robberies had been rising steadily throughout the 1990s until 1997; and they had begun to buck the general trend again by 1998[1]. Sustained media coverage of public and political concerns about the rise in robbery, however, began in earnest early in 2000 when a sudden sharp and unexpected increase in the *monthly* robbery figures (see next chapter, Figure 2:1) drove the annual figure up to an unprecedented level.

Figure 1:1
Recorded robberies* vs all recorded crime
England and Wales 1990 to 2000/1
* includes commercial and personal robberies
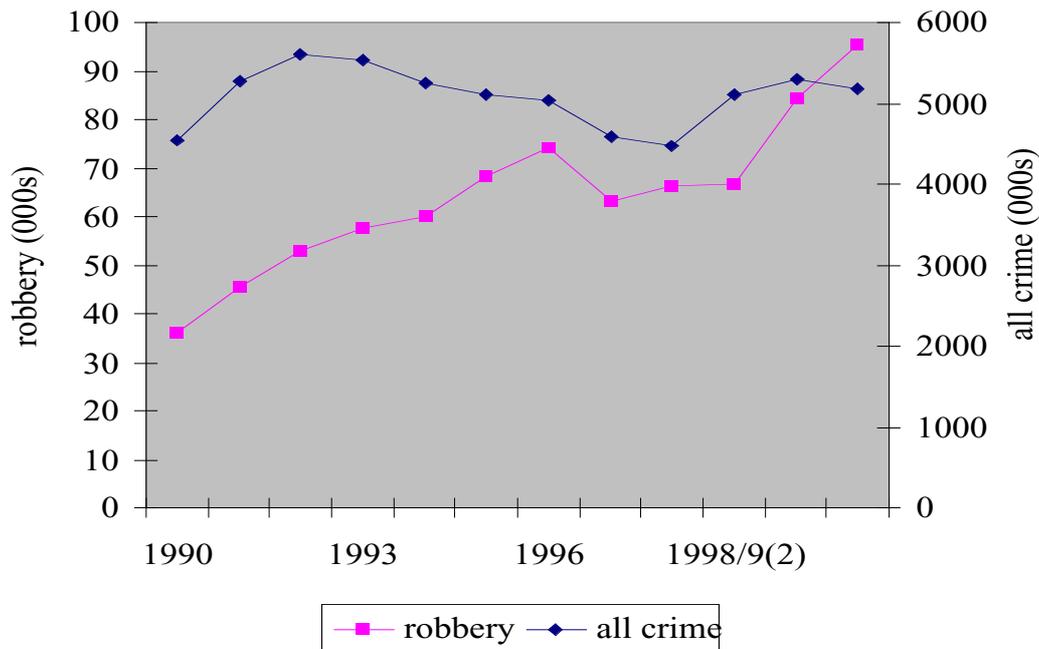
The main driver for these increases, however, was not in classic forms of robbery of commercial targets but rather personal robberies. Often referred to previously as muggings , these came to be discussed in the current context under the label of street crime . Professionals working in the field and subsequent research (FitzGerald 2000, Harrington and Mayhew 2001) then began to draw attention to a new and worrying development which was playing an important part in this increase. Significantly higher numbers of young people had

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[1]   Changes in the counting rules meant that a wider range of offences were included in the figures for 1998/9, giving the impression of a 14 per cent rise in crime overall. Figure 1:1 therefore shows the numbers without the change (1998/9a) and after (1998/9b). When directly compared with the previous year, all crime actually fell again by 2.5 per cent; but recorded robberies had again risen by nearly 5 per cent.

begun to come to the attention of the criminal justice system for robbery offences. A prime target was mobile phones; and their victims were often their peers.

In relative terms, street crime represents a small proportion of crime in all police force areas. As the relative scales in Figure 1:1, show, it accounted for just under one per cent of all recorded crime in 1990 and rose to just under 2 per cent in 2000/01; but it is higher in some areas than in others. The rate of robbery in London, in particular, has always been much higher than average. What happens in the capital, therefore, contributes significantly to the total and can strongly affect overall trends. Even in London, though, *all* robberies (both personal and commercial) accounted for less than 4 per cent of total notifiable offences in 2000/01.

Importantly for the purposes of this report, it should be noted that the figures given so far have referred to the standard offence categories used by all forces in returning data to the Home Office for publication in the annual Criminal Statistics. Each of these categories, though, comprises a number of specific offences; and the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) has kept its own figures for a category called street crime . This category is unique to the MPS and is made up of figures from offences which fall into two separate groups in the Criminal Statistics.

The MPS s figures for street crime are made up of offences of *personal* robbery, combined with those for *snatch thefts.* The latter are not robberies but fall into the category of Theft and Handling where they are a subset of offences of theft from the person. The other main offence of theft from the person is pickpocketing; but this is *not* included in the street crime figures. The MPS street crime category (also) accounted for only about 4 per cent of all crime in London in 2000/01; but the proportion varied considerably from one borough to another. It was highest - at 8 per cent - in one inner city borough (Lambeth) but many outer boroughs hovered around just under one per cent.

By mid-2000, the problem had begun to engage considerable police attention in London and in four other forces (the West Midlands, Greater Manchester, Merseyside and West Yorkshire). For, in addition to the crime reduction targets set by central government for *all* forces in relation to domestic burglaries and vehicle crime, these five were set targets for reducing robbery. The problem, though, continued to escalate; and in March 2002, following a meeting chaired by the Prime Minister, a cross Departmental group was set up to meet fortnightly under the Home Secretary:

to tackle any obstacles to cutting street crime . It will provide an opportunity for the police and all those involved in the criminal justice system to identify immediate short-term solutions to deliver better results ahead of the Government's broader reform package, and will work on delivering sustainable long-term solutions.

(Home Office press release 20 March 2002)

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

In view of its responsibilities for offending by young people in general and the salience of the problem in London in particular, the Youth Justice Board had commissioned an early analysis

of MPS data (FitzGerald 2000). In addition to confirming that street crime in the capital had risen dramatically in 1999 to 2000 after declining slightly for the previous two years, the report s main findings were as follows.

- v   Although a minority of London boroughs consistently accounted for the majority of all street crime, trends had varied between them. In some there had been a steep rise, but others appeared to have contained the problem more effectively.
- v   Most of those responsible were young men in their mid-teens; and, although much larger numbers of people were becoming involved at younger ages, this was even more the case for those at the peak age for offending. So the available data did not suggest any significant lowering in the average age of those involved.
- v   Victims covered a wider age range than offenders but there had been a significant shift in recent years, with a fall in the total number of victims aged 30 and over. More than half of all victims were now aged under 30; and the increase was particularly marked among young people aged 10 to 15.
- v   Cash and credit cards continued to be the main items stolen through street crime but there had been a significant increase in the theft of phones. They featured in 27 per cent of incidents of street crime in the most recent financial year compared with 4 per cent four years earlier.
- v   The majority of suspects in London were described as black[2]; and this was true also of those accused of street crime. The increase in suspects described as white was lower than for other ethnic groups[3].

The Board then commissioned the research reported on here through a process of competitive tender. The aims of the study were to explore:

- v   why young street robbers offend;
- v   what prevents them offending;
- v   the reasons for recent trends and for differences by age, gender, ethnicity and area;
- v   the factors which heighten a young person's risk of being a victim of street crime;
- v   the implications for policy and practice in local authorities, police and Yots.

METHODS AND COVERAGE

In addressing these questions we were very conscious of the need to explain the evident variations between different boroughs. We were also uncertain that interviews with those who were convicted of street crime offences would give us the insights we needed into the drivers of street crime. Clearly their accounts would be of value — in particular with regards to the specific circumstances of their offending and their stated attitudes towards the future. However, it was by no means certain that they themselves would have any more objective

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[2]   Under the system of ethnic classification used by the Home Office at the time for the purposes of monitoring police activity, the term refers to anyone described as being of (black) Caribbean, African or Other Black origin (including people of mixed black and white heritage). The term Asian under this system applies to people with origins in the Indian subcontinent.

[3]   The report also pointed up the need for caution in interpreting suspect data since it appears that where more than one witness describes the same suspect, each description is recorded, resulting in multiple entries for some suspects.

understanding of the cumulative factors which had brought them into their present situation than the professionals who worked with them.

Rather, it would be important to piece the picture together from a range of sources — including professionals who had directly observed much larger numbers of convicted young offenders than we could hope to interview. Their impressions of trends over time, in particular, — albeit subjective - could, if common themes emerged, be illuminating. In turn, these and any interviews with offenders could usefully be supplemented by looking at the patterns in case files held by the Yots.

However, it also had to be borne in mind that convicted offenders might not be fully representative of young people involved in street crime but only of the minority who get caught[4]. As we saw it, the group *most* likely to be aware of what was really going on were the peers of these convicted young offenders. Young people who had grown up with them would be aware not only of which members of their cohort were likely to be involved in this type of offending but also of when and how this had started. Some of these same young people would probably also be involved in offending themselves but, so far, have avoided getting caught; and they would also include victims of street crime — whether or not they had formally reported the crimes. That is, it was apparent from the outset that young people *in general* were potentially one of our best sources of insight into the influences at work in the increased involvement of young people in street crime.

Finally, the perspectives of offenders parents and carers might add further detail to the picture by providing more insights into their backgrounds — including their own role within this.

The Board originally decided that the study would be limited to London and would be complete within a year. Work began in April 2001; and, in the light of the considerations above, it had two main components.

One element of the work was to produce a statistical model of patterns of street crime in London boroughs, taking account of the social, economic and demographic characteristics of their resident populations. For this we were given very full assistance by the MPS: Jo Clayton of their Performance Information Bureau provided a wide range of customised data for our use (details of which are included at Appendix 1) while her colleague, Howard Greenwood additionally supplied the figures for police searches.

The second element consisted of case studies in four London boroughs which we selected to cover the fullest possible range of experience. Borough A was a relatively affluent, low crime borough, while boroughs C and D were two of the most deprived. Also crime rates in Borough B — which contained pockets of deprivation as well as highly affluent neighbourhoods — were inflated by the fact that one end of the borough covered part of the central London area. The aim of the cases studies was to gain insights into the similarities and

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[4]   Thus, in 2000, the number of accused (i.e. arrested and charged) in London was 4,201; and some individuals may be recorded more than once in relation to separate incidents over the year. The number of offences recorded in the same year was more than ten times higher.

differences between all four, in the context of the wider statistical picture we were compiling. We did this through:

- v scrutiny of local data (including statistics and other records held by the police and the Yots);
- v interviews and focus groups with police officers and Yot staff;
- v focus groups with pupils in Year 10/11 of local schools;
- v interviews with young people convicted of street crime and supervised by the Yot;
- v interviews with parents/carers and with victims.

By the end of the fieldwork period we had supplemented the core data used in our modelling with a range of statistics and documentation from each of our areas and had built a database from the files on 70 (anonymised) young people supervised by our four Yots. We had individually interviewed or held focus groups with over 40 police officers and a number of civil staff (mainly analysts) as well as over 50 Yot staff, and had interviewed a number of other key individuals (including teachers) *ad hoc*.

Only a minority of the schools we approached were willing to co-operate in the study by allowing us to undertake focus groups with students; and, despite repeated contacts — both directly and on our behalf - *no* school in our most affluent local authority (Borough A) was prepared to allow us in. Two schools in each of the other three boroughs enabled us to hold focus groups with a total of about 100 pupils aged 15-16 at the end of Year 10 or as they entered Year 11 in the autumn of 2001. We were given a double period with groups of boys and girls separately; and, with a guarantee of strict anonymity, they gave us very frank views on who was involved in street crime, why and what could be done about it before completing a questionnaire under our supervision. (Copies of the discussion schedule and of the questionnaire are at Appendices 2 and 3 respectively.)

We were dependent on the Yots, in the first instance for our interviews with young people convicted of street crime and with parents and carers, for them to make the initial contact on our behalf; and, even then, not everyone they contacted would be willing to be interviewed. In the event, we were very disappointed with the response this produced. We interviewed a total of 17 young people (most of them in Areas B and C) and only 5 parents (4 in Area B and one in Area A). There were difficulties also in contacting victims — and, in particular, young victims since Victim Support Schemes tend not to cover them. However, we did obtain 5 interviews with people who had been robbed by youths. Most of these interviews, as well as the school focus groups, were taped and transcribed.

Even where coverage was not as good as we had hoped, some of the qualitative data were very rich; and we gained further insights during this period from a focus group one of us was asked to conduct independently of this study. This was with a group of four young men involved in street crime in another highly deprived borough (Area E).

Additionally, towards the end of 2001, the Board sponsored a national workshop to discuss the emerging findings of the study at that stage. It was attended primarily by Yot staff and police representatives and served as an important opportunity to test:

a) whether people in London dealing with the problem day-to-day recognised the picture we had begun to build up; and

b) the extent to which the patterns in London were replicated elsewhere in the country.

The workshop was also a useful source of ideas for effective approaches to tackling the problem.

With political attention increasing by Spring 2002, the Board then asked us to explore the question of the relationship between the picture in London and the pattern of street crime generally in a little more depth. Time was short, however; and it was clearly out of the question to replicate our empirical research in other areas as well. However, we circulated a paper based on our emerging findings, as refined by the discussion in the national workshop. This was used as the basis for further discussions with Yot staff and with police representatives[5] in the four main police force areas outside London for which the Government had originally set specific targets for robbery reduction also. (Appendix 4 contains details of those seen.) We visited two areas in each of three forces (Greater Manchester, the West Midlands and West Yorkshire) and one in Merseyside. In addition to getting an impression of similarities and differences between areas through these discussions and scrutiny of relevant local material, these visits also allowed us to explore further ideas for developing effective policy and practice.

THIS REPORT

The report continues by looking at the variation in patterns of street crime and the factors associated with this, drawing largely on statistical data. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 then bring this material together with data from other sources — in particular our qualitative research — to explore the interaction of a range of environmental and personal factors in increasing the risk of getting involved in this type of activity for some young people. Chapter 6 takes a thematic approach to distilling the main findings of the research, while Chapter 7 examines some of their policy implications, with particular reference to the main agencies covered by the study.

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[5]   In some instances our hosts had also invited other local partners to participate including relevant local authority staff and representatives of the local Government Office.

CHAPTER 2 - PATTERNS OF STREET CRIME

The recent increases in street crime mean that much larger numbers of young people than ever before have begun to come to the attention of the criminal justice system because of their involvement in this type of activity. Concern has frequently been expressed (not least in our own interviews with police officers) that many of these are young people not previously known to the system. Adding considerably to this general concern is the fact that robbery is a serious offence. It can cover a very wide range of activity — from the theft of cash or items of considerable value by use of serious violence to taking 50 pence from someone in circumstances where they feel intimidated into parting with it even if no threat has explicitly been made[1].

However, robbery (including assault with an intent to rob) is an indictable-only offence; and, though theft from the person is triable-either-way, the immediate consequences of being charged and found guilty are potentially far more severe than for many other typical first offences. In particular, it carries a much higher risk of custody; and this of itself may have important long-term implications. It may further diminish chances of gaining legitimate employment which, for many of the young people involved, are already lower than average; and this may itself increase the likelihood of recidivism, setting in train a vicious circle.

Before exploring the qualitative insights from our study into the factors which have produced this increase in the figures and the individuals most at risk of becoming involved, this chapter looks at the statistical evidence for London. It maps in particular the types of area in which street crime is most likely to occur and the groups whose members seem most susceptible to involvement, as well as exploring trends over recent years.

OVERALL PATTERNS

Area

The unusual degree to which street crime is concentrated in certain areas is reflected in the Government s decision initially to set robbery targets for only five forces. Whereas all 43 forces had to meet the targets set for reducing domestic burglary and vehicle crime, the five who were set robbery targets together accounted for 70 per cent of all recorded robbery in England and Wales. But the relative salience of the problem still varies both between and within those forces where it is most prevalent.

In the financial year 2000/01, recorded robberies accounted for just over 4 per cent of crimes in London while in the West Midlands the figure was just over 3 per cent; but in West Yorkshire it was just 1.5 per cent. The original analysis for the Youth Justice Board, in turn, showed that within London 60 per cent of all recorded incidents occurred in just 10 of the 32

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[1]   As one boy pointed out in a focus group in Area C: You might see three schoolboys and you d just think they were three friends walking along together. You wouldn t realise the two on the outside were robbing the boy in the middle. All they would need to do was to say What have you got for us?

boroughs. This pattern was also strongly confirmed in the three non-London forces where we visited two different areas. In all three, street crime (as a proportion of all crime) was more than twice as high in one of the areas than the other. That is, it was seen by Yot staff and by the police as a particularly serious issue in youth offending in some places, whereas in other parts of the force problems such as vehicle crime were of much greater concern.

Even in the sub-force areas where the problem is greatest, the pattern is often intensely localised; but there are different patterns also for personal robbery and thefts. Figures in two adjacent Merseyside subdivisions (Table 2:1) are broadly illustrative. They show much higher rates of both personal robbery and theft person in the city centre (Neighbourhood 1) than in any of the other 14 neighbourhoods. Theft person is most prevalent in the centre (where it accounts for 42 per cent of the total); but 25 per cent of all personal robbery occurs there also. Outside the city centre, Neighbourhood 11 stands out as the single other hotspot for both offences.

Table 2:1
Recorded personal robbery and theft person* in two Merseyside subdivisions
Financial year 2000/01

Column percentages

Neighbourhood	Personal robbery	Theft person	Total	% of all
1	413	646	1059	33.1
2	174	127	301	9.4
3	74	79	153	4.8
4	112	120	232	7.3
5	112	80	192	6.0
6	55	63	118	3.7
7	58	62	120	3.8
8	51	40	91	2.8
9	66	49	115	3.6
10	110	45	155	4.8
11	229	94	323	10.1
12	57	15	72	2.3
13	51	31	82	2.6
14	51	25	76	2.4
15	59	48	107	3.3
	1673	1524	3197	

* NB this includes both snatches and pickpocketing

In London, we ranked the 32 boroughs according to the Department for the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR) measure of average ward deprivation. This creates four natural groupings. Those with low levels of deprivation score up to 19.9 on this measure; average boroughs score 20 to 29.9; those which are relatively deprived score 30 to 39.9; and a small group of highly deprived boroughs have score above 40.

MPS borough-by-borough figures for street crime (Table 2:2) suggest a degree of correspondence with total recorded crime; and both tend to track levels of deprivation — but street crime accounts for a higher proportion of total crime as the level of deprivation increases. Although the match with deprivation is not exact, this is in large measure because of the distorting effect of high levels of street crime in central areas where neither the victims nor the perpetrators tend to be local residents. The most obvious example is Westminster

which covers the central area of the capital and attracts a lot of crime (especially drugs offences and street crime[2]) even though its resident population is very small and, on average, relatively affluent; and the city centre effect will also tend to inflate the figures in other boroughs with neighbourhoods which come in this category — most obviously Kensington and Chelsea. Other apparent anomalies, though, are less easily explained at borough-level — in particular the relatively low street crime in two fairly deprived boroughs (Greenwich and Barking) and the extraordinarily high level of street crime as a proportion of the total in Lambeth.

Table 2:2
Street crime and deprivation in London boroughs 2001/2
(All crime figures shown as per 000 population)

BOROUGH	Street crime	TNO	Street crime as % of TNO	Level of deprivation
Sutton	2.18	87.0	2.5	Low
Richmond upon Thames	2.19	87.4	2.5	Low
Havering	2.6	95.0	2.8	Low
Bexley	2.7	97.6	2.8	Low
Kingston upon Thames	2.7	95.7	2.9	Low
Hillingdon	3.1	116.6	2.7	Low
Bromley	3.5	96.2	3.6	Low
Merton	4.1	96.8	4.2	Low
Greenwich	4.1	135.7	3.0	Fairly deprived
Barnet	5.0	99.6	5.0	Low
Harrow	5.1	86.4	5.9	Low
Hounslow	6.1	142.9	4.2	Average
Barking and Dagenham	6.2	133.5	4.7	Fairly deprived
Enfield	6.3	110.9	5.7	Average
Redbridge	6.5	120.8	5.3	Average
Croydon	7.3	111.6	6.5	Average
Ealing	9.3	130.9	7.1	Average
Wandsworth	9.3	134.5	6.9	Average
Lewisham	9.8	120.2	8.2	Fairly deprived
Kensington and Chelsea	11.4	180.5	6.3	Average
Waltham Forest	11.7	137.9	8.5	Fairly deprived
Hammersmith and Fulham	12.3	187.9	6.5	Fairly deprived
Brent	12.4	133.3	9.3	Fairly deprived
Islington	12.7	212.7	6.0	Very deprived
Newham	13.5	177.8	7.6	Very deprived
Haringey	14.8	171.3	8.7	Very deprived
Camden	16.9	279.9	6.0	Fairly deprived
Tower Hamlets	17.2	207.3	8.3	Very deprived
Southwark	17.4	198.3	8.8	Very deprived
Hackney	21.7	207.5	10.5	Very deprived
Westminster	24.4	406.4	6.0	Average
Lambeth	31.5	215.3	14.6	Fairly deprived
TOTAL	9.8	147.6	6.7	

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[2]   A higher than average proportion of these, however, are snatch thefts and the perpetrators tend to be older than in more residential areas.

People

As Chapter 1 has indicated, the rises in street crime in recent years have largely been attributable to the increased number of reported offences involving young people; and their victims have also tended to be younger. However, the rise in youth involvement has not occurred consistently across all areas. It seems to have been lower in areas such as West Yorkshire[3] where street crime overall has not increased to the same extent as elsewhere. By the same token, the profile of the offenders the police have to deal with for street crime in such areas also tends to be different[4].

Also, while cases involving very young children tend to attract attention, it is important to bear in mind that charges of street crime are bringing more young people into the system at all ages; but the main increase has tended to occur in the 14 to 17 year age group — that is, the age range most susceptible to involvement in offending generally (Graham and Bowling 1995, Flood-Page et al. 2000, Farrington 1997). Those involved are predominantly young men; but the numbers of young women involved appears to have increased at least as much. Females accounted for 5.7 per cent of all descriptions of suspects in recorded cases of street crime in 1998/9 and this London-wide average rose to 6.1 per cent by 2000/01, but masks a range from 4 per cent to over 9 per cent in different boroughs. In more than half of the 32 London boroughs in 2000/01 the rate of increase was actually higher than that for males.

Whether or not the rate of increase in girls involvement is the same as or greater than that of boys, it is possible that girls as a group may be disproportionately affected. For boys complain about being stereotyped as offenders; but the much larger numbers of girls coming to the attention of the police and the courts may begin to alter perceptions of gender differences in the propensity for offending.

A group who *are* disproportionately affected by these developments are black[5] young people. In London many of the boroughs where street crime is highest are also those with a high proportion of young black people (see Appendix 5) and black young people are also more likely to be at risk for other reasons discussed in the following chapters. This must be seen against a long history of a higher level of black involvement in robbery compared to other types of offending[6] which is reflected in Yot figures. Over a quarter (27 per cent) of the young people supervised by the Yots for robbery *nationally* are black, although they make up less than ten per cent in nearly all other categories of offending. Nor is this simply a function of area: Table 2:3 is based on data on young people supervised by the Yot in a single London borough; so it provides a good illustration of the extent to which ethnic differences in patterns of offending persist even within the same area.

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[3] This appears to be the case also for other forces outside the big five such as Avon and Somerset.

[4] Similarly, the proportion of suspects described as under 18 in London boroughs in 2000/1 ranged from 24 per cent to 48 per cent.

[5] For the groups covered by this term and the reason for its usage, see Chapter 1.

[6] The ethnic breakdown of those sentenced to custody which has been available since 1985 has consistently shown a higher proportion of black men are imprisoned for robbery offences than men from other ethnic groups (Home Office annual publications); and published arrest figures have shown the same patterns (see Home Office s95 publications, the most recent published in 2002).

Offending by young people of different ethnic origins
Supervised by a London Yot
2001

	White	Black	Others*
			column percentages
Violence against the person	8.9	9.8	10.7
Sex offences	0.8	1.5	0.0
Motoring	24.1	19.5	32.4
Robbery	4.0	14.2	4.9
Burglary	6.2	2.8	9.8
Vehicle theft	6.4	4.3	7.6
Theft and handling	15.1	15.5	16.9
Fraud and forgery	0.8	2.3	0.0
Arson and criminal damage	7.6	4.7	4.9
Drugs	6.0	7.6	7.6
Public order	4.0	4.0	3.6
Other	6.8	2.5	6.7
Racially aggravated	1.0	0.7	0.0
Breach of conditional discharge	0.2	0.4	0.0
Breach of order	6.0	7.2	7.1

* the numbers in any single other group were too small reliably to breakdown by offence type

There are evident differences in the patterns of offending by young people from different ethnic groups. Nearly a quarter of all white young people supervised by this Yot had been found guilty of motoring offences; and this was true of nearly a third of the young offenders from minority ethnic groups *with the exception of* black people. On the other hand, the black young people were more than three times as likely as whites to have been found guilty of robbery, although they were only half as likely to have been convicted of burglary.

Black communities have therefore been particularly hard hit by the rise in street crime. While the number of people suspected of street robbery in London rose on average by 67 per cent from 1998/9 to 2000/01, the increase was 75 per cent for black suspects[7]. It is, however, important to bear in mind that, as with all groups, only a minority of black young people commit and are convicted for an offence of any sort. Also (as Table 2:3 illustrates) of those who do, most have been found guilty of offences *other than* robbery; and robbery is not necessarily the main offence for which they are convicted.

Other trends
The pattern of increase in street crime in London since 1998/9 has shown month-to-month variation. It had tended to level off by 2001, once the problem was highlighted and had become the focus of intensified police activity. The degree of police attention given to street crime increased further early in 2002, with the announcement of the Government s Street Crime Initiative (see Chapter 1); and this was reflected in an increase in the use of police stop and search powers (see Figure 2:1). The extent to which the power of search under s1 of the

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[7] The figure for whites was 43 per cent and that for Asians was 62 per cent.

