

Home Office Research Study 288

Reassurance policing: an evaluation of the local management of community safety

Lawrence Singer

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Foreword

Reassuring the public has become a central part of police reform. Working with communities to reduce their concern about crime and disorder is as important as bringing down the actual level of crime and disorder prevalent in neighbourhoods. Although effort has been put into the measurement of public concerns and fears, there is very little empirical evidence of how to reduce these concerns. The research described in this report makes an important first step in filling this key knowledge gap. The local management of community safety involving the police working not only with other statutory agencies but also with members of the community constitutes an extremely challenging array of issues and problems. The modest but nonetheless positive findings of this evaluation indicate that working together can make a difference. In each of the four public-facing outcomes measured in this evaluation (namely public engagement, safety and security, satisfaction with and confidence in the policing provided) statistically significant progress is demonstrated. In drawing together the lessons learned from the project evaluated, a model of effective partnership and partnering is described. The model will be of value to the development of both the National Reassurance Policing Programme being undertaken by eight police forces and, more widely, local police and their partners engaged in neighbourhood policing.

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Contents

Acknowledgements	ii
List of tables, figures and exhibits	iv
Executive Summary	vii
1 Introduction	1
Reassurance policing and the local management of community safety	1
The local management of community safety	3
Campbell Park and Woughton Parishes	5
Evaluation methodology	7
Structure of the report	10
2 Public engagement	13
Engagement from the public	14
Engagement with the public	21
3 Safety and security	33
The relevance of crime and fear of crime to residents	34
Recorded and perceived levels of crime	36
Concern about crime	39
Concern about disorder	47
4 Satisfaction and confidence	55
Satisfaction with police encounters	55
Victims	56
Use of the police non-emergency service	60
Residents' community safety priorities	64
Residents' expectations of ABOs	65
Residents' expectations of PCCSOs	68
Residents' assessment of the community policing provided	72
5 Partnership and partnering	75
Comprehension	80
Commitment	81
Coordination	83
Capacity	85
6 Conclusion and recommendations	89

List of tables

Table 2.1	Social capital domains, definitions and questions	15
Table 2.2	Social capital baseline and follow-up findings with HOCS data	15
Table 2.3	Frequency of residents seeing police officer in the neighbourhood	24
Table 2.4	What the police officer was typically doing	24
Table 2.5	Familiarity of police officers working in neighbourhood	24
Table 2.6	Whether resident knew what the parish council did	27
Table 2.7	Whether resident knew whom the parish councillor was	27
Table 3.1	The first priority social issues identified by residents in percentages with consistency of response between baseline and follow-up	34
Table 3.2	The top five 'high level' fears of the recall sample (312N) in percentages with consistency of response between baseline and follow-up	35
Table 3.3	Recorded crime on the estates and BCU 2000/01 – 2002/03	37
Table 3.4	Very or fairly worried about becoming a victim of particular crimes for the BCS and LMCS samples in percentages	40
Table 3.5	Very/fairly worried responses from females about becoming a victim of particular crimes in percentages (189N)	42
Table 3.6	Type of crimes reported by victims at baseline and follow-up in percentages	46
Table 3.7	Individual responses at baseline and follow-up to fear of becoming a victim of crime in percentages	46
Table 3.8	Positive and negative changes to victims' perceptions of safety and worry about the same offence occurring again in percentages with numbers in each group	47
Table 3.9	Physical disorders thought a very big problem BCS 'Striving' group and estates in percentages	50
Table 3.10	Social disorders thought a very big problem BCS 'Striving' group and estates in percentages	50
Table 4.1	Victims' satisfaction with treatment by police Proportion rating excellent or good in percentages (118N & 137N)	57
Table 4.2	Residents' rating of how well ABOs doing overall and top four most important jobs (in percentages)	68

Table 4.3	Residents' rating of how well PCCSOs doing overall and top four most important jobs (in percentages)	71
Table 4.4	Residents' assessment of the community policing provided in percentages	73
Table 5.1	The official ingredients of partnership success	76
Table 5.2	LMCS costs October 2002 – September 2003 relating to Campbell Park and Woughton parishes	86
Table 5.3	LMCS funding sources	86

List of exhibits

Exhibit 3.1	New youth shelter on Beanhill and conversation with users	49
Exhibit 3.2	Before and after LMCS action on Beanhill	99
Exhibit 3.3	Before and after LMCS action on Fishermead	103

List of figures

Figure 2.1	Taylor's model of geographical communities	20
Figure 2.2	Pyramid of participation on the estates	20
Figure 3.1	Perceived change in crime level over last two years for BCS 'Striving' areas	38
Figure 3.2	Perceived change in crime level over last 12 months for the estates	38
Figure 4.1	Non-emergency service users' Assessments in percentages	61
Figure 4.2	Residents' first community safety priorities - top six	61
Figure 4.3	Residents' ranking of most important jobs for ABOs to undertake in percentages	66
Figure 4.4	Residents' ranking of most important jobs for PCCSOs to undertake in percentages	70
Figure 5.1	The partnering triangle	78

Executive summary

This study reports the results of an evaluation of a reassurance policing project, the Local Management of Community Safety (LMCS), undertaken in two socially deprived parishes of Milton Keynes. LMCS comprises a tripartite partnership between district and parish council members and officers with the local police of the Thames Valley force. The multi-faceted nature of reassurance policing was addressed through examination of four key strands of reassurance: namely, public engagement, feelings of safety and security, satisfaction with the policing provided, and public confidence in the policing expected. Similarly, the policing evaluated involved not only the services provided by the police but also the policing coordinated or directly delivered by parish-employed crime and community safety officers.

Data were collected over a two year period from December 2001 to November 2003 in order to facilitate a pre- and post-intervention analysis. A variety of research methods were employed so that the findings from one source could be checked against and/or clarified by those from another. A survey of 605 residents living on two estates situated in the parishes was carried out for baseline purposes in December 2001/January 2003. The survey included questions from the British Crime Survey and the Home Office Citizenship Survey and was repeated 18 months later in June/July 2003 with 600 residents. Because of the plan to analyse individual differences, a recall sample of 312 was derived and the unweighted results from this sample forms the basis of most of the statistical analysis reported. In addition and following each of the surveys, semi-structured interviews based on the survey questionnaire were carried out individually or in groups with 76 people comprising councillors, district/parish officers, police officers and residents. This material was further augmented by participant observation of the LMCS Steering Group and a photographic survey of key locations on the two estates pre- and post-intervention. Overall, a number of modest rather than spectacular improvements were recorded indicative of the challenge presented by the local management of community safety.

Public engagement

LMCS conceived and operated their public engagement based on the view that it was equally important to improve engagement *from* as well as *with* residents. The main findings were as follows:

- The co-production of community safety between estate residents and policing representatives does not operate in a vacuum but is constrained by socio-economic and housing factors.
- Nevertheless, a modest rise in collective efficacy/social capital was achieved. Although residents' sense of belonging and trust on the estates showed no improvement, the precursors to this in the form of higher levels of participation and greater knowledge of people in the area did register positive increases in the order of six percentage points. Similarly, residents' awareness of who the parish councillors were and what they did both rose by around eight percentage points.
- Facilitating engagement from residents was found to be closely related to what is described in the evaluation as a pyramid of participation. The pyramid comprises five different levels of resident engagement and groups. These were *governing* by parish councillors, *negotiating* by interest group leaders, *consulting* by volunteers, *listening* by loyal residents and *ignoring* by disengaged residents. A targeted and multi-faceted engagement strategy employing different media and messages was found to help cater for these diverse population segments.
- Improvements in engagement with the public were also found especially in relation to the introduction of Area Beat Officers (ABOs) serving the parishes and their estates. In spite of high levels of abstraction (estimated at approximately 25 per cent) during the period of the evaluation, there was an 11 percentage point rise in the proportion of residents reporting that they saw an officer walking in their neighbourhood. Similarly, regarding familiarity, there was a five percentage point fall in the number of residents who knew neither the name nor the face of their local officer.
- During the follow-up survey the visibility, accessibility and familiarity of Parish Crime and Community Safety Officers (PCCSOs) – as distinct from the outcome of the work they had undertaken – was very limited. However, in the semi-structured interviews conducted later, the value of the different functions performed by the PCCSOs was unequivocally positive. Their liaison role with service providers on behalf of the parish was universally praised by the councillors. Similarly, linking people up with the right personnel from council departments or acting as caseworkers in more complex cases was positively regarded by residents.

Safety and security

From both a social and a psychological perspective, crime and the fear of crime remained of major relevance to residents. Reducing crime was ranked as the top priority for the parish

council at baseline and follow-up. Similarly, fear of becoming a victim of crime was the second highest ranked worry behind something bad happening to a loved one during both surveys. The main findings were as follows:

- Recorded levels of crime over the three financial years pre-dating and covering the implementation of LMCS increased in the Basic Command Unit by 11 per cent whereas on one estate it fell by 19 per cent whilst on the other it only rose by seven per cent. In spite of the disappointing results from one of the estates the proportion of residents from both estates who thought there was more crime fell by six per cent. This compares favourably with the BCS comparison group where a three per cent rise was found.
- Attempts to measure feelings of safety using traditional questions did not produce any statistically significant improvements but did indicate the limitations caused by the confounding influence of fear of the dark. Thus negative results in relation to walking alone in the neighbourhood after dark became positive when the responses from those not at all fearful of the dark were analysed.
- Measures relating to feelings of security were much less ambiguous and more positive. Statistically significant reductions in worry about becoming a victim of burglary, sexual assault, physical assault, and being attacked due to skin colour, ethnicity or religion were achieved. The results were more positive than those for the BCS comparison group.
- The most fearful group identified at baseline were female residents and, by follow-up, statistically significant reductions in worry about the four crime categories of burglary and the various types of assault were noted. The most dramatic and positive outcome for LMCS in terms of potentially vulnerable groups was found for members of minority ethnic communities where an 18 percentage point decline in fear of being attacked due to their skin colour, ethnicity, or religion was registered.
- The results relating to improvements in physical and social disorders were more mixed. Moderate improvements were noted in relation to graffiti whereas the problem of litter and rubbish was thought to have deteriorated. In contrast, problems to do with social disorders such as drugs, drunkenness and teenagers hanging around all recorded statistically significant reductions as being a very big problem for residents.
- At the affective level, a boundary was identified between residents' fear of crime on the one hand and anger with various manifestations of disorder on the other.
- Assessment of the connection between the various improvements recorded and the action taken by LMCS suggests that success to date has not been the product

of a single tactical option such as the conducting of special operations nor the deployment of ABOS and/or PCCSOs. Instead success made more sense when understood in terms of a multi-faceted response based on policing within a framework of active cooperation and collaboration between the police, statutory agencies and the local residents and their representatives.

Satisfaction and confidence

Overall, the evaluation of satisfaction and confidence suggested often positive but occasionally negative results. The main findings were as follows:

- The treatment of victims by the police improved generally by five percentage points and positive ratings across the dimensions of attentiveness, responsiveness, competence, and demeanour were recorded between baseline and follow-up. Instead of these improvements being an accidental success, the police officers interviewed attributed them to the adoption of a community policing problem-solving approach by the ABOs.
- In line with previous research and commentary, there were three main problems with the performance of the ABO role: specifically, the inadequate supervision received by ABOs, their low status relative to other roles in the force, and the inadequacy of current performance measures.
- A downward shift in appreciation of the single non-emergency police number was recorded by residents who had used the service. Three types of criticism were voiced: namely, the time taken and cost to get through to the right person, the service being neither local nor knowledgeable about the locality, and the difficulty of remembering the six-digit number.
- Top of the residents' list of community safety priorities was increasing the number of police officers on the beat. The introduction of ABOs therefore met residents' expectations and helped to build a firm foundation for increasing public confidence. The residents' priorities were, however, broader than pure law enforcement activity and encompassed social problem solving as well. This served to endorse the policing as distinct from the police-only model developed by LMCS.
- Similarly, residents' expectations of both ABOs and PCCSOs were generally consistent with the roles identified for them by LMCS. ABOs delivered reassurance through deterring would-be criminals or preventing crime, while PCCSOs acting as a complement rather than substitute addressed the physical and social disorders prevalent on the estates.

- The residents' assessment of how well the ABOs and PCCSOs performed their most important jobs was mildly rather than strongly positive. However, when the combined efforts of LMCS were assessed in relation to the community policing provided, a more positive response was given. Excellent/good ratings rose by just under two percentage points and the very poor/poor ratings fell by nine percentage points reflecting the fact that over a third of the matched responses gave a more positive response at follow-up compared with baseline.
- In working to increase the satisfaction with and confidence in the policing of the estates, LMCS staff were very conscious of the need to recognise the history of perceived and real neglect, the consequent long-term nature of the challenge faced and the importance of mending not only broken windows but also broken expectations.

Partnership and partnering

Running through each of the reassurance strands and the reassurance policing activity was the idea of partnership in both defining the problems and determining the solutions. Instead of doing things to the community, LMCS has concentrated on doing things with local people. Not simply to demonstrate a genuine concern but to form a new partnership where the community is empowered to direct the policing experts and officials. The practical lessons learned from the evaluation of managing community safety locally are summarised in three main points. Taken together they provide a basis for developing a model of effective practice.

- First, the challenge of effective partnership endeavour is less about knowing what to do than how to do it. A case of 'how works' rather than 'what works'.
- Second, a vital ingredient missing from various recipes of good practice has been partnering and the cultural component. This is the difference between legally prescribed partnerships and voluntarily agreed partnering characterised by high levels of cooperation and trust.
- Third, four cornerstones of successful partnership and partnering were observed in LMCS: namely, comprehension (inclusion, information and interpretation), commitment (passion, perseverance, and proportionality), coordination (plans, programmes and project management) and capacity (staff, skills and sustainability).

Reassurance policing and the local management of community safety

When Charles Bahn coined the concept of reassurance policing in the United States, he defined it as feelings of safety and security engendered by the visible presence of police patrol officers (1974). The public, Bahn argued, were often suspicious of reported decreases in crime, whereas the beat cop was a more tangible figure of reassurance:

“The beat cop represents a presence, always near, always comforting – the symbol of concern and security.”

Since this time reassurance policing has become a catch-all category encompassing a variety of ideas including public engagement by the police as well as public satisfaction with and confidence in policing. More specifically, it covers: engagement with the public through the medium of not only visibility but also accessibility and familiarity (HMIC, 2001); satisfaction with policing based on the quality of police officer-citizen encounters (Reisig and Parks, 2002); and finally, confidence in the police through its dependence on effective crime management (Scottish Executive, 2003).