1984 Police and Criminal Evidence Act is used varies considerably between boroughs, though, (FitzGerald 1999) and the rise was also very uneven (see Chapter 6).

Figure 2:1
Street crime and recorded police searches
(under s1 PACE)
London
April 1999 to June 2002
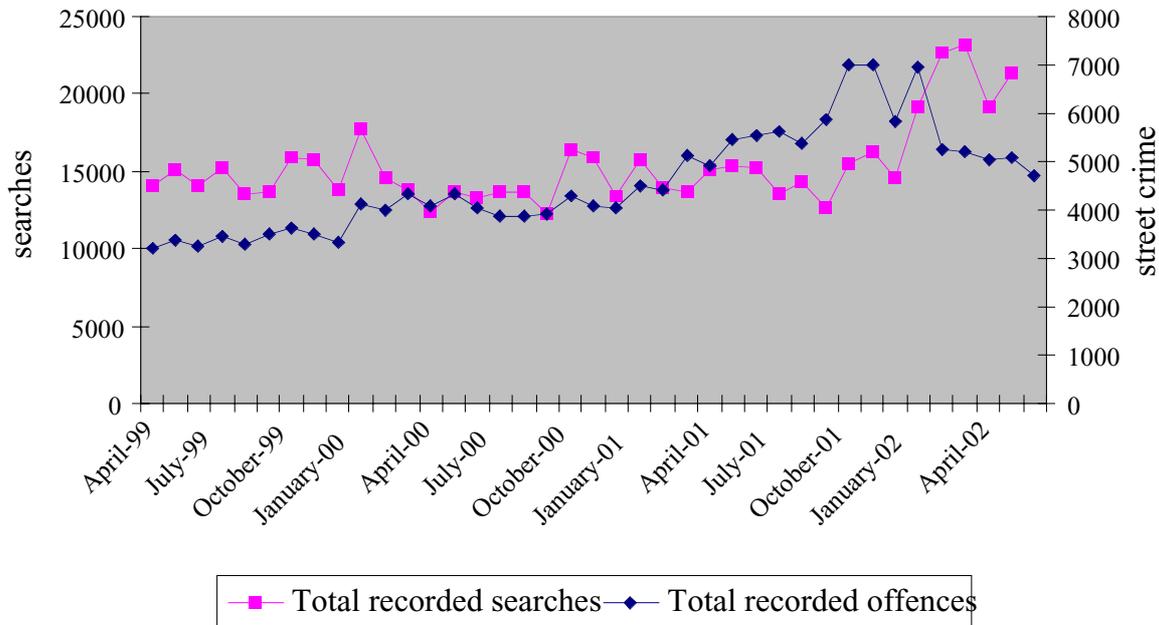
Despite the increased police attention to the problem over the longer period there appear nonetheless to have been two sudden rises in street crime. There was a sharp increase in the autumn of 2001; and it has been argued that this occurred because of the demands made on police resources by the events of September 11. That is, it was claimed that street crime rose at a time when other events made it impossible to sustain the intensified level of police attention. However searches (which are also the only proxy measure we have for police activity on the streets) fell only in September. They had risen to a higher level than previously by October; yet street crime continued to rise. By contrast, when they dropped sharply again in December, this was matched by a similar sharp drop in street crime; and the two rose in tandem again in January.

Overall, the pattern is of searches tracking levels of street crime. Occasional breaks occur in this pattern, the reasons for which may be specific to other events at a particular time; but this does not appear to have any sustained effect. This absence of any strong relationship between searches and street crime tends further to be borne out by earlier work (FitzGerald 1999) and analyses for the present study which did not show a close fit between the variation in searches by borough and differences in levels of street crime.

Meanwhile, judicial disposals for street crime offences (that is the numbers charged and then cautioned/warned or convicted at court) have ranged from just over 7 per cent to just over 9 per cent of all recorded street crime (based on quarterly averages over this period). These

have also varied by borough; but the trend line overall suggests that they have not kept pace with the numbers of incidents being recorded by the police.

Figure 2:2
Offences and judicial disposals by month
London 1998 — 2002
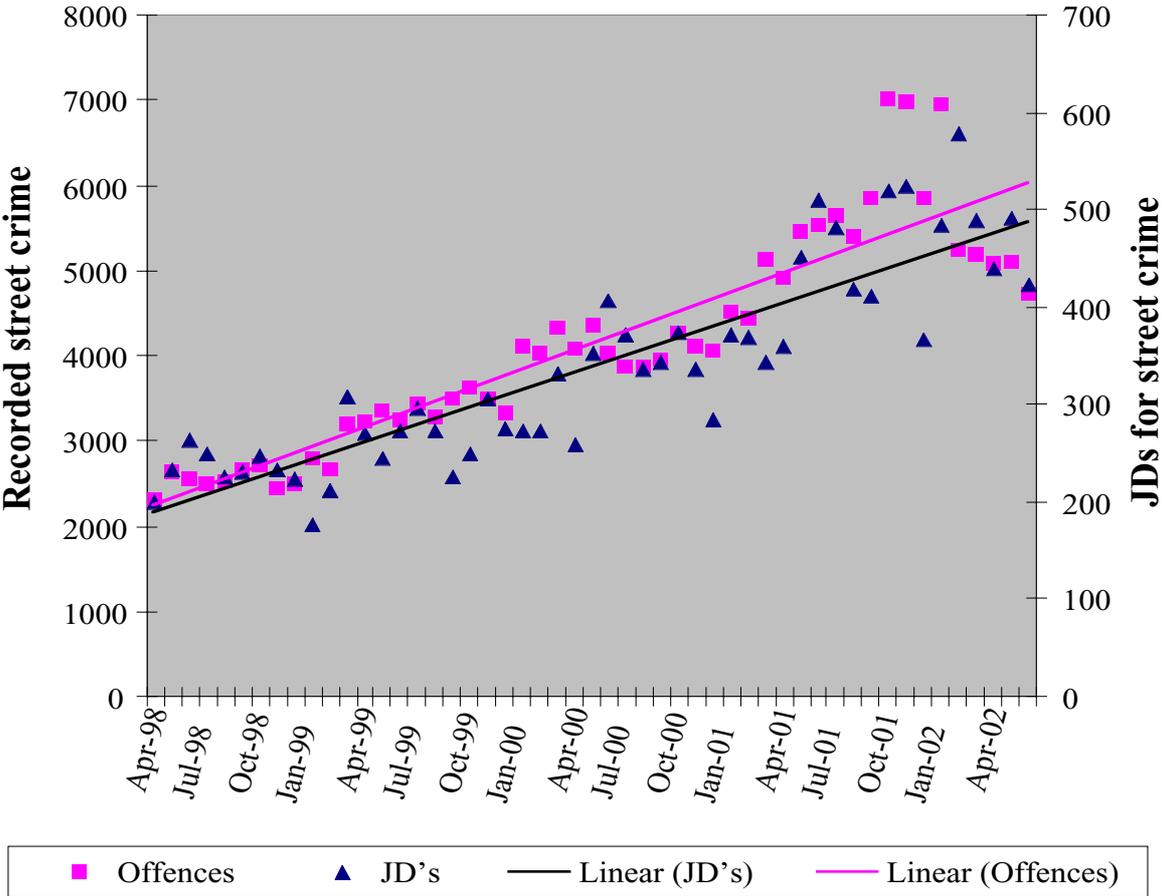
There has been considerable variation also in the rate at which street crime has risen from one borough to another. On average, though, as Figure 2:3 shows, the rise was much steeper in boroughs with average to high levels of deprivation in the financial year 2000 to 2001 when the problem first began to receive priority attention. By the following year, there had been a significant reduction in the increase in the most deprived areas where the largest volume of offences occurs. So the problem overall seemed to be coming under control. Yet the more affluent boroughs in particular, as well as those with average levels of crime and deprivation, effectively remained vulnerable to continuing high rates of increase.

Figure 2:3
Average rise in street crime on previous year by borough type 1998 to 2002
(excluding Westminster)
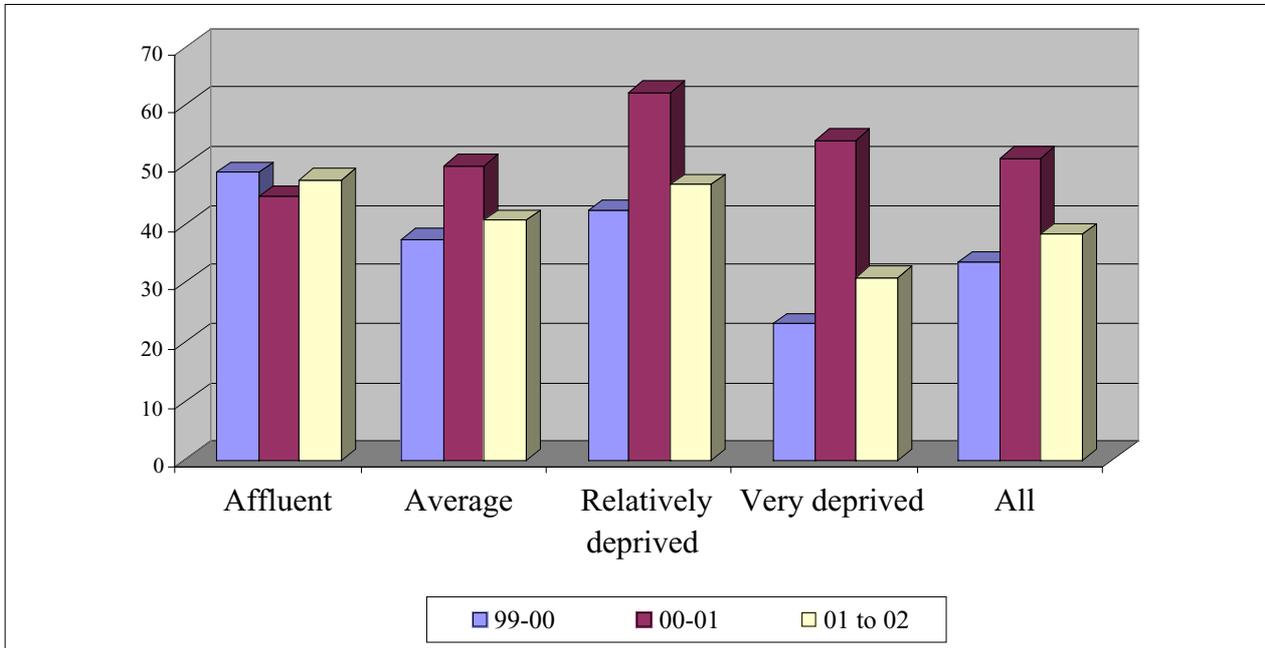
Our approach to modelling street crime
We undertook statistical modelling to explore the patterns of street crime in London as shown by the MPS figures as background to the qualitative research. For this we used:

a) borough-level data provided by the police for four successive financial years from 1998-99 to 2001-02; and
b) a range of socio-demographic variables from a range of sources (listed in Appendix 1).

We also fitted our figures for judicial disposals by borough to the models at the end.
We were interested to explore:

a) the factors associated with the variation in the *level* of street crime between boroughs;
b) the factors associated with variations in the amount of *increase* in street crime between boroughs since 1998-9;
c) the extent to which the detection and prosecution of street crime made a difference to the overall level and/or to the rate of increase once other explanations were taken into account.

Our approach was to take the number of recorded incidents of street crime *per thousand population* for each borough as our dependent variable (i.e. what we were trying to explain). This, on balance, provides a better basis of comparison than simply using the crude numbers,

since there is considerable variation in the size of different boroughs. However, boroughs also vary in the extent to which those present within their administrative boundaries on any given day are residents of the borough or only there temporarily — whether for work, pleasure or any other reason (including to commit crime). As we have already noted, high numbers of non-residents can significantly increase the crime figures; so we did not include Westminster in the model. Clearly the number and size of hotspots associated with non-residents will vary also in the remaining boroughs[8]; so it is probable that locally-specific factors explain some of the unexplained variations which remained within the final model.

In building up a model to explain street crime (our dependent variable) we used the statistical technique of multiple regression. We grouped our possible explanatory factors (our independent variables) into three:

1. population composition - including age structure and ethnic composition plus measures to capture how rapidly this is changing;
2. housing tenure profile, household composition, residential mobility and educational achievement;
3. measures of deprivation.

We followed this sequence to introduce the individual variables into the model one after the other.

The results

Fuller details of our approach are provided in Appendix 6 along with a step-by-step account which shows the individual factors which we found to be highly correlated with street crime at each stage in building the model. This shows that a number of our individual variables appeared to be closely associated with high levels of street crime in London in 1998-9 *until* further variables were added into the model and effectively washed them out[9]. They included, for example: the relative size of the youth population; the percentage of dependent children living in lone parent households; and the proportion of black pupils in primary schools. The final results once all of the variables had been entered, however, suggested that four main factors between them explained borough-level variation in street crime across London in 1998-99. Three of the variables were related to deprivation while the fourth reflected the rate at which the local population was changing. They were

a) number of employment deprived;
b) number of income deprived;
c) extent of deprivation; and
d) change in ethnic composition.

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[8] This has been illustrated already by neighbourhood-level figures which point to higher rates in town or city centres which effectively have no local residents. But there may also be patterns around leisure venues or tourist attractions, as implied by some of our interviews with offenders who talked about the places they would target *outside* those where they actually lived.

[9] This could be because variables added later were effectively capturing the same thing but doing so more powerfully. (Thus the relative size of the youth population proved less important than its ethnic make-up). *Alternatively* the first variable was not so much explanatory in its own right but symbolic of an overarching variable which was truly significant. (So measures of deprivation transcended the seeming importance of housing tenure, lone parenthood, educational attainment and ethnic composition.)

The number of employment deprived was *positively* related to street crime; and so too was the number of income deprived — but only if it was entered separately into the model before the employment deprived variable. When the latter was included also, the number of income deprived became *negatively* significant. That is, areas where the overall level of unemployment is high will have particularly high levels of street crime where there are also more people who — despite high unemployment overall — are themselves *not* poor. Put another way, where there is high unemployment *and* lots of people locally are income deprived there are fewer obvious 'targets' for street crime (see next chapter also)

At the same time, street crime is also highest in areas where the *extent* of deprivation is particularly high — as measured by the proportion of the population in each borough which lives in the 10 per cent most deprived wards in the country. In addition, we found that the proportion of the population which had moved in the previous year was strongly associated with street crime even when account had been taken of all other factors. However, this variable was based on data from the 1991 Census. So we constructed another variable to capture change in the local population using more recent data. The easiest way to do this was to measure the amount of difference in the (estimated) ethnic make-up of the population at large and that of its school-age population. In some areas the size of the minority ethnic population in the school population was very much larger than in other areas where the ethnic makeup of the population as a whole was identical. From this we inferred that the rate of change in the local population was higher in these areas. Once this variable was entered into the model it superseded the 1991-based measure. It must be emphasised here that we used ethnic data for the purpose of capturing the extent of population change in the absence of any other readily available measures. This does *not* mean that the level of street crime in any given area is a function of its ethnic make-up. Rather, it simply suggests that the faster the rate of change in the local population, the higher the level of street crime.

In lay terms, the model suggested at that, immediately prior to the major upsurge in recorded street crime, the longstanding patterns of local variation could best be explained as follows. Street crime[10] was highest in areas where there are pockets of intense deprivation and a large proportion of the population overall is unemployed, but a large enough number of local residents also have the sort of income to provide *opportunities* for street crime (by inference because they have things which are worth stealing), especially where there is a relatively high level of turnover in the population as well.

When we looked at how well the model predicted street crime at the level of individual boroughs (omitting Westminster for the reasons referred to) we found it was 95 per cent accurate in all cases but one. The borough of Lambeth was the exception and had levels of street crime which were significantly higher than our model would predict.

The model still held good for the financial year 1999-00; but by 2000—01 when the increase had begun to set in, the situation was less clear. The model still explained nearly 80% of the variation in street crime between boroughs in that year. However the variable which captures

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[10]   The model held true also for crime more generally as well as for other specific types of offence (see Appendix 6).

the number of pockets of intense deprivation (the extent variable) was no longer statistically significant; and when it was dropped from the model, the variable for income also fell out. The model improved, though, if instead of these two variables we added in the percentage of dependent children in households with no adult earners. For 2001-2002 we found a broadly similar picture where again our modelling led us to drop the extent variable and include percentage of dependent children in households with no adult earners.

That is, new factors began to come into play in the year in which the street crime first surged markedly; and the drivers of street crime were now becoming distinct from those associated with patterns of crime more generally (see Appendix 6). While levels of unemployment remained significantly associated with the level of street crime in any given borough[11], other traditional measures of deprivation (both absolute and relative) had been superseded by a measure which related more specifically to the *children* in households which were income deprived.

This finding tied in with our second set of results when we used the same approach to try to explain the extent of borough-by-borough *change* in the level of street crime between 1998-99 and 2001-02. Taking account of all of our variables in turn did not this time produce a complex model. Rather, the single factor positively associated with larger increases in street crime was the increase in the proportion of suspects under the age of 17.

In the light of these findings, we then applied our data on judicial disposals and on searches to our models for explaining the variation between boroughs both in the overall pattern of street crime and the extent of increase. As has already been noted, there were very marked differences between boroughs in the proportion of recorded offences which resulted in anyone being successfully charged and also in the use of search powers. Taking these variations into account did not improve the fit of our models overall. However, these are based on annual figures; and there does appear to be a positive relationship between the increase in searches and the fall in street crime from February 2002. This is consistent with other research which has shown sudden marked increases or decreases in police activity to have short-run effects on crime levels[12].

The implications of interventions by the criminal justice system — and the police in particular - are explored further in Chapter 6. For the present, though, our modelling provides an important reminder that street crime is primarily explained by economic, social and demographic factors; and these have played a central role in the increased involvement of young people which has accounted for the recent rise in London.

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[11]   This was significant only at the 90 per cent level, however, by the financial year 2001-2.
[12]   Thus, a sudden fall in searches in London in the first quarter of 1999 was found to be significantly associated with an overall rise in crime over the same period (albeit only a very weak association was found with street crime as such). (FitzGerald 1999)

CHAPTER 3 - ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCES ON YOUNG PEOPLE'S INVOLVEMENT IN STREET CRIME

Street crime combines two main elements: it has the characteristics of a property offence; but it is also a crime of violence. The seriousness of either element — as has already been pointed out — can vary considerably; but so too does the extent to which either element is more salient. All of our sources emphasised that different people in different situations were involved for different reasons. Many of these were also the reasons young people were involved in all sorts of offending; so it was unsurprising from our research that many young people involved in street crime were involved in other types of offending too, whether or not this had been detected.

Importantly, many of the adults we spoke to emphasised that street crime involving young people was in many respects an extension of the way children had always behaved towards each other in schools; so it tended to differ from the more classic types of street crime committed by young adults. It was difficult to be sure whether the propensity of some young people to gang up on and intimidate others had got any worse; but it was evident that far more of this behaviour than ever before was now coming to the attention of the criminal justice system. One of the main reasons for this was, quite simply, the way in which the world around them had changed and the opportunities this presented for new forms of bullying[1].

While children who had previously been robbed of their dinner money or bus fare might not report it, it was far more difficult to disguise the theft of expensive items their parents had given them. This was not to trivialise the issue. Our respondents were well aware of the serious consequences for the young people themselves (as both victims and offenders) as well as for the crime statistics; but one police officer put it in perspective as follows:

If we started to record every fight in the school playground, the figures for crimes of violence would go through the roof.

For the young people themselves, the change in their environment had been dramatic; and several commented on the impact this was already having on those who followed them. As one boy in a focus group in Borough C remarked:

The availability of stuff s increased. Four years ago you wouldn t have five out of every six people having a mobile phone [or] bringing £4 or £5 more money to school every day.

Meanwhile, his classmates commented on younger brothers getting old before their time . Already,

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[1]   Hence, for example, the need for DfES guidance to schools to recognise text-message bullying as a serious problem (Independent, 13 August 2002).

the environment that they re growing up in is very different from when I was their age. Like when I was about 10 the only thing I was worried about was what was going to happen on the next Power Rangers episode — not like getting jacked on the road or this man s got a beef with me down [a different area] yeah?

A strong consensus which emerged from all of our sources chimed with the results of our statistical modelling. Young people s involvement in street crime, they believed — and in particular the rises in the last few years — must be understood *primarily* in terms of these young people s environment. Two further sets of factors could then also come into play, one of which might exacerbate the impact of the environmental factors at work while the third might put some individuals at greater risk than others. These three sets of factors are effectively nested ; and the overlap means that some of the distinctions below are arbitrary. However, understanding who becomes involved, why and the implications of this for policy and practice depends on an appreciation of the interaction between all three.

The three main sets of factors at work can be grouped under the following heads:

- v environmental;
- v organisational; and
- v personal.

This chapter discusses the environmental factors at work and the following chapter considers the role of key organisations. Against this backdrop, we finally set out the evidence of our research in relation to the personal circumstances of the individuals who get involved.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

Culture

One set of issues commonly raised by young people and adults alike related to *cultural issues* and, most importantly, issues concerning consumer culture. Young people expected to possess particular things and to dress in particular ways, in large part because this was what others expected of them. Not to do so was to invite disrespect [2]; and, in areas where street crime among young people was most prevalent, failing to live up to this standard, actually made you vulnerable. It was, explained one group of boys all about looking good because, as one put it:

if you look good, you don t look like a idiot on the street. Someone ain t gonna come jack [3]
you if you look good.

Some items had special status value - but only for as long as they were the most recent or most sophisticated model. Mobiles were by no means the only such items: jewellery and

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[2] In a telling comment in a television documentary, a young man commenting on whom he would target for street crime singled out an apparently unlikely suspect at a bus stop. Asked by the interviewer why, he replied with contempt: Just look at him — he looks as though he s dressed from Tesco s (Unreported Britain, Channel 4, 5 April 2002)

[3] There is some variation in the terms young people used for what is usually referred to by adults as mugging ; but jacking was by far the most common.

designer clothes were also an essential part of the image . However, mobiles were top of everyone s list of the things people stole for two main reasons.

One was as a fashion accessory *per se* but the other was as a commodity which could be traded to earn the money to buy other things which it was less easy to steal and also less acceptable. Some young people would steal cash and credit cards to this end also; and the most usual outlet for the re-sale of mobiles seemed to be among their peers — for there was clearly a large youth market for this type of stolen goods. Before the advent of mobiles it had been more common to rob each other of status items of clothing; but the income from the new market openings created by mobiles made it possible to buy such things instead. Now - unless trainers were new, very prestigious and, for that reason, could also be traded - there was no longer any point in stealing them and the idea that anyone would take them for their own use invited something like contempt. Not only was there a good chance some one else s trainers would be the wrong size, wearing other people s clothes was seen as dirty , especially now it had also become unnecessary.

> *The status on trainers isn t as great any more — they re not the latest thing like mobiles.*

> *Trainers used to get nicked but mobiles get nicked ten times more.*
> Schoolboys, Area C

Where young people stole mobiles for their own use, they might hold on to several prestigious models at a time, and only sell them on once they had begun to lose their *cachet.* By inference, the more unattainable they were by legitimate means, the more desirable they became; but if others in their immediate environment could afford them, this put them, in another, very literal sense, only just out of reach of those who could not. It is no coincidence that victims appeared to be most vulnerable when they had their mobiles openly on display and, often, while they were using them; and these seemed to be the circumstances in which the more impulsive acts might occur. A group of boys in Area D cited someone they knew who had told a girl he wanted to put his number in her phone book but, on finding she had a prize model, simply took the phone instead[4] and ran off with it.

A further cultural factor makes the possession of a mobile a *sine qua non*, though. Quite simply, the mobile has become an important and very particular form of communication among young people. This is mainly because of the text facility; but we also heard of one school which had banned mobiles primarily because fights in the school playground could escalate into major incidents now the parties could instantaneously summon reinforcements in this way.

Respondents most often referred to the cultural influences on street crime in terms of its acquisitive aspect; but some — including young people in our focus groups — referred to cultural influences, especially rap and hip-hop music which glamorised crime and, in particular, violence[5]. An issue of increasing concern was the carrying of knives and other

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[4] The robbery in this instance seemed to have been spontaneous; but we were also told this was a common technique for robbing from girls without needing to use threats or violence.

[5] A group of boys hotly debated this point. One objected that because you enjoyed the music, it didn t mean you re going to go out and do what they say ; but he conceded that this meant being strong

weapons (including screwdrivers). This was to a degree simply a matter of fashion[6]; but young people in Areas C and D were all very aware of shootings in the area. Some of the girls saw the increasing trend for boys to carry knives as the start of a slippery slope. Yet, as the earlier reference to younger brothers illustrates, they also recognised why boys in particular felt an enhanced need for self-protection as the world in which they moved became more dangerous. In cases of street crime, threatening victims with a weapon was effective, even if the offender did not actually display it — and might not be carrying one at all. The trend had wider implications, though, since routine altercations between young people could develop into something far more serious if any of the parties was carrying a weapon - whether or not theft was involved.

Economic

Where young people legitimately possess mobile phones (and other similarly expensive objects of desire) this is almost always because their parents have bought them or given them the money to do so. For, as young people in our focus groups repeatedly pointed out, almost no-one of school age is in a position to *earn* enough legitimately to buy them in their own right. In Areas C and D in particular (and also in the focus group in Area E) there were frequent references to the difficulties of single mothers trying to make ends meet. Children picked up on their mothers stress and were affected by it in various ways referred to later in this and the following chapter. One recurrent theme, though, was that it was out of the question to ask your mum to buy you a mobile phone, knowing that they could not afford it. Additionally, a small minority of the very poorest appeared to commit street crime to supplement the family economy; and some - who had effectively left home and were sleeping at various friends — were often short of food.

Most commonly, however, taking others phones or buying stolen phones from other young people, knowing they were stolen, was simply seen as the only option for young people to acquire one if their parents were not able to provide it. Meanwhile the income from selling stolen mobiles was the only way of acquiring many of the other items which were essential to one s image[7]. The boys in Area C articulated a theme which commonly occurred in most of our groups. Street robbery was strongly connected to young people s perceived need for the sort of money their parents could not provide and which they themselves were unlikely to be able to earn for a long time, if ever. Comments from different boys included:

> *You want more than you can afford — so the only way you can get it is to take it from someone else.*

> *It s easier to jack it than to go out and waste your money.*

> *I can go out, jack four phones - I ve got £300 . Bang! I can start straight away*

It s just easier to jack someone on the street than it is to, say, get a job, work six months and then go and get it - and then it s out of style or something like that.

If you jack it, then you can spend your money on something else and then you can have two things.

One member of the group summed up this outlook starkly, thus:

It s, obviously, a means of making money. When you leave secondary school [or] when there s no more mummy and daddy and you ve got to find a way of making your own money it s quite easy to do. It s quite an easy thing to get into — because it s easier than going to college and then, like, working for however many years at college and then going into a job. And - because it s quick money also - you don t have to go through all those years of education before you can start to earn money [sic]. You can start earning money straight away.

Of all of the things you had to have, mobiles could most easily be physically removed from others; and their own experience had made young people well aware of the impact this had had on the rise in crime. However, they did not see this as a problem which would go away simply if mobile phones became more difficult to steal. A girl in another focus group summed up the general view as follows:

I think it s getting worse like since mobile phones and that have started like coming into the schools and that. More people do get jacked every day like. It is - I think it is getting worse over time. Like there s more things there available for people to wanna take em and stuff.

In our discussions with Yot workers towards the end of the fieldwork, they had begun to hear of other targets becoming fashionable which had the same combination of must have and easily removable qualities, as well as a trade-in value. These included designer sunglasses, mini disc players and palms. A girl in another focus group starkly predicted that, as long as young people could not earn and their parents could not buy them these things:

The crime s just going to get worser and worser.

In this context, the reply given by a young robber when asked about the type of person he would target is particularly telling. At the time of his offence his fragile family relationships had broken down and he was effectively homeless. He reflected:

They d be someone like me — only they d have it [the mobile] because their parents had bought it for them. And they could go home and tell them they d been robbed. And their mum d buy them another one.

Outside London, our practitioner respondents in several areas pointed to a pattern of local young people targeting students. This tended to peak in the autumn term when the freshers arrived; and it largely explained some hotspots outside city centres such as Neighbourhood 11 in Merseyside (see previous chapter).

Gender-roles and families

Girls in our school-based focus groups as well as boys insisted that girls may be more involved in offending than the official figures might suggest. However, girls and boys alike referred to important gender differences in this context. They not only made it more likely for boys to do street crime but meant that girls who *did* get involved might find it easier to get out before getting trapped into a cycle which was often difficult to escape from.

In particular, girls in one of our inner city schools (most of whom were of minority ethnic origin) felt families and schools had higher expectations of achievement for girls. Boys in a different school in the same area also saw girls as carrying the responsibility for upholding the family s reputation and for setting a good example to siblings. In part for these reasons, far more opprobrium attached to them being found out in offending. By contrast, when boys start getting into trouble this was more likely to be accepted — or, even, half expected. The girls also suggested that, because they matured earlier they had the chance to catch up on schoolwork and a higher proportion would leave school with some qualifications. By the time many of their male peers reached this realisation, it might be too late and they felt they had little option but to continue as they were. Girls in their world, they agreed had more chances .

Importantly, girls were also more likely to have positive same-sex role models in their everyday lives, not least their own mothers. A high proportion of young people in the areas where street crime was highest lacked fathers. The few adult male role models in the boys immediate environment often had status *because* of their criminal activities. One young man who had been charged with armed robbery was asked what would make the difference as to whether an (imaginary) nephew of his went a different route and achieved legitimate success. He replied without hesitation:

> *He s got to have a father. He s got to have a father to teach him right from wrong and keep him away from bad company and punish him if he starts getting into trouble   . He s got to have a father instead of ten different drug dealers coming in and out of his mother s life while he s growing up.*

Importantly, with the exception of a few teachers, the individuals most readily available to them as a source of male attention and validation were older boys. Reference was frequently made to the important role played by older brothers and cousins, as well as the wider circle of their friends. Younger boys might actively seek the approval of boys in higher forms who were seen as cool ; and girls in particular were aware that the need to impress older boys was often the trigger for younger boys starting to get involved in activities which could lead them into crime. While this spontaneous emulation was seen as more common than the active recruitment of younger boys by older ones, one group of girls saw the only solution as finding a way of breaking the cycle . Currently, as they saw it, a group in each successive cohort of boys entering secondary school would gradually come to occupy the position held by the most antisocial and criminally active groups in the higher years as these left.

The high proportion of young people in the areas where street crime is highest who come from families headed by single mothers already implies higher levels of material deprivation[8]. Not only are there greater difficulties with providing parental supervision in these circumstances, mothers can find it challenging emotionally as well as physically to exert the necessary control over their sons activities to keep them away from situations in which they get caught up in offending. One we interviewed had a good relationship with her son and there were grounds to suppose that he had, indeed, pulled back from offending; but she specifically acknowledged:

> *The trouble is he s always missed his dad; and I can t be a father to him.*

A recurrent theme from professionals was the difficulty of getting some mothers to recognise the young men their sons had now become[9]. On the other hand, several of the mothers who were willing to speak to us were suffering from burn out : their sons criminal involvement was often the culmination of years of problem behaviour. Their requests for help had for many years been ignored, they said, by a system which now blamed them. One specifically recalled asking:

> *What do I have to do to get help — wait until he s actually committed a criminal offence?*

As she saw it, this was effectively what had happened.

Yet many of the young people in our focus groups strongly asserted that whether or not people became involved in crime critically depended on their parents. In particular, they saw parents as failing children who grew up with no sense of right and wrong ; but they also insisted that a relationship of trust and respect between parents and children was a key protective factor. Young people from such families would hesitate to get involved in crime, they believed, because they would be letting down their parents. However, one boy in a focus group recognised that, at a certain stage, even the most responsible parents may have no influence at all:

> *Some parents don t want to know. They don t want to believe that their kid s doing it . But even if they lecture — like if my mum lectures me - you just zone out. Lecturing ain t good enough. You don t listen: you just go out and do it again. So there s not much parents can do — short from go and call the police theirselves.*

Meanwhile, the dangers also became evident that young people would themselves also go on to replicate this cycle. Some girls seemed routinely to anticipate having children but with no apparent expectation that the children s fathers would be involved in their upbringing. One

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[8] Government figures for 2000 show that, of families with dependent children, 57 per cent of those headed by *single* lone mothers (that is mothers who had never been in a marital or cohabiting relationship) had incomes of £150 per week or less. The average for all lone parents was still 45 per cent, by stark contrast with the figures for cohabiting and married couples which were 15 per cent and 10 per cent respectively.

[9] One police officer in a non-London area talked about a mother who persistently refused to acknowledge her son s involvement until she was shown CCTV footage.

young woman convicted of street crime had already planned for this differently from her peers in one respect:

Girl: *The friends I used to be with, most of them - not all of them, most of them - they ve got their babies already now.*

Interviewer: *How do you feel about that?*

Girl: *I don t want to have my baby now.*

Interviewer: *How are they managing?*

Girl: *They re bringing up their baby how they wanted to bring their baby up; but . The baby s got everything it needs. They haven t got everything they need but the baby has. There s days where they haven t even got food like do you know what I mean? But the baby s got everything. So that s the way they chose their life. That s their business, in it? When I have my baby I want to be eating and I want my baby to be eating as well, do you know what I mean?*

At the same time, the girls perceptions of the choices available to them was in part related to educational attainment whereas boys, by inference, looked on taking school seriously as something girls did; and these gender differences may be particularly marked in the Black Caribbean population. Data from the Labour Force Survey regularly shows that proportionately more black women have higher qualifications than their white counterparts and are less likely to have no qualifications, whereas the reverse is true for men.

The problem for black boys may also be compounded by negative stereotyping, including from the police[10]. They automatically aroused suspicion, although some girls said boys they knew also made matters worse by deliberately winding up the police. Girls, meanwhile, were less likely to draw the attention of security staff in shops; and they were also more likely to go undetected since (as they were well aware) only female police officers could search them and there are many fewer of these.

Nonetheless, it was commonly agreed among young people that girls were far more involved in offending than adults seemed to realise; but, as one boy put it, two very different but significant protective factors were at work in the case of girls:

At the moment when it comes to street crime, girls that are doing it are still the minority — but it s growing and it s growing quickly. And the reason why it can grow so quick is that it s normally undetected - because you re not looking for the girls to be doing the crime . Like in the house, yeah, they re more high security : the parents come down harder on the girls. While, out there, there s a lot more leniency towards them; so they can get away with a lot more. So that s why they can afford to try it.

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[10]   One black Yot worker outside London said he was still routinely followed into shops and eyed with suspicion as he stood with his cigarette in the doorway of the smoke-free Yot office.

There was a difference too in the *type* of offending boys and girls were involved in which, in part, reflected gender-specific use of leisure time. For girls, shoplifting was a natural form of acquisitive crime to get the types of things they wanted (other than mobiles), including jewellery, make-up and clothes. Boys wanted different things; they were less likely to go shopping with their friends out of choice; and they were further inhibited by being objects of suspicion if they did. So opportunistic crime of this type was more likely to occur as they hung out in groups on the streets.

Taken together, these last two factors may, in part, help to explain some professionals impressions that cases of street crime involving girls tended to be more serious. This may be because a higher proportion of girls less serious offences may be overlooked *and* because their acquisitive offending takes alternative, non-violent forms. So the violent aspect may be more salient for those girls who do get involved in street crime, while boys lifestyles conspire to combine both violent and acquisitive offending in this type of activity.

Area

Previous chapters have stressed the variations in street crime from area to area and explored some of the reasons for this mainly using aggregated data at borough (or Basic Command Unit) level. The illustrative figures from Merseyside, though, have highlighted much more localised patterns within this and our qualitative data produced further insights into the reasons for this. Many are necessarily conjectural; but feedback from a wide range of respondents suggests they merit further research attention.

One important consideration is that the *opportunities* for street crime vary between areas. Hale pertinently sums up the findings of a range of relevant research studies as follows:

In order for a crime to take place three things are needed — a motivated offender, a suitable target and a lack of guardianship.

(Hale 1999, p.37)

There are important variations between areas in terms of all three conditions.

In terms of motivated offenders, it is evident that the *proportion* of the youth population whose personal circumstances put them at greatest risk of offending tends to be highest in areas of greatest deprivation[11]. In such areas, these individuals are mixing with larger than average numbers of other young people who are similarly at risk; and they are doing so in circumstances where crime and antisocial behaviour are prevalent anyway[12]. This may significantly affect group norms.

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[11]   In 1998, for example, figures for the number of children on the child protection register per 1,000 population aged under 18 rose from an average of 22 in the least derived group of London boroughs to 43 in the most deprived (FitzGerald 2000b).

[12]   Thus, the average number of offences per thousand population doubles between the least and most deprived boroughs; but the increase is greater for crimes of violence (FitzGerald 2000b) and, as already referred to in this chapter, a growing proportion of these crimes have recently involved knives and firearms.

This is not to say that these young people lack any moral frame of reference. The boys group in Area C who gave us some of our richest insights described an incident where a young man had snatched a bag from an old lady. A group of them had given chase, intimidated the mugger and got the bag back. In terms of what went on between young people themselves, they did not attempt to justify it. (As one boy put it, *It s not that it s right* .) However, the importance of image, the need for money to fund that image - along with the idea that everyone does it - often seemed to override any moral considerations.

I know it s a clich but is a bit of peer pressure that first gets you into it. You know that it s wrong; and you [still] get into it - and it suddenly becomes something that s safe, that s normal, that s part of your routine. And you stop thinking that there s anything wrong with it. Because, as far as you re concerned, everyone is doing it; and no-one else is bothered about it - so why should you be?

Boy, Area C

That is, there is a much a larger pool of potentially motivated offenders in some areas and they are also less inhibited about crossing the threshold into criminal activity, in part for this reason.

With regard to the question of guardianship , the higher proportion of families with only one parent in these areas tends *de facto* to diminish the overall level of *personal* guardianship available for young people. In areas where populations are most diverse and/or where — as the evidence of our statistical modelling suggests - there is greater population movement, these problems of personal guardianship may further be compounded in some areas by a lack of *communal* guardianship. In such areas, local people are less likely to know each other and they may be more reluctant to get involved in tackling the problems. Even if they are willing to give information they may also be less likely to be able to identify those responsible.

With regard to the second condition, though, the availability of targets varies by area also. Town and city centres, as well as affluent residential areas, tend to be rich in potential targets. Within this, though, there may be differences

  a) in the extent of guardianship; and
  b) in the numbers of motivated offenders.

For example there may be differences in the number and location of CCTV cameras, the quality of street lighting, the numbers of properties with burglar alarms and other features of the built environment. Added to this, there will be variations also in the extent to which people in the area would be willing to report suspicious behaviour or take responsibility for intervening if they saw an offence in progress etc. Meanwhile, the number of motivated offenders may also vary. The numbers living in affluent residential areas will be relatively small. Here, as well as in town centres, therefore, much will depend on the extent to which offenders are motivated to travel; and this, in turn, may depend on their calculation of the risks of being caught based on their perception of guardianship[13].

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[13]   Thus one group of boys in Area D highlighted the greater difficulty of jacking in the West End, as opposed to in their immediate environment. In particular, the extent of CCTV and the presence of

However, children getting involved in offending tend to start on their own home territory[14]. While the pool of motivated offenders and lack of guardianship are greatest in the poorer areas, these areas themselves were perceived by many of our respondents as dividing in two. These perceptions corresponded closely with the results of our statistical modelling, as follows.

Some areas are unremittingly deprived; but other areas with a high proportion of very deprived residents may also contain pockets of relative affluence — or they may regularly be visited by outsiders who are perceived by residents as being markedly more affluent than themselves. One member of a Yot team outside London worked in an area of unremitting deprivation remarked that, while antisocial behaviour, vandalism and violence were a problem, levels of street crime were low because of the relative lack of suitable targets. By contrast, in other deprived areas, much larger numbers of targets were available as result, for example, of people coming into the area to buy drugs or of other children travelling through the area to private schools. Such areas might also house the local (temporarily resident) student populations referred to above, as well as people living in expensive, new fortified developments which appeared to many increasingly to be springing up in the heart of run down neighbourhoods.

Thus, too, young people themselves would often identify the main victims of street crime in terms of rich or posh people. Asked whom he would target, a young offender in Area C unhesitatingly replied:

> *The little rich boys, little white boys and Asian boys, cause they re all the rich boys at school. [Also] some of the black boys, the rich ones, the little posh ones.*

At the same time, young people wanting to extend the scope of their street crime, once they were old enough to move out of their own immediate area, would go to other areas where the number of such targets was greater. This was acknowledged by several of our offenders and recognised by the following schoolboy in Area B:

> *Other areas are worse because it s [i.e. the people who do it are] not people from this area. People come from other areas to the posh areas to rob the posh kids for the posh stuff; and the only reason it s bad in them areas is because   If you go to that area [you re at risk]. They won t rob people from their own area, cause they all know each other.*

The notion of belonging , however, had additional significance in this context, one of which is implicit in the quote above. Many young people had a strong sense of their own territory[15]: outsiders were likely to attract attention and this meant knowing how to handle yourself if you were in someone else s area. Not only were recognisable outsiders an

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security guards implied a much greater degree of conscious planning; including the importance of operating singly or in pairs since any larger group would *per se* attract more attention.

[14]   Police data for suspects and accused in London consistently shows a much lower proportion of under-17 year olds involved in street crime in the central areas of Westminster and Kensington.

[15]   This could be very highly localised, extending (as one Yot worker pointed out) down to the level of small areas of parks which belonged to particular groups.

obvious individual target for opportunistic street crime, some of this activity had a group dimension. As Chapter 5 illustrates, some incidents were effectively a punishment for those who had consciously invaded another group s space.

At the same time, most young people associated street crime with particular areas. The consensus around which areas these were coincided with the crime figures; and young people in Areas C and D were well aware of this. They saw themselves as labelled by area; but such labels could also apply at sub-borough level — including to particular estates in low-crime boroughs. In a context where young people attach so much significance to image, perceptions of area may have a particular impact on group norms among young people. They can influence styles of routine social interaction and consensus about what constitutes symbols of success . At the risk of oversimplifying, it is possible to conceive of the areas where young people grow up as lying at different points on a spectrum. At one extreme, a greater or lesser degree of criminal involvement represents conformity; and girls in Area D echoed our boys in Area C on this point.

Interviewer: *Are any particular boys more likely to do it than others?*

Girl: *No. Everyone does it.*

Interviewer: *Everyone does it?*

Several voices: *Yeah.*

At the other end of the spectrum the same activity represents a failure (or refusal) to conform. By extension, in the poorer areas, involvement in street crime for some young people may be a marker of belonging whereas for those in more affluent areas it may be a marker of their *not* belonging.

When young people in our focus groups were asked in the questionnaire what they would do as a parent if they thought their child was getting involved in street crime, it was significant that several in the more deprived boroughs suggested moving away from the area. We also interviewed the black mother of a young street robber in Area A who had moved there from Area C. She was convinced that her son would be able to turn his life around - even though they lived in what was seen as one of the sink estates of the borough[16]. If they had remained in Area C, she believed he would by now have been in much more serious trouble. He would have had little prospect of escaping the more pervasively criminogenic influences in that environment, including the impact of high levels of violence and the growing knife and gun culture already referred to[17].

Ironically — but perhaps significantly also in the light of the over-representation of young black people in this type of crime, she was concerned for other family members who had

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[16]   The interview with the young man himself also tended to confirm this.

[17]   A young man in the focus group in Area E talked about being surrounded by negative energy and the difference it would make to grow up in an area where, instead, you were surrounded by positive energy .

remained in Area C. She had tried to persuade her sister to move for this reason; but the latter had preferred to stay. On balance, she preferred to take the risk of raising her children in this environment than expose them to the racism they were likely to encounter in Area A.

CHAPTER 4 - THE ROLE OF ORGANISATIONS

There are important area differences in the provision available from a range of organisations with a role to play in protecting young people from becoming involved in street crime or in diverting them from further offending if they do. We are concerned broadly with two sets of organisations: non-criminal justice agencies and the individual agencies of the criminal justice system itself.

NON-CRIMINAL JUSTICE AGENCIES

Schools
Given the age-range covered by the Board, the role played by schools was of central interest to the study.

At the time of the fieldwork, a consensus emerged spontaneously from the professionals we spoke to that many schools preferred to ignore the problem of street crime and, inasmuch as they addressed it, most preferred to try to tackle it alone. Disincentives included the pressure of league tables, OFSTED inspections, staffing problems and initiative overload. In general, these appeared to lead to any or all of the following:

- v denial of any responsibility for what happens outside the school gates;
- v avoiding dealing with the problem by (formally or informally) keeping the pupils responsible out of school;
- v dealing with the issues in school as general matters of discipline or interpersonal relations rather than as crime (so young people were unaware of the potential seriousness of the consequences if their activities were reported to the police);
- v resistance to sharing information with other agencies and/or to calling on outside help.

Different schools respond differently, though, and there are a number of reasons why the pattern may vary by area.

In the poorer areas young people are caught in a cycle of low attainment. For example, the London average for attainment at 4+ in English Key Stage 2 in 1998/9 was 76 in the affluent boroughs, falling systematically to 59 in the most deprived, and other educational measures all show similar trends (FitzGerald 2000b). This of itself leads to diminished career prospects, possibly reinforcing perceptions that education is not worth taking seriously. By extension of the general point made in the previous chapter, such schools will also contain higher than average numbers of pupils with special needs and/or who are seriously disturbed. The need for educational support will be disproportionate in these circumstances and the majority of pupils will be worse affected because the minority whose behaviour is disruptive will be larger. This will affect relationships within the school and may affect behavioural norms generally.

The problem is exacerbated by high teacher vacancy rates in these areas. DFES figures suggest that in 2001, teacher vacancies in the most deprived London boroughs ran at twice the rate of those in the most affluent[1]. Yet these figures themselves are the tip of an iceberg which comprises a high turnover of temporary and/or inexperienced teachers. The problem is as likely to affect the special support services as it does the mainstream of education. Meanwhile, the underlying problems of the disruptive minority may be compounded by the negative reactions of teachers who are already under stress trying to meet the needs of the majority. One result has tended to be higher average levels of formal exclusion in such areas, with an average two and a half times as high in the most deprived boroughs in 1998-9 than in the affluent group (FitzGerald 2000b).

Additionally, schools may also turn a blind eye to high rates of absence, especially where those involved are the more disruptive pupils they find it difficult to contain. An internal review by the Youth Justice Board of the relationship between non-attendance at school and youth offending put the problem of exclusions into perspective, showing that fixed term and permanent exclusions accounted for 5 per cent and 1.6 per cent respectively of absences from school. Classic truancy (unauthorised absences) accounted for a further 14 per cent of pupil absences on any given day; but the study revealed a major problem of authorised absences whereby nearly 80 per cent of absent children were out of school with the permission of an adult. All of these forms of absence were associated with school-time offending; and the pattern is apparent in the backgrounds of the young people who come into the criminal justice system. A report to the Board (ECOTEC 2001) found that 80 per cent of a sample of young people in custody in 2001 had no longer been in mainstream education by age 15; and 45 per cent had experienced permanent exclusion at some stage. A similar pattern was apparent in the case files we studied ourselves: even if the extent of permanent exclusions was slightly lower, most of the young people were recorded as having some history of truancy.

Provision for those who are excluded is variable. What does exist sometimes proves far more attractive to the young people it caters for than the mainstream of education (see next chapter); but it also brings young people at risk of offending into more intensive contact with other, similar young people. Also, once the period of exclusion is complete it often proves very difficult to get young people back into the education mainstream. Echoing some of the personal accounts we were given, the report cited the following comments.

Once detached from the mainstream, reintegration becomes more difficult, especially for those over 14. Detachment is often accompanied by a move to part-time provision and a high number of moves of placement. This involves a high degree of disruption for the young people.

(ECOTEC op. cit. p.ii)

That is, exclusion is the tip of the iceberg of pupil absences; but it represents an active intervention by the education system which may effectively mean the end of their education

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[1] By 2002 this had narrowed to one and a half times; and there had been a significant fall in the rate of teacher vacancies generally. However, such rapid results are likely to have been achieved by major recruitment of large numbers of new teachers who are likely to be inexperienced (whether generally or in the British system). The problems this may itself create — at least initially — will also have a larger impact on the schools with pupils at greatest risk.

for many 14 year olds. It leaves them without qualifications and, therefore, even worse placed to earn their living legitimately.

These problems beset schools in all areas. In more affluent areas, however, the young people at risk tend to represent a much smaller proportion of all pupils. So, on the one hand, schools in these areas are less experienced in dealing with (potentially) delinquent pupils; but, on the other, they may also be less willing to tolerate them — or even to acknowledge that the problem exists[2] - because they have a position to maintain in league tables. This may mean they are under more pressure to take action against such pupils from parents and governors as well.

Further work would be required to confirm this; but it seems likely that pupils who are susceptible to getting involved in street crime may have a higher chance of being excluded in more affluent areas and those who have offended are more likely to suffer from negative labelling. In areas where there are more offenders, they are less stigmatised. While some pupils complained of schools turning a blind eye to the activities of offenders, it is also possible that more effort is made to reintegrate those with the best chance of desisting, rather than simply writing them off.

In both types of area (but on a larger scale in the high crime areas), the problem is compounded by the fact that time hangs heavy on young people who have been excluded or are truanting. So they tend to gravitate back to the vicinity of the school at the end of the day; and joining them will be some who may have officially left school but have nothing else much to do and nowhere to go. This is why offending peaks at this time on weekdays (see Figure 4:1); and it also tends to drop during school holidays when potential offenders and victims may be more dispersed - in both time and space. At peak times, though, street crime tends to occur off school premises, albeit often in the vicinity of schools or on the main routes taken home by pupils (including on public transport).

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[2]   In this context, we felt it was no coincidence that Borough A was the only one of our case study sites where no school was willing for us to discuss the issue with Year 10/11 pupils.