From a social policy perspective, reassurance policing has been slow to come to the fore in Britain. After Bahn it was not until 1994 that the Police (Secretary of State’s Objectives) Order 1994 gave statutory weight to high visibility policing as a “tool to reassure the public” (Smith, 1994). In 1999 when police forces were required to set targets for best value performance indicators, three of them related to the safety/security and confidence strands of reassurance policing.¹ However, in September 2001 the Home Secretary, David Blunkett, described a step-change for reassurance policing when he outlined his plans for police reform to the Police Superintendents’ Association. In a passage that combines the various strands of reassurance he stated how he saw it as being central to police reform:

“the reform programme must ... enhance the accessibility of police services and improve communication between the police and the public to deliver a consistently high level of service. It can only make real progress in driving up public confidence by increasing the visible presence of police officers and authority figures on the basis of proper analysis of the problems a community or town centre is experiencing.” (Blunkett, 2001)

1. Based on data from the 2001 British Crime Survey, they were the fear of crime, feelings of public safety and public confidence in the criminal justice system.

In the main, commentary on and research relating to reassurance policing has been focused on defining rather than delivering reassurance.² This is hardly surprising given the genealogy of the concept and its diverse meanings. However, one notable exception to this trend can be found in the work of Wilson and Kelling. Their original and influential paper on the broken windows theory and the role of the police in securing neighbourhood safety (1982) was followed up seven years later with an article drawing on research evidence on how to translate their theory into practice. Concentrating on residents' feelings of safety in run-down neighbourhoods, Wilson and Kelling had argued in 1982 that serious crime flourished in areas where disorderly behaviour went unchecked. One unrepaired broken window was "a signal that no one cares, and so breaking more windows costs nothing". Similarly graffiti symbolised how the environment was "uncontrolled and uncontrollable", whilst the unchecked beggar became the first but not the last broken window:

"If the neighbourhood cannot keep a bothersome panhandler from annoying passers-by, the thief may reason, it is even less likely to call the police to identify a potential mugger or to interfere if the mugging actually takes place."

The authors concluded their seminal paper by encouraging police departments to recognise the importance of protecting communities as well as individuals: the key being to identify neighbourhoods at the tipping point – specifically, where public order was "deteriorating but not unreclaimable" if targeted police action was taken. In their subsequent paper, Wilson and Kelling cited evidence where this approach had been adopted by a police department which covered a problem housing project in New Briarfield, Virginia, with apparently spectacular success. In 1984 a police task force had been established and a detective and patrol officer assigned to interview residents about their concerns. Burglaries as well as the physical deterioration of the housing project were identified as the residents' principal concerns. A joint clean-up of the environment and clear out of criminals in the neighbourhood was carried out through targeted and community-oriented policing with the result that the burglary rate in the area was reduced by 35 per cent (1989). As Wilson and Kelling succinctly summarise their approach to delivering reassurance to the public: "It means working with the good guys, and not just against the bad guys."

This report describes an evaluation of a project in Milton Keynes that essentially picks up where Wilson and Kelling left off. The Milton Keynes project and the evaluation of it do, however, differ from Wilson and Kelling and the New Briarfield example in three important respects. First, the concept of reassurance employed here is broader than the crime reduction and fear of crime focus they reported. Instead, this report will address reassurance

2. As will be seen later in the chapter on feelings of safety and security, this is especially marked in the literature relating to fear of crime.

in terms of four key elements in recognition of the inclusive and inevitably complex nature of the concept. These four strands are:

- engagement with residents by policing representatives;
- feelings of safety and security amongst neighbourhood residents;
- residents' retrospective satisfaction with policing encounters; and
- residents' prospective confidence in policing.

Second, the project was neither initiated nor undertaken solely by the local police. Instead, the police played a key part alongside both district council and parish council members and officers. Consequently a distinction is made in this report between police action and partnership-based *reassurance policing*, with the emphasis on the latter. Third, the results obtained in regard to each of the four elements of reassurance policing have been modest rather than spectacular, reflecting the complex and demanding challenge presented by the local management of community safety.

In the remainder of this chapter details of the project, the estates studied and the evaluation methodology employed will be described.

The Local Management of Community Safety

The Local Management of Community Safety (LMCS) is one of a number of projects established under the auspices of the Milton Keynes Crime and Community Safety Partnership. LMCS comprises a tripartite partnership between district and parish council officers and members together with the local police of the Thames Valley force. It developed from the national Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) initiative offered by central government to local authorities in 2000/2001. Through the scheme local authorities had the opportunity to sign up to challenging targets to deliver key national and local priorities in return for operational flexibility and incentives such as funding rewards for measured success in improving local community quality of life. In a review document (Solly, 2002), LMCS is described as developing as part of the LPSA bid from Milton Keynes to central government. The project began to take shape following discussion between the Crime and Community Safety Co-ordinator and the police inspector seconded to the Milton Keynes partnership. Initial thinking centred on the wish for Thames Valley Police and Milton Keynes Council to work with local bodies within the community in order to deliver community safety onto the estates surrounding the city. Various options were considered, including work with residents' associations, ad hoc interest groups, local businesses and local charities.

However, although each of these bodies was seen to have influence within the local community, the review concluded that the most appropriate body would be the parish council. Four reasons were identified. Specifically parish councils:

- are directly elected by the community;
- have a statutory duty to work towards crime reduction and community safety within their communities;
- have access to funding for the purpose of the above; and
- can raise additional funds and as such have flexibilities that go beyond those of the principal authority.

By the spring of 2001 and following extensive consultation, district, parish and police representatives had agreed to collaborate and an LPSA had been finalised with central government. LMCS has four defining features. First, an LMCS Steering Group was established comprising membership from representatives of all three sectors. District council representatives included, for example, staff from the housing and youth services departments. Two councillors from the Crime and Community Safety Partnership jointly chaired the group. These councillors were also parish councillors representing the two areas initially piloted by LMCS. The Steering Group first met in July 2001 and has met monthly thereafter. Its role has been to act as a forum for comprehending local problems, co-ordinating action, reviewing progress and maintaining both the commitment of the partners to the plans agreed and the capacity of the project to deliver. The administrative work of the Steering Group has been supported by the district council's Crime and Community Safety Partnership team throughout.

Second, from April 2002 a police sergeant from Thames Valley was seconded full-time to act as the project manager for LMCS. Her role was to provide a vitally important link between the district, parish and police representatives. On the one hand she worked with district, parish and police officers to establish an infrastructure with a clear division of roles and responsibilities. For example this involved facilitating good communication and collaboration between housing officers and youth workers from the district, community safety officers from the parish, and area beat and crime reduction officers from the police. On the other hand, she responded to any suggestions or problems as they arose from the Steering Group and reported back to them.

Third, the appointment of a new type of officer, a Parish Crime and Community Safety Officer (PCCSO), funded and managed by the parish councils. In the original plans for this new officer the review document referred to above stated:

“The functions of this officer would be to research local community safety needs on behalf of the parish council and to develop community resources in order to deal effectively with any crime reduction issues raised.” (Solly, 2002)

In the two parishes initially piloted, the first PCCSO started in November 2002 and the second in January 2003.

Finally, Area Beat Officers were reintroduced to be not only visible to residents on the estates but also accessible and familiar to them. The Sector Inspector for the parishes covered by LMCS explained that, in traditional reactive policing, beat officers tended to be used to pick up deferred commitments and act more like an enquiry team that did the odd school visit than real community police officers. What he wanted, and LMCS presented the opportunity for, was to:

“get into the real longstanding problems that exist in the community ... [to] get a cohesive team of beat officers who could interact at the local level with community leaders.”

As will be reported later, problems with both the abstraction and turnover of beat officers have remained an issue throughout the life of LMCS to date.

Selection of the pilot sites was resolved by the crime audit undertaken by the Council (Milton Keynes Crime and Community Safety Partnership, 2001). This audit indicated that the areas of highest crime, apart from the city centre, were Campbell Park and Woughton parishes. In turn, the sites for evaluation of LMCS concentrated on two estates situated in these parishes. Details of the two estates are given in the next section.

Campbell Park and Woughton parishes

Measured against the index of multiple deprivation, the ward profiles for the two parishes place them both near the bottom of the rankings. Out of a total of 8,414 English wards, with rank 1 being the most deprived ward in England, Campbell Park registered 2,249 and Woughton 573.³ When particular factors constituting the 16-point index are examined, the level of deprivation is even more acute. For example, in Campbell Park the income, education and housing rankings were all lower at 2,121, 612 and 1,881 respectively. Similarly, for Woughton the income rank was 567 and education 85.

3. All the statistics quoted here relating to deprivation are from the Neighbourhood Statistics website at www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk

Prior to commencing the evaluation the resident populations of the parishes were 15,000 for Campbell Park and just under 12,000 for Woughton. Because the aim of the evaluation was to study reassurance policing from as local a perspective as possible, it was decided to concentrate on two estates from each of the parishes for data collection and analysis purposes. The two estates selected were chosen following advice from and agreement with members of the LMCS Steering Group. Accordingly, Fishermead was identified for Campbell Park and Beanhill for Woughton. Both estates reflected the high levels of crime and deprivation characterising the two parishes but also offered useful differences relevant to with whom and where reassurance policing is undertaken.

Fishermead is the single largest estate in Milton Keynes with a population of approximately 5,000. Either the council or registered social landlords own roughly two-thirds of the properties. A large proportion of the dwellings consists of flats in low-rise blocks that are separated by alleyways. At the time fieldwork was conducted five per cent of properties on Fishermead were estimated to be houses of multiple occupation (HMOs). The population is young in profile and there is a high proportion of young families, single parents and the incidence of teenage pregnancy. At least 15 per cent of the residents are from minority ethnic groups (compared with 9.5 per cent for Milton Keynes). These groups are split between on the one hand, an established and fully integrated population of Indian, Chinese, Ghanaian and African-Caribbean residents, and on the other, a recent influx of people from Somalia and Tanzania – many of whom are either economic migrants or persons awaiting a decision on asylum applications. The estate has two schools, a church, a community centre and several shops. As with Beanhill, there is an active parish council but unlike its pilot partner the parish office is situated on the estate. Fishermead is located very close to the city centre and whilst this offered ready employment opportunities there was a serious concern among residents about the over-spill of crime stemming from people attending the night-time entertainment in the city. Additionally, both residents and LMCS members were concerned about a number of other problems on the estate. These included deteriorating building stock and the wider environment with high levels of abandoned vehicles, graffiti and litter in the open spaces and parks. There was also a high turnover in the population resulting in little personal investment in either the community or its fabric⁴; a notorious café where drug dealing was suspected; and high levels of racially motivated crime. Based on information from the crime audit, Fishermead had consistently rising levels of crime over the three years preceding the report's preparation in November 2001.

4. An example of this was experienced during the follow-up stage of the survey element of the fieldwork when the contractor attempted to re-interview residents on Fishermead. Instead of the average of 10 per cent of the sample being discounted because they had either moved away or died, the contractor found a "higher than usual rate of 22 per cent".

The Beanhill estate has a population of approximately 2,000 and consists almost entirely of council accommodation. The properties are mainly bungalows, laid out in cul-de-sacs, with a number of conversions for disabled persons. A large proportion of the population is elderly and in terms of race and ethnic composition, mainly White. The estate has a school, a small parade of shops, a small unit for persons with learning disabilities and a family centre that was described by the Crime and Community Safety Co-ordinator earlier as “encouraging and maintaining good neighbourhood links”. Beanhill is three miles from the city centre so was not troubled by any crime over-spill problems. However, public transport, whilst available in the day, was and remains very limited in the evening. Because all of the estates in Milton Keynes are designed as self-contained communities, residents in outlying areas like Beanhill tend to feel cut off from the centre and the services available in the city and elsewhere. In addition, older residents were known to have concerns about young people hanging around the shops and the shopping parade had suffered a substantial amount of vandalism. Crime rates on the estate, whilst high relative to other parts of Milton Keynes, had remained fairly stable over the three years preceding the crime audit prepared in November 2001.

Evaluation methodology

The aim of the evaluation was to provide both a theoretical and a practical contribution to understanding reassurance policing – not simply to define what reassurance policing is but to identify key features that will facilitate its delivery. Reassurance policing was examined in terms of the four elements described earlier: namely, engagement with the public by policing representatives; feelings of safety and security amongst estate residents; their satisfaction with police encounters; and confidence in the policing provided. At the outset it was determined that the research would focus on communities experiencing high levels of crime and social deprivation. Evidence from the British Crime Survey clearly indicates that, based on survey evidence, council estates and low-income areas experience severe reassurance problems (Nicholas and Walker, 2004)⁵. The research evidence and commentary presented here is therefore confined to this type of context.

In designing the methodology for the evaluation it was felt that the multi-faceted nature of reassurance policing required a multi-faceted approach to measuring and understanding it. A combination of survey, interview, and observation material was therefore collected and analysed. The advantages of this triangulated approach are well known in the social

5. See for example Table 4.03 p 50 where ‘Striving’ areas have the highest rates for worry about burglary, car crime and violence.

research literature (Webb *et al.* 1966, Denzin, 1970) but it has not been applied extensively in the reassurance research field. Hale (1996) for example, in his authoritative review of fear of crime literature, observes that there has been an over-reliance on surveys and questions about feeling safe at night. Instead of this “overly restrictive” framework, he argues, studies should draw on the rich material available from, amongst other sources, individual and group discussions. As with Hale, the view taken here is that the quantitative survey is valuable in testing whether results arising from other qualitative approaches can be generalised, but that individual and group discussions can equally clarify and extend our understanding of survey findings.

For each of the methods used in the evaluation a longitudinal rather than cross-sectional approach was adopted. The pre-stage data were intended to establish a baseline prior to various initiatives being taken and the post-stage follow-up to record the nature and degree of impact of what had been implemented. The advantage of a longitudinal approach over a cross-sectional design is that it avoids the pitfalls of potentially confounding factors that might explain individual differences observed in similar but not identical cross-sectional samples. Thus, through surveying the same people all relevant demographic and non-demographic independent variables are controlled for at the 100 per cent level.