Figure 4:1

**Proportion of street crime offences committed at different times of day
(London 2001)**
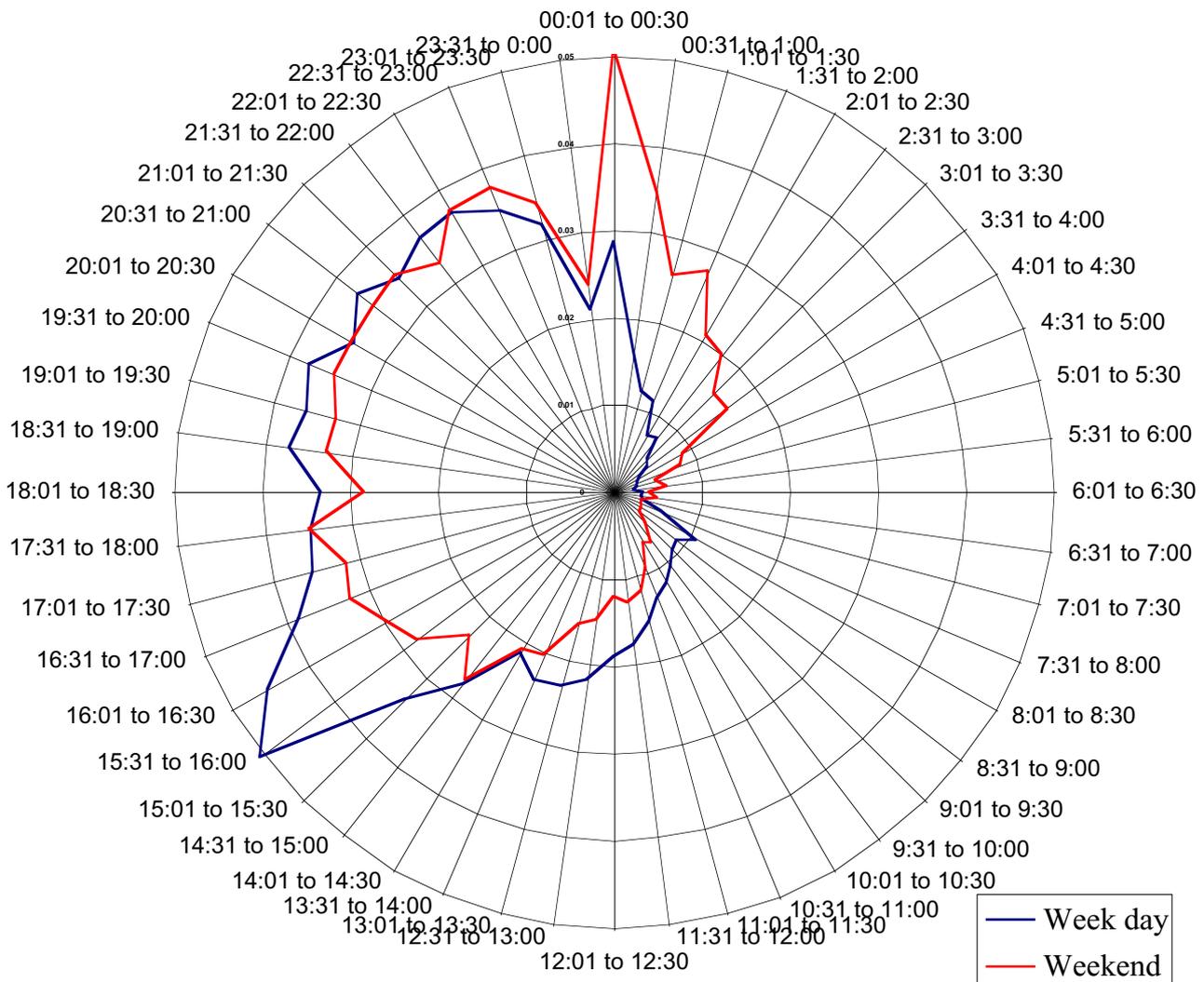
The transition from primary to secondary school

A variety of sources (including Yot records and our interviews with young offenders) confirmed that the transition from primary school is a critical point in the onset of offending. One of the main explanations seems to be that primary schools have got to know most children s particular abilities *and* vulnerabilities by the time they reach the top year, including knowing a lot about their family background[3]. For some of those most susceptible to getting involved in crime, primary schools may have contained this in two main ways. By the top class of primary school, children have *de facto* acquired a degree of status in the eyes of others, in part because they may have been given responsibility and recognition. But the primary school is also a known environment, usually on the children s home territory. There

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3   As one police officer observed: They see whose parents fight with who in the playground .

is relatively little movement within it during the course of each day. They know all or most of the adults and are known by them; and in each year they have the chance to develop a relationship with a significant adult (their class teacher) which will not be replicated again in their educational careers. One young offender described the contrast in moving to secondary school thus:

Primary school, yeah, it s like you never move class rooms - you always stay in one class, yeah? Teacher reads to you. People got teachers that knows you, yeah? When you go to secondary school, you got to move around classrooms and you re the youngest in the school and before when you was in primary, you was the oldest, innit?

In the transition to secondary school, though, personal knowledge of the individual child seems to get lost — even if the files are passed on — although (for better or worse) some may be seen in the light of what is known about older brothers or sisters. They have now moved from the top to the bottom of the pecking order; and even those who are not as susceptible to criminal involvement may suffer from:

- v   loss of identity;
- v   disruption of relations with known adults;
- v   moving out of safe territory of the neighbourhood school;
- v   heightened risk of being picked on/bullied by older pupils.

While some of the young offenders we spoke to were at first intimidated and confused by the move, others recalled strong feelings of excitement. The chance to do new subjects, meet new people and the symbolic transition to being more grown up had held a strong appeal. Both the anxieties of the first group and the enthusiasm of the second, though, soon tended to dissipate. In both instances, the change seemed most likely to show in those who were most personally susceptible to getting involved in street crime because of factors in their personal backgrounds. Within a couple of years many seemed to become disruptive within school and to have started truanting and getting involved in antisocial or criminal behaviour, whether within school or outside.

While this behaviour among younger children might initially be viewed by schools as relatively trivial at this stage, the potentially serious implications for these individuals might already be exacerbated by their being actively recruited (or seeking to be accepted) into particular networks already established within the school. These would be groups who were respected, feared or both because their members were seen as cool (a term often synonymous with a reputation based on toughness rather than academic attainment). Being associated with them, therefore, offered both status and protection.

A few of our young respondents also cited the transition into Year 10 as a watershed. The prospect of GCSEs, the big post-school choices they faced and the prospect of having to survive independently created particular pressures on pupils. These might come from others — especially teachers and (some) parents; but they could also come from within themselves. One young woman offender described begging to be allowed to do GCSEs after several disrupted and disruptive years of schooling:

I mean like Year 11 exams were coming up and GCSEs. And I went to school and I was like Oh, Miss X , (that was my head of year), and I was like Can I do my GCSEs? I ve realised now I ve mucked around. And I proper meant it! I ve never meant anything that meant something so bad in my whole life. And I was like If I don t do these GCSEs, I won t have a job when I m 16. If I don t have a job, I ll still be doing what I m doing now, and the world s just getting stricter and stricter, obviously, with cameras[4] and you know, and things like that . And I was just so, you know, I didn t want to live in that kind of world any more.

In the event, the school decided instead to exclude her[5].

Post school

The Government has set ambitious targets for the number of young people who are expected to stay in full-time education post-16[6]; and the proportion in London already tends to be much higher than the national average. Staying on rates are especially high among young people from minority ethnic groups, despite (but perhaps also because of) the overall lower attainment at GCSE by black, Pakistani and Bangladeshi pupils in Year 11. Of itself, this means that their earning capacity is limited and they remain effectively dependent on other sources of subsistence. Notionally these young people remain dependent on their parents for longer. Yet many of our young respondents identified their peers involvement in street crime with the point at which parents became unwilling or unable to provide their children with money, whether or not they were still in education (see previous chapter).

Poor youth provision

A common problem cited by many respondents both in London and elsewhere was the absence of youth provision outside school hours. Parents and professionals who had known the same area in the past recalled specific activities, play schemes and affordable sporting and leisure facilities which were no longer available. Young people whose parents could not afford to pay now had few constructive outlets for their energy or, more specifically, few facilities for *legitimately* achieving things they could be proud of or respected for. There were few places they could simply socialise other than in public space where they tended to attract complaint and suspicion. Youth services generally were run down; provision was especially poor at weekends and during the holidays; and what did exist often lacked appeal for the young people most at risk.

There was a similar lack of after-school provision; and, even if this is no worse in the more deprived areas, a much higher *proportion* of young people in these areas need these types of facilities because they are relatively unsupervised. They may also actively be discouraged from staying at home for reasons which may be physical or emotional. So the street life to

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4   This is a reference to CCTV cameras increasing the perceived likelihood of being caught.
5   Her account continued:
> *and then my teacher s No like we re chucking you out - like [in] Year 11. And I was like What, you re chucking me out? I was mad and I was like Why re you chucking me out when you could have done that [in] Year 9? Why are you chucking me out now? [Pause] And then ... that s when my home split and everything with my mum and that, and I went into care.*

6   Under the Government s spending review of July 2002, schools were set a target of getting 300,000 young people a year to college by 2004, an increase on the previous target of 220,000. Its 2001 Manifesto envisages the majority of young people entering higher education by 2010.

which they default in large numbers[7] tends to perpetuate a cycle of anti-social behaviour which shades into criminal activity of various types; but different traditions in different areas may in part determine the form this criminal activity takes.

Other agencies

The problems of high turnover and inexperience among teachers, especially in the most deprived areas, are likely to affect other local services also. This may detract from the level and quality of support which is needed not only by the disproportionate number of children at risk in these areas but their families as well[8]. The key other statutory agencies with regard to young people at risk of offending are health, housing and social services — each in its own right but also in relation to the others. Our professionals expressed concern about all of these, as did some of the parents we had interviewed who had in the past asked in vain for help for their children (and also themselves). In reporting their comments, it is important to acknowledge that we did not ourselves interview any professionals from these services to provide *their* perspective on the same issues; and the histories of some offenders clearly suggest that many had received extensive support in the past.

Health authorities were commonly seen to be less involved in local multi-agency work than most other key agencies. This is true of their participation in the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships generally (see below) and also their contribution to the work of the Yots. Yet some of the young people who come into the system need professional help with both physical and mental health problems; and these problems tend to be most intense in the areas with the highest street crime. A senior professional in a Yot in one such area pointed out that they were dealing with a lot of young people who had had no systematic health screening or immunisation (including refugees and travellers). It was difficult to start work with them until their physical needs had been attended to and this required the equivalent of a school nurse.

A largely neglected issue which was raised repeatedly by our practitioner respondents was the problem of housing provision for young people. Many of those who have offended seem to have spent time staying with a range of friends when family relationships were strained or had broken down. Effectively they were homeless, with all that implies at that age in terms of not having direct access to basic physical necessities, including food or the wherewithal to pay for these essentials. In other cases, where family breakdown had been formally recognised, fostering or other alternative arrangements may also have failed and vulnerable young people often had to be put in bed and breakfast in the absence of any alternative[9]. Particular needs attached to young people on bail and, even where good support schemes were in place, finding adequate foster care or appropriate accommodation could cause particular difficulties. Also, many of those supervised by the Yots are at particular risk at the end of their sentences. They may have co-operated with their supervision and had benefited from it; but this may be

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[7] As Chapter 2 suggests, the level of street crime may vary by area according to the size of the youth cohort at any given time.

[8] In the most deprived boroughs, the average number of children on the child protection register (per 000 population aged 18) tends to be double that in the most affluent boroughs (FitzGerald 2000b).

[9] One such example was the young woman cited above who had wanted to do her GCSEs. She was in bed and breakfast at age 15 and she was convicted of street crime (her first detected offence) some time later.

significantly undermined if they are thrown back on their own resources with nowhere adequate to live. This is especially the case for those released from custody.

While social service departments are an important source of funding and, in particular, of the core staff of Yots, (see further below) there was a widespread perception that they tended to abrogate responsibilities for young people involved in offending. With the exception of cases involving child protection issues, once young people were involved in crime, the view was that all aspects of their welfare became the responsibility of the Yot — even in cases where there had long been social services involvement. One Yot manager put this in perspective by pointing out that juvenile justice had always constituted only a very minor part of the work of social services departments. Once it was removed to what was effectively a parallel department, the social services departments found it difficult to respond positively to its demands — not least when these were made by ex-members of staff or people who were still on secondment from them.

THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

The following are the main issues which emerged from our research in relation to the criminal justice system. They reflect the accounts of our respondents and our own observations, as confirmed by other research and feedback from professionals in response to our emerging findings.

Street crime as an offence

Much of the general concern about the rise in street crime has focused on concern that first time offenders have begun to enter the system in much larger numbers for an offence which — if it is charged as robbery - can incur such serious penalties. However, it has already been emphasised that the term street crime covers a very wide range of activity [10]; and many respondents (especially Yot staff) claimed there was considerable variability in charging practices. Specifically, it was asserted that different individuals may be charged with theft or with robbery for the same substantive offence. To explore this with rigour would require a different study involving large-scale statistical analysis of data from case files; but the point was made too often to be dismissed. Ironically, if there is any substance to the complaints made by a number of police respondents about the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) downgrading robbery charges this might add weight to the argument[11].

At the same time, many young people who show up in the figures are first time offenders only in the technical sense that they were not previously known to the system. The accounts we had from offenders themselves and our trawl of case files suggest that a minority may have unwittingly found themselves in the wrong place with the wrong people at the wrong time. Most, though, had already been involved for some time — both in this and often also in other types of offending. Their own experience - as reinforced by their observation of others —

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[10]   Our own research was framed in terms of the MPS definition which embraces personal robbery and snatch theft (see Chapter 1). Towards the end of the research period, though, the Home Office expanded this for the purposes of monitoring performance in the ten police areas under specific scrutiny. In this context the term now came to include pickpocketing, vehicle crime and the use of weapons also.

[11]   This is not to discount the possibility that the CPS, as officers implied, also downgrade robbery charges in cases where this is inappropriate.

was that getting caught was a matter of luck; and that this was the first time their luck had run out (see next chapter also).

The police

In addition to the question of charging practices, the main concerns expressed about the role of the police in this context referred to stereotyping, the pressure to achieve clear-ups and the respective roles (and relationships) of operational and other police officers. Additionally, young people of all origins resented being stopped and questioned by the police. It reinforced their view that they were routinely seen as suspects and (in part as a consequence) would not be taken seriously as victims of crime.

Some young people in our focus groups and many respondents among Yot staff referred to a heightened police suspiciousness of black youths. By contrast, our young offenders and their parents were more likely simply to talk about the increased attention given to young people once they become known to the police, regardless of ethnicity; and further evidence in support of this comes from the MORI surveys for the Youth Justice Board[12].

That is an intelligence-led approach which targets those who, on past evidence, are most likely to commit offences may, on the one hand, overlook young people at the stage where they are becoming increasingly inured to offending. They have overcome any moral inhibitions (see previous chapter); yet their fear of getting caught which, as the MORI surveys illustrate, is one of the most powerful deterrents to young people getting involved in crime[13], have not been realised. On the other hand, this targeting can unintentionally reinforce labelling. For example, the repeated experience of being stopped and searched on occasions when they are not involved in any wrongdoing is likely to make it more difficult for young offenders to see themselves as non-criminal (FitzGerald 1999). Many of those we interviewed were adamant that they would not re-offend; but being targeted in this way would almost certainly add to the difficulties of sustaining this resolution.

Additionally, a number of offenders referred to attempts by arresting officers to get them to admit to offences they did not commit and to cases where they were arrested because they were known despite not fitting the suspect description. These accounts came spontaneously from different respondents in different areas; and the fact that none claimed to have been falsely charged with the offences for which they were currently convicted tended to add to their credibility.

Operational officers have the main responsibility for tackling the problem of street crime in the sense that they target suspects, provide intelligence and make arrests. There may be tensions between their roles and those of other officers with particular responsibilities for work with young people, including those working in the Yots; and — as our focus groups and interviews brought out - their *attitudes* towards the young people concerned may differ

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[12] The 2002 survey, for example, showed that 18 per cent of respondents who had commited an offence within the last year had been caught, compared with 39 per cent who had committed four or more offences.

[13] 45 per cent of school pupils interviewed said that this would deter them from becoming involved in crime and a similar proportion cited the reaction of their parents.

considerably[14]. Plans for extending the presence of the police permanently *within* schools were beginning to bring these tensions into sharp relief towards the end of our fieldwork. Young offenders and their parents are likely to have had contact with these different types of officer and this can create conflicting impressions of the service[15].

Courts and sentencing

On the account of young offenders themselves, a first appearance at court can be intimidating; but thereafter it loses its impact and the process may come to be seen as something of a game. Our own observation confirmed the accounts of several practitioner respondents that for many young people the courts had become a place where they met their mates. Personal tensions could run high, nonetheless — whether between parents and children or between defendants and co-defendants (plus their respective supporters); and this was especially likely where perceptions arose of differential treatment and the party who came off worst inferred betrayal by the other. The hearing itself, though, seemed to go on *around* young defendants. It did not meaningfully involve them in any way. Some young people s accounts of the memory of their first appearance implied a complacent awareness that the first time they were caught nothing serious could happen to them: they would simply be told off because of their age and the fact that *technically* (see above) this was their first offence. For those who were used to the system, court appearances seemed to have lost any significance *except* inasmuch as they risked getting a custodial sentence.

Yot respondents in particular pointed to differential sentencing by magistrates; and some perceived racism in this — for example citing cases where they believed magistrates had, unusually, sent black defendants for Crown Court sentencing and another where an older white defendant was acquitted but his mixed-race co-defendant received a year s custody. Some, though, took these disparities to point to inconsistency in sentencing generally; and they were aware that defendant demeanour could also have an influence[16]. An important new development towards the end of the fieldwork was the introduction of Referral Orders for those appearing in court for the first time and who admitted the offence. These effectively remove most of the discretionary power of magistrates; but they may also have a differential effect on black young people who have traditionally been less likely to admit the offences they are charged with (FitzGerald 1993).

One particular area of concern raised by Yot staff was the failure of the courts to take breaches seriously enough. Young people were returned to them having been told off but not penalised in any meaningful way. Effectively they knew that they had got away with the breach and this could make it more difficult to work with them. It was particularly disheartening where this occurred towards the end of their sentence and the courts appeared to take no further action for that very reason.

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[14]   Their perspectives might be broadly classified as: victim-orientated; offender-orientated; and target-orientated.

[15]   We specifically probed parents experience of arresting officers and, although the number was small, all had found them OK . Some had varied experiences, however, of their subsequent dealings with the police; but these largely seemed to be a matter of differences in attitude between individual officers.

[16]   Hence at least one referred to coaching young people about their behaviour in court if they were to avoid putting themselves at an unnecessary disadvantage.

Youth offending teams (Yots)

Respondents in the Yots themselves raised numerous areas of concern with regard to: resourcing; information systems; and the targets they were expected to achieve.

Our own observations also suggested that problems lay not only with data systems but with the ways in which they were used. It was by no means apparent that returns from the Yots to the Youth Justice Board justified the effort it took to provide them. Large amounts of the information they have to produce relate to thirteen key performance measures set nationally for the Yots — and to whether they have met the several targets attached to each (see Appendix 7). The database this produces is patchy and, even if it is accurate, the potential for analysis of the aggregated national data is very limited.

The figures in the form they are provided for the Board are of little value for the Yots own purposes; and much of the information which would be of greatest analytical value to them is, in any case, held on paper records in individual case files. We found considerable inconsistency in the way these records are completed and little evidence of the data being analysed systematically. Yet, in principle, the items of information Yots are supposed to record should make it possible, for example, to show re-offending rates by category of offence, age, gender, ethnicity, previous convictions and other relevant factors such as the type of sentence already served. In practice this would allow local and national trends to be monitored in ways which routinely tracked the relative effectiveness of different types of intervention. It could provide a robust measure of need while allowing *meaningful* comparisons of performance across areas. By improving understanding of the specific reasons for differences in the extent to which different Yots meet their targets could also help to prescribe effective remedial action.

In essence, the work undertaken by Yots with those who have already been convicted is intended to challenge young people s offending behaviour and to try to safeguard against their re-offending. The scope for addressing the underlying causes of this behaviour is necessarily circumscribed by the length and type of sentence; but Yot staff appeared to vary considerably in their attitude towards the punitive aspect of their role. Some saw no inconsistency between this and a constructive, rehabilitative approach; yet others (especially those from a social work background) expressed a strong sense of tension. Their appreciation of the factors which had brought young people into this situation was, they felt, at odds with the requirement on them, as professionals, for punishing them for being here; and a few openly doubted their own ability to continue in this role.

Working with young people involved in street crime highlighted these tensions since such a high proportion were black. On the one hand, many of our Yot respondents - both white and black - specifically referred to the impact of institutional racism on this group [17]. On the other, some black workers in particular drew on the norms and expectations of their own traditions of child rearing and discipline. Seen in this light the activities of many young black street robbers (and the immediate personal circumstances which had fostered their offending) were a direct contravention of their own norms. In addition, they fuelled negative stereotypes

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[17] One senior black worker stated that half the young black people in prison are innocent of the crimes of which they have been convicted.

of black people from which black professionals and their own children continued to suffer. Two black workers reflected on the issues as follows:

Man: *I mean all the stuff that we ve been saying you know, the changes in society, poor schooling and stuff like that, we ve had that for a long time. ... It is a factor but I don t think [it can explain what s happening] . They [i.e. the young people] don t have any idea about responsibility, their own personal responsibility, they don t take responsibility for themselves. And to a certain extent I think we kind of like collude with that to a certain extent by saying this [or by] trying to do this for them and trying to — maybe - assist them too much, kind of like taking away their responsibility .*

Woman: *Yeah, and probably if they were our own children, our own personal children, we probably wouldn t be as lenient . Cause we re thinking This is my child, I care, I want them to grow, prosper, be a good member of society, whatever, have a good job at the end of it . You fight harder if you re one of those parents that hasn t already given up, that is. But when they come to us now . I think that we re still at the stage of what works really. Because I ve been through the IT [Intermediate Treatment] bit with young people, the alternatives to custody, juvenile justice etc.; and I m still trying to figure out what works - as a practitioner, as a parent, as a human being.*

Surprisingly, perhaps, none of the young people supervised by the Yots whom we interviewed talked about wanting to be understood and/or exonerated. Several of those we interviewed said they were determined not to re-offend, although others adopted a more defiant attitude. Most felt they were getting something useful from their supervision; but this was almost always expressed in terms of practical advice and help. One, however, found this rewarding experience disconcerting: while he valued it, he did not feel in any sense that he was also being punished. It seemed no coincidence that he had subsequently been breached — almost as though this was a way of pinching himself to make sure his criminal conviction was real.

Questions also arose over the premium placed on the one-to-one relationship between the offender and their Yot worker. Group work programmes were variable in their content and their availability. They can be effective but it may be difficult to manage the dynamics of the group (and relationships between those in it) and these can actually militate against breaking patterns of problem behaviour. In any case, many of the young people can choose not to participate in group activities; there may be no relevant programmes available; and/or programmes which start may not last[18]. However, for most young people — that is, other than the minority of more serious offenders for whom Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programmes (ISSP) are available - contact time with their individual worker is relatively limited. It also tends to be tied to office hours; and this means that the young people who may be best disposed to benefit either have to take time off work or fit in meetings between the end of school and the office closing.

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[18] This type of provision is more likely in areas where Youth Inclusion Programmes operate; but these are not universally available.

Additionally, where there is a high turnover of staff or workers or where, for whatever reason, Yot staff have difficulty keeping appointments, this further militates against establishing effective working relationships with these young people. Indeed, one Yot plan made available to us explicitly referred to feedback from young people which suggested the need for:

Work around delivering what we say we will, turning up on time and working with young people on the seriousness of their offending.

This seems particularly important when most of the cases of street crime we looked at appeared to involve young people with a long history of difficult relationships with adults. Significant adults in their lives to date might variously have subjected them to physical or psychological abuse; or they may have been important objects of attachment who effectively let them down by disappearing from their lives (see next chapter). Others will have had a role simply as figures of authority which the young people may often have perceived to be exercised unfairly[19]. This not only poses a serious challenge to establishing a relationship with their Yot worker in the first place — especially where the sentence is relatively short and non-intensive and where several sessions may be missed altogether or cut to a bare minimum. *If the relationship is nonetheless successful, it can be inordinately significant for young people precisely because of their history.* Yet this, in turn, poses obvious challenges at the end of the sentence if the youth justice system is to avoid reinforcing their experience of being abandoned[20].

The work of the Yots is also beset by many of the difficulties of partnership working which are discussed below; but a final consideration here is their involvement in *preventing* offending. This is a central element in the remit of the Yots. They were set up under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 which explicitly specified that:

It shall be the principal aim of the youth justice system to prevent offending by children and young people.

In practice, though, there appears to be considerable variability in the extent to which Yots are involved in this type of activity[21]. While a few have specified prevention posts and teams, most do not; and what detail is contained in Youth Justice Plans suggest that in budgetary terms the amount spent on this type of activity is relatively small and also very variable. Other than the work with offenders which counts towards meeting prevention targets, it usually depends on non-core funding; but the dilemmas inherent in any other arrangement are summed up thus in one Yot plan:

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[19]   One striking, recurrent theme raised by young people in our focus groups as well as the young offenders themselves was the unjust way many felt they were treated by teachers. While those who were in serious trouble knew there had also been many times when they had got away with things, what strongly rankled was occasions when they were falsely accused and no-one had asked — still less listened to — their side of the story.

[20]   In a different context, a police officer working in a school described a boy who became extremely disruptive towards the end of Year 11, culminating in acts of serious vandalism against the school. It was the only secure environment he had ever known; and he was reacting against the prospect of being effectively abandoned by it because, at age 16, his time would be up.

[21]   The Youth Inclusion Programmes, for example, which provide constructive activities for up to 50 young people aged 13 to 16 who are at high risk of offending covered less than half of all Yots in 2002.

The situation beyond 2003 is unpredictable.   there will be increasing pressure to mainstream   projects such as the Early Years Intervention Team . This can only be achieved by a re-direction of resources from remand placements and Court-ordered interventions to early interventions services.

Provision is usually delivered at one remove from the Yot by another agency, nor is it directly under the control of the Yot in many cases. Where they are involved, this is often in partnership with others; so whether these schemes are sustainable may also be affected by uncertainty around others budgets, especially where the Yot is a relatively junior partner. However, it was not apparent that the Yots had any involvement at all in many of the most innovative prevention initiatives we heard of.

Prisons

Fear of incarceration emerged very clearly as *the* most powerful deterrent to offending - both from the focus groups with young people and from our offender interviews[22]. One of the most frequent suggestions made by the focus groups was that schools should invite in people who have experienced prison to spell out the possible consequences of getting caught; and some wanted pupils physically to be shown what a prison was like.

At the same time, though, there was a concern that once some young people crossed this Rubicon there was no way back. Those without meaningful qualifications and lacking informal entr es to the labour market effectively return from custody to the same criminogenic environment with their prison record a source of status among their peers. Street crime among young people appears largely to be opportunistic and activity is triggered within a group. In circumstances where these opportunities present all the time, resisting them may actually be damaging to the only credibility these young people have. Of interest in this context is that several Yot workers referred to young people welcoming ISSP in part because it gave them a legitimate pretext to remove themselves from the groups on the streets and the activities these would inevitably drawn them into. In addition, prisons provide a clear structure, a bed and three guaranteed meals per day. For some of the most vulnerable, once they have discovered how to survive prison, being inside may actually be easier than being thrown back on their own limited resources to survive the chaos of life outside.