The survey comprised a 50-item questionnaire based on material gleaned from the British Crime Survey, the Home Office Citizenship Survey, and additional questions derived from the reassurance literature relevant to the themes of engagement, safety, satisfaction and confidence.⁶ In the follow-up survey, extra questions were incorporated to assess the impact of two important LMCS initiatives, namely the introduction of Parish Crime and Community Safety Officers and the re-introduction of Area Beat Officers. Because of its length, the questionnaire was administered face to face in respondents’ homes. Data collection was contracted to National Opinion Polls and they randomly selected a representative sample from residents on the two estates. The first survey was conducted with 605N in December 2001/January 2002 and 600N 18 months later in June/July 2003. Because of the research plan to analyse individual differences, respondents taking part in the pre-stage were targeted in the post-stage and a recall sample of 312N was eventually achieved. Most of the survey analysis of post-stage outcomes is based on the unweighted results of the recall group.

Four types of statistical test were used to undertake the analysis of the survey data. The chi square test was used to examine the baseline data to pinpoint any statistically significant – as distinct from chance – association between certain sample attributes, e.g. gender,

6. This included for example literature relevant to social capital, notably Forrest and Kearns (2000) and critiques of traditional fear of crime research e.g. Farrall *et al.* (1997) and Ditton *et al.* (1999)

previous victimisation, and different levels of perceived security e.g. the level of worry about becoming a victim of particular crimes. This information provided a focus for the analysis of the longitudinal sample using the Wilcoxon matched pairs test where individual before-after differences are compared. When individual cases could not be matched because the samples were cross-sectional, the large sample approximation test of changes in proportion was used. Finally, following Ditton *et al.*'s (2003) observation of categorical shifts revealed by longitudinal data e.g. from feeling unsafe to safe or visa versa, McNemar's test to assess the significance of change in dichotomised variables was also used where appropriate (Huck, 2000). For all the tests $P < 0.05$ was taken as the lowest level of probability for indicating that the finding was a statistically significant rather than random result.

After the results of the surveys had been analysed it was possible to explore the findings with interviewees. Individual and focus group discussions were held in May 2002 and 18 months later in November 2003.⁷ A total of 76 individuals participated including 55 residents, nine police officers, five councillors, five district officers, and two parish officers. Fourteen of the residents participated in both the survey and the subsequent interviews. The interviews were semi-structured and based on the survey questionnaire. Interviews lasted on average for 90 minutes and all interviews were taped, transcribed and reviewed with survey findings for triangulation purposes.

There were two observational methods. First, because of the concerns on both estates with various signs of physical disorder, it was decided, following Sampson and Raudenbush (1999), to make an objective and systematic photographic record of various places on the estates. This material was collected at the same time as the interviews with precise locations being logged by the project manager. Unlike Sampson and Raudenbush digital still photographs were recorded by the researcher rather than video taping contracted to a team of trained observers. The timing of the follow-up photographic observation was unknown to the project manager so there was no opportunity for any environmental fixing on the part of the LMCS team.

The second observational method related to the researcher acting in the participant-as-observer role (Gold, 1969). From October 2000 up to the completion of fieldwork, an invitation was extended to the researcher to sit on the Steering Group of LMCS. This

7. Because of the risk of a seasonal effect on respondents' answers to questions relating to safety and security e.g. feeling more unsafe and worried in December compared with June (Semmens *et al.* 2002), the timing of the focus group and individual interviews in May and November provided an opportunity to address this potential problem. Although the follow-up survey results could have been inadvertently biased toward more positive responses, the comments elicited during the subsequent interviews in relation to safety and security questions did not reveal any inconsistencies with the general pattern of responses previously given that could be linked to the problem of seasonal influence.

opportunity served the joint purpose of enabling the researcher to learn more about the personnel and workings of LMCS whilst at the same time being able to share the emerging findings of relevance to LMCS's work with its members and officers. Following completion of the pre-stage survey, a presentation of the findings was made to the Steering Group and other Crime and Community Safety Partnership members and police representatives. In the autumn, when the pre-stage survey, interview and photographic material had been analysed, an interim report was produced and presented to the Steering Group of LMCS. Both occasions provided an opportunity to not only disseminate but also to assimilate valuable insights relating to the project. Toward the end of fieldwork the researcher gave a presentation to the 'family group' of the Crime and Community Safety Partnership⁸ but took the opportunity to make notes of reported experiences of the PCCSOs in a workshop they gave.

Ideally the evaluation would have included two matched control areas so that the findings from the two estates studied and any differences observed over time could be compared with the results from similar areas not undergoing the LMCS intervention. However, resources were not available for this purpose and it was decided as an alternative to compare the estates with data from comparison areas available from the British Crime Survey covering a similar time period. Whilst this strategy goes some way toward overcoming the weakness in the research design of this evaluation, it nevertheless means that the findings reported should be regarded as indicative rather than conclusive.

The LMCS project remains a work in progress and the evaluation does not refer to a number of new initiatives taking place at the time of writing. These include the introduction of wardens by the district council to act as the "eyes and ears" of the areas they will patrol, and the additional staff employed by the parish councils whose role it will be to specialise in environmental rather than crime and community safety matters.

Structure of the report

In Chapter 2 engagement *from* as well as *with* the public is examined. The level of social cohesion and trust on the estates is compared with the findings from the Home Office Citizenship Survey as a backdrop to the analysis and a pyramid of participation from residents is described. An analysis of the role of Area Beat Officers, Parish Crime and Community Safety Officers and parish councillors together with their visibility, accessibility and familiarity is then reported as a basis for evaluating LMCS's public engagement.

8. For comparison purposes, the Home Office has grouped Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships into families sharing similar socio-economic features.

Chapter 3 examines the social and psychological relevance of crime and fear of crime to residents, recorded and perceived levels of crime as well as how much LMCS was able to make a positive impact on residents' concerns about both crime and disorder. The analysis compares the results obtained with the findings from a comparison group of the British Crime Survey covering a similar period to the implementation of the LMCS project. In Chapter 4 the residents' satisfaction with and confidence in the policing provided is described. Satisfaction is considered in terms of an assessment of victims' views about the quality of encounters with the police and residents' views following their use of the police non-emergency telephone service. Confidence levels are reviewed through exploring the residents' expectations of the ability of policing representatives to deliver particular services. Chapter 5 attempts to draw out the major lessons learned from the LMCS experience and derive a model of good practice for managing community safety locally. The concept of partnering as an adjunct to partnership and the four cornerstones of effective partnership and partnering are described. The final chapter summarises the key findings of the evaluation and provides a rationale for the recommendations made.

Bahn's suggestion that the planned visibility of a police officer provides reassurance to the public has been developed more recently by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary through the specification of the additional mechanisms of accessibility and familiarity (HMIC, 2001). Thus visibility refers to the level, profile and impact of police resources deployed within local communities. Accessibility relates to the ease with which the public can obtain appropriate police information, access services or make contact with staff. Familiarity concerns the extent to which police personnel both know and are known by members of the local community. At the root of this three-fold typology is the idea of engagement with the public. However, for both government policy and policing research, public engagement is not only about what policing representatives do with the public but also about the capacity and commitment of members of the public themselves to engage with policing representatives. For example, Hazel Blears, the current minister responsible for the police, has stated that successful public engagement depends on consultation with members of the community about the problems they face and their active involvement in shaping the solutions delivered.

"But many communities, especially those in deprived and high crime areas, lack the capability or the will to express their needs and to participate. This may be due to lack of leadership, organisation, knowledge, skills and confidence." (2003)

Research undertaken in Chicago by Robert Sampson and his associates (1997) supports this distinction between engagement from and engagement with members of the community. Based on the systematic observation and surveying of deprived neighbourhoods, Sampson *et al.* found that the shared willingness of local residents to intervene for the common good in response to instances of crime and disorder was closely associated with conditions of social cohesion and mutual trust among neighbours. It is unlikely, they conclude, for a person to intervene when "people mistrust or fear one another". This is what Sampson *et al.* describe as the absence of collective efficacy and other community commentators have described as the decline in social capital.⁹ In this chapter the work of the LMCS project that aimed to encourage both engagement from the public as well as engagement with them is reported.

9. Social capital refers to the value of social networks. Whereas physical capital e.g. buildings and machines, and human capital e.g. a college education, can enhance individual productivity, social capital can affect the well-being of both individuals and groups in the communities where they live. Robert Putnam, commenting on what he describes as the collapse and revival of American community has observed: "In high-social-capital areas public spaces are cleaner, people are friendlier, and the streets are safer ... Higher levels of social capital, all else being equal, translate into lower levels of crime." (2002)

Engagement from the public

To gauge the level of social cohesion and trust on the estates, Forrest and Kearns' framework for analysing social capital was utilised (2000). Six of their domains relevant to the neighbourhood context were addressed and each was measured in the baseline and follow-up surveys: namely, participation, supporting networks, collective norms and values, trust, safety and belonging. In order to place the findings of the evaluation in a national perspective, the wording employed in the Home Office Citizenship Survey (HOCS) was followed (Attwood *et al.* 2003).¹⁰

The domains, their definitions and the questions relevant to them are summarised in Table 2.1. The results are presented in Table 2.2. In the unshaded column of Table 2.2 the findings from the HOCS are presented. At the time of writing only data from the first survey was available and is not therefore accompanied with any follow-up information. In the next three columns the baseline and the follow-up data and differences observed for the two estates are shown. For each row the baseline and follow-up differences have been statistically tested and presented separately.

10. The question-answer format employed in this evaluation differs slightly from that in HOCS but the difference was not considered sufficient to invalidate comparisons being made. For example, with regard to the domain of *Belonging*, in HOCS the question was 'Would you say that this is a neighbourhood that you enjoy living in?' and answered on a three-point scale of 'Yes, definitely', 'Yes, to some extent', or 'No'. In this evaluation the same question was asked but answered in the traditional five-point Likert scale from 1 meaning 'Not at all' to 5 'Very much'. To make the two scales consistent, the five-point scale was collapsed with the two ends of the scale being combined i.e. a score of 4 or 5 was taken as equivalent to a 'yes, definitely' response. The proportions reported for the estates refer to the recall sample. The HOCS data relate to persons living in the most deprived areas based on the rankings of wards in the Index of Multiple Deprivation. Although Campbell Park ward should properly be placed in the second lowest of the five pairs of clusters used by HOCS, the Fishermead estate was judged by LMCS staff to be in the lowest of the five groupings i.e. the most deprived cluster, along with the Beanhill estate.

Table 2.1 Social capital domains, definitions and questions

Domain	Definition	Question
<i>Participation</i>	That people take part in social and community activities. Local events occur and are well attended.	Involvement with local clubs, groups or organisations to promote community safety.
<i>Supporting networks and reciprocity</i>	That individuals and organisations co-operate to support one another for either mutual or one-sided gain. An expectation that help would be given to or received from others when needed.	This neighbourhood is a place where neighbours look out for each other.
<i>Collective norms and values</i>	That people recognise and accept the importance of securing harmonious social relations.	This is a neighbourhood where most people know each other.
<i>Trust</i>	That people feel they can trust their co-residents and local organisations responsible for governing or serving them.	This neighbourhood is a place where people can be trusted.
<i>Safety</i>	That people feel safe in their neighbourhoods, and are not restricted in their use of public space by fear.	Various questions. Described and analysed in the next chapter.
<i>Belonging</i>	That people feel connected to their co-residents in the home area and have a sense of belonging to the place and its people.	This is a neighbourhood I enjoy living in.

Table 2.2 Social capital baseline and follow-up findings with HOCS data

Domain	HOCS (For lowest deprivation groups)	Baseline	Follow-up	Difference
Participation	35.0% ¹¹	3.5%	9.3%	rise of 5.8%*
Supporting networks and reciprocity	32.0%	33.9%	26.9%	fall of 7%
Collective norms and values	28.0%	30.5%	36.9%	rise of 6.4%*
Trust	25.0%	22.2%	17.9%	fall of 4.3%
Belonging	52.0%	51.9%	48.4%	fall of 3.5%

* P = < 0.01 derived from Wilcoxon matched pairs test.

11. Although not strictly meeting the HOCS definition of civic participation, club, group, or organisation-based activity associated with promoting community safety was judged to be more appropriate than social participation because the latter includes individual recreational activities. If the level of social participation for the most deprived areas is used then the difference between the estates and other areas is even starker i.e. 57 per cent.

Although there were differences between the two estates, with Beanhill registering a marginally better improvement or less worse deterioration between the baseline and follow-up, the differences were not statistically significant. For this reason the findings have been aggregated.

Four key points emerge from the results contained in Table 2.2. First, as an index of social capital, life for residents on the two estates is perceived in the main more negatively than for similarly deprived areas nationally. Whilst a third of the national sample was definite about the existence of supporting networks and neighbours looking out for each other, it was closer at follow-up to a quarter for the estates. Similarly, whilst a quarter of the national sample regarded their neighbourhood as a place where people could definitely be trusted, on the estates the corresponding proportion by follow-up had fallen to less than a fifth. This underlines the challenge faced by LMCS.

Second, overall the findings cannot be cited as evidence of spectacular success. In two domains, comparing the results from the baseline with the follow-up, positive and statistically significant results were obtained but in three others negative findings were obtained. As Sampson *et al.* have pointed out, local residents working together to solve their problems is "not the whole picture". Socio-economic and housing factors also need to be acknowledged in making changes to as much as deriving changes from social capital.

"Recognising that collective efficacy matters does not imply that inequalities at the neighbourhood level can be neglected." (1997)

The evidence gathered in this evaluation points to an interdependence between physical capital and social capital with the former exercising a dampening effect on the latter. An indication of this for the Fishermead estate relates to the problem of houses of multiple occupation (HMOs). A parish councillor explained how the overcrowding caused by multiple occupancy coupled with a high turnover amongst these residents had created a tension between them and the established community. Because HMO residents regarded these properties as only a "stepping stone to somewhere better", they had little interest in the quality of life in the neighbourhood. Although the councillor had argued over the years for greater regulation of these properties, she conceded:

"It's a slow process and I'm in trouble because the cabinet member concerned [of local district authority] considers well if you start registering these HMOs it's this amount of housing we don't have. But we are saying, you know, they're not a family house, a family of three, four, five people. You've now got four or five families,

you've got the attendant extra rubbish, extra parking, extra noise. They're converting carports into rooms. Well, there is a ventilation duct in the middle of the house which is not coming out, you've got issues with the Fire Service about escape and all that."

For many Fishermead residents the problem of HMOs inevitably influenced who they knew, looked out for or could trust. As one resident put it:

"It's the multiple occupancy houses, the high turnover of residents. I don't want to know half the people on my street any more. I've got my immediate next door neighbour who is the only constant. We look out for each other. But you know the rest of the houses down the street, I don't want to know these people you know – their cars are parked outside my house, they're noisy, they have people out there all the time. I don't want to have anything to do with them. I wouldn't entrust anything with them to do with my life." (Female, 40-49, resident on Fishermead for ten years)

On the Beanhill estate there was no problem with HMOs but other social structural factors had an equally dampening effect on social capital. According to the Parish Crime and Community Safety Officer:

"The thing about quality of life and community engagement is that it's a much bigger picture than something that [First name] or I are going to influence ...If you're an area which is full of poor people who are dependent upon other people to get things done. If the fence post goes down, they're not going to be able to afford to just put one up or get somebody to put one up. If you have a reliance upon other agencies and also if you think they've failed in the past, they'll fail in the future."