Others, though, including some parents and young offenders themselves saw prison in a positive light. When all else had so far failed, it provided the space to reflect on their lives to date and on whether they wanted the future to be different. One mother we interviewed was pinning considerable hope on her son being sentenced to a particular prison for long enough to benefit from a programme which was available there. She saw this as the last chance for

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[22]   This finding may appear slightly at odds with the finding of the MORI survey. However, the latter asked which two of a list of items respondents thought had the biggest effect on stopping young people from committing crime — i.e. why some people weren t involved. Our own question allowed for more spontaneous responses but asked more specifically what would stop those who *were* involved (or at greatest immediate risk of becoming involved).

him to address the serious problems which underlay the long history of behavioural problems of which his offending was one aspect[23].

Whatever the contribution prison might make in principle, though, in practice there were major problems with:

a) the quality of education and training available for young people (ECOTEC 2002); and
b) providing adequate safeguards against them relapsing into old patterns when they were released into the same environment (Social Exclusion Unit 2002).

The legal profession
The legal profession plays an important but largely neglected role in the context of tackling young people s offending - and one which is, at best, ambivalent. In interviews, young people convicted of street crime tended to rate their solicitors simply according to whether they got them off . Meanwhile several of the professionals we spoke to specifically raised concerns about the role of lawyers in reinforcing a mindset of denial. We were given reports not only of more hardened young people routinely giving no comment interviews[24] but of solicitors advising clients in ways which Yot workers believed ultimately went against their best interests[25]. Thus in one non-London area, a worker cited the example of a young man she was supervising who had been arrested and taken to the police station, accompanied by his mother. His solicitor had told him to go no comment and the first his worker knew of the arrest was when the mother had phoned her in distress. The boy had wanted to admit the offence and she had seen it as important for him to do so; but both had felt unable to defy the advice of their professional representative.

In another area, however, workers remarked on a reasonable working relationship where the solicitors would ask beforehand what sentence the Yot was recommending and tailor their advice to the young person accordingly. They specifically commented that — although occasionally solicitors might try it on — they were not playing games with the system in ways that were perceived as more common in London.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING
All of the above highlights the importance of partnership working in this context, for three main reasons.

v Tackling the factors which are conducive to street crime depends on a range of agencies *other* than the agencies of the criminal justice system - although the police and the Yots in particular have an important contribution to make in specifically crime prevention initiatives.

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[23] These had already become apparent from our interview with this young man while he was on custodial remand.

[24] Some remarked also on the legalistic approach quite young children may now adopt to misdemeanours of any sort. That is, from an early age, the issue for some young people may not be whether they actually did something (and still less whether they should feel any moral responsibility for doing it) but whether their accuser has any evidence .

- v Interventions by the agencies of the criminal justice system with those who commit street crime need to be consistent and mutually reinforcing.
- v The success of these criminal justice interventions, though, will often depend on the input available from other agencies not only at the time but over the long term once sentences have been completed and the system has no ongoing responsibility towards the young people in question.

Multi-agency working has been promoted since at least the 1980s; but, more recently, different local agencies have been required to co-operate within an increasing number of specified partnership arrangements. The two main forms these have taken are:

- v structures within which individual agencies collectively formulate plans, with each expected then to contribute to their implementation;
- v new organisations which are resourced by different agencies and/or whose purpose includes co-ordinating their contribution to meeting a specific policy objective.

Importantly for our purposes, the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act set up one of each of these types of arrangement in, respectively, the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) and the Yots. However, other similar arrangements have been made over the same period, including the Connexions service which was about to come on stream at the time of the fieldwork. It is intended to provide personal advisers to young people aged 13 to 19 in relation to employment, education and training and to target in particular those who are disengaged from the education process. A number of obstacles to agencies meeting their collective potential became evident in the course of our study, though, and many of these can be illustrated by reference to the CDRPs and the Yots. The size and shape of these obstacles, though, tends to vary from area to area depending on local tradition (including the prior history of working relations between the agencies concerned) and on funding.

A major stumbling block to partnership working has been that each of the agencies has its own core budget; and it is judged on how well it spends that budget by its performance in relation to targets which are set for it individually. Partnership working does not directly contribute to meeting these targets and, although it may in principle pay off for each of the agencies, this is unlikely within the time frame in which their performance is measured (FitzGerald and Hough 2002). There is, therefore, little incentive to use core funding for partnership initiatives; and much good work of this type is financed through bidding competitively for pockets of money which are available only for specific purposes over a limited period. This can create problems of staffing, militate against effective long-term planning and create problems for the future if the provision meets a need but is not sustainable. Meanwhile further problems arise where different agencies targets are set independently of each other (often by different government departments) and may be in tension[26].

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[26] Most obviously, the premium set for schools on educational attainment may further alienate many of the pupils most at risk of offending, increasing rates of truancy and exclusion with a likely knock-on effect to rates of offending also. However, it was also pointed out that increased detection of street crime by the police and successful prosecutions would increase the numbers of young people the Yots dealt with for these offences; and this would directly militate against their own targets for reducing this type of offending.

The police and local authorities have tended to take the lead within the CDRPs but it is still proving difficult to get agreement on sharing information[27]; and particular sensitivities arise with regard to young people. Schools in particular (but also social services) have understandably been reluctant to divulge personal information on pupils who they see as vulnerable. What, to some agencies, is simply a question of identifying those at risk of offending in order to be able to divert them is seen by others as putting them at risk of labelling. In the view of the latter, targeting them (even benignly) may actually compound their problems.

The relationships between the Yots and other key agencies may in part be influenced by the variation in their funding arrangements. Yots are in principle multi-agency teams and their funding *does* come from the core budgets of several of the local statutory agencies; but it is also topped up by funding from the Youth Justice Board and may be supplemented by other money they raise from sponsorship or successful bids. The main local funders are social services departments (in some instances further supplemented by direct contributions from chief executives) who contribute over 50 per cent of the core, rising in some areas to nearly 80 per cent. This is followed by the police and probation service who may respectively contribute anything between 10 and 20 per cent, though it falls below this in a few areas and there are local differences in which of the two agencies gives more. Health and education, in turn, may add a further modest amount which ranged from just over one per cent to just under 10 per cent in the sample we looked at. Funding from the Youth Justice Board may supplement the core by anything from under 20 per cent to over 50 per cent, in part depending on whether the Yot is running particular Youth Justice Board-funded programmes, including those aimed at prevention (see earlier).

Effectively, then, the Yots are accountable to a number of different agencies; but how far these agencies hold them to account, actively support their work or consider them as partners in their own core business also tends to vary from area to area. In some areas, for example, they appeared to be closely involved in the CDRPs and consciously framed their own work in relation to the local CDRP plan. In others, though, it has already been noted that most of the street robbery initiatives (as well as innovative approaches to crime prevention among young people) seemed to be partnership-driven with little reference to the Yots. Meanwhile, despite the fact that most of their core funding came from local authorities, there was little evidence that chief executives were prepared to force the issue where Yots needed better co-operation from other departments (in particular education[28] and social services).

Finally, whatever form they take — and however well-conceived - multi-agency arrangements take time to bed down and begin to work effectively; and they are also time consuming for those involved. In relative terms, the Yots at the time of our fieldwork were in their infancy. They had grown rapidly and been subject to numerous changes already in the two years since they were set up; but many of our practitioner respondents outside the Yots also expressed

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[27]   In one area we were told (in early summer 2002) that a protocol had finally been elaborated after extensive discussion and was about to be signed. But when we asked for a copy several weeks later, it had been sent back for further consultation.

[28]   In the case of education, the quasi-autonomy of head teachers and governing bodies under local management of schools would, in any case, have made this more difficult.

concern at the growing proliferation of these initiatives. Not only did the requirement of liaison add to demands on them, these newcomers were creating considerable confusion — both internally and externally - about the respective roles of the existing agencies. They faced obvious practical difficulties where more and more agencies were seeking to recruit from essentially the same pool; and funders had to review the balance of the allocation of their finite resources. Yot staff reported that, for parents of the young people they supervised, it was proving increasingly difficult to find their way through the system. They expected their child s worker to be able to take a holistic approach to the problems which - unless they were effectively addressed in the course of the young person s sentence - would lead them to re-offend.

CHAPTER 5 - PERSONAL FACTORS

Having looked at the statistical evidence and the general factors surrounding their offending, this chapter looks more closely at the individuals involved. It follows the sequence of the interview schedule we used with young people who had committed street crime and which we mirrored in our interviews with parents and carers. While the numbers were relatively small (and we did not succeed in getting interviews with young people sentenced to custody) we were able to validate much of what they told us against our notes from Yot records. These covered a much larger number of cases (see Chapter 1) and also provided background we would not necessarily have discovered in interviews. Additional corroboration came from the young people in our focus groups. Indeed, our subsequent interviews with convicted young offenders tended to confirm that many of the school students we spoke to had been drawing on direct observation — and, in some instances, on their own personal experience as victims, offenders or both.

Again it is important to emphasise from the outset that many of the factors at work are not particular to street crime.

FAMILY BACKGROUND

Most of the young people whose case notes we looked at were living with single mothers; and, where they were not, the father was usually not their natural father. In several cases there was tension between the young person and their mother s boyfriend. Some boys we spoke to talked of concerns about their mothers; but there was often some ambiguity in this. References were made to mothers being tense and anxious, preoccupied with worries about jobs and money and seeing their son s offending as adding to the litany. Typically, one boy convicted of street crime began by citing the impact on his mother as the main reason he had stopped offending; but towards the end of the interview he let out more about the way she made him feel:

You see, my mum, yeah, she s one of the reasons why I stopped offending. Cause of my mum, yeah, because like she goes through more . She . Like it s hard for her, yeah; but when I come out, yeah, she says to me: Oh I was trying so hard for you , yeah? But it s like, yeah, she s saying to me [Look at] all I do for you . She s saying to me, yeah, I ve been doing this for you, I ve been getting letters together, trying to do this . [Pause] She never asks me how I m feeling, yeah? She s just telling me what she s been trying to do for me and how I ve been done this and this . So she cries, yeah, and makes you feel upset like . If she sends you a letter, yeah, you read it - you feel upset. And one of the reasons why I m stuck, yeah . She always makes out like she.   She does do a lot for me, yeah, I m not saying she don t. But she will always tell me. She ll never leave me, yeah? She ll just tell me I done this, I done that for you. I m trying to get you out . But she won t ask me, yeah? I m the one who s been through the worst time. That s what I tried to tell her one time like when we was driving from court yeah? I say to her, I mean But I was the one that was up there . [And] she says to me yeah, I ve been doing this, I ve been doing that. I couldn t sleep in the night yeah. Do you know what I m saying? Do you know what I m saying?

By contrast, the girls involved in offending seemed to have had no real relationship with their mothers over a long period — or one which was very strained.

Boys who remembered their own fathers often retained a deep attachment to them which was, in at least one case, an ongoing cause of considerable distress. But many of the young people involved had witnessed serious domestic violence early in their lives — whether between their natural parents or their mother and a subsequent partner. The black mother in Area A referred to in Chapter 3 attributed her son s early disruptive behaviour in school to her breaking up with his own father. The boy had eventually gone to live with him for a year but came back because he didn t get on with his stepmother. Shortly afterwards the mother herself had fled from his half-sister s violent father; and the family was in Area A because they were moved there from a women s refuge.

Most of those involved had siblings. Sometimes these had different fathers and the young person might feel quite unconnected with them[1]. Often, though, they tended to feel quite protective towards younger ones (hoping they would not follow in their own footsteps). At the same time, they looked up to older ones, taking them as their model - for better or worse. Effectively, in the absence of a father, the older brother might assume that role.

Grandparents were important and were often a focus of considerable attachment[2]; but relatively few now lived close enough to the young people to play an active part in their lives and, in some cases, it seemed that loss of contact with grandparents might be part of the problem. For the young people in question seemed to have experienced a disproportionate amount of loss, separation and other disruption to key relationships up to this point; and in several cases these changes seemed immediately to precede the first onset of offending. The most obvious loss was the break-up between their natural parents; but this experience might be replicated in the withdrawal from their lives of surrogate parents to whom the young person subsequently became attached (including mothers boyfriends).

Deaths seemed also to feature in case histories to an unusual extent, including the natural loss of grandparents or of older relatives who were especially important to them. But there were also several instances of relatives who met violent ends (including parental suicides), the sudden deaths of siblings and at least two cases where girlfriends had suffered miscarriages.

At the same time, a surprising number of young people of minority ethnic origin in Areas C and D had either been born abroad or had been sent abroad for a period before being brought back to the parent who remained in Britain. Among those born abroad were several asylum seekers and others who may have come illegally, although they might not themselves have been aware of this[3]. In both instances, they did not have National Insurance numbers so were

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[1]   One had set up a half-brother to be jacked (i.e. mugged) but was caught when the latter grassed on him.

[2]   One young man who showed no remorse for his offending or any feelings towards his victims would nonetheless kill anyone who did the same to his own Gran.

[3]   In one complex case, a young man had been left in Sierra Leone and believed his parents to have been killed. He was then brought to England to an aunt who turned out to be his natural mother. He was now living at his grandmother's (who he had previously also been told was an aunt) but sleeping on the

not eligible to earn legitimately. Those who had been left behind to join families here later — or who had for an extended period been sent abroad to relatives (including grandparents and fathers[4]) - had often been subjected to major disruption of relationships which may be assumed to have been important to them. They had to re-negotiate relationships with families here, some of which had in the meantime been reconstituted or added to.

For a number, family relationships had broken down so badly that official action was taken; but more commonly they seemed to cope by moving between friends and relatives. Or they managed to avoid their parents simply by staying out a lot and/or only being at home while their mother was at work. One Asian girl had been placed in foster care; and her reflections on this summed up the experience of breakdown and its emotional consequences in a particularly articulate way.

Interviewer: *Who fostered you?*

Girl: *Oh it was a black family like, but there was like white kids in there and I had to share my room with this girl and . It was the same really . But, I mean, it weren t the same obviously: it was a different environment. But the thing is, they tried to be like my family and I thought I lost my real family - so why am I going to try being with a fake family? Do you know what I mean?*

Interviewer: *How did the bust up with your mum happen?*

Girl: *She just thought I was worthless.*

Interviewer: *But did she chuck you out, or did you walk out or ?*

Girl: *Yeah, no, she chucked me out and I had enough anyway. I wanted to leave anyway because you know, I d just had enough, like of her hitting me all the time. My dad would give her one phone call, he d wind her up, she d start coming you know, lash on me. And the last time she lashed at me was . She picked up a knife, like, you know? So that s why it ended. And I had enough anyway and, you know, I thought Maybe if I go to care, the money will be . At least I know I ll get my money every week and I ll have my clothes that I need like do you know what I mean? Not what I want, what I need.   And I just went into foster care; and they tried to put me in school and that. I went to school anyway - not school, but like a college thing, a training thing — cause if I didn t go there, then I would have not had my placement. But I never used to, like, do no work and that. I was just depressed and that.*

Interviewer: *What were you depressed about?*

Girl: *Just about life — just everything . And then I went . Then from my foster care I got chucked out; and it wasn t nothing big to me - cause I just thought it was just another place getting me chucked out again. And then I went to B&B. I couldn t live in that B&B. I couldn t cook or nothing you know . So I run away.*

She went to a friend living outside London and it was here that the street crime offence occurred of which she was currently convicted. She had developed a close relationship with an older boy; but he was sentenced to custody before she discovered she was pregnant. So she had an abortion.

In the rare cases where young people seemed to live in close, traditional nuclear (or extended) families, several seemed to be families with criminal connections. One white street robber had been taken strongly to task over his offending by his father; but the father himself had a criminal record, as did the boy s older brother. Both were now going straight; but the boy had still been able to dispose of materials he had stolen from a building site *via* a contact of his sister s.

Where parents had criminal backgrounds some were determined to try to divert their own children from the same fate, but often in adverse circumstances[5]. In a significant minority of cases, also one or other parent seemed to have serious problems with drugs or depression and, in particular, alcohol. Young people in the focus groups, though, had singled out having older brothers and cousins involved in street crime as a major influence on offending; and this tended to be reinforced in our interviews[6]. One girl said all of her siblings except for one was a thief . Asked if that had influenced her as she grew up:

Girl: *I wanted to be just like them. Cause I didn t really know nothing about it [i.e. I didn t appreciate the possible consequences]. I just thought it was great, what they was doing.*

Interviewer: *Why was it great?*

Girl: *Cause I used to see all the stuff they used to get.*

Families, that is, could often be an important part of the problem; and parental neglect or abuse were not uncommon. More commonly young people talked about parents being under serious stress themselves; and although this might effectively result in neglect, they did not hold them to blame. These situations meant that oldest children in particular may have been expected to take a lot of responsibility from an early age. Where boys, by default, became the

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[5] Thus, the mother of a boy in Area C had been imprisoned for fraud, along with his father and he had been cared for by his grandmother. His father was a crack addict who was violent towards his mother in incidents which the boy had witnessed. The case notes say the mother had dealt firmly with the offence, not wanting the boy to follow in her footsteps; and his relationship with her and his grandmother are described as close. However, his behaviour begins to deteriorate after his conviction and the latest note on the file said his mother was concerned about his association with a 21-year-old local crack dealer who he claimed had paid him for doing some decorating.

[6] Boys usually drew a contrast with sisters who tended to be conscientious and hard working. Girl offenders, though, often had offending siblings, including sisters in some cases.

man of the family, however, expectations might vary, depending on how the role of men was viewed. In the case of girls, though, the discussion reported in Chapter 3 implies more consistent expectations that they would take responsibility for younger siblings and household chores. Those parents we spoke to were all seriously concerned for the future of their children and wanted to play an active role in securing it. They felt strongly, though, that they themselves needed support in order to do so rather than being stigmatised.

One mother gave a typical account of years of frustration trying to get treatment for her son. She had no illusions about him; and was sympathetic to the problems of some of the professionals who had to deal with people like him:

I mean when you sit there and you listen to your son in a police station telling these people they re fucking bastards and go screw their mothers you know, and you think of all the worst things they can say, and your son is sitting there saying all this, and these people have got to sit there and sort of be impartial to you. I think you know, most of them I d say do a great job. Because at the end of the day their hands are tied. They re getting these kids going in and out of these places day after day and they cannot do a thing with them. And it must be so frustrating.

On the other hand, she resented the way she herself was automatically viewed by the system — from schools to magistrates courts:

If you ve got a son - or a daughter even — who s like this, you re labelled. You re a single parent, on the Social - a non-working, smoking, drinking mother. And that s it, you know.

SCHOOL

Of those who were educated in this country, most had had disrupted schooling, at least at secondary level. Some had already shown serious behavioural problems in primary school — often following some personal upset and/or because they had a learning difficulty which they found frustrating but which was not always detected. Some admitted to bullying and petty theft in primary school; but most seem to have stayed out of serious trouble until secondary school and, like the boy cited in the previous chapter, retained positive memories of school before that[7]. By no means all found the transition at 11 traumatic, as was mentioned in the previous chapter, and it was described thus by one young, white street robber:

I can remember walking in and thinking I was Jack the Lad like walking around secondary school, cause I knew everyone there — but, like, getting excited. Cause you ve been in primary school for so long and you didn t see many people bigger then you cause you was in the top class.

How well they settled — but to some extent also, the path marked out for them — was often influenced by whether or not they had had older brothers or cousins at the school. The boy cited above was able to feel Jack the Lad because his older brother had a bad reputation for

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[7] There was more than one nostalgic reference to the residential activity week away from London which some primary school children experience in their final year.

fighting and that [8]. By contrast, the Asian girl who ended up in bed and breakfast had no such protection. So she had to invent an armour for herself from scratch and did so in ways which had already served to withstand her own mother.

Basically in secondary school.... It s just about if you don t dress in a certain way and if you don t act in a certain way and your hair is not in a certain way, and things like that then people do start on you. That s how it is. So basically yeah, [when first] I used to go to secondary school, I d wear my trainers, wear my trousers, my jacket, whatever.... I d just have my hair all back in a ponytail. ... So, like, you know I was quiet and whatever; so they just wanted to start on me. So I showed them basically. I got that aggression where . I don't know, I got angry how I d get angry towards my mum when she was hitting me or whatever. And then they saw that and they were scared, like do you know what I mean? I thought All right then, this image [when you] think of it is too you know, too quiet and too sweet or whatever. So I ll change myself . So like I ll tell you the truth yeah? The way I changed myself is - I made myself look more like my own colour . So I started doing all different things. I started plaiting my hair, I started putting gel on my hair like you know, how black girls do and you know, started wearing baggy clothes and all that.

By the second year, many had started to become disruptive and to truant, like the boy above:

I started to be a thief and that. Started getting naughty like - throwing things at teachers and setting off the fire alarms.

Few offered any real explanation for their behaviour at school; and although some simply said school was boring, several records and the accounts of parents again point to their having difficulty keeping up with work. Most had been excluded at some stage of secondary school; but some had additionally had their education interrupted by spells living abroad or with relatives elsewhere in England; and most records made some reference to truanting. On their own account and those of parents, they might often associate with older boys while they were bunking off; and this catalysed their involvement in offending as well as experimenting with drugs in a small number of cases.

A few with serious behavioural problems had been sent to special schools (including boarding schools); and by the time they were attending the Yot, many had been in pupil referral units. Here they met other young people with similar histories of antisocial behaviour and offending; but they also seemed to find a motivation to attend which contrasted with their previous attitude towards school.

Interviewer: *So what was different about the project [if, for example] you got into fights and all that sort of stuff?*

Boy: *We weren t fighting and that . We were all mates, you know what I mean, when we went there. So there were no, like, proper fights because we was all mates.*

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[8]   Eventually he was permanently excluded.

Interviewer: *If people started getting out of order, what happened on the project?*

Boy: *What they do, like, to punish us? What they do   they say if you don t behave today you can t go to wherever again tomorrow   we had loads of things cancelled; and it s like if you behave   you did some stuff. Do five minutes of work and you can go for a cigarette and stuff . They used to send us home like for a day innit if it was something serious, send you home.*

Interviewer: *So where at school you d bunk off, at the project being sent out for a day was actually punishment?*

Boy: *Yeah. I didn t play up as much   I had a lot of days off; but the story is I wanted to go, you know what I mean? It was good, I enjoyed it.*

The girl cited in the previous chapter who had begged to be allowed to take her GCSEs also recalled:

> *About Year 9, I told my teacher to chuck me out so I can go to the unit — because at the unit you get more attention — more, like, care and that.*

(This too had been refused.)

Few had any educational qualifications by the time they reached 16 — variously because they had not applied themselves at school, had missed a lot of time (through truanting and exclusion), because of learning difficulties or through a combination of these. Although it is well established that a disproportionate number of young offenders may have learning difficulties[9] it is important also to bear in mind that this is by no means true of all of them. One black girl escaped a custodial sentence because of a report from her school which suggested she had considerable potential — although she appears to have been far too alienated to have responded positively to this opportunity. The same was true of a black boy whose school report to the court described him as pleasant and helpful . However, the file suggests that his behaviour began to deteriorate after his conviction and the most recent entry showed that he was now threatened with exclusion[10].

OFFENDING

General patterns

Few of those involved in street crime did it exclusively. Those with criminal records had often been found guilty of other offences also. By the same token, we saw records of young people supervised by the Yots for other offences but who had convictions for street crime too. At the time of their first offence, many had a long history of disruptive behaviour and, often, as in the following case of a white boy, of crimes for which they had not been caught:

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[9]   A study for the Youth Justice Board of young people sentenced to custody found that, of a sample with an average age of 17, nearly half had literacy and numeracy problems below those of the average 11 year old. (ECOTEC 2002)

[10]   In the view of his teacher, because he didn't go to custody he thought he could now behave as he pleased.

Interviewer:	*Had you done anything before but not been caught for it?*

Boy:	*Yeah. See that s the thing, yeah, you see, like people on the streets, when they get caught for crimes - but they ve done more crimes than they re getting caught for. When I got arrested yeah, by the police, yeah, for street robbery, yeah, they stopped me in the middle of the street, and they said to me, yeah Look, we got you for ten street robberies , yeah. Confess to five of them and we ll let you off the other five , you get me? And I was thinking to myself, yeah, they must know, cause I ve done more than ten street robberies, do you get it? So I m thinking to myself they must know that. Now it s true that people do build up more but they don t get caught. Some people don t even [ever] get caught.*

Interviewer:	*When was the first one you did? I just want to find out a bit more about where it starts . Can you remember the first one?*

Boy:	*I can t even remember the first time. I mean like I ve stole things for . Like sweets yeah, I ve been stealing them since I ve been seven like.*

He seemed here to be making a distinction here between stealing sweets and *real* crime which, he thought, started when he was about 14; and he went on to explain:

> *I ll tell you what happens, yeah? First thing, yeah, if you go out, yeah, like the most common thing people thief, yeah, a mobile phone.*

That is, for someone with these antecedents, street crime — and, specifically, taking mobile phones — was the activity that *currently* one progressed to. This seemed especially to be the case in areas where this type of offending was prevalent; and this may, in turn, have a self-perpetuating effect which of itself would amplify the number of incidents. Thus another boy recounted his first arrest at age 11:

> *It was like summer holidays like and me and X used to go around with an older lot and we always used to see them mugging people like, robbing boys like. And as we was getting older we started to think yeah, we should do it like cause all the boys had money like everyone got loads of money. We could be like them and that. So we started going out and we started robbing people and then one day I got caught, just got nicked like, they come to my house of a morning, got arrested.*

In other areas, other types of crime may be more prevalent, as in Area A where there was a much greater mix of burglary, car crime, criminal damage and assault. Meanwhile in areas where most police activity had now been focused on street crime, the pattern was beginning to change[11]. One young black man in Area C - who already had convictions also for offensive weapons and car thefts - thought the time had come to diversify again:

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[11]	Many practitioners we spoke to saw the initial rise in street robberies itself, in part, as displacement from burglaries and car crime which had become more difficult as the result of: a) improved security;

Mostly now I m trying to stop doing robberies and most of the things that I m doing is car stereos and that, because it s quick money and it s easy. But it s not as much fun, you know, as doing a robbery .