This sentiment was echoed by one resident during the baseline interviews in connection with the problem of teenagers hanging around with nothing to do:

"We've got a meeting place on Beanhill that is wrongly designed for the community. It's just one massive hall, the acoustics are terrible, we've tried running youth groups in there but it's just hell. It is large and you can't divide it into smaller sections and that hall sits there. I don't know for definite but I would say 95 per cent of the year it sits empty purely because it's not adaptable and our youths could meet in there. They could use that place for all sorts if it was built properly but they won't. Why bother?"

(Male, 50-59 Beanhill)

The third point to note about the findings reported in Table 2.2 is that, in spite of these socio-economic and housing constraints, a vital first step in reassurance policing and getting the public to engage in quality of life and community safety issues was registered through the improvement in participation levels. On Fishermead, for example, parish councillors and officers have deliberately encouraged community capacity through the provision of advice and assistance. One resident described the work undertaken and support provided:

"We try to organise things on the estate for children, adults, grandparents, we try to get together as a community. Basically we want to give people information about where they can go for help and if they have a problem with their housing or if they have a problem socially or they need some help because they've got family problems ... Predominantly it's been the Kids Off The Streets project in the summer holidays and there was a couple of fun days and cheer leading now and they've got football, basketball. Things they've never had before ... They've given us money, they've given us help, they've given us advice, they've given me no end of 'You come in, we will help you'."
(Female, 30-39, Fishermead)

A similar approach was adopted by councillors and officers on Beanhill with similarly positive results:

"Things have changed yes, people are beginning to talk now, talk openly. It's not done behind closed doors any more, it's getting more out in the open than what it used to be. You can talk to your neighbour about things." (Male, 40-49 Beanhill)

The fourth and final point relates to what for convenience can be described as the pyramid of participation. When outlining his plans for the civil renewal agenda David Blunkett, the Home Secretary, emphasised the importance of balancing the rights to which citizens were entitled e.g. an orderly and civil society, with their obligation to play an active part in the delivery of these rights.

"The point is that order is not imposed from above but comes from bottom-up engagement in what happens in a community."
(2003)

The LMCS project is an example of this approach but has been constrained by the different expectations residents had about the extent and nature of engagement they were prepared to exercise. Marlyn Taylor (2003) provides a useful model of residents' attitudes towards neighbourhoods and this is reproduced in Figure 2.1. If people do not like where they live they can either exit to somewhere else or remain and voice their concerns to improve the

area. Alternatively, they can passively remain because the good elements outweigh the bad or disengage and become withdrawn. From the accounts given in this evaluation by the elected members, officers and residents interviewed, the process of moving residents from the disintegrative to integrative side is an important part of but not the whole challenge. A pyramid of participation emerged from the interviews affecting what and how much people on the estates were prepared to do (see Figure 2.2).¹² For a small minority there was an altruistic willingness to act, as one officer described the parish councillors, “as full-time amateurs”, sharing in the governance of the estates by taking responsibility for what was decided about services in the localities and being accountable to the electorate. A slightly larger proportion, drawn from residents actively involved in running grass roots organisations, did not seek to govern but to negotiate with councillors and council officers on behalf of their interest groups. A larger group comprising residents in Taylor’s ‘Loyalty’ quadrant might occasionally undertake voluntary work and wished to be consulted about issues of concern and proposed solutions – a voice to be heard rather than automatically followed or negotiated with. So far as the estates studied in this evaluation is concerned, a much larger group of residents simply wanted to be kept informed – only responding if there was a particular issue that directly affected them – and the largest group wanted to be left alone. As one resident described the pyramid from her interest group negotiator’s perspective:

“There’s a percentage of people that want to be in the residents’ groups – obviously, they’ve joined. They’re trying to actively do something. And other people who are just happy to just to be members who don’t want to be particularly involved. There’s other people who don’t actually get involved at all but actually read your newsletter. And I know they do because they’ve come down and knocked on my door and said ‘Oh I saw such and such’ and come to tell you about something. And then you’ve got people who couldn’t care less.”
(Female, 30-39, Fishermead)

Understanding this pyramid and targeting particular levels for particular purposes, for example keeping residents informed about what is happening, consulting about problems and possible solutions, or negotiating activities, would seem an important lesson emerging from the LMCS experience in building up a productive engagement from the public. Although the aim is to invert the pyramid through increasing the number of community representatives engaging in local governance with councillors, as Blears (2003a) has argued, the evidence here suggests the value of mapping the area concerned and targeting accordingly.

12. Because awareness of this pyramid of participation did not emerge until after the survey data had been collected it was not possible to devise a question to estimate more precisely how many residents saw themselves fitting into the different groups identified.

Figure 2.1 Taylor's model of geographical communities

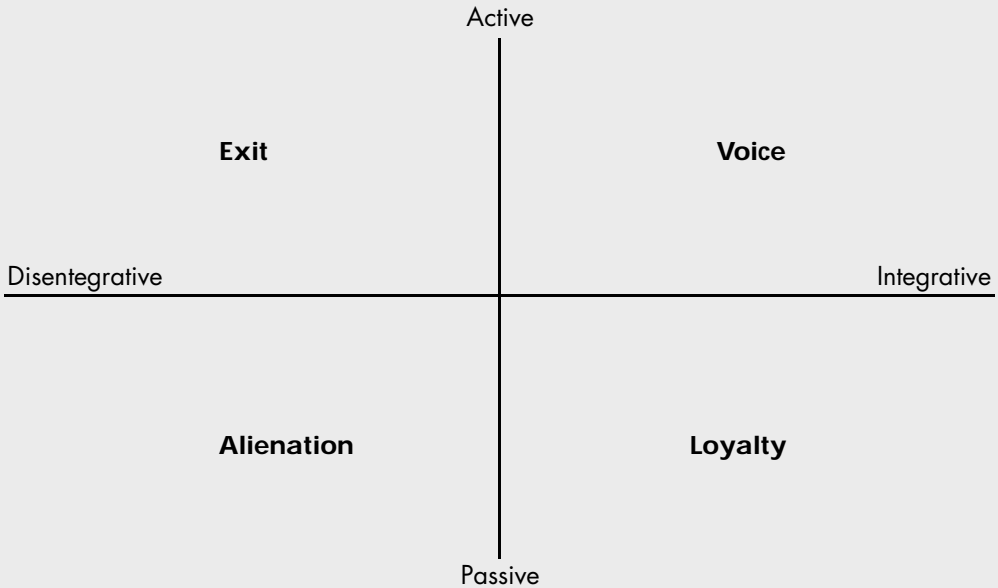
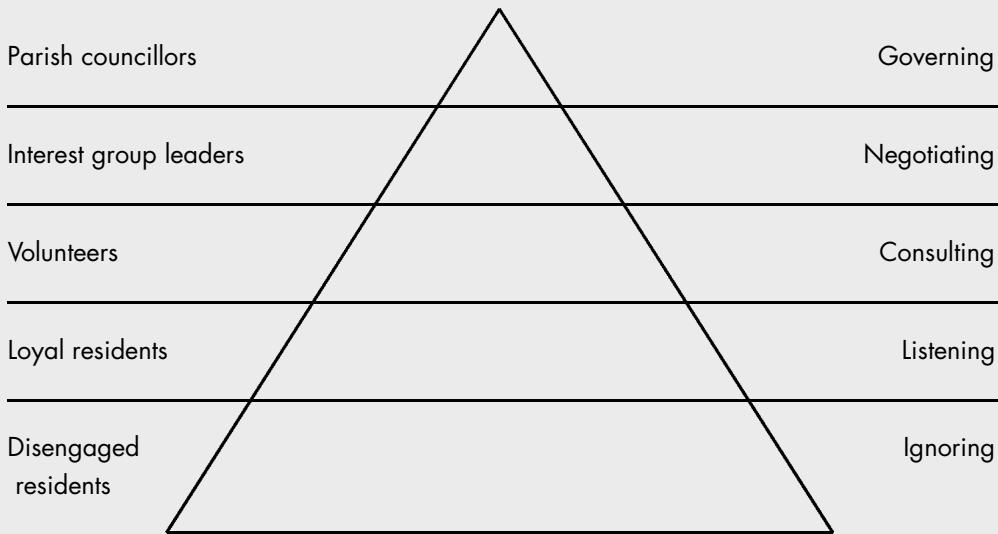


Figure 2.2 Pyramid of participation on the estates



Engagement with the public

The positive rise in participation from residents on the two estates reflects two of the key principles of effective community policing identified by Skogan and Hartnett (1997); namely, responsiveness and facilitation. Responsiveness entails listening to citizen input concerning the perceived needs of the community and working with members of the community to find the most appropriate ways in which to meet these needs. Facilitation refers to helping residents to identify and solve their crime and disorder problems themselves. For the Community Safety Co-ordinator who sat on the LMCS Steering Group, it was not a case of the professionals being the experts who knew best but a commitment to comprehending the problem from the residents' perspective.

"We've had to learn humility in quite a sharp way sometimes, but being humble enough to know that we haven't got all the answers and actually we don't even know what all the questions are. We think we know, so – in the Milton Keynes Council we've got deprivation indices coming out of our ears. We can get all the crime stats from Thames Valley Police. But when we actually go out on to the ground we often find that the situation we think is a problem is actually, isn't a problem at all and there are completely different things that are coming to the surface".

Responsiveness and facilitation are complementary elements in the same way as engagement *with* and engagement *from* the community. In the remainder of this chapter attention will be focused on the latter with particular reference to the visibility, accessibility and familiarity of policing representatives. To place the statistical analysis to follow in perspective and to have an overall sense of the perceived nature and extent of engagement at the start of the evaluation, the following two extracts are representative. First the problem:

"You don't know them and you don't see them. You don't know what they're doing to change things. Doesn't look like they care, so the way I feel, I don't think that I have any say in what they do because I don't know what it is that they do."

(Female, 20-29, Fishermead on district and parish councillors and policing representatives)

Second the proposed solution:

"I think that they should work side by side [council and police]. I think there should be communication between the two. I mean I don't know what the communication is, I wouldn't have a clue. Side by side and maybe just walking around the estate

together, just talking to people and finding out what, you know a bit like this, just finding out what people's fears are and what they would like done about it."

(Male, 60-69, Beanhill)

The visibility of police officers and, more precisely, the sight of officers on the beat was the top priority for residents on Beanhill and Fishermead during both the baseline and follow-up surveys. From a list of 15 community safety options ranging over particular policing methods e.g. patrolling, traffic management, the use of informants or CCTV, to focusing on particular crime types or disorders e.g. drugs, hate crimes or anti-social behaviour, increasing the number of officers on the beat was the first choice. At baseline it accounted for 31.7 per cent and at follow-up 29.5 per cent.¹³ These proportions were nearly double that for the second and again consistently preferred first choice of working with children and teenagers and/or providing more facilities. During the evaluation period the Sector Inspector was able to secure two Area Beat Officers (ABOs) for Fishermead and one to cover Beanhill. Whilst not "sexy in this day and age" for young police officers, the Inspector was nevertheless keen on the deployment of ABOs because he firmly believed in "basic community policing, highly visible, on the street, knowing the community, knowing your criminal".

In line with the Audit Commission's (1996) analysis of the unique role and contribution of neighbourhood-based foot patrol, ABOs were expected, under the auspices of LMCS, to perform three distinct but complementary functions:

1. Reassure the public through a visible, accessible and familiar presence

Through the attachment of ABOs to discrete and fixed geographical areas, residents would have the opportunity to get to know 'their' local officer. Knowing that ABOs were patrolling the parishes regularly would reassure residents that (a) the neighbourhood was being policed – as opposed to being passed through – and (b) something tangible was being done to deter would-be criminals.

2. Proactively engaging in problem-solving with residents to reduce problems of crime and disorder

In contrast to the incident-driven style of reactive policing, the aim was for ABOs to work with residents and relevant agencies as partners in the production and maintenance of

13. The statistical significance of these proportions is discussed in Chapter 4.

community safety. ABOs were there to analyse the situations that led to calls for service, identify the causes that lay behind them, and design tactics to deal with these problems.

3. Gather intelligence especially in relation to crime and criminals

Given the size of the populations served and the problems faced, ABOs needed to adopt a targeted rather than random style of policing based on good intelligence. This intelligence-led approach depended on being intelligence fed by residents and relevant agencies. Through building trust and working in partnership to solve problems it was hoped that an enhanced level of intelligence could be encouraged.

During the baseline phase of the evaluation one resident spoke for many when explaining what he saw as being the deterrent, problem-solving and intelligence-gathering benefits of having ABOs:

“I mean it’s common sense really. Simplifying the matter a little bit. If I was thinking of committing a crime, if I see a police officer and I mean in person, not just driving past, I may think twice before I do something, you know. Or on the other side if they see me doing something wrong or they think I’m going to do something wrong and if they’ve got the communication going with the local beat officer they may feel more inclined to go and say well I saw this chap. If you build your relationship and if you’re having a conversation with this person maybe on a daily basis if not certainly every so often, you could be discussing anything and it wouldn’t be seen as grassing people up you know. During your conversation you can mention ‘Well I saw this car, saw four youths in it’. No one is going to say that person has grassed me up and they’re going to come looking for you because if they come looking for you they’re going to have to look for everyone on the street because everyone on the street has talked to the local beat officer.”

(Male, 50-59, Muslim, Fishermead)

Although staff turnover (both managerial and operational) and abstraction to other duties remained a constant challenge for LMCS – estimated at approximately 25 per cent – this initiative appears to have made a positive, if modest impact. In Tables 2.3–2.5 the results are reported for residents’ perception of the frequency police officers were seen, what they were doing and how familiar they were to residents.