Motivation

People s motives for doing robberies varied considerably — as did the circumstances in which they occurred. Most commonly, as has already been implied, young people who were already getting a bad image drifted into this type of activity almost as a matter of natural progression. But the immediate explanations they gave covered a wide range. For some, the main impulse was the sheer fun referred to by the boy above — a buzz or adrenaline rush described by others and well attested in the criminological literature (Katz 1988). Others, in turn, tended to echo two views widely expressed in our focus groups and reported in the previous chapter.

Getting involved in street crime was a way of people protecting themselves from being picked on by deliberately cultivating a reputation for being tough; but some also advanced starkly instrumentalist justifications in which the need for money featured strongly. Thus one black girl explained that she herself just robbed out of boredom; but it was different for her friends:

Girl: *I can understand with them because they re broke, man. Their mums and that, they don t give them no money, so they have to rob to get what they want. They got to .*

Interviewer: *And in your view, that s the only reason why they do it .*

Girl: *Yeah, that s why they do it, cause they want money and they can t get money. Their mum don t give them none, if they don t rob they can t get clothes, trainers, nothing. So they have to rob. To get what they want.*

Another black boy talked about being intensely preoccupied with money, especially now he was older and his mother no longer gave him any while he was still not of an age to earn. In his case, he actually needed to buy food and appeared by now to be robbing and doing car crime for older, organised criminals, although he realised they were making a considerable profit from his activities while he took the risks. Others too, robbed to order to supply the juvenile market referred to in Chapter 3. They would spend the money variously on culturally determined status objects, including designer clothes but also on drink and drugs.

Both alcohol consumption and smoking cannabis are common among young people; and the former generally is far more prevalent than the latter. A recent international survey of school pupils aged 15 and 16 showed that, in the UK, 23 per cent of boys admitted to being drunk three times or more within the previous 30 days. Near half (47 per cent) had drunk beer three or more times, compared to 18 per cent who had used cannabis once or more in the same period (ESPAD 2001). Black and Asian young people are less likely to drink alcohol than

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and b) increased police attention when crime reduction targets were set for these particular offences (see Chapter 1).

white young people[12]; but — irrespective of ethnic origin - only a minority of cases dealt with by the Yots were shown in the *ASSET* forms we looked at as having serious problems. However, there were two important considerations in this context. Both alcohol and cannabis cost more money than young people readily have unless they are well supported financially by their parents[13]; and some episodes of offending seem to have occurred under the influence of one or the other, even though the young people involved were *not* problem users as such. Several young people talked about the dis-inhibiting effects of these drugs, including the following young street robber s account:

> *If I was drunk or out of my head you know what I mean, I feel more confident, you know what I mean? When I m drunk I just do anything, you know what I mean, I don t care. But when when you re like normal, it s just like you think about it more .*

One further motive for street crime which was mentioned with surprising frequency was settling scores between young people. In some instances this was simply to exact punishment for a perceived wrong or insult; and invasions of others territory was a factor on some of these occasions. A girl explained at length the build up to her own current offence. The robbery in this case was almost an accidental by-product of a beef over six months between two different local manors :

Girl: *So, like, she s coming to my manor expecting me to be a prick, yeah, and not turf her. So I said You come out, man, [name of manor] girl, come out. Know what I mean? I went to her manor again to see one of my [friends] that goes to my school, I see her there. But she s going, What you doing here, ner ner ner? So I said D you know what, I ve had enough of this, man, from six months before all this beef, before all this beef been going on and that . So when she was going But you know, ner ner ner I was winding her up.*

Interviewer: *And then what happened?*

Girl: *I banged her against a wall. Took off her [hat?] She took her hands out of her pocket, her phone dropped, I picked it up and put it in my pocket.*

In others, instances, the motive was to recover or replace property which had been stolen in the first place, setting in train a tit-for-tat spiral which often involved numbers of young people aligned with the different factions. Mainly this seemed to be a question of co-opting older brothers and cousins, leading to what some respondents referred to dramatically as a war . Also one boys focus group described a further scenario:

Boy 1:   *Certain bus routes, yeah, they pass through a lot of different areas and like people get robbed hard on this bus route - the X. It goes [names placed en route]; and everyone knows about the X like. People from all different areas*

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12   The 2000 MORI survey for the Youth Justice Board confirms similar findings from other surveys of young people: 45 per cent of white secondary school pupils drank alcohol at least once a month compared to only 12 per cent of those of minority ethnic origin.

13   Additionally, as one young woman pointed out, if you do a lot of cannabis you get very hungry and, out on the street, there is no easy way to satisfy that other than to steal.

go on that bus — and a lot of robberies happens on that bus. And someone from like another school will tell their friends Oh some boy in my school s got this phone . They ll find out about it and then come down the school and they ll rob them.

Interviewer: *Do other people know about this as well? Fairly commonly.*

Boy 2:   *Happens all the time.*

Targets
This mixture of motives for street crime was reflected also in who was targeted and how; and the main distinctions within this tended to be:

   v   whether the incident was opportunistic or involved a degree of planning; and
   v   whether the victim was known to the offender or a stranger.

Broadly speaking, incidents at the younger ages seemed most likely to be opportunistic. They took place locally where young people hung out together and the fact of being in a group was significant in a number of respects. On the one hand, individuals might proactively want to prove themselves to the group or, on the other, they might be expected to do so and act under a degree of implied pressure. Often, though, the attempt would be spontaneous and collective — something that individuals might not have contemplated alone but where the presence of others gave them the necessary courage .

At a slightly older age, people might travel further to other areas which offered both greater anonymity and more profitable targets — albeit this was not always the conscious or primary purpose of the trip. Some of the younger people got caught up in this and might be directed to rob by the older ones as a condition of acceptance (and, by inference, protection); but it should be stressed that serious organised activity of this type did not appear to account for the majority of incidents involving young people.

Where young people picked on others they knew, inasmuch as they had thought through the consequences, there was a presumption that their victims would not grass [14]. That is, they would not tell teachers or the police. Whether or not schools might be expected to take action, in any case, was very variable, while the police were often perceived as stereotyping young people and picking on them as potential offenders but not taking crimes against them seriously. If young victims told anyone it would usually be other young people; so the consequences were expected to be minimal unless, by mistake, you targeted someone who had back-up .

Strangers were seen as more likely to report offences but, at the same time, less likely to be able to give any meaningful description to the police, especially if you operated in a group who were all dressed similarly (and pulled their hoods up). Those who were targeted randomly tended to fall into two categories (and, ideally, both). They would be *different* from

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[14]   As our professional respondents pointed out, most such incidents tended to be reported by parents rather than the actual victim — and this may have been against the wishes of the child concerned.

you — or from the image you were keen to project by robbing them[15]. So weakness was a key characteristic, although this usually applied to people below a certain age - for old people seemed to be viewed as off limits by all but the most hardened (as the account in Chapter 3 of the boys chasing someone who had robbed an old lady suggests). But this not only meant that victims would be physically weak. It included people who were wet — whether because they did not dress fashionably or because they were nerds or boffins (i.e. young people who took school seriously). Another important distinction, though, concerned posh people; and the latter also fell into the second important category of stranger victims. That is, posh people were expected to have things that were worth taking. Hence also — for those who were not simply opportunist - the targeting of business people and particular areas where there were likely to be rich pickings (see Chapter 3).

For the most part, they would pick easy targets, although a few who got a particular buzz from the violence and the physical challenge might take more risks. As one boy put it All my mates love fighting anyway . But, even in his case, this was not consistently his motive.

Interviewer: *Do you feel cheated if they don t put up a fight? I mean if they just give it over without a fight, does that take the fun out of it?*

Boy: *Yeah. Yeah. Well, sometimes, depends how you feel, if you re feeling up for fighting, know what I mean. If you re going Yeah, yeah really wanna fight . But then sometimes you re like . It depends how you feel.*

Others, by contrast, said that they would deliberately choose people who could be expected *not* to fight back - though one added, somewhat ambiguously:

Boy: *If they stuck up for theirselves yeah, they would not get robbed.*

Interviewer: *You reckon?*

Boy: *Yeah. That s the truth. If they stuck up for theirselves, they would not get robbed, I m telling you because I know from my experience, yeah? [If I] go out robbing, if there s a trendy and he won t give me his stuff, I ll just leave him. Punch him in the face and just leave him there or something like that.*

Interviewer: *Wouldn t you get angry?*

Boy: *Yeah, I d punch him or something, I d just walk away. That s nothing, a minor punch, that s nothing. If they start fighting back, then I d mostly be more scared than them.*

The context of this comment was particularly interesting. Despite his apparent bravado, he had just admitted to having been robbed himself at the age of 10 and, although the interviewer

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[15]   One black worker suggested that this was a reason black young people tended to target whites and Asians; but another possible explanation is simply that a smaller proportion of black young people were seen as weak and more were expected to have back-up .

did not press the point, had admitted to feelings of fear, humiliation and impotent anger. Another, one of the hardest of all the boys we talked to, volunteered:

Do you know, a thief who acts like they re proud of it   really deep inside they re not.

None of the boys we interviewed spoke of their victims in individual terms, although some referred to their immediate reaction as affecting their own behaviour — whether as a deterrent or as adding to the buzz . In the circumstances of the interview it would have seemed artificial — and potentially counter-productive — to probe this further. Some (but not all) of the girls, by contrast, talked about concern for the impact of the offence on the victim in hindsight and, in two instances, during the offence itself[16]. However, there was no way of being certain the extent to which this was a learnt response — and one which girls found more acceptable to admit than boys.

Unfortunately we were unable to obtain sufficient numbers of interviews with victims for any clear patterns to emerge; and the circumstances of their experience varied, as did their own reactions. All had been set on by strangers and, although they were willing to speculate in general terms about why this type of offending occurred, their interest in the motives of the perpetrators in their case tended to focus simply on why they themselves had been targeted. As one man put it:

I suppose extremely selfishly, but being very honest, I don t really care how they got into the situation where they do that. I don t really care about how they live, the troubles they have to deal with; I don t really care about any of that. I would love to know why they thought they needed to steal that mobile phone, and I guess if it had been more serious I would have wanted to know why they had to injure me.   In terms of restorative justice, I don t know I d want to meet the guys that did it; it would be pretty meaningless for me anyway, because I didn t really see them.   I don t know if that s just me but I m not interested in revenge on that person. I d like to think they couldn t do that to someone else, but I m not sure that in my desire to stop them doing it again that I d actually want to face them again.

I think that the system asks a lot from the victim. I m sure you re told it s for the good of society, but being cynical, I d say that s to save money on a justice system on my behalf which I pay for, thank you very much. You re now asking me to become a policeman, a judge and jury, lawyer, and to work with someone who, before they butted into my life, who I had nothing to do with and wouldn t have wanted to have anything to do with.   I ought to be saying Yes, I want to improve society and if, by confronting this person, it makes everyone s life better I ought to be doing it . So I guess if I was asked to do it, it wouldn t have been a straightforward No . I think the more serious the crime the less likely I would be to co-operate. If it was burglary, or someone stole my car, sure; but if they had hurt me I would not want to see that person again. Perhaps it says a lot more about me than anything else; I would not want to understand that person. I d want to keep them at arm s length. You re

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[16] One claimed that she was caught up in an incident where two younger girls had attacked another girl because of a dispute about a boy. Realising there was a danger of the victim getting seriously hurt if she continued to hang on to her bag; she had urged her to let go of it. In consequence, as the oldest of the three, she was portrayed in court as being the instigator of a pre-meditated robbery.

asking for your victim to empathise with the person that did it. It would be really nice to be big enough to do that.

Two victims, both of minority ethnic origin, consciously discussed the significance to them of the fact that their attackers were black. One — a 23-year-old Turkish student - was adamant:

There is no colour problem with me. I had a friend at school [who was black] and at college we all support each other. It [the incident] hasn t made me feel different about black people.

However, a 13-year-old who had been picked on by a large group of older boys and girls on a bus was strongly encouraged by an older brother to see his experience as part of a pattern of black people targeting Asians in the same area.

THE FUTURE

The boy who spoke about thieves not being proud of themselves was also unusual in his resigned acceptance that he would end up in prison. Most of the offenders we spoke to confirmed the more general view in our focus groups. The one thing which really frightened them was receiving a custodial sentence. They described this not only in terms of their loss of liberty but being thrown together with what one described as lots of scary people ; and several had clearly had this fear reinforced by the experience of being held overnight in a cell.

Most of the young people we spoke to claimed to have reformed. One had just given up college and appeared to be drifting. Asked if he now risked lapsing back into street crime, though, he protested:

No. I never do crime no more.

Both boys and girls tended to want the same sort of future — a steady job earning good money. Of the few girls we interviewed, one in particular stood out as having detailed plans for achieving this and the determination — given the right opportunities — to realise them. Another had become a Christian and was strongly motivated not only to put her past behind her but to help others to do so as well. But most of these young people were very vague about how they hoped to realise their ambitions legitimately. A few had been fortunate in getting work through family contacts; and several boys specifically mentioned hoping to work with (absent) fathers.

One girl in Area C had herself got a job but commented as follows on the mindset of her peers:

Girl: *[They say] Oh you re lucky, you ve got a job . I m saying Well go look for one innit?*

Interviewer: *Do you think it would be fairly easy for them to find a job?*

Girl:	*Yeah, I said to them, all they got to do is write out a CV and print it out; [or] make someone write them a CV and go down the West End and go in all the different shops. But they don t want to do that. They re just lazy.*

Interviewer:	*Do you think apart from being lazy. Is it just that they re too lazy to do that stuff?*

Girl:	*Yeah. And they re too used to robbing, that s why. You can t . It s like they ain t got it in their head to work. Working for them is robbing.*

Asked about the likelihood of young people like this turning back from robbery, her reflection was sobering:

Some of them, but not all of them. Cause some of them can t read or write. And because they can t read or write and they re nearly 16 and all that, they re not going to be able to get a job or whatever. So they just rob.

CHAPTER 6 - DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

THE PROBLEM AND ITS UNDERLYING CAUSES

The sudden, marked increases in street crime since the turn of the century have largely been accounted for by the increased involvement of young people. It is a problem which, it seems, is not peculiar to Britain: in the course of the study we came across several reports of similar developments in other countries of Western Europe also[1]. However, the problem has been most pronounced in a relatively small number of urban areas; and there are variations in the pattern even within these. Street crime tends to be highly localised, with a small number of districts accounting for the majority of offences (although even here it accounts for only a small proportion of crime overall).

In some areas outside London, police statistics show that adults remain responsible for the relatively high levels of street crime; and many of our respondents - including the professionals we spoke to as well as the young people - saw adult patterns of (and motivation for) this type of offending as very different from those of young people. In particular, they saw a much closer link between street crime and problematic drug use in offences committed by older people on strangers. By contrast, much of the activity by young people was an extension of bullying among the peer group.

This study has focused on the patterns of and motivation for the involvement of young people in street crime; but its implications for policy and practice are not limited to the relatively small number of areas where this has recently become a significant problem. Rather, exploring these issues has made it apparent that street crime cannot be seen in isolation. The recent increase in young people s involvement in this type of offending reflects four sets of developments which are likely to continue for the future to affect patterns of offending among young people, irrespective of trends in recorded street crime as such. They are:

- v technological advance (as symbolised by the mobile phone);
- v patterns of consumption (with increasing and ever changing numbers of items seen as essential by young people, in large measure driven by fashion);
- v social fragmentation (seen especially in neighbourhoods where social ties are weak and in the increasing numbers of families experiencing various forms of disruption in relationships); and
- v economic polarisation (in contexts where the proximity of others heightens a sense of relative deprivation among those who have least).

Both our quantitative and qualitative data illustrate the impact of these developments on young people; and the last two sets of factors in particular operate on a large scale in urban areas where the greater inflow and outflow of transient populations itself increases the

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[1]   Unfortunately international comparative data are either insufficiently recent to be useful for the purposes of illustration or the categories they use are insufficiently refined, or both. Our sources were primarily newspaper articles and feedback from police officers who had attended international meetings where they swapped notes with professional colleagues.

opportunities for crime. It is in part for these reasons that street crime has consistently tended to be higher in London than elsewhere. However, the potential for mounting an effective, multi-agency response to the problem will be weaker where the key, relevant public services find it more difficult to attract and retain staff; and these are often the same areas. For example, both vacancy rates and the proportion of teaching posts filled only temporarily are consistently higher in London than for any other government region and tend to run at more than double the national average (DFES 2002). At the same time, a survey by the Association of London Government in 2002 found that, in the critical areas of family support and child protection services, London boroughs not only had 7 per cent vacancy rates, but up to 20 per cent of staff were provided by employment agencies on temporary contracts. Similarly, statistics for GP recruitment show many fewer applicants per post, higher vacancies and longer waiting times to fill them in deprived urban areas (Department of Health 2002).

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

The difficulties described above make it no less important to find ways of countering the effect of these developments on young people. Otherwise increasingly larger numbers of young people risk going into adulthood with a criminal record and this will have a disproportionate impact on certain groups, including black young people.

What follows draws on a range of different sources to meet the fourth of our terms of reference, which was to consider the implications for policy and practice in local authorities, the police and Yots. During our research many young people themselves made suggestions about what should be done. We also came across many practical examples of relevant initiatives both in London and elsewhere, some of which were directly related to government policies, while others were local projects. In addition, we have been able to draw on a growing body of other policy relevant research. We do not, however, make specific recommendations; for the issues are complex and the relevant agencies have to balance the implications of our research against other competing demands in the context of limited resources, some of which are tied to work on priorities unrelated to these issues.

Our conclusions are based on the following assumptions.

Effective interventions are essential to catch those currently responsible — preferably as early as possible - and to penalise their offending appropriately (that is, in ways which are most likely to prevent recidivism while providing justice for the victim). However, it is more important still to address the reasons for their involvement, as identified by this study, since these factors potentially affect other young people in the same and in subsequent cohorts. That is, work is required over the medium to long-term if we are to avoid other young people becoming involved in street crime (or other related forms of offending) for these same reasons in future.

The work will need to address the social and economic factors at work; but the challenges involved cannot be underestimated. For it is likely to run counter to many of the cultural influences identified by this study; and these are consistently reinforced by powerful commercial interests.

The lead agencies for most of this work will not be agencies of the criminal justice system, although the police in particular have a contribution to make — for better or worse. Ideally, preventative initiatives will be based on the co-ordinated efforts of all the relevant agencies; and in many areas this will require a holistic approach to the neighbourhood factors which are inextricably linked and which themselves increase the likelihood of some young people getting involved in offending.

The four sets of developments reflected in the rise in street crime (see above) have a pervasive influence on young people generally. Yet, in practice, most young people do not get involved in offending; or they do so only fleetingly and never come to the attention of the criminal justice system (Flood-Page et al. 2000). Much will depend on the balance between the risk and protective factors in their personal circumstances. These were explored in detail in a separate study for the Youth Justice Board (Beinart et al 2001) and are summarised in Appendix 8. We would stress in particular from our own study the extent to which the early experience of direct or indirect victimisation (including, for example, witnessing domestic violence, emotional neglect and psychological bullying) contributes to the risk of subsequent offending.

Young people s personal circumstances, though, may change at any time, such that those who were not thought to be at risk may suddenly become involved if something unexpected happens in their lives. On the other hand, many young people show remarkable resilience despite adverse circumstances; and their subjective response to the same circumstances will vary widely, even within the same family. So there may also be a danger in targeting attention on some who — according to objective criteria - appear to be at risk since this may label them as potential offenders, not only in the eyes of others but in their own as well. A further consideration in this context is the recurrent theme in our interviews and focus groups about the absence of appropriate youth provision in general. Importantly, young people in some of our focus groups expressed strong resentment where they saw provision made for offenders and those at risk which they would have wanted to access themselves. They saw this as rewarding others for bad behaviour.

In broad terms, therefore, what is needed is a sustainable multi-agency strategy which invests not only in tackling risk factors but in strengthening the protective factors in young people s immediate environment. Insofar as the strategy focuses on crime, it needs to pay as much attention to young people as victims of crime as it does to them as offenders. Its overarching aim, though, must be to increase legitimate opportunities for young people to develop confidence and self-respect as well as empowering them to take responsibility for themselves and for others.

General
The most obvious vehicles for facilitating the necessary co-operation between the relevant agencies and tailoring this to specific local circumstances are:

- v the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) — to tackle the symptoms of the problem;

- v the work of the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit — which aims to stimulate local solutions to local problems in the medium to long-term using local resources from the statutory, business and voluntary sector to tackle the wider social and economic causes and to strengthen communities; and
- v Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs).

The CDRPs cover all local authorities and were set up under the Crime and Disorder Act of 1998, while the current phase of neighbourhood renewal dates only from 2002[2] and is limited to 88 English local authorities containing some of the most deprived neighbourhoods in the country. They operate in the context of Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) which bring together the statutory, business and voluntary sector in the relevant local authority area to take a more co-ordinated approach to local needs. The government is strongly encouraging the setting up of LSPs in all areas, though, not only in those which are most deprived. So these too should provide a natural vehicle for a co-ordinated approach to meeting the needs of young people.

The development of the CDRPs, however, has been uneven (Audit Commission 2002); and this may also be true of Neighbourhood Renewal initiatives and LSPs since they are not only new but expressly intended to take shape bottom-up. Whatever their content, though, it is important that they adopt a coherent approach to addressing the needs of young people and actively involve them, including in consultation over priorities. (For a discussion, see *Young People and Community Safety: Developing a Strategy* published by NACRO in 2002 under the auspices of the Government Office for the West Midlands.)

Many of the examples below of promising initiatives by particular agencies were initiated in the context of multi-agency working. However, their potential needs to be set in the context of the many obstacles to the effective development of a consistent and strategic approach to this type of work. Chief among those identified by this study are the following.

- v The over-riding requirement on individual agencies to meet separate departmental targets results in a mismatch of priorities which, in some instances may be in tension with those of their intended partners or actively undermine the latters chances of meeting their own targets.
- v The plethora of new initiatives — including different approaches to the same problem and the setting up of new co-ordinating mechanisms — can create confusion (not least among service users). They also add to the demands on existing agencies, at the likely risk of undermining their capacity for routine service delivery.
- v The short timescales for meeting targets, coupled with the fact that many initiatives are set up with central funding which supplements core budgets but is time-limited, militates against effective, co-ordinated planning for the medium to long-term.

Local authorities
With a few exceptions (most obviously that of health) local authorities are responsible for the services which make most difference to the opportunities available to young people. They are

also the main vehicle for providing formal support to them and their families when they most need it. Of particular importance in this context are the youth service, social services and — above all — education. Before considering each in turn, it is worth also highlighting the central role of local authority chief executives. They are uniquely placed to determine not only the extent to which each of these individual services will contribute to the strategy but also the extent to which they co-operate with each other and with all of the relevant outside agencies.

The common view that good, affordable youth services[3] were essential to avoiding young people getting involved in crime also stressed that these needed to be attractive to young people, locally accessible and open at appropriate times. Youth Justice Board-sponsored-schemes such as Splash schemes and Youth Inclusion Programmes (YIPs) have apparently been successful in reducing offending; but this tends, of itself, to point to the need for this type of provision to be more widely available. As was noted in Chapter 2, street crime was less likely to occur at weekends and during school holidays; so more provision is needed in the after-school period when young people are most at risk. Additionally, Youth Justice Board-sponsored work necessarily targets the needs of the young people most at risk; and this could effectively stigmatise such schemes in the eyes of other young people, even if they could be extended. Yet young people generally may resent not having access to provision of this type; and many of these will themselves be potentially at risk anyway.

Local authority social services departments were frequently referred to as posing difficulties with partnership working. Allowance needs to be made for the major staffing problems many are encountering (see above). At the same time, though, social services departments are the major funders of the Yots (see below). While, in the circumstances, it is understandable that some tend to see the Yots as primarily responsible for the social service needs of young people who offend, an effective strategy cannot work without their full participation. They are likely already to be closely involved with the families of many young offenders; and their continuity of input may itself be important if the Yot is to work effectively with the young person.

Additionally, social services departments, have important wider responsibilities which could help strengthen protective factors, including their responsibilities for some pre-school provision (including childminding) and for fostering. More specifically, they have responsibilities which may make a critical difference to young people caught up in offending. They are supposed to provide appropriate adults to be present for young people when they are arrested and their parents cannot (or will not) come to the police station; and they may be responsible for (or act as gatekeepers to) services which Yots need to access on behalf of the young people they are supervising but which they cannot themselves provide[4]. The police and Yot staff we spoke to tended spontaneously to refer to the inadequacy of provision by social services departments in these areas.

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[3]   Public opinion surveys in deprived areas also tend to identify poor youth provision as a priority concern (MORI 2002).

[4]   Specific cases mentioned included minors whose immigration status was uncertain and who had no accommodation or means of support.

The main patterns of street crime activity by young people have tended to be in and around schools; so the role of schools in an effective, sustained strategy will clearly be central for two sets of reasons. One is in relation to the pupils for whom they are immediately responsible; and the other is in relation to the wider community. Both our quantitative and qualitative work has shown a strong link between the two. That is, a higher proportion of pupils potentially at risk of offending because of their personal circumstances tend also to live in deprived, high crime areas where community guardianship may be especially weak.

Our different sources of data (including feedback from young people generally as well details of those convicted of street crime) highlighted particular issues for schools in connection with the following.

- v Regardless of ability, there is a cultural norm, especially among some boys, that educational attainment is for nerds, geeks (or girls).
- v Boredom with the school curriculum is compounded in some instances by learning difficulties. Many of the individuals at greatest risk of offending, though, know that, relative to other pupils, they will never achieve success as measured by the standards of educational attainment which predominate in the school system.
- v Alienation from the school ethos more generally, including alienation from particular teachers who are perceived as unfair or simply as weak is associated with high rates of absence or disruptive behaviour in class. This may, in turn, be compounded by difficulties in young people s personal lives of which the school may or may not be aware.
- v The perceived need for money — in particular to finance one s image with things parents cannot afford to provide — can lead to increasing impatience in adolescence to find ways of earning it at an age when young people cannot expect to work for a living for several years.
- v Young people may feel they need to appear to be tough and/or to have the protection of others who have a reputation for toughness in order to protect themselves from being bullied. This can perpetuate what some young people saw as a cycle where younger boys were recruited into offending by older boys[5].
- v The transition from primary to secondary school is a critical stage; and it is particular important to strengthen the protective mechanisms for the 11 to 13 year old age group.