Table 2.3 Frequency of residents seeing police officer in the neighbourhood

Level	Baseline	Follow-up	Difference
High – once a day or more	22.1%	21.2%	Fall of 0.9%
Medium – up to weekly	27.9%	29.2%	Rise of 1.3%
Low – less than weekly/never	50.0%	49.6%	Fall of 0.4%

Table 2.4 What the police officer was typically doing¹⁴

Activity	Baseline	Follow-up	Difference
Riding in a patrol car	56.2%	56.8%	Rise of 0.6%
Walking in the neighbourhood	6.8%	17.7%	Rise of 10.9%*
Attending crime scene/accident	6.6%	1.3%	Fall of 5.3%
Mounted horseback	15.4%	8.1%	Fall of 7.3%
Riding a bicycle	1.8%	2.6%	Rise of 0.8%

*P = < 0.01 derived from Wilcoxon matched pairs test.

Table 2.5 Familiarity of police officers working in neighbourhood

Type of Familiarity	Baseline	Follow-up	Difference
By face and name	6.4%	7.4%	Rise of 1%
Name only	1.6%	0.3%	Fall of 1.3%
Face only	7.4%	11.9%	Rise of 4.5%
Neither	84.6%	79.8%	Fall of 4.8%

So far as frequency of sighting is concerned, Table 2.3 indicates that there was very little difference between the baseline and follow-up surveys. No significant differences were found between the estates either. A statistically significant rise was, however, found for officers seen walking in the area as shown in Table 2.4. Although there had been a drop in mounted horse patrols, there had been a slight rise in officers observed cycling on the estates and a reduction in crime scene and accident sightings. This is relevant to the LMCS project's aim to redress the imbalance between call-reactive policing where officers briefly attend on demand and then depart for the next scene, and a community focus as described above by the Sector Inspector.

The sighting of officers in patrol cars remained the dominant sign of police visibility. A criticism voiced by many residents during the baseline survey was that they only saw

14. Note that the proportions relate to responses made i.e. 395 and 384 from the 312N recall sample.

officers in cars rushing through the estates: “Well you see them, you see them in cars, you don’t see them to talk to”. This recurring complaint from residents is reminiscent of Wilson and Kelling’s criticism that car patrol officers tend to use the vehicle as a deliberate barrier between themselves and the public (1982). However, the ABOs provided an important rejoinder to this criticism. They disagreed with the call by the public and the media for them to only patrol on foot. Foot patrol was considered both impractical in carrying all their equipment and paperwork around and inefficient in the use of their constantly scarce time. A car could in fact provide a useful compromise for being both visible and accessible provided that it was based on a community orientation. An ABO explained:

“I go and sit in the vehicle and do paperwork at the local centre or in the car park, by the shops, the post office. At least I’m being seen, I’m doing my paperwork but I’m being seen.”

To prove the point the officer relayed an incident where a resident had approached her parked police car complaining about nothing happening following their reporting of criminal damage to their vehicle. The value of the damage was only £280 but the officer felt that because it mattered to the individual, it should matter to the force and would foster good community relations. On investigating the matter it turned out that “due to a failure in our system this job had actually been filed” i.e. closed. The ABO took on the investigation, identified a prolific offender responsible, prepared the case papers and got it processed. As the ABO concluded:

“I think what makes the difference is just being there, whether we’re in a vehicle or not.”

Because of the level of abstractions it is perhaps not surprising that the familiarity of police officers on the estates did not increase dramatically – although Table 2.5 does show that those not knowing officers by name, face or both fell by just under 5 per cent. When individual responses to the familiarity question were examined, over a fifth of the recall sample changed their response between the baseline and follow-up from either not knowing to knowing or visa versa. The majority shifted from reporting that they did not know to now knowing officers and, when this finding was analysed using the McNemar test to assess the significance of this change, the result was found to be statistically significant i.e. $P = < 0.02^{15}$. This can largely be explained by the directed as distinct from random nature of the patrolling undertaken by the ABOs.

15. In other words the increase in familiarity is only likely to have been a chance occurrence in two instances out of a hundred.

"I can't be everywhere but I make a point of being at the start or finish of school. We've had complaints about parking and road safety. When I first went to the school what happened – What are you doing here? Nothing, I'm just doing my patrol. And after the third time, How are you da de dah, how are you today, what you doing, it's nice to see you. And it changes, you can see it, they've changed and they come and talk to you. Oh it's really changed since you're here, cars don't come round here ... And you start getting information in."

During the follow-up interviews, residents on both estates were much less critical of the police presence and appreciative of what they regarded as greater visibility, accessibility and familiarity. This is not to deny the problem of abstractions and residents' concern about the ABOs remaining attached to the estates:

"I think there's a high police presence ...having the new beat officer who hasn't actually been for a couple of weeks but – laughs – but having him around it's deterrence."
(Female, 20-29 Fishermead)

Examples quoted by residents of this deterrent effect related to the presence of the officer in the off-licence or walking round the schools resulting in trouble makers disappearing from the estate and with them the "the graffiti, muggings and whatever else goes on".

Alongside the establishment of ABOs, the LMCS project was responsible for two further initiatives designed to enhance engagement with the community. These were the parish councillors proactively working as the democratically elected witnesses for and advocates of residents and their specific concerns about community safety on the estates, and the appointment of full-time Parish Crime and Community Safety Officers (PCCSOs). In spite of the parish councillors being the prime movers of the LMCS Steering Group right from the outset, at the time of the baseline research very few residents on the estates either knew who they were or what the parish council did. However, as can be seen in Tables 2.6 and 2.7, by the time of the follow-up the situation had improved considerably.¹⁶

16. These tables present all the answers given to each of the questions which were then tested using Wilcoxon.

Table 2.6 Whether resident knew what the parish council did

Knowledge	Baseline	Follow-up	Difference*
Yes	11.9%	20.5%	Rise of 8.6%
To some extent	17.9%	22.8%	Rise of 4.9%
No	70.2%	56.7%	Fall of 13.5%

* P = < 0.001

Table 2.7 Whether resident knew whom the parish councillor was

Knowledge	Baseline	Follow-up	Difference*
Yes	15.7%	23.7%	Rise of 8%
No	84.3%	76.3%	Fall of 8%

* P = < 0.01

Given the low level of social capital on the estates and the more widespread apathy in the general population towards elected representatives, this is a particularly noteworthy achievement. There were no differences between the estates relating to knowledge of what a parish council did i.e. both estates recorded an increase with an 8.8 per cent rise for Fishermead and 8.1 per cent for Beanhill. On councillor knowledge Beanhill registered a greater rise than Fishermead, with a 10.7 per cent rise compared with 5.8 per cent. These improvements were not a chance result and reflect the many and various means employed by the councillors to make themselves more visible, accessible and familiar to the residents. Space does not permit a detailed description of each of the methods of engagement but a summary for each estate is given below. As can be noted, the highly personalised approach of the Beanhill councillor may explain the slightly greater knowledge recorded in the survey.

Beanhill

Measures included:

- utilisation of the community centre situated in Beanhill as an information centre;
- distribution to all addresses of a publicity leaflet advertising the services available from and how to contact the PCCSO;
- distribution of information leaflets preceding special clean-up operations; and
- regular visits by the parish councillor who lives on the estate to the local shops and to all new arrivals on the estate.

Fishermead

Measures included:

- upgrading of the Parish House situated on Fishermead as a drop-in centre Monday to Friday and base for police and PCCSO to use for surgeries;
- the production of a professional quality parish newsletter on a quarterly basis with community safety and quality of life information relating to people, projects and progress;
- walkabouts on the estate by the parish councillors with officers of the district council to meet residents and identify problems relevant to particular district council departments;
- the staging of ten 'Spotlight' community meetings to either representatives of grass roots organisations e.g. on race and culture with community leaders and district race equality officers, or particular segments of the population e.g. parents of school children to consider Youth and Crime; and
- the creation of a website, www.campbell-park.gov.uk. The monthly average visit for 2003 was 26,730.

No single method stood out for residents as having the greatest impact. But none of them received adverse criticism from those interviewed. Instead it appears that to achieve positive engagement with the community requires:

- developing an engagement strategy to cater for a diverse population based on a variety of media and messages tailored according to the pyramid of participation described earlier; and
- recognition that the underlying value of each of the actions taken is to signify a genuine commitment to helping the community to help itself. As one councillor put it:

"I think people feel a little bit more cared about. In a funny sort of way it makes them slightly more of a community. On an estate like Beanhill there was a feeling that nothing's happening, that it was being left, it was being neglected. It wasn't being cared for in a sense. I think there's just signs now that they're seeing local activity generated to do with cleaning up the estate a little bit, to do with visibility of councillors and personnel and the information flows, that kind of thing. And that transposes into a, in funny sort of sense, into a greater sense of security – being less isolated, less uncared for, less unlooked after."

In addition to what they were able to do themselves, the parish councillors were also responsible for the creation and appointment of PCCSOs. This last strand of the LMCS engagement strategy has proven to be of equal, if not greater, significance in maximising responsiveness to and facilitation of solutions to residents' concerns on both estates.

Although the PCCSOs' initials are similar to those of Police Community Support Officers i.e. PCSOs, they are very different jobs. PCCSOs are funded and managed by the parish council not Thames Valley Police; they wear distinctive green uniforms with a parish logo not blue serge; and are paid more to identify community safety needs and develop community resources to respond to them rather than to reassure the public through high visibility foot patrolling.¹⁷ During the life of LMCS the role of the PCCSOs has developed into five distinctive but complementary functions.

1. Liaison officer between the parish and any agencies or parties that are responsible for the provision of services to the parish

This has entailed liaison with various officers from the district council i.e. education, environmental, health, and social services, local businesses and commerce, schools, Thames Valley Police, and local groups. In the words of one of the PCCSOs:

"I think the time spent on liaison is seldom wasted in this role because it's by having a good relationship with people that you get things done – bearing in mind that we have no powers of authority, we can't tell somebody to do something. It's about being good ambassadors for the parish and getting to know anybody, any agencies that can do something for our parish."

2. Linkman between residents and service providers

Utilising their knowledge of personnel providing services to the parish, coupled with an awareness of the difficulties often experienced by residents in contacting or getting a satisfactory response from these people, PCCSOs acted as either navigators or intermediaries. The aim was to become a type of one-stop-shop for residents whereby the PCCSOs could either point out who would be best to contact or help directly in making contact and getting something done.

¹⁷ Based on the financial year 2003/4, PCCSOs were paid £8,000 more per annum than PCSOs in Thames Valley Police.

“If they come to you with a problem, an issue, something needs dealing with, you can either signpost them if you think just by giving them the phone number or the person to get in contact with they’ll solve their problem themselves. Or you can sort of take ownership of that problem for them and then pass it on directly to the person that’s gonna sort of make it happen for them.”

As both PCCSOs pointed out, the Linkman function is complemented by the liaison function. Regular contact with representatives of the various agencies and building a working relationship with them meant that when they asked for something to be done the representatives were more likely to do it.

3. Caseworker

The difference between the caseworker and Linkman functions is based on the complexity of the problem presented. Whereas a resident might ring in to complain about an abandoned vehicle outside their property and the PCCSO would know exactly who to contact and what details were required to have the vehicle removed, casework revolved around less straightforward matters. These have included anti-social neighbours, children having problems at school, and residents having problems with teenagers on the street late at night. Case examples given by the PCCSOs tended to take weeks rather than days and followed a similar pattern of escalating enforcement. Initially there would be fact finding to define and evidence the problem, for example was it a genuine noisy neighbour or an on-going feud between tenants? This would be followed by a reassurance that the PCCSO would take up the case and a suggested course of action was presented to the complainant for their approval, for example PCCSO speaking to the noisy neighbour and, if that failed, to the Housing Manager. If the problem persisted, further steps up the enforcement ladder were pursued, for example a joint visit to the noisy neighbour by the PCCSO and Area Beat Officer, application for an Anti-Social Behaviour Order with the PCCSO acting as a professional witness and finally, as happened in one case described, eviction.

4. Project manager

Projects were focused on groups on the estates rather than individuals and varied by type, size, duration, agency involvement and visibility. At one end of the scale was a series of multi-agency environmental cleansing operations staged on both estates called Operation Springclean. These operations involved the PCCSOs working closely with various agencies

and residents to remove graffiti, rubbish and abandoned cars. On Fishermead, for example, one operation removed 48 tons of refuse during a three-day period and a later exercise 78 tons over three weeks. On the other end of the scale there were poster competitions within the local schools encouraging children to look after their environment, refereeing lunchtime football at the schools, running after-school clubs and assisting residents to set up or maintain various activities e.g. play schemes.

5. Demi-wardens

Unlike Street Wardens or Police Community Support Officers, the PCCSOs did not see their role primarily as acting as the eyes and ears of an enforcement agency. One of the PCCSOs explained that the ratio of one PCCSO to 15,000 residents on the parish made a full-time warden function impractical. Instead the PCCSOs saw their role mainly in terms of what they could get other agencies to do. Nevertheless they acknowledged the value of this function and estimated that they spent approximately 20 per cent of their time walking around the estates. This not only served to increase their accessibility and familiarity to residents to carry out the other four parts of their role but contributed to making people feel safer because of their visible presence as an official on site to deter individuals from behaving anti-socially or criminally.¹⁸

In the follow-up survey additional questions were inserted to assess the impact of particular LMCS initiatives. Two questions related to the PCCSOs: specifically, whether residents knew that these new officials had been introduced and whether they had seen them. The results from the full sample¹⁹ were disappointing and seemed at first to contradict the engagement with the public claimed by the PCCSOs. Thus only 16 per cent said that they knew a PCCSO had been appointed and as few as five per cent had ever seen one. On Beanhill 24 per cent knew a PCCSO post had been established compared with only 12 per cent on Fishermead but there was no difference between the estates when it came to ever having seen a PCCSO. When this finding was discussed with the PCCSOs they were not surprised and suggested that, apart from the practical limitations of becoming familiar to all the residents given the population size of the parishes, the job title was not easy to grasp and remember. Instances were cited of officers from both Milton Keynes Council and Thames Valley Police getting their title and role wrong. The Fishermead PCCSO stated:

18. Toward the end of the evaluation period the decision was taken by the LMCS Steering Group to incorporate Street Wardens into the project and the pilot areas following their appointment by the district council. Because this occurred after the fieldwork for this evaluation the impact of Street Wardens cannot be assessed.

19. No before-after differences could be examined so the results for the full sample of 600N were analysed. The results were weighted to reflect the age, gender and number of adults in the household of the estates.

"To adults I'm known as [first name]. To a school child they recognise my face and they'd know that I'm from the Tree Council [uniforms have a tree logo] or I'm the Green Policeman or I'm the football referee man."

Similarly on Beanhill:

"I don't think they'd call me a policeman but I mean they would know me – helping at the play schemes, they'd know me wearing the outfit, the green tee-shirt"

The interviewees in the follow-up survey were not briefed to provide these alternative identifiers so it is not possible to know what difference it would have made to the recorded level of awareness of PCCSOs on the estates. However, focus groups with residents held after the survey elicited the following responses about their familiarity and 'approachability':

"He is a very approachable guy – it doesn't matter what you throw at him 'I'll see what I can do', you know. Having [First name] there as a stepping stone is beneficial to get on top of things a lot better than a resident would be able to because sometimes you get put on the back burner and [First name] gives you that little bit extra, you know, to get things sorted out." (Female, 30-39, Fishermead)

"You see him about on the street and you know who he is and I think people feel they can go up and tell [First name] if there's a problem because he is very approachable and he's not, he's not a policeman but they know they can go to him. He's a face seen in the community." (Male, 40-49, Beanhill)

Even if these views are not shared by a large proportion of the residents they are nonetheless indicative of the PCCSOs starting to make a difference. Both conceded that they had put more work into designing the job than promoting it and given the Liaison, Linkman, Casework, and Project Management roles – as distinct from the Demi-Warden function – it is perhaps appropriate to close this review of engagement with the public with the following comment from one of the PCCSOs:

"Hopefully they've seen the things we've done because there's been improvements in terms of feeling a bit safer and thinking the place is a bit cleaner. They just haven't attributed it to us."

How much safer and how cleaner residents thought their estates were after the LMCS intervention is the subject of the next chapter.

Feelings about safety and security from crime and disorder are central to reassurance policing and provide the focus for this chapter. In his review of evidence relating to crime and community decline, Skogan (1988) makes the important observation that fear of crime does not stimulate involvement in collective efforts to act against crime but often tends to have the effect of undermining commitment to a geographical area and interest in participation. In the previous chapter the actions taken to encourage community engagement were described and some promising results were reported. Here an analysis will be presented of the extent to which the various initiatives have been able to make a difference to residents' sense of safety and security on the estates.

In the UK, research and commentary on public perceptions of safety and security has mainly concentrated on problems associated with defining and measuring the topic rather than on evaluating and developing solutions to communities feeling unsafe and insecure. Farrall *et al.* (1997), for example, describe various epistemological, conceptual, operational and technical concerns about the validity and reliability of the fear of crime measures customarily used in surveys. Broadly speaking they challenge whether a) the questions measure what they purport to measure and b) that they do so consistently over repeated tests. If their criticisms are correct then national policy initiatives as well as local projects like LMCS run the risk of being based on at best an exaggerated problem or at worst an incorrect one. The design of this part of the evaluation was mindful of Farrall *et al.*'s concerns and accordingly analysed data brought together from a variety of complementary methods. These included both the statistics from the closed questions of the surveys and the open-ended accounts given by residents, council members and officers involved with LMCS during the semi-structured group and individual interviews. The chapter is divided into four sections:

- the social and psychological relevance of crime and fear of crime;
- recorded and perceived levels of crime;
- concern about crime; and
- concern about disorder

Although a flaw was suggested in respect of one particular fear of crime measure, the evidence emerging from this evaluation does not support the idea that fear of crime is only a misguided artefact of poorly crafted surveys. The findings also demonstrate some positive reassurance outcomes over the life of the LMCS project and its activities.

The relevance of crime and the fear of crime to residents

Drawing on the knowledge of LMCS elected members and officers, a list of ten local issues and problems affecting the quality of life on the estates was generated. The list included the need for improvement in local schools, housing, the environment, public transport, employment and the provision of amenities. During both surveys residents were invited to identify what they considered the council should make the top priorities for the estates. In Table 3.1 the social issues identified by residents as their first priority are described together with the proportion of those who nominated the same issue both times. As can be seen, reducing crime came out top on both occasions for the recall sample. It was also the social issue that attracted the greatest amount of consistency of response comparing baseline with follow-up answers. There were no differences between the two estates.

Table 3.1 The first priority social issues identified by residents in percentages with consistency of response between baseline and follow-up*

Priority	Baseline	Follow-up	Consistency
Reducing crime	38.8	40.7	55.4
Improving public transport	13.1	7.1	19.2
Litter and landscape	12.8	16.3	32.5
Local schools	10.3	10.9	25.0
Housing	7.7	6.4	12.5
Increasing efficiency of council services	5.8	5.8	11.1
Increasing provision of amenities	3.8	3.2	8.3
Traffic	3.2	4.5	20.0
Pollution, recycling	3.2	2.2	0
Employment opportunities	1.0	2.2	33.3

*Based on responses from the recall sample of 312N.

Because of the risk that residents’ responses might have been inadvertently biased toward crime problems due to the community safety focus of the survey, the first, second and third priorities specified by residents were aggregated to check whether a different ranking of social issues might emerge. Again, however, reducing crime remained the most popular social issue of concern, registering the highest in the list of ten during both baseline and follow-up. Reducing crime attracted 23.0 per cent and 23.8 per cent of the aggregated first choices ahead of litter and landscape management (16.5%:17.0%) and improving local schools (9.9%:8.5%)²⁰. During the period of the evaluation of LMCS, crime therefore was and remained a relevant social issue for the residents on the two estates. Could the same be said from a psychological perspective?

20. The proportions were derived from expressing the number of times an item was identified as a priority out of 936 total number of choices.

To analyse the relative psychological significance of crime compared with other worries residents might have, a scale was devised comprising 16 different phobias and worries including fear of the dark, going into hospital, enclosed spaces, certain animals or insects, heights or crowds. Residents were asked to rank on a five-point scale whether they were *not at all* to *very fearful* of each item. The responses to each phobia/worry were then clustered into low, medium and high level groups.²¹ The greatest fear recorded at both baseline and follow-up was not crime. Instead, top of the list during both surveys was fear of something bad happening to a loved one. In Table 3.2 the psychological categories registering the highest levels of fear reported by the recall sample are presented. What immediately becomes obvious is that whilst some jockeying for position occurred between baseline and follow-up for fear of public speaking and fear of heights, fear of becoming a victim of crime remained consistently the second highest ranked worry. Similarly, the proportion stating that they were *very fearful* both times was second highest for becoming a victim of crime, just behind fear of heights.

Table 3.2 The top five 'high level' fears of the recall sample (312N) in percentages with consistency of response between baseline and follow-up*

Type of Fear	Baseline	Follow-up	Consistency
Something bad happening to a loved one	63.5	58.3	49.2
Becoming a victim of crime	53.8	49.7	56.0
Public speaking	38.5	37.8	45.5
Heights	38.5	34.6	57.8
Going into hospital	31.7	32.1	43.9

* Based on responses from the recall sample of 312N with consistency derived from those answering *very fearful* both times.

Against this social and psychological profiling of issues and fears it is perhaps not surprising that the relevance of crime, as a local issue, was reflected in the extent to which it affected the quality of residents' lives. Residents rated the effect of crime on their quality of life on a five-point scale from total effect to no effect and these responses were converted into high, medium and low groups (see footnote 21).

Between the baseline and the follow-up there was a fall in the high group of 3.5 per cent from 28.2 per cent to 24.7 per cent. Similarly, there was a rise in the low group of 1.3 per cent from 49.7 per cent to 51.0 per cent. This positive trend was neither spectacular nor statistically significant but contrasts noticeably with the results from the annual British Crime

21. A score of 1 or 2 was classified as low, 3 as medium, and 4 or 5 as high.

Survey (BCS) for 'Striving' communities for the 2001/02 and 2002/03 periods i.e. for council estates and low income areas comparable to the estates studied over a similar period to the evaluation of LMCS. Thus between 2001/02 and 2002/03 there was actually a rise of six per cent in the high group from 10 per cent to 16 per cent and a fall in the low group of eight per cent from 72 per cent to 66 per cent.²² The effect of crime may be more negative on the estates compared with the council estates and low income areas nationally but the residents in the evaluation seem to have fared better than their comparators in the national sample.

A sense of the negative effect of crime on residents was captured by one respondent when he described his experience of coming home from work. As an able-bodied working male his remarks are particularly striking because he would not be regarded as the typical vulnerable adult:

"I was just getting home from work, going through the security door. There was a young couple, the young guy he tried to push his way in, he says, 'I wanna come in'. I says 'Well do you live here?' and he says 'Get out the effin' way!'. I says 'No, sorry' and the girl spat at me but missed and hit the door. And you know, I managed to close the door but I said to myself 'I don't need this after a day's work' ... I mean we've had people come in and they just roll joints on the bottom of the stairs. I mean this is our home and people are rolling joints. This is just not fair that this should be happening you know, who's gonna do something about it if it's not the police, and the Council and the Government?"

(Male, 20-29, Fishermead)

In the remaining sections of this chapter it will be shown how, though these feelings still persisted for some residents, a positive reduction in feelings of being unsafe and insecure were registered and related to the reassurance policing undertaken by LMCS.

Recorded and perceived levels of crime

Although the first meeting of the LMCS Steering Group was held in July 2001, the deployment of ABOs, the appointment of PCCSOs and the conducting of special operations on the two estates did not occur until much later, for example the first police operation did not take place until November 2002 and the first PCCSO serving Campbell Park parish also only commenced work at this time. Given this extended lead-in time it was decided to

22. BCS information supplied by the BCS team, Research Development and Statistics, Home Office, based on unweighted data of 834N and 907N.

compare Thames Valley Police's recorded crime data for the three financial years 2000/01–2002/03 thereby pre-dating and covering the actual rather than planned implementation of LMCS. In Table 3.3 the total recorded crimes for both estates and the Milton Keynes Basic Command Unit (BCU) of which they are a part are reported.

Table 3.3 Recorded crime on the estates and BCU 2000/01 – 2002/03

	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	% change 02/03-01/02	% change 02/03-00/01
Beanhill	236	208	190	- 9%	- 19%
Fishermead	712	714	765	+ 7%	+ 7%
BCU	21,825	23,187	24,191	+ 4%	+ 11%

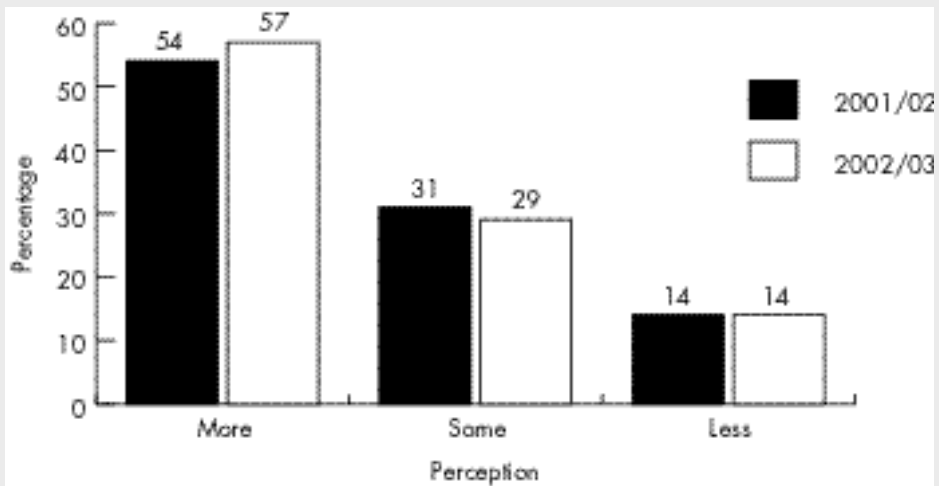
As can readily be seen, crime on Beanhill fell consistently and substantially. For example, between 2002/03 and the previous year criminal damage, constituting the largest volume crime on the estate, fell by 14 per cent, auto crime by 47 per cent and shoplifting by 64 per cent. By contrast, on Fishermead crime has risen although not as dramatically as elsewhere in the BCU comparing 2002/03 with 2000/01. In commenting on this disappointing result for Fishermead, the Sector Inspector stated that he thought the crime figures paradoxically reflected the impact of police activity on the estate, specifically, the operational deployment of ABOs together with the staging of an intensive police and council operation entitled Operation Dignify. Operation Dignify entailed the high visibility and targeted patrol of one sergeant and 11 officers (all uniformed) over a six-week period on the estate. During this time the dozen officers 'worked the streets' for up to 18 hours per day and made a total of 80 arrests. At the same time district and parish officers mounted a complementary 'Spring-clean' operation to remove graffiti, rubbish and abandoned cars.

"People would expect there to be a reduction in crime, quite the contrary, my expectation was at least in the short to medium term there would be actually an increase in reported crime as confidence increases. That's been my experience over the years. So it was actually quite reassuring, certainly on Beanhill to see a reduction on the levels of reported crime. The Fishermead increase, marginal increase, was more what I expected as community confidence increases."

However, although it would be possible to re-interpret the recorded crime figures for Fishermead – deducting for example the 80 arrests to show a four per cent fall on the previous year – this begs the question of why the presence of ABOs and special operations later carried out on Beanhill did not produce a similar effect.

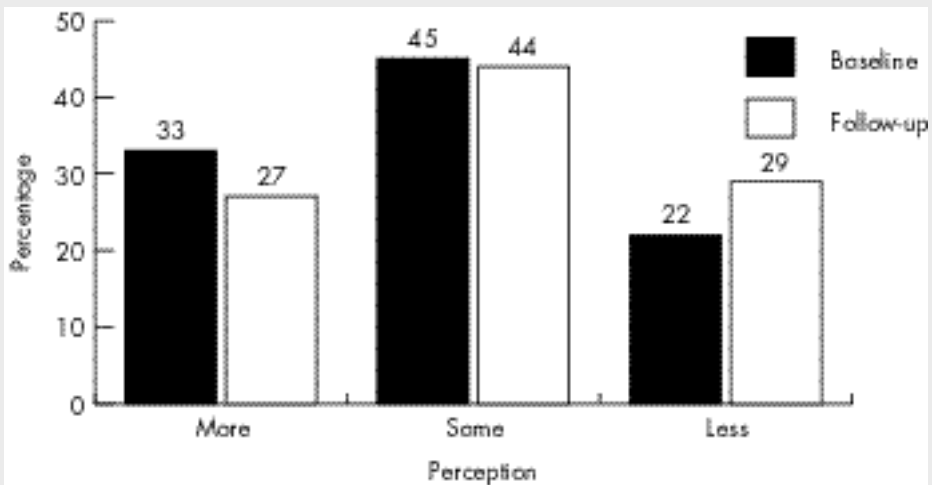
If the recorded crime results for Fishermead are disappointing, residents' perception of local crime on both estates was more positive and unequivocal. Figures 3.1 and 3.2 present the results from the BCS and the evaluation are presented.