While many of the factors at work are beyond the control of schools, some seemed to contain the problems they posed better than others.

When asked, young people in particular wanted schools to take firm action against those responsible for victimising others (although they implied they would rather the authorities discovered without pupils themselves needing to grass **[6]**). They also wanted young people to be made aware of the possible consequences of this type of activity — and, in particular, the

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[5] A further consideration which merits further attention is that the risk is greater where younger boys have a significant unmet need for the approval of older males.

[6] This tends to be confirmed by a survey of school pupils in Manchester on the subject of taxing in 1994 which was undertaken as a result of concerns at that time over an increase in the numbers of young people being intimidated into parting with money. (Personal communication, Greater Manchester Police.)

risk of imprisonment. In line with their general plea for more things for young people to do, though, they also wanted schools to provide relevant activities, including out of school hours.

Meanwhile, the experience of some of the offenders and their parents, as well as the professionals we spoke to and some of the relevant literature suggested the following as useful approaches.

Mentoring and buddying schemes can not only help those young people who feel vulnerable, giving young people responsibility for others as buddies may also be important in reinforcing protective mechanisms[7]; and this was an important feature of other promising schemes we were told of. These included schools-based consultation on crime issues (see The police below) and initiatives such as giving pupils responsibility for property marking their school s audio-visual equipment[8] or for undertaking a photographic environmental audit of the vandalism and graffiti in their local area for the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership.

For those who are most alienated, distressed and causing (or experiencing) problems at home, schools undoubtedly have a dilemma. They have a responsibility to protect the larger numbers of other pupils who (as implied above) often see schools as failing to be sufficiently robust in tackling these young people s disruptive behaviour. In addition, they have little obvious to gain from investing in helping such pupils since they may contribute little to the school s performance rating but could potentially distract from it unless they are contained or excluded. Some of the most effective work with these pupils, as our own work suggested, seemed to be undertaken by Pupil Referral Units (see Kinder et al, 1998, 2002 for an account) or other support systems. The reasons for their effectiveness, though, has been characterised in terms which should in principle describe the mainstream of education also, as follows:

The opportunity to establish positive personal relations with an adult who can model pro-social behaviour; the opportunity to achieve academic/vocational success which offers the young person a sense of coherence along a learning pathway; and the opportunity to appreciate constructive leisure activity.

(Morris M and Hegarty S, 2002)

In terms of the needs of pupils at risk to receive special support from agencies other than those concerned with teaching them, schools are nonetheless the most likely source of referral. The type of provision in question includes counselling at times of particular personal difficulty (such as the loss of significant adults) as well as work with whole families, especially since parents own need for a range of types of support may be a critical influence on the child s behaviour. While such provision tends to be rare, it does exist and is well

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[7] One striking theme from interviews with offenders was the concern many showed with regard to younger siblings. Several professionals also remarked on the extraordinary solicitude even the most alienated might show when they were actively *entrusted* with helping others who were clearly more vulnerable, including small children, old people and the handicapped.

[8] It was believed that this scheme — in a very deprived, high crime area had a dual benefit. It deterred the young people themselves from considering stealing it (in part out of a sense of ownership); but word would also be passed through the local adult network that the school was not worth breaking into for this reason.

established in some places[9]. In some instances, a range of other relevant services are actually available on school premises while in others they are routinely accessed through the school when needed. Provision of this type stands to benefit teaching staff and other pupils alike not least because it can provide the necessary support for individuals while reducing the drain on the mainstream (Pricewaterhouse Coopers 2001)[10].

In a further variant on the extension of school-based provision to include a range of non-educational services, schools themselves can be an important resource for local people more generally. The possibility of their playing a key role in their neighbourhoods has been recognised as especially relevant in areas where street crime has tended to be high because community is weak locally. As a previous Secretary of State for Education put it:

> *I want schools to be at the heart of neighbourhood renewal. In some of Britain s most deprived localities, schools are one of the few stable centres of community life.*
>
> (Estelle Morris, November 2001)

A range of government policies and initiatives seek to enable schools to develop these wider aspects of their role, including the introduction of the Citizenship curriculum in all schools in September 2002. The Education Act of the same year gives governing bodies the power to provide community services and facilities, following the White Paper Schools: Achieving Success (House of Commons 2001) which recommended legislation to remove barriers to schools providing more support to pupils, families and communities. Meanwhile, demonstration projects have been set up to test out the benefits of extended schools albeit, as implied earlier, the concept is not entirely new and in large part dates back to a long tradition of community schools in certain areas.

This type of approach would appear to have considerable potential for addressing many of the issues identified by this study. However, there are many obstacles to effective implementation - from finance and the negotiation of the roles and relationships of the various agencies to the personal safety of pupils where schools are effectively opened up to outsiders. Also, schools face many competing pressures and demands; but their performance is measured primarily in terms of the educational attainment of their pupils. As one set of commentators have put it:

> *Not surprisingly, government policy currently exacerbates tensions rather than helping schools resolve their dilemmas . It is never made entirely clear ... how schools are to balance what has latterly come to be called their extended role with their core business of raising standards.*
>
> (Cummings et al 2002)

The police
The number of cases of street crime dealt with by the criminal justice system depends on the police since they have the power of arrest and charge. In practice, though, the police deal with

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[9]   One such example is MAST, the Multi-Agency Support Scheme which serves a number of primary and secondary schools in Leeds.

[10]   Thus, the best Pupil Referral Units give others responsibility for finding constructive outlets for what a young man described in one of our focus groups as negative energy in an environment where these are more easily provided.

only a minority of all the crimes committed. This may be especially true of cases involving young people for the reasons given below; and this may further reduce the police s capacity for detection and prosecution. They do, however, have an important role to play in prevention; but this study also highlights the need for the police to undertake activity of either type in ways which:

- v avoid unnecessarily criminalising young people; and
- v enhance rather than detract from young people s confidence in the service.

In detecting crime of any sort, the police are largely dependent on the crime being reported in the first place and on the information they receive about who is responsible. Young people may be particularly unlikely to report to the police, especially where they know those responsible and may have to face them daily — whether or not they have been arrested and successfully prosecuted. Thus the most recent survey of young people for the Youth Justice Board shows that nearly twice as many victims of crime had chosen the route of sorting it out for themselves as had reported to the police (Mori 2002).

This highlights the need for police investment in work with young people which will build confidence and trust, as well as providing natural opportunities for them to pass on information about crime without needing formally to report to the police. Examples of this type of work occur below; and this highlights the important connection between both types of activity. However, the study also identified some areas of concern in each of these areas. They arose in the context of street crime but their implications are more general and those connected with detection are as follows.

Targeting attention on young people who are already known to the service may be effective to some degree in terms of producing arrests. Nonetheless it risks missing those young people who are just starting to offend; yet our interviews suggested that, for some, being caught early can make an important difference. Otherwise they may soon overcome any initial inhibitions they have about offending (including the fear of getting caught) and come increasingly to regard the criminal justice system as a lottery. The other side of this coin is that young people who have been caught but are motivated to desist may be discouraged where they feel that, because of their record, they will always be de facto suspect whenever an incident is reported to the police.

At the same time, considerable risks are also attached to the use of tactics which target areas rather than individuals, as illustrated by the overall increase in stop and search in London in recent years which escalated further in the context of the Street Crime Initiative (see Chapter 2). It is a commonplace that searches are a very blunt instrument: only a small minority actually produce arrests; and, in part for this reason, they inevitably inconvenience (and potentially alienate) large numbers of members of the public. They mostly affect young people and are, therefore, a significant source of tension in the police s relations with the citizens of the future (FitzGerald and Hough 2002); and this is especially the case for young black people who have always experienced searches at a much higher rate than whites. The danger of exacerbating the collateral damage which searches can cause — among young people

generally and particularly in police relations with minority ethnic groups — needs therefore to be weighed carefully against any gains.

While searches in London increased by 70 per cent in just over two years between April 2000 and May 2002, the increases fell unevenly across different ethnic groups. Those on whites rose by 34 per cent; but the number more than doubled for the black group (up by 112 per cent) while the rise for Asians was even higher at 142 per cent. (This was in part due to the marked variations in the rise by borough, including a marked increase in Tower Hamlets where half or more of the youth population is of Bangladeshi origin.)

Yet the proportion of searches which led to an arrest fell from 18 per cent to only 14 per cent; and the majority of these arrests were for drugs. Drugs accounted for 52 per cent of all arrests from searches by the end of the period, compared with 39 per cent at the beginning; and most of these are likely to be for personal possession of small amounts of cannabis (FitzGerald 1999). By contrast, arrests for stolen property accounted for just over a quarter of the total. They showed a far more modest increase; and it cannot be assumed that the majority of these are related to street crime offences.

Although much of the media focus on police activity in the context of street crime has been concerned with detection and arrest, our study came across a wide range of police interventions related to prevention also. In many areas, it seemed that the police tended to lead - or at least to play a major role - within partnership approaches to prevention. Examples of individual partnership initiatives with strong police involvement included the following.

In one area, pupils participated in a competition to script a short film on the subject of street crime, with the winning script enacted by students and professionally produced using police facilities. It was then used as a stimulus for further school-based discussion on the subject. In another area, the police sponsored a competition around street crime using a local radio station popular with young people; and the police were also active in setting up some of the environmental audits involving young people referred to earlier.

More strategically, forces have recently been developing specific youth strategies; and the Association of Chief Police Officers has taken a lead in co-ordinating this work. Meanwhile, the government has actively supported a new approach to police involvement in schools — including provision for allocating officers to work as quasi-members of staff in designated schools - with the roll out of the Safer Schools Programme from September 2002. On a more ad hoc basis, the demand for police involvement was also increasing in order to help schools meet the demands of the Citizenship curriculum; and we came across examples of the police themselves engaging outside expertise to develop teaching materials[11]. In one area also, the service had encouraged local secondary schools to set up consultative groups on policing issues. Their formal makeup was at the discretion of the school, but in any feedback the police asked for evidence that they had canvassed the opinions of all pupils.

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[11]   One product was an interactive CD-ROM based on the concept of Sim City . Pupils were faced with choices about how to handle different problems of crime and disorder, the considerations which had to be weighed and the consequences of their decisions for aspects of life in the city.

There were also examples of the police engaged in joint working to improve youth facilities locally and to ensure environmental measures were taken to improve safety, as well as working with local groups to stimulate neighbourhood renewal and prevent anti-social behaviour. In one area local beat officers were involved in pre-release visits with Yot workers to try to prevent young prisoners re-offending. The relevant agencies co-operated to try to ensure appropriate provision was available to the prisoner on release; but s/he also had to give undertakings about their conduct and this was jointly monitored by the police and the Yot.

This type of activity clearly contributes to the holistic, long-term strategy which is needed; and it may also help improve police relations with young people as they move into adulthood as well as having a more immediate pay-off in terms of crime reports and intelligence. However, respondents frequently raised a concern that the measurement of input relative to output is much more difficult in relation to preventative work. In any case, the results may not be as apparent in the short term; and it would often be politically as well as intellectually difficult to try to distinguish the contribution of the police from that of other partners. This made it more difficult for the police to justify investment in preventative work, especially in the context of a target-driven culture which sets a premium on the measurement of performance — often (as in the case of street crime) over very short-time scales.

In addition, problems were becoming apparent in relation to enhancing the role of the police in schools, especially in the light of the new system of crime recording adopted from April 2002. This requires officers to record not only all offences reported to them where there is evidence that the incident took place. They must now record any allegation made to them - however trivial and whether or not there is any substance to the claim. This could further inhibit partners generally from sharing information with the police and could clearly pose problems for officers working with young people (whether in schools or otherwise, including those in the Yots). So guidance will be needed on how best they should treat information given to them in confidence without risking undermining trust, especially among young people.

Youth offending teams (Yots)
When the study began, the Yots were effectively in their infancy. They were initially staffed by a number of different local agencies; and they are funded from various sources and are accountable to all of them. Many Yots have expanded rapidly since their inception; and the policy and legislative framework within which they operate has been changing at the same time. The size of their caseload at any given time is effectively determined by who the police catch, what they charge them with and, to some extent, with what the courts decide should happen to them[12].

Unsurprisingly, we found considerable variation between the Yots we worked with — in terms of their core work with offenders and their wider provision in relation to prevention more generally. Complex lines of accountability and the differences within this from one to another increased the challenges they faced in addressing some of the issues raised by our study. This can make it more difficult to ensure common standards, with the further risk that some issues will be neglected if none of the funding agencies recognises it as a priority or key partners fail

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[12]   The extent of this has reduced, however, with the introduction of Referral Orders.

to provide the Yot with the necessary support. However, the study also raised some concerns about the variable quality of management within the Yots also.

The main business of the Yots is work with young people convicted of crime and some appear to do little beyond this. The programmes available to these young people via the Yots (in addition to the core requirement of their sentence) depend on the Yot in question; and, in any case, their participation will usually be optional. Most of the young offenders we spoke to said they found attending the Yot had been useful; but they saw this primarily in terms of the advice and support their individual Yot worker could provide. It was apparent, though, that the scope for meaningful work was limited, especially for those on sentences where the overall length, as well as the frequency of contact was inevitably limited[13].

This made it all the more important for staff to keep appointments — not least since many of the young people they are dealing with have long histories of being let down by adults. Many, however, will have grown up with models of inconsistent behaviour with regard to threats and promises, as well as more everyday considerations such as time keeping. A minority of Yot staff were perceived by colleagues as well as young people as failing to set these standards. Of more general concern was the absence of provision for supervision outside office hours — especially when some of the young people with the best chance of avoiding re-offending could find it difficult to attend because of a commitment to work or school.

The question of closure or continuity at the end of the sentence period is obviously important - especially for young people with a disproportionate experience of losing contact with significant adults; and many will need ongoing practical support, for example in relation to accommodation. The question of handling closure seemed to be largely to be resolved by Yot workers at an individual level; and, although, Yots now have accommodation officers, provision here and in terms of other support services is often limited and dependent on other agencies (see Local Authorities earlier).

Street crime was rarely treated by Yots as a particular, separate issue in offending — not least since, as has been pointed out, the young people convicted for this may be involved in other forms of offending also and any re-offending may not take the same form. However, the disproportionate involvement of young black people in street crime raised issues of ethnicity and offending for many workers — whether white or of minority ethnic origin. These again tended to be resolved individually, raising the possibility that in some Yots black young people would encounter differing attitudes towards their offending, depending on which worker they were allocated to.

Against this background, one main, overarching concern is the question of record keeping and the use made of the information available. Aside from the problem of the very variable detail provided by different workers on paper files, electronic systems also vary in the data available. Most importantly, though, they do not appear to be used systematically to monitor

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[13]   Some professionals we spoke to also commented on the irony that many young people who were less advanced in their criminal careers might arguably benefit *more* from Intensive Supervision than the relatively small number of more serious offenders now sentenced to these programmes.

the impact of Yot interventions with young people — for example with regard to the effectiveness of different types of intervention and any variations by age, offence type or ethnicity.

In terms of prevention, this is formally covered by the Yots remit; but the extent of their involvement in relevant initiatives seemed to vary. This may largely be because (as with the police) prevention does not figure strongly in the criteria against which their performance in measured; so their variable involvement tended to reflect the extent to which they received additional funding specifically for this type of activity. However, it also seemed to reflect the variability of their involvement with others locally who tended to be in the lead on preventative work, including the police but also the CDRPs more generally. Some Yots were clearly well integrated within the CDRP structures and the local strategies were a central point of reference for their work but this was less evident in other cases. Since most receive the largest part of their funding from local authorities, it would seem incumbent on chief executives to facilitate closer involvement where necessary.

In areas with Youth Inclusion Programmes (YIPs) which were to become part of the Yot, this was likely to strengthen the preventative aspect of their work; but it could effectively create a two-tier system. Some Yots would have a strong preventative component with others less involved in prevention — and much more ad hoc. Also, even where YIPs were becoming part of the Yot, the two could not necessarily be expected to integrate overnight.

Irrespective of the work of other local partners or provision for a YIP, we came across some examples of Yots undertaking useful work with two further groups with whom they were directly in contact but who were not themselves under sentence. One group is young people on bail, some of whom may de facto already be in the at risk group. They may face considerable personal difficulties and be in particular need of help and advice while their case is still to be resolved; but the type of bail support work which is needed is not mandatory and does not attract core funding[14]. The other group is the families of the young people referred to the Yots. Currently the provision of parenting courses is patchy, although there is evidence that these can be effective; and many case histories (as well as our own interviews) strongly suggest that work with families (including siblings) may be as important for prevention as focusing on the individual young person.

It may not always be appropriate to consider the Yots themselves providing interventions of this type; and both may require bringing in outside, specialist help. However, Yots are a key point of contact and potential referral to other relevant agencies.

Other agencies
Although our remit did not extend to agencies other than local authorities, the police and the Yots, it is apparent that the effectiveness of their work in this areas is interdependent; and other agencies may also play a critical role, for better or worse. Other relevant statutory

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[14]   Ironically, it is sometimes more difficult for these young people when the trial results in their acquittal and they are effectively left without even the minimal help they received in coping with their ongoing difficulties while they were on bail.

agencies include the health service[15]; but the voluntary sector can also be an important source of support in providing facilities to help prevent offending, as well as opportunities for young people supervised by the Yots. Similarly, there are examples involving the private sector (as a source of sponsorship, for example, or work experience).

Other agencies of the criminal justice system, though, can play a centrally important role in:

- v reinforcing consistent messages about justice; and
- v maximising the likelihood of desistance.

They do not appear currently to do so as effectively as they might; and this can seriously undermine the work of the agencies we have considered. Concerns were raised in particular with regard to the courts, prisons and the legal profession.

The courts need to be seen to be fair and to engage meaningfully with the young people themselves; and this must include backing Yot workers by being seen to take breaches seriously. Sentencers, though, depend on Yot workers for good information on the young people who appear before them and on some of the options available to them — for example where particular local programmes provide worthwhile alternatives to custody. Our earlier observations about Yot record keeping suggest the standard of what they receive may not be consistent.

At the same time, concerns were frequently raised about inconsistency of decision making, both between and within local benches; and it would be of help if these could be monitored — if only to establish that perceptions of unfairness in sentencing are groundless.

Fear of going to prison appeared to be the single most effective deterrent for young people at risk of offending and those who have already started. However, there was a real danger that, once they had won their spurs in this way, this simply confirmed the bad reputation which was almost their only source of status and credibility on their release. On the other hand, it was evident that in principle prison could provide some young people with a significant opportunity to turn their lives around; but in practice there are major difficulties in achieving this (Social Exclusion Unit 2002). Whether the first of these outcomes can be avoided and prison can be a worthwhile sentence for those for whom it is appropriate depends on developing policies which recognise the following.

- v Sending large numbers of young people to custody for short periods may result, at best, in their simply being warehoused. They are likely to be held in conditions where it is impossible to do any constructive work with them but one of the main effects of this for the future may be to neutralise the one remaining deterrent to their offending behaviour[16].

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[15]   As with social services, support from this quarter was usually seen as patchy, at best.
[16]   As some professionals observed, for the more inadequate and those whose lives were especially chaotic, the discovery of somewhere where they were sure of a bed, a fixed routine and three meals per day could be a reassuring alternative to trying to survive outside.

- v Prisons can only work effectively if they can offer the compensatory education and skills training many prisoners need if they are to survive better post-release than they did before they were sentenced. As another study undertaken for the Board has shown, overall provision of this type is currently very poor (ECOTEC 2001). Some also need particular forms of treatment for problems associated with their offending behaviour, since - if they are not addressed during their time in custody - they will continue to have the same effect on their behaviour post-release.

- v Planned and co-ordinated post release supervision is important. The level of involvement by Yot workers while the young people they are responsible for are in custody was said to vary; but the provision they can make for them on release may be very dependent on other agencies. They will rely on them, for example, with regard to ongoing education provision and, in particular, accommodation - which can be particularly difficult for this group. With regard to future employment prospects, however, some monitoring is needed of the impact of the operation of the Criminal Records Agency. While proper safeguards are needed for the public, if employers can effectively reject applicants on checking that they have a criminal record this will have a further seriously disproportionate effect on black communities in particular.

Finally, the legal profession plays an important role at a significant moment in the lives of many young people; and this raises serious ethical issues which have yet to be satisfactorily addressed. In cases where the young person is guilty, they may already have offended with impunity for some time and have come to regard the system as something of a lottery. Once they are caught and charged, however, the criminal justice system has the chance to confront them with responsibility for their criminal behaviour and its possible consequences (for themselves, their families and their victims). Arguably it is not in their best interests if, at this point, their legal representatives reinforce their resistance to these messages by encouraging them in a mindset of denial.

A parallel set of questions arises, though, with regard to the profession s treatment of young people as victims and as witnesses; and together these considerations point to an urgent need for the relevant bodies to develop codes of practice in cases involving young people. Without this, they risk further undermining young people s confidence in the notion of justice and compound the mixed messages young people receive from adults about the importance of concepts of right and wrong — as opposed to manoeuvring and manipulating to win a perennial game of chance where the odds are stacked in favour of the survival of the fittest.

CONCLUSIONS

In researching the reasons for young people s involvement in street crime, it soon became apparent that the problem could not be treated in isolation. The factors at work had long-term implications for everyone involved with young people, irrespective of the trends in the numbers of incidents recorded. At the same time, looking at how the relevant agencies responded to these reports (and, in particular, to the young people involved) raised many wider issues for the organisations concerned and for their ability to work together effectively.

The latter part of our fieldwork coincided with the Government s major drive to tackle street crime. In interviews and discussions with key professionals in the spring and summer of 2002,

the importance of the initiatives developed in this context was commonly recognised. In particular, they had broken down barriers and catalysed new ways of thinking and working which were applicable more generally. The main question exercising our respondents was whether this impetus would be sustained and would underpin the type of collaborative strategy which is needed over the longer term in order to address the issues raised by this study.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 - VARIABLE DEFINITIONS

CRIME DATA (SOURCE MPS PIB)

- v Recorded offences by borough by major crime type for financial years 1998-99, 1999-2000, 2000-2001
- v Recorded street crime by time and day of offence
- v Judicial disposals by borough for financial years 1998-99, 1999-2000, 2000-2001
- v Suspects of street crime (where known) by borough by age, by gender, by ethnic group for financial years 1998-99, 1999-2000, 2000-2001
- v Suspects of street crime (where known) by age, time and day of offence
- v Suspects by relationship to victim
- v Victims of street crime by borough by age, by gender, by ethnic group for financial years 1998-99, 1999-2000, 2000-2001

INDICES OF DEPRIVATION 2000 DISTRICT LEVEL (SOURCE DETR)

Income Scale:	count of individuals experiencing income deprivation
Employment Scale:	count of individuals experiencing employment deprivation
Average of Ward Scores:	population weighted average for ward scores across a district
Extent:	proportion of a district's population living in the wards which rank amongst the most deprived 10% of wards in the country
Local Concentration:	the population weighted average of the ranks of a district's most deprived wards that contain exactly 10% of the district's population

OTHER SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

(Borough profiles on Policing for London website)

- v Population (1997)
- v % Population aged 0 - 15 (1997)
- v % Population aged 16 - 19 (1997)
- v % Population aged 65+ (1997)
- v Projected population change 1997-2011
- v % Population moved within last year (1991)
- v Claimant Unemployment Count (July 1998)
- v % Population claiming income support (1996)
- v % Private Sector Housing (1996)
- v % Dependent children in lone parent families (1991)
- v % Dependent children in households with non-earning adults (1991)
- v Children on child protection register (per 10,000 population aged under 18) (1998)
- v Infant mortality rate average 1996-98
- v Scores at Level 4+ English Key Stage 2 (1998-1999)
- v % Secondary pupils permanently excluded (1998-1999)

- v GCSE scores (1998-1999)
- v % Pupils with English as a second language (1998-1999)
- v % Population White (1998)
- v % Population Black Caribbean (1998)
- v % Population Black African (1998)
- v % Population Black Other (1998)
- v % Population Indian (1998)
- v % Population Pakistani (1998)
- v % Population Bangladeshi (1998)
- v % Population Chinese (1998)
- v % Population Other (1998)
- v % Primary school pupils White (1998)
- v % Primary school pupils Black Caribbean (1998)
- v % Primary school pupils Black African (1998)
- v % Primary school pupils Black Other (1998)
- v % Primary school pupils Indian (1998)
- v % Primary school pupils Pakistani (1998)
- v % Primary school pupils Bangladeshi (1998)
- v % Primary school pupils Chinese (1998)
- v % Primary school pupils Other (1998)
- v % White population born abroad (1991)
- v Asylum seekers and refugees per 1000 residents (1997)

APPENDIX 2 - DISCUSSION GROUP SCHEDULE: SCHOOL PUPILS

Introduction

I m Marian FitzGerald and this is Ian Joseph. We re from London University and we ve been asked by the government s Youth Justice Board to do some research into young people s involvement in what they call street crime . Other people call it mugging ; but you may have other names for it.

The questions the Youth Justice Board want us to look at boil down to:

- v who are the main victims of street crime — and why do they get picked on?
- v who mainly does street crime — and how do they get into it?
- v what (if anything) the government, the police, schools or anybody else could do to *reduce* street crime?

During the research we ll be talking to lots of people — including the police, teachers and people in the local youth offending teams. They ve all got their own ideas about the answers to these questions; but we said that young people themselves know the answers better than anybody. So that s why we re here today.