Figure 3.1 Perceived change in crime level over last two years for BCS 'Striving' areas



Based on unweighted data from 1,363N and 1,411N.

Figure 3.2 Perceived change in crime level over last 12 months for the estates



Based on unweighted data from the recall sample of 312N.

Although the two periods the data cover are similar, it is important to note that the BCS invites answers relating to the last two years whereas this evaluation sought to document perceptions over the last 12 months. This may have contributed to the higher estimates obtained by the BCS. However, this does not detract from the striking difference in direction. While for the BCS three per cent of those in 'Striving' areas thought there was more crime in 2002/03 compared with 2001/02, on the estates there was a six per cent decline. Similarly, whilst the proportion thinking there was less crime remained the same for BCS respondents, on the estates seven per cent thought that there was less crime. When individual LMCS baseline and follow-up responses were analysed, over half the sample (162N) was found to have shifted its view. Nearly two-thirds of this sub-group changed to thinking that there had been a decrease in crime. Using McNemar's test for the significance of change, this positive shift was found to be statistically significant i.e. $P = < 0.02$.

The survey finding that residents perceived there to be less crime was endorsed in the follow-up interviews with comments such as "There's no comparison" from Beanhill, and "I think the crime side of it possibly has improved a little bit" from Fishermead. These type of comments were always made with reference to the various actions undertaken by LMCS from the reintroduction of ABOs to the creation of the PCCSOs and the Dignify and Spring-clean operations. The perceived decline in crime does not, however, automatically guarantee that residents feel more safe and secure. In the next section the results of various safety and security measures are reported.

Concern about crime

Traditionally, surveys assessing people's sense of safety have examined how safe an individual feels walking alone in the neighbourhood either during the day or after dark, as well as how safe they feel at home alone at night. The validity of these measures has been challenged in the literature and this evaluation found some support for the criticism of the question relating to feelings of safety walking alone in the neighbourhood after dark. Between the baseline and the follow-up the proportion feeling unsafe (either very unsafe or a bit unsafe) rose by two per cent from 66.3 per cent to 68.3 per cent. This is a larger set of proportions than that for the comparable 'Striving' group from the BCS of 44 per cent and 48 per cent respectively – though less than the four per cent rise registered.²³ However, when residents who stated that they were fearful of the dark were filtered out and the proportions based on those who stated that they were not at all fearful at baseline and follow-up, the *very safes* rose by just under two per cent (15.9%:17.8%) and the *very*

23. Based on the unweighted results from 6,433N and 6,896N for 2001/02 and 2002/03 respectively.

unsafes fell by 1 per cent (34.5%:33.5%). These results were not statistically significant but the reverse direction raises a question about the influence of the confounding factor of fear of the dark. Later in this section further evidence of this bias is presented in relation to elderly persons.

The positive LMCS differences observed for walking alone in the neighbourhood during the day and being at home alone at night were also not statistically significant. Although daytime feelings of being unsafe fell by 3.9 percentage points (21.2%:17.3%) and being unsafe at home alone by 2.9 percentage points (18.6%:15.7%), these apparent improvements may have been a chance result.²⁴

A more robust measure employed by surveys to gauge the level of security relates to worry about becoming a victim of particular crimes. Here the LMCS project, both examined separately and compared with the BCS 'Striving' group, demonstrated some very promising results. In Table 3.4 the findings for the 'Striving' and estates groups are summarised.²⁵

Table 3.4 Very or fairly worried about becoming a victim of particular crimes for the BCS and LMCS samples in percentages

Crime type	2001/02	Baseline	2002/03	Follow-up	Difference BCS	Difference LMCS
Burglary	59	79	57	73	- 2 *	- 6 **
Being mugged	51	71	52	69	+ 1	- 2
Being raped	34	57	36	51	+ 2	- 6 ***
Being physically attacked	50	68	51	64	+ 1	- 4 ***
Being attacked due to skin colour, ethnicity or religion	21	47	21	33	=	- 14 ***
Being insulted or pestered	38	46	39	46	+ 1	=
Theft of vehicle	60	75	61	70	+ 1	- 5
Theft from vehicle	57	67	57	65	=	- 2

* P = < 0.05 (using large sample approximation test for BCS sample because respondents were not matched. The sample sizes for each group varied from 3,276N to 6,929N).

** P = < 0.001 using Wilcoxon matched pairs test for recall sample of 312N.

*** P = < 0.05 using the Wilcoxon matched pairs test for the recall sample.

24. When compared with the BCS 'Striving' group the unsafe proportions were lower but between the two review periods the proportions rose by one per cent from 10 per cent to 11 per cent for feeling unsafe at home alone based on 6,475N and 6,929N respectively. No data were available for daytime.

25. LMCS percentages have been rounded to whole numbers for ease of interpretation of the table.

These findings provide empirical support for the LMCS project to claim some success in addressing excessive and negative fear of crime²⁶ caused by the problem of social disorganisation. Dating back to the work of Clifford Shaw (1931) and later developed in the Broken Windows theory of Wilson and Kelling, the social disorganisation model regards fear of crime as the result of crime and disorder rising in a neighbourhood inversely to a decline in 'neighbourliness' and the ability or willingness of residents to exercise informal social controls e.g. elders checking unruly teenagers and families controlling their members. Bearing in mind the findings reported in the previous chapter, it would seem that the positive if modest gains in social participation from residents on the two estates have been accompanied by a commensurate improvement in their sense of security in relation to crime. Although Beanhill elicited higher positive proportionate change than Fishermead e.g. those on Beanhill *very worried* about being physically attacked fell by nine per cent whereas on Fishermead it was four per cent, both estates registered positive improvements in six of the eight measures tested. Indeed, for those very worried about being subject to a physical attack because of their skin colour, ethnic origin or religion, Fishermead recorded a nine per cent fall compared with eight per cent for Beanhill.

Social disorganisation theory is not the only model formulated by criminologists to explain fear of crime nor the only evidence LMCS can draw on to demonstrate that the project is starting to make a difference. Independent of the community factor there are also the vulnerability and victimisation models (Berzins and Prashaw, 1995). In the vulnerability model an individual's physical or financial limitations are critical factors. Females and older persons, for example, are prone to fear of crime because they do not see themselves as being strong enough to withstand an attack. Alternatively, those on low incomes are vulnerable because they do not have enough money to adequately protect or insure their property.

During the interviews conducted in the baseline phase of the evaluation, feelings of vulnerability were frequently voiced by both females and older persons:

"You just don't feel as big and as powerful if there's two men fighting in your own home. The man that lives there and the man that's got in, both men stand an equal chance within reason. A woman doesn't. They would just hold a woman down and that would be it. You couldn't feel as strong I don't think." (Female, 30-39, Beanhill)

"You haven't got any strength have you. If someone comes up behind you, you haven't got any strength to resist what's going to be done to you have you? You're more feeble aren't you if you know what I mean." (Male, 60-69, Fishermead)

26. Fear of crime, as with other avoidable harms, can have positive consequences to the extent that it makes the individual more careful in their behaviour (Home Office, 1989).

To test the representativeness of these perceptions a variety of residential contexts e.g. walking alone in the neighbourhood during the day, were cross-checked with various resident characteristics e.g. whether the resident was male or female, using the chi-squared measurement of association. In total nine different contexts were cross-checked with seven different characteristics.²⁷ The most dramatic result found was that for females compared with males. For example, with regard to becoming a victim of burglary or robbery or sexual attack or physical attack, females were much more worried than males and the likelihood of this being a chance result was only one in a hundred for each of the four separate instances. When the baseline and follow-up responses made by the 189N females in the recall sample were compared using the Wilcoxon matched pairs test, a statistically significant improvement in their perception was found. The results are summarised in Table 3.5.

Although the level of worry for female residents still remains high, a significant reduction can nonetheless be noted since LMCS initiatives were implemented. In the follow-up interviews with residents frequent reference was made to the reassurance provided by the presence of ABOs, PCCSOs and parish councillors.

Table 3.5 Very/fairly worried responses from females about becoming a victim of particular crimes in percentages (189N)

Crime type	Baseline	Follow-up	Difference
Home broken into	82.4	75.5	- 6.9*
Being mugged/robbed	79.9	75.3	- 4.6*
Being sexually assaulted	76.7	68.1	- 8.6**
Being physically assaulted by stranger	79.8	73.1	- 6.7**

* P = < 0.05

** P = < 0.01

Action taken to manage the physical environment including tree trimming, shrub thinning and alley-gating were much appreciated. For example, on Beanhill during the baseline phase there was concern about trees and shrubs becoming overgrown and providing concealment for potential attackers. However, by the follow-up female residents seemed reassured.

27. The contexts were walking alone during the daytime, after dark and being at home alone at night; fear of being a victim of crime, and worry about being a victim of various crimes such as burglary, robbery, physical or sexual assault and being attacked due to skin colour, ethnicity or religion. The characteristics were gender, age, income, ethnic status, whether living alone, property status and estate resided in.

"You can see more now. It is a hell of a lot better, you can see everything, you can see long distances because before I know a few people used to get attacked because people used to sit behind it and things like that. But you don't hear that anymore. If you can see you're safe where to walk, you go don't you."

Similarly, on the presence of ABOs and PCCSOs:

"I think you feel safer because you know they're there." (Female, 30-39, Beanhill)

Also with regard to the parish councillors on Fishermead:

"I've seen them walking around, they're gating off flats, you know making the flats safer." (Female, 20-29, Fishermead)

In contrast to female residents, older persons on the estates i.e. those aged 65+, did not see themselves as being as vulnerable as predicted by the model. Only one of the contexts was found to be statistically significant at the baseline (using the chi-squared test) when the responses of those aged 65+ (98N) were compared with those under 65 (507N).²⁸ The context was walking alone in the neighbourhood during the day and older persons were twice as likely to feel unsafe compared with younger residents i.e. 39 per cent and 19 per cent respectively ($P = < 0.001$).

Based on an examination of the results obtained from the recall sample, those aged 65+ recorded an improvement in their sense of safety by 8.4 per cent between baseline and follow-up. The proportion of those feeling unsafe walking alone in the neighbourhood during the day fell from roughly a third to a quarter i.e. 33.9 per cent to 25.5 per cent. This finding was not statistically significant and may therefore have simply been a chance result. Although a global impact on pensioners' feelings of safety cannot be inferred from the survey evidence, for pensioners living on the Beanhill estate interviewed at follow-up, the concern about potential harm being caused by teenagers had lessened considerably since LMCS had erected shelters for young people to have a place of their own to meet:

28. Because of the confounding influence of fear of the dark, feeling unsafe walking alone after dark was excluded from the analysis. Further justification for eliminating this particular residential scenario to that presented earlier was indicated by the different proportions found for older persons feeling very unsafe or a bit unsafe when unadjusted and adjusted responses from the recall sample were compared. Unadjusted scores based on 56N registered a fall between baseline and follow-up of 8.9 per cent from 83.9 per cent to 75.0 per cent. However, when those fearful of the dark were excluded, a sub-set of 38N and 33N produced an 18.3 per cent fall from before to after, 78.9 per cent to 60.6 per cent.

"They've made the places for teenagers to congregate. They're all in one place now instead of all round the estate, round the shops, on the different little play areas which they always congregated on ... I do think that has made a difference since they've done them".
(Female, 70-79, Beanhill)

A similar non-statistically significant improvement was noted for those on low incomes. Because membership of the low-income group varied between baseline and follow-up, it was decided to compare the proportions of those on low incomes i.e. under £750 net monthly income, pre- and post-LMCS. A key issue in both the fear of crime literature and amongst residents was concern about being unable to protect their properties. Criticisms were often made by council tenants about the poor security of the doors and windows. Between the baseline and the follow-up, worry for the low-income group about their home being broken into remained high but fell by five per cent from 80.5 per cent to 75.5 per cent.²⁹ For one householder the 'Linkman' role of the PCCSO had been very helpful in accessing them the appropriate district council department:

"The council did it. Yeah, so we've got proper locks on doors and windows and I feel a lot safer because of it."
(Adult female, Beanhill)

Work undertaken by LMCS, particularly on Fishermead, to foster an improvement in relationships between the predominantly white population and members of minority ethnic groups has also shown some positive results in relation to concern about crime. Over the course of the evaluation period Fishermead parish councillors worked closely with members of Milton Keynes district council, including the Milton Keynes Race Equality Council, and staged a number of public meetings with community representatives to encourage the cascading of greater understanding of cultural diversity. During the baseline phase, interviews were held with members of the Muslim community and concern was expressed about both their own and their families' safety in the wake of September 11th. An illustration of the problem is highlighted by the following extracts from the interviews:

"They come onto here, not being funny, Somalians and all these people [asylum seekers and immigrants], that come on here, not the fact that they're Black or whatever they are, but – they don't live in this country, they don't understand what – they don't get vetted but I get vetted."
(White, male, 40-49)

"There's loads of immigrants on this estate and they're just – they cause half the rubbish, they walk along even throwing all their stuff on the floor, leaving glass bottles smashed, they're dirty."
(White, male, youth)

29. Based on the recall sample of 113N and 94N and tested using the large sample approximation test.

"I have to sit down and say why am I being targeted? What have I done? I'm not responsible for September 11th. I don't feel under siege physically but the physical siege might come later but the mental siege is there at the moment. Mentally you fear you are under siege."

(Muslim, male, 60-69, resident on Fishermead for over 20 years)

Although the numbers sampled were small³⁰, a statistically significant reduction in this sense of mental siege was indicated by a fall of 18.4 per cent in worry about being attacked due to their skin colour, ethnicity or religion³¹.

During the baseline survey a reassurance action suggested by the Muslim group related to the attachment of a police officer from a minority ethnic community. This was expected to provide a "mentor for our community" and positive role model for the Muslim youths living on Fishermead. Towards the end of the evaluation period a Muslim ABO started on Fishermead. In discussion with the officer he drew attention to how he made a point of visiting members of the Muslim community when they attended the local centre for their religious services. He thought this proactive visiting was an effective way to get to know and be known by members of this minority group. The officer gave a number of examples where he had acted as a mentor and role model including one instance with a wayward Muslim youth:

"I'll give you an example. I was in the custody suite and there was a guy who was being particularly obstructive and thinking he knows it all, and giving a hard time to the custody officer. And it came to prayer time – he's a Muslim – so I explained to him, showed him how to do a few things. From that day he changed and although he's got previous and he was very anti, stops on the street, he now talks to me. Even when I had an altercation once before, he came and stood on my side, which was nice to see."

A final model and characteristic against which the effectiveness of LMCS was tested relates to the victimisation model. In this perspective high crime levels lead to a high number of victims and this results in a high level of fear in anticipation of being victimised. Between the baseline and the follow-up surveys self-reported victimisation for the recall sample rose by six percentage points from 26 per cent to 32 per cent. Reported crimes over the two periods are shown in Table 3.6.

31. 38N of the recall sample were from minority ethnic communities i.e. 12.2 per cent, of which 36N lived on the Fishermead estate.

32. i.e. from 68.4 per cent being very or fairly worried to 50.0 per cent $P = < 0.05$ based on the Wilcoxon matched pairs test.

Table 3.6 Type of crimes reported by victims at baseline and follow-up in percentages

	Baseline	Follow-up	Difference
Violence*	28	33	+5
Vehicle theft	25	28	+3
Burglary**	31	23	-8
Theft from vehicle	10	9	-1
Robbery	6	7	+1

*Includes actual and threatened violence.

** Includes actual and attempted burglary.

Although some differences can be noted between the baseline and follow-up periods they were not statistically significant.³² Similarly, when the recall sample rated how fearful of becoming a victim of crime they were on a five-point Likert scale with one meaning *not at all fearful* and five being *very fearful*, positive but not statistically significant differences could be noted for those victimised prior to the baseline period (81N), those victimised prior to the follow-up (99N)³³ and those not victimised at either time (168N). For example, of those *very fearful* of becoming a victim of crime, the baseline group registered a seven percentage point fall from 33 per cent to 26 per cent, the follow-up group three percentage points from 36 per cent to 33 per cent, and the non-victims four percentage points from 36 per cent to 32 per cent. In Table 3.7 individual responses given at baseline and follow-up to this question are summarised in terms of whether the respondent remained of the same view as originally or gave either a less fearful or more fearful response.

Table 3.7 Individual responses at baseline and follow-up to fear of becoming a victim of crime in percentages

	Same	Less fearful	More fearful
Baseline victims	37	38	25
Follow-up victims	42	33	25
Non-victims	48	28	24

Although for each group there was a greater proportion of less fearful than more fearful responses, using McNemar’s test of the significance of change these differences were not found to be statistically significant.

32. Using the large sample approximation test to assess the significance of the change.

33. Includes 36 cases reporting victimisation at both baseline and follow-up.

It could be argued that rather than testing the impact of LMCS on victims' fear of crime using global measures, questions specifically related to direct offence experience represents a more relevant and fair assessment. In Table 3.8 a summary is given of the positive and negative change for first wave (baseline survey) and second wave (follow-up survey) self-reporting victims. The victims' perceptions of their safety and worry about experiencing burglary, violence or vehicle-theft again were analysed in terms of whether they felt more safe/less worried i.e. positive, or less safe/more worried i.e. negative. Because of the relevance of burglary to feeling safe at home alone during the night, this item was also examined. In the table the percentages are expressed as a proportion of the total cases for each group.

Table 3.8 Positive and negative changes to victims' perceptions of safety and worry about the same offence occurring again in percentages with numbers in each group

	N	First wave victims		Second wave victims		
		% Positive	% Negative	N	% Positive	% Negative
Home alone at night	32	34*	9	33	18	36
Burglary	32	28	16	33	18	21
Violence	28	32	11	41	32	20
Vehicle theft	29	31*	3	46	15	26

* P = < 0.05 based on the McNemar test.

In spite of self-reported victimisation rising between baseline and follow-up a greater proportion of positive responses were made for five of the eight measures tested. Victimisation may have made residents more wary but for those not victimised recently or those subject to violence it does not appear to have made them oblivious to the various actions taken by LMCS to contribute to a reduction in feeling unsafe. However, because only two positive results were found to be statistically significant only a very modest rather than spectacular impact for LMCS can be claimed.

Concern about disorder

At the heart of the Broken Windows theory is the idea of disorder germinating an escalation toward serious crime. In their later paper, Wilson and Kelling (1989) put it bluntly:

“What to some aesthetes is folk art is to most people a sign that an important public place is no longer under public control. If graffiti painters can attack [subway] cars with impunity then muggers may feel they can attack the people in those cars with equal impunity.”

This evaluation is not in a position to judge the precise causal relationship between various disorders and crime. However, the co-presence of disorder and crime as an issue for residents was certainly evident during the baseline survey and interviews. With regard to graffiti, for example:

“The shops are covered with graffiti and they look awful. You sort of drive into the estate by the shops you know and you just want to turn around and drive out again because of the state of them, they’re terrible.” (Female, 30-39, Beanhill)

“I live on the outskirts of Fishermead, I will not go in the centre unless I absolutely have to. It’s funny, I just, I feel intimidated, I don’t know quite why – my immediate neighbours are very nice yes, but er – it is the graffiti I think, that’s what puts you off, it’s all around the place which is really something that the council should address.” (Female, 70-79, Fishermead)

Similar comments were expressed concerning problems to do with rubbish or litter lying around, people using or dealing drugs, and teenagers hanging around. These physical and social disorders became a focus for the LMCS project. Over the course of its life, the LMCS team has carried out a number of clean-up operations as well as initiating the provision of facilities for teenagers and the elimination of drugs and drug paraphernalia on the streets of the estates. For example, on both estates a system of notifying residents via leaflet drops of rubbish collection days was established together with a helpline number to the PCCSOs for advice and assistance in removing their own and others’ abandoned cars, furniture items and white goods. On Beanhill there was a particular concern about teenagers hanging around the shops with nothing to do and the area being covered in graffiti and litter. This led to joint work with the Youth Services department and consultation with young people on the estate. As noted earlier, shelters for teenagers to meet up were erected (see Exhibit 3.1). At the same time the shopping parade was cleared of graffiti and litter. On Fishermead the PCCSO became active in either running or facilitating projects for young people. Graffiti was cleared away from public areas, repainted with anti-graffiti paint and this action backed up by the staging of a competition in local schools around the theme of keeping the environment clean. Parish councillors also arranged for a telephone kiosk to be relocated to a more visible position to deter the use of the public phone as a contact for illicit drug dealing.

Exhibit 3.1: New youth shelter on Beanhill and conversation with users

- LS: How often do you come here?
 Female youth: Every day.
 Male youth: I'm here every night.
 LS: What do you think of it?
 Female youth: I think it's really good because all your friends come here and it's somewhere to meet up.
 LS: What about you?
 Male youth: It's good, it's good yeah. You can sit 'ere and 'ang around with all your mates and just talk. I'm 'ere every night.
 LS: Where did you hang around before this was put up?
 Male youth: The shops, the park, I dunno, there was nowhere to go, nothing to do. It's good you just sit 'ere.
 LS: Who uses it, just you lot?
 Male youth: No, there's loads of people, like everyone in Beanhill.

Tables 3.9 and 3.10 present the results from the BCS 'Striving' group and the estates, divided into physical and then social disorders. The results are based on the proportion of respondents stating that a particular disorder was thought to be a very big problem.

**Table 3.9 Physical disorders thought a very big problem
BCS 'Striving' group and estates in percentages**

Disorder	Baseline	2001/02	Follow-up	2002/03	Difference LMCS	Difference BCS
Graffiti	41.0	21.0	46.8	22.0	+ 5.8	+ 1.0
Rubbish	48.4	20.0	58.3	21.0	+ 9.9	+ 1.0

LMCS based on 312N and BCS based on unweighted range of 6,463N to 6,914N.

**Table 3.10 Social disorders thought a very big problem
BCS 'Striving' group and estates in percentages**

Disorder	Baseline	2001/02	Follow-up	2002/03	Difference LMCS	Difference BCS
Drugs	31.4	24.0	22.8	26.0	- 8.6 **	+ 2.0
Drunkenness	19.2	10.0	13.5	12.0	- 5.7 *	+ 2.0
Teenagers	24.4	21.0	18.6	21.0	- 5.8 *	=

* P = < 0.01 and ** P = < 0.001 derived from Wilcoxon matched pairs test.

LMCS based on 312N and BCS based on unweighted range of 5,994N to 6,465N.

Compared with the striving areas the estates had a greater problem with physical disorders and by follow-up the situation had deteriorated further! However, when asked whether matters had improved over the last 18 months just under a third of the recall sample stated that the graffiti and vandalism problem was better compared with just over a fifth who thought it was worse i.e. 32.1 per cent and 23.1 per cent respectively. For rubbish or litter lying around only 14.1 per cent saw an improvement while over half i.e. 52.2 per cent thought the position was worse.

Three months after the face-to-face questionnaire was administered the follow-up photographic survey was undertaken. This painted a very different picture to that in the tables regarding physical disorders. In Exhibits 3.2 and 3.3 the results are presented for both estates and there are obvious signs of before-after improvements. In the interviews with residents, also undertaken three months after the questionnaire survey, a consistent sense of physical improvement rather than deterioration was conveyed.

“The estate does look tidier, I have to say, even though we’ve still got people putting rubbish out, compared to two years ago. I sat down with my husband and we looked back and compared to two years. There’s far less graffiti and there was far less rubbish on the estate. That is definitely.” (Female, 30-39, Fishermead)

Similarly a local businessman was extremely positive about the work undertaken by the PCCSO:

"He's always there if you phone him up and there's a query. He's always chasing it up you know. I mean that's helpful and he always comes back to you, you know. I mean we had the graffiti done, he came into it and it's all been cleaned up and it was absolutely brilliant you know the whole area was cleaned up and everything. And he's always helping out disposing of rubbish. They have a special day when you know they let all the community know that there's gonna be rubbish like furniture stuff on this certain day and they do their job and it's all cleared and it keeps the whole area clean and it is much cleaner than before I have to say."

(Businessman, 50-59, Beanhill)

See Exhibit 3.2 and 3.3 pages 99-106.

The anomalous result – especially regarding the problem of rubbish and litter – may simply be due to the timing of the data collection in this evaluation although LMCS staff did not report any special projects during the three-month interval. Alternatively, it may be due to the raised expectations of residents on the estates.

In contrast to the ambiguity of the results for physical disorders, social disorder demonstrated a positive and statistically significant change on all three measures. Whilst for the striving areas the position at best remained static for teenagers but worsened for drugs and drunkenness, falls for all three social disorders were recorded for the estates. Indeed, for the drugs and teenager problems the proportions at baseline were greater on the estates compared with the striving group but smaller at follow-up. The following comments were typical:

"I know they did a project on putting needles away from the park, that was up the road from here you know ... I aint heard more on that side so obviously if you don't hear more of it then that's a good thing."

(Male, 40-49, Beanhill)

"It's not such a visible thing, the bushes are kept well cut back so there's nowhere to throw anything anymore, any paraphernalia."

(Female, 30-39, Fishermead)

"They've got these huts where they can all meet. There's hardly anybody around the park here anymore you know. It's been ever such a lot quieter since they've made those places where teenagers can all get together sort of thing. And I find the park so much cleaner since nobody's been round there throwing bottles and God knows what everywhere. It has improved a lot."

(Female, 40-49, Beanhill)

As noted earlier, this evaluation is not in a position to judge the causal relationship between various disorders and crime. It may, however, be able to shed some light on criticism of the validity of the concept of fear of crime as measured by large-scale surveys. Ditton *et al.* (1999) have argued that instead of fear, large-scale surveys are tapping just as much, if not more, into feelings of anger. They suggest that further research would be useful in showing where the boundaries between these two emotions lie. This is an important issue for policymakers who need to ensure that reassurance schemes are tailored to the right problem. Based on the comments made during the baseline and follow-up interviews with residents it is possible that the boundary lies somewhere between concern about crime and anger with disorder. Evidence has already been presented that reflects the authentic concerns residents had about crime. The following extract from a focus group suggests a more angry than afraid stance in relation to physical disorders:

- *I think you do get angry about the rubbish, you do get angry about the graffiti.*
- *It's on people's cars now isn't it.*
- *Yeah, not just walls, it's everywhere.*
- *(LS) You mean abandoned cars?*
- *No, everywhere!*
- *It's personal property that is being graffitied now so that is making people angry. The rubbish makes people angry because you get so sick of walking through people's rubbish. And residents' groups send out letters to people if they keep putting their rubbish out on the wrong day. Why should you have 19 bags outside his house on a Sunday when the bin men don't come till Wednesday?*

In concluding this review of residents' concerns about crime and disorder and the differences made by LMCS regarding feelings of safety and security, the last word is perhaps best left with the Community Safety Co-ordinator. For him the social disorganisation, vulnerability and victimisation models all amount to a variation on a single theme of powerlessness:

"If the community feels powerless to affect whatever it is that's going on then the fear rises and all three of those theories have in common that the community feels less able to take charge of things."

No single 'tactical option' will provide a quick-fix or even slow-fix solution. In the view of the LMCS team members it would be wrong to assume that the improvements achieved to date are the simple result of one or a combination of special police or council operations, the deployment of ABOs and/or PCCSOs or various methods used to manage the physical and social environment.

"I think that what it's all about, it's giving local control. Showing that we're taking more interest but also showing that what they do say, what their views are will be taken into account. You know we are saying the answer to this is partly in your hands, it's partly in our hands as well but we need to form a new partnership and you in the community are gonna have the power to make us do something about it."

Reassurance as an outcome relates to not only feelings of safety and security but also, as noted in the introductory chapter, to satisfaction with and confidence in the policing provided. For example, increased public engagement is not likely to reassure if the interaction with the police is perceived negatively by residents. Similarly, undertaking various policing initiatives that fail to address or resolve residents' concerns are unlikely to instil confidence. Evidence from the United States reviewed by Kubrin and Weitzer (2003) suggests that dissatisfaction with the amount and quality of police activity is a particular problem for people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Could the same be said for the two estates studied and, if so, has the LMCS project made any difference?

For the purposes of this evaluation satisfaction was examined in terms of an assessment of two specific types of previous encounter between residents and police personnel: on the one hand, victims' views about the quality of their encounters with the police and, on the other, residents' views following their use of the police non-emergency service. Bearing in mind the importance of the police contribution to the LMCS project and the value of eliciting the perspectives of service providers as well as service users, the findings from interviews with police officers are also reported.

Confidence levels were reviewed through exploring the residents' expectations of the ability of policing representatives to deliver particular services. Specifically:

- residents' community safety priorities;
- residents' expectations and assessment of ABOs and PCCSOs; and
- residents' assessment of the community policing provided.

As with the other dimensions of reassurance previously reported, the analysis between baseline and follow-up contains a mixture of often positive but occasionally negative findings suggestive of LMCS beginning to make a difference.

Satisfaction with police encounters

Based on an analysis of telephone interviews of 5,361 residents across 58 neighbourhoods