We need to tape-record the discussion to make sure we don t get anything you say wrong. But the tape is *just* for Ian and me to refer to. Anything any one of you says is in confidence. Obviously our report will describe what young people are saying in general; but we shall not identify any individuals; and we shall certainly not pass on any information you give us to teachers, police officers or anyone else - unless you ask us to.

At the end of the discussion we shall ask you all to fill in a short survey and give it to us. Again, anything you write will be treated in total confidence and, as you ll see, the survey doesn t even ask for your name.

Any questions so far?

General

1. First, can we just go round the group and ask people for their names — just so we can call people one at a time. (If everyone talks at once, we can t hear what they re saying when we listen to the tape.) So you can even make up a name if you want to.

   And can you just say also:

   - v whether you live around here; and
   - v how long you ve been at this school?

2.   Can I just start by asking why you think the government, the press and everyone has got so interested in street crime in the last year or so?

      Probe trends over last two years: a) in general; b) in this area; c) relative to other types of crime.

3.   Turning to the questions we ve been asked to look at in our study, the first one is:

      v who do you think are the main *victims* of street crime — and why do they get picked on?

      Probe as necessary: individual characteristics; relationship to victim; reasons for targeting; variation by area etc.

4.   So who, mainly gets involved in doing it — and why?

      Probe as necessary: individual characteristics; motivation; variation by area/over time; attitudes of/actions taken by others (including parents, schools, police) and what impact these have, etc.

5.   So finally, we ve got to make suggestions for what people could do to stop people getting mugged. Any suggestions?

      Probe: family; peers; schools; police; other criminal justice system (including Yots/courts); local authorities; central government.

Thank you.

As I said, we d like you all to fill in a questionnaire for us. Some of the questions are a bit like the ones we ve just talked about. But it gives everyone a chance to say what they want in their own words or to add things which didn t come up in discussion. You don t have to answer all of the questions if you don t want to; and you don t have to give us your name. What you tell us, though, will help us get across to some important adults how street crime looks in the real world to young people like you.

APPENDIX 3 - SCHOOLS QUESTIONNAIRE

INTRODUCTION

You ve just taken part in a discussion about street crime (mugging). That was to help us with our study of young people and street crime.

We re doing the research for the government s Youth Justice Board. They want to know more about:

v why street crime happens; and
v what people could do to prevent it.

Now we re asking you also to fill in this questionnaire.

What you say is in confidence. We won t pass the information on to your teachers or the police unless you actually ask us to.

You don t have to answer all of the questions. And we re not asking you for your name.

But we really appreciate you helping us by taking part.

Thank you.

Dr. Marian FitzGerald
Ian Joseph

London School of Economics
University of London
16 October 2001

In this first part, we want to find out more about **what is happening now**.

1. How many people you know have been victims of street crime in the last six months *including yourself*?

2. What was taken from them?

3. Did any of them get hurt?

4. Did they report it to anyone? (Who?)

5. And how many people you know have done street crime in the last six months (including yourself)?

6. Have any of them been caught

    a) by teachers?
    b) by the police?

7. Why do *you* think people do street crime?

In this second part, we want to know more about **what could be done to prevent street crime**.

8. If you were a parent and your child was being picked on as a victim of street crime, what would you do?

9. If you were a parent and you thought your child was getting involved in street crime, what would you do?

10. If you were a teacher and you thought a pupil was being robbed by other pupils but they were frightened to tell you, what would you do?

11. If you were a teacher and you thought a pupil was getting involved in street crime (even though no-one had told on them) what would you do?

12. Please write down your suggestions for what any of the following could do to prevent street crime:

    v   schools

    v   the police

    v   the government

    v   young people themselves

    v   anyone else.

This third part is **about you**.

13. Are you a girl or a boy?

14. How old are you now?

15. How old do you expect to be when you leave school?

16. What do you want to do when you leave school?

17. Who do you live with at the moment? (Who else lives in the house where you sleep most nights?)

18. How would you describe your ethnic origin ? (What colour are you and where were your parents born?)

Thank you very much for your help.

Dr. Marian FitzGerald
Ian Joseph

London School of Economics
University of London

If there is **anything else you would like** to add please write it in the space below.

We shall not pass this information on to anyone — unless you actually ask us to.

If you want us to tell someone anything you have said, please mark clearly:

- v   which bit of information you want us to pass on;
- v   who you want us to tell.

APPENDIX 4 - TOTAL NUMBERS OF PEOPLE INTERVIEWED/PARTICIPANTS IN FOCUS GROUPS

School pupils   103

Yot staff
(including police Yot staff)   142

Police
(including analysts and civil staff)   79

Other professional
(including teachers, YIP, local authority and Government Office staff)   23

Young people convicted of street robbery   17

Parents/carers of young people convicted of street robbery   5

Victims of recorded street robberies   5

APPENDIX 5 - ETHNIC MAKE-UP OF LONDON BOROUGHS 2000

ALL VS PRIMARY SCHOOL POPULATION

	White (all)	White (primary)	Black (all)	Black (primary)	Asian (all)	Asian (primary)
Least deprived						
Richmond	93	*89*	0	*3*	2	*4*
Kingston	87	*85*	2	*2*	5	*5*
Bromley	93	*91*	3	*4*	1	*1*
Sutton	91	*90*	3	*4*	2	*3*
Harrow	65	*49*	6	*10*	24	*26*
Havering	96	*97*	1	*1*	1	*1*
Barnet	77	*70*	5	*10*	9	*10*
Bexley	93	*91*	2	*3*	3	*3*
Hillingdon	83	*79*	3	*4*	11	*13*
Merton	79	*68*	7	*14*	7	*8*
Group average	86	*81*	3	*6*	7	*7*
Average deprivation						
Kensington	83	*52*	6	*21*	2	*4*
Croydon	78	*67*	11	*19*	6	*8*
Redbridge	70	*53*	7	*10*	19	*30*
Wandsworth	78	*51*	12	*30*	6	*10*
Westminster*	72	*42*	8	*22*	7	*13*
Hounslow	68	*55*	4	*7*	22	*29*
Ealing	61	*44*	9	*15*	21	*31*
Enfield	81	*75*	9	*14*	6	*5*
Group average	74	*55*	8	*17*	11	*16*
Relatively deprived						
Hammersmith	80	*52*	11	*32*	4	*5*
Brent	49	*30*	19	*31*	22	*28*
Waltham Forest	67	*54*	15	*21*	13	*20*
Camden	77	*53*	7	*20*	7	*17*
Lewisham	72	*52*	22	*35*	2	*3*
Barking	90	*86*	5	*7*	4	*4*
Greenwich	83	*71*	7	*14*	5	*6*
Lambeth	66	*38*	25	*53*	4	*5*
Group average	73	*55*	14	*27*	8	*11*
Very deprived						
Haringey	66	*48*	21	*33*	6	*6*
Southwark	71	*45*	21	*45*	2	*4*
Islington	76	*53*	14	*21*	4	*6*
Newham	48	*30*	20	*23*	26	*34*
Hackney	64	*34*	25	*43*	7	*13*
Tower Hamlets	59	*31*	9	*10*	28	*56*
Group average	64	*40*	18	*29*	12	*20*

Sources: All - Estimates by London Research Centre based on 1991 Census
             Primary schools - Annual returns to DFES

APPENDIX 6 - THE QUANTITATIVE MODELS

The basic technique we used was that of multiple regression. This allows us to identify those factors that have a statistically significant impact on area variations in street crime after controlling for other possible causal influences[1]. We took as our dependent variable **street crime** measured as recorded street crime per 1000 population. We began by looking for the most powerful explanatory model for 1998-99 and then examined how this model fared in explaining street crime in the following three years. We were also interested in whether 'explanations' of street crime were distinct from those from other crime categories. Hence as well as comparing the model over time we examined its efficacy for other types of crime.

As noted for our independent explanatory variables we used the area level set of socio-demographic variables listed in Appendix 1. We divided these into three main groups:

1. Population composition - including age structure and ethnic composition plus measures to capture how rapidly this is changing;
2. Housing tenure profile, household composition, residential mobility and educational achievement;
3. Measures of deprivation.

In addition we had data on Judicial Disposals which we used as measure of potential deterrence effects.

For each groups we considered possible combinations of variables and retained only those which had a statistically significant effect[2] on street crime. After looking at the results from each group in turn we combined the statistically significant variables from each into a general model. Again we examined this general model for explanatory power and retained only those variables that were statistically significant.

Looking at the results in some detail of the variables capturing variations in age distribution across the areas we found that when used on their own both **% population aged between 0 and 15** and **% population aged between 16 and 29** have a significant positive effect on **street crime**. We then looked at how variations in the ethnic composition of the primary school population might impact on **street crime**. Trying each of these in turn with the population age variables we found that **% primary school population White** was negatively related with the **street crime**, indicating that those areas with smaller proportions of white primary school pupils have higher levels of street crime, whilst **% primary school population Black**

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[1] We do not present the numerical results for all stages of the modelling process in this report (these are available from the authors on request). Instead we present the best fitting model for *street crime* for each year in Tables A6.1 through A6.4 below. It should be noted that a major problem with regression using cross section data is heteroscedasticy which if present will bias statistical tests and hence potentially lead to invalid inferences. For the technically minded note that our conclusions are based on consistent heteroscedastically adjusted estimates of variances and standard errors. The regression modelling was carried out using the software packages SPSS 11 and MICROFIT 4.

[2] Unless otherwise indicated we used a 5% criterion for including variables.

Caribbean, *% primary school population Black African* and *% primary school population Black Other* were, when considered separately all positively related to *street crime*. Whichever statistically significant school variable is introduced *% population aged between 0 and 15* becomes redundant and is dropped from the model. Clearly all these school variables are capturing a similar phenomenon and when taken together *% primary school population Black African* is the dominant variable. We also constructed a variable to capture areas' changing ethnic composition. *Change in ethnic composition* compared the % white in total population with the % white in primary schools. The larger this variable the more the ethnic mix of the area was changing. This variable was positively related to *street crime*, the greater the change in ethnic mix the higher the levels of street crime, and highly significant. From this group of variables that we have labelled population composition we were finally left with *% population aged between 16 and 29*, *% primary school population* and *Black African Change in ethnic composition*. Each was positively related to *street crime* - the greater the proportion of the local population aged between 16 and 29, the greater the proportion of primary pupils who were Black African and the greater the change in ethnic mix of the area the higher the level of street crime.

Turning now to the set of variables we have grouped under *Housing tenure profile, household composition, residential mobility and educational achievement* our analysis shows that taken separately on its own *% population moved within last year* was positively related to levels of street crime whilst *% private sector housing* had a negative impact. Both of these results are consistent with expectations but neither variable remained significant when *% dependent children in lone parent families* was introduced into the model. Again in line with expectations this was positively related to street crime. Of the various variables related to educational achievement only two were statistically significant when considered individually. They were first *Key stage 2 results at level 4+* which had a negative impact on *street crime* and second *LA secondary School exclusions* which had a positive effect. Again these results were as expected in that the better the educational results in an area and the smaller the numbers of school exclusions the higher the level of street crime.

Finally we looked at the impact of various measures of deprivation. Again we will report only variables which had a statistically significant impact on *street crime*. Considered individually both the DETR variables and the *number of income deprived* were positively related to street crime. Thus both suggest that street crime is higher in deprived areas- in particular, if we ignore other factors areas, with larger numbers of population on low income have higher levels of street crime. However whenever they both appeared together in a model whilst the *number of employment deprived* continued to be positively related to street crime the *number of income deprived* switched to negative. This tells us that after controlling for levels of unemployment areas with lower numbers of income deprived will have higher levels of street crime. A possible explanation is that taken individually both of these variables capture the *'motivational'* effect of deprivation when both are included in the model *number of employment deprived* continues to capture this effect but now *number of income deprived* needs interpreting in terms of an *'opportunity'* effect - the lower the numbers of income deprived the greater the number of 'targets' and opportunities for street crime to take place. Of the remaining DETR variables the only one which was significant was one that measures the proportion of the population in each borough living in the most 10% deprived wards in the

country which they label ***Extent***. It's aim is to portray how widespread in a district are high levels of deprivation. Again this was positively related to street crime.

Having examined separately variables from each of the three groups the final stage was to pool the significant variables into a single model. When we did this all three of the deprivation variables remained statistically significant. Of the other variables identified by our methodology as potentially important only ***Change in ethnic composition*** was still significant and positive. To emphasise this point, after taking into account the effect on street crime of the four variables, ***number of employment deprived***, ***number of income deprived***, ***Extent*** and ***Change in ethnic composition*** none of the other population age and ethnicity factors nor any other housing, mobility or education factors identified in the lower level simple analyses remained important. In short our preferred model suggest that for 1998-99 levels of deprivation and changes in ethnic composition can explain the variation in levels of street crime across London (see Table A6.1).

We then looked at how well the model worked in explaining other types of crime in 1998-99. For Total Notifiable Offences (TNO), Burglary and Violence against the Person (VP) we found the model worked well. For drugs offences it also offered a reasonable fit but not as good as for the others. Hence we would suggest that in 1998-99 the explanation for the pattern of street crime across London was similar to that for other crimes.

Our next step was to look at how well this model worked for ***street crime*** in the next three years. We can deal with 1999-00 quickly as the model continued to fit well (Table A6.2). For 2000 -01 the situation was less clear. Although the model explains nearly 80% of the variation in street crime in that year ***Extent*** is no longer statistically significant. However when we drop this variable from the model the ***number of income deprived*** also becomes insignificant. However when we substitute the ***% dependent children in households with no adult earners*** the redefined model does seem to work (see Table A6.3). This shift is confirmed in the results for 2001- 2002 where *extent* is again insignificant. The best model for this year is reported in Table A6.4where again we have left the insignificant *number of income deprived* in the model since to exclude it again affects the other variables.

When we fit the model to other crime types in these last two years we find that for Total Notifiable Offences the results are less good in 2000-2001 than for 1998-99; but they provide a good fit in 2001-2002. For Violence against the Person the model breaks down completely. For Burglary the model continues to be fairly robust but in 2001-2002 the ethnic change variable is no longer significant. We suggest that the fact that our model may be showing signs of changing supports the notion that the factors which explain street crime may be shifting. Until recently these were commonly associated with other forms of crime also; but other factors may now be at work which are more specific to street crime. The most obvious change is the shift from general indicators of deprivation to the measures of deprivation which discriminate between households with dependent children.

TABLE A6.1
Final Model for Patterns of Street Crime in London Boroughs Financial Year 1998-1999
(Dependent Variable: Recorded Street Crime per 1000 population)

Explanatory Variable	Estimated Coefficient	Standard Error[1]	t-ratio	p value
Constant	-0.760	0.859	-0.883	0.385
Number of Employment Deprived	0.000842	0.000128	6.573[**]	0.000
Number of Income deprived	-0.00018	0.000026	-6.9667[**]	0.000
Extent of Deprivation	0.0258	0.0150	1.721[*]	0.097
Measure of Population Ethnic Change	0.0852	0.0216	3.936[**]	0.001

$R^2 = 0.863$

[1] Standard Errors are adjusted to take account of heteroscedesticity in the data

[**] Significant at the conventional 5% level for a two tailed test of significance

[*] Significant at the conventional 5% level for a one tailed test of significance

TABLE A6.2
Final Model for Patterns of Street Crime in London Boroughs Financial Year 1999-2000
(Dependent Variable: Recorded Street Crime per 1000 population)

Explanatory Variable	Estimated Coefficient	Standard Error[1]	t-ratio	p value
Constant	-1.086	1.023	-1.061	0.299
Number of Employment Deprived	0.00102	0.000165	6.156[**]	0.000
Number of Income deprived	-0.000206	0.0000319	-6.444[**]	0.000
Extent of Deprivation	0.0528	0.0172	3.063[**]	0.005
Measure of Population Ethnic Change	0.0939	0.0252	3.722[**]	0.001

$R^2 = 0.893$

[1] Standard Errors are adjusted to take account of heteroscedesticity in the data

[**] Significant at the conventional 5% level for a two tailed test of significance

[*] Significant at the conventional 5% level for a one tailed test of significance

TABLE A6.3
Final Model for Patterns of Street Crime in London Boroughs Financial Year 2000-2001
(Dependent Variable: Recorded Street Crime per 1000 population)

Explanatory Variable	Estimated Coefficient	Standard Error[1]	t-ratio	p value
Constant	-3.199	1.1889	-2.691[**]	0.012
Number of Employment Deprived	0.000758	0.000341	2.224[**]	0.035
Number of Income deprived	-0.000125	0.000068	-1.856[*]	0.075
% Dependent Children in Households with non-earning adults	0.159	0.0701	2.268[**]	0.032
Measure of Population Ethnic Change	0.0934	0.0444	2.105[**]	0.045

$R^2 = 0.810$

[1] Standard Errors are adjusted to take account of heteroscedesticity in the data

[**] Significant at the conventional 5% level for a two tailed test of significance

[*] Significant at the conventional 5% level for a one tailed test of significance

TABLE A6.4
Final Model for Patterns of Street Crime in London Boroughs Financial Year 2001-2002
(Dependent Variable: Recorded Street Crime per 1000 population)

Explanatory Variable	Estimated Coefficient	Standard Error[1]	t-ratio	p value
Constant	-3.527	1.634	-2.187[**]	0.038
Number of Employment Deprived	0.000963	0.000499	1.931[*]	0.065
Number of Income deprived	-0.000173	0.000104	-1.657	0.109
% Dependent Children in Households with non-earning adults	0.213	0.0972	2.194[**]	0.037
Measure of Population Ethnic Change	0.156	0.0564	2.775[**]	0.010

$R^2 = 0.810$

[1] Standard Errors are adjusted to take account of heteroscedesticity in the data

[**] Significant at the conventional 5% level for a two tailed test of significance

[*] Significant at the conventional 5% level for a one tailed test of significance

APPENDIX 7

PI No.	WORKLOAD MEASURES / PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	No.
ALL of this table should be completed QUARTERLY		
OFFENDING		
Q1	The number of children and young people usually resident offending during the previous calendar year to that which the return is being made in	
Q2	The number of children in need (as per the counting rules for Table 4d) offending	
Q3	The number of children looked after (as per the counting rules for Table 4d) offending	
RESTORATIVE JUSTICE REPARATION		
Final Warnings		
Q4	The number of Final Warnings, with a supporting intervention concluded during the period	
Q5	The number of Final Warnings, with a supporting intervention concluded successfully within the period	
Q6	The number of Final Warnings, with a supporting intervention, concluded during the period where a victim(s) have been consulted	
Q7	The number of Final Warnings, with a supporting intervention, concluded in the period involved the young person in: (a) Indirect Reparation	
Q8	(b) Direct Reparation	
Q9	The number of Final Warnings, with a supporting intervention, concluded successfully in the period involved the young person in: (a) Indirect Reparation	
Q10	(b) Direct Reparation	
Referral Orders		
Q11	The number of Referral Orders concluded during the period	
Q12	The number of Referral Orders concluded successfully during the period	
Q13	The number of Referral Orders concluded during the period where victim(s) have been consulted	
Q14	The number of Referral Orders concluded in the period involved the young person in: (a) Indirect Reparation	
Q15	(b) Direct Reparation	
Q16	The number of Referral Orders concluded successfully in the period involved the young person in: (a) Indirect Reparation	
Q17	(b) Direct Reparation	

PI No.	WORKLOAD MEASURES / PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	No.
Reparation Orders		
Q18	The number of Reparation Orders concluded during the period	
Q19	The number of Reparation Orders concluded successfully during the period	
Q20	The number of Reparation Orders concluded during the period where victim(s) have been consulted	
Q21	The number of Reparation Orders concluded in the period involved the young person in: (a) Indirect Reparation	
Q22	(b) Direct Reparation	
Q23	The number of Reparation Orders concluded successfully in the period involved the young person in: (a) Indirect Reparation	
Q24	(b) Direct Reparation	
Community Penalties		
Q25	The number of Community Penalties (as defined in Annex A) concluded in the period	
Q26	The number of Community Penalties concluded successfully in the period	
Q27	The number of Community Penalties concluded during the period where victim(s) have been consulted	
Q28	The number of Community Penalties concluded in the period involved the young person in: (a) Indirect Reparation	
Q29	(b) Direct Reparation	
Q30	The number of Community Penalties successfully concluded in the period involved the young person in: (a) Indirect Reparation	
Q31	(b) Direct Reparation	
Q32	Number of Supervision Plans for community penalties agreed between the young person and a Yot worker during the period	
Q33	Number of Supervision Plans for community penalties agreed between the young person and a Yot worker, within the timescale prescribed by National Standards, during the period	
REMANDS		
Q34	Total number of young people receiving a community based remand episode(s) in the period (unconditional bail, conditional bail, bail supervision and support, and remand to local authority accommodation)	
Q35	Total number of Court <u>appearances scheduled</u> for those subject to community based remands in the period *(in court for the offence which they are subject to remand)*	
Q36	Total number of Court <u>attendances made</u> by those subject to community based remands at scheduled Court appearances in the period *(in court for the offence which they are subject to remand)*	

PI No.	WORKLOAD MEASURES / PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	No.
Q37	Total number of young people in the period charged with an offence allegedly committed during a remand episode (as per Table 12).	
Q38	Number of community based remand episodes requiring interventions from a Yot (*this is related to the young people in Q34 —ie subject to bail supervision and support and remand to local authority accommodation*)	
Q39	Total number of Court appearances scheduled for young people subject to Bail Supervision and Support in the period (*in court for the offence which they are subject to remand*)	
Q40	Total number of Court appearances scheduled for young people subject to a Remand To Local Authority Accommodation in the period (*in court for the offence which they are subject to remand*)	
Q41	Total number of Court attendances made by those subject to Bail Supervision and Support in the period (*in court for the offence which they are subject to remand*)	
Q42	Total number of Court attendances made by those subject a Remand To Local Authority Accommodation in the period (*in court for the offence which they are subject to remand*)	
Q43	Total number of young people made subject to Bail Supervision and Support in the period	
Q44	Total number of young people made subject to a Remand To Local Authority Accommodation in the period	
Q45	Total number of young people in the period charged with an offence allegedly committed while subject to bail supervision and support	
Q46	Total number of young people in the period charged with an offence allegedly committed while subject a remand to local authority accommodation.	
Q47	Total number of young people subject to either Bail Supervision and Support or a Remand To Local Authority Accommodation in breach for non compliance in the period	
PRE-SENTENCE REPORTS		
Q48	Number of Pre Sentence Reports submitted to the Court during the period on: (a) The general population (e.g. non PYO population)	
Q49	(b) The persistent young offender population	
Q50	Number of PSRs prepared on the general Court population submitted (i.e. presented to the Court) within the number of working days of request as detailed by National Standards	
Q51	Number of Reports prepared on the Persistent Young Offender population submitted within the number of working days of request as detailed by National Standards	
COURT ORDERS —DETENTION AND TRAINING ORDERS CONCLUDED IN THE PERIOD		
Q52	Number of Detention and Training Orders concluded in the period	
Q53	Number of Detention and Training Orders concluded successfully in the period	

PI No.	WORKLOAD MEASURES / PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	No.
Q54	Number of Detention & Training Orders imposed during the period	
Q55	Number of Training Plans for Detention and Training Orders agreed in the period	
Q56	Number of Training Plans for Detention and Training Orders agreed within the timescale prescribed by National Standards, in the period	
ENFORCEMENT OF COURT ORDERS		
Q57	Number of Orders in the period which have resulted in either a return to Court (Referral Orders) or Breach proceedings (Community based penalties and Detention and Training Orders) being instigated with respect to: (a) Referral Orders	
Q58	(b) Reparation Orders	
Q59	(c) Community Penalties	
Q60	(d) Detention and Training Orders and Sections 90-92	
CAREER PATTERN OF OFFENDERS TAKEN TO COURT IN THE PERIOD (receiving a substantive outcome)		
Q61	Number of Direct Entrants (i.e those with no previous Reprimands, Final Warnings, or convictions)	
Q62	Number of First Timers (i.e those with only a previous Reprimand and/or Final Warning)	
Q63		
Q64	Of Q61 and Q62, those entering a guilty plea	
Q65	The number with one previous sentencing occasion	
Q66	Those with two or more previous sentencing occasions (but who do not meet the criteria for an ISSP	
Q67	Those who meet the ISSP criteria	
PARENTING ORDERS AND PROGRAMMES		
Q68	Number of Parenting Orders completed in the period — this is NOT including voluntary parenting programmes. *(The completion of the Order is the official end of the Order rather than the end of any intervention programmes)*	
Q69	Of Q68, the number completed successfully (i.e. parent(s) in the period co-operating with designated programme without re-sentencing being carried out by a Court following breach proceedings being instigated). *(The completion of the Order is the official end of the Order rather than the end of any intervention programmes)*	
Q70	Of Q68, the number completed without child/young person re-offending during the course of the Order in the period. . *(The completion of the Order is the official end of the Order rather than the end of any intervention programmes)*	
Q71	The total number of people leaving a parenting programme in the period (this INCLUDES both statutory and voluntary participation)	
Q72	Of Q71, the total number of people successfully completing the agreed programme	

APPENDIX 8 - RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS IN YOUNG PEOPLE'S LIVES

(Adapted from Beinart et al 2001)

RISK FACTORS	PROTECTIVE FACTORS
Family risk factors Poor parental supervision and discipline Family conflict Family history of problem behaviours Parental involvement in/attitudes condoning problem behaviour Low income and poor housing	**Social bonding** with family, friends and teachers
School risk factors Low achievement, beginning at primary school Aggressive behaviour at school, including bullying Lack of commitment to school, including bullying School disorganisation	**Healthy standards** set (through example) by parents, teachers and community leaders
Community risk factors Community disorganisation and neglect Availability of drugs Disadvantaged neighbourhood High turnover and lack of neighbourhood attachment	**Opportunities for involvement** and for feeling valued within families, schools and communities
	Social and learning skills
Risk factors relating to individuals, their friends and peers Alienation and lack of social commitment Attitudes that condone problem behaviour Friends involved in problem behaviour	**Recognition and praise** — for positive behaviour

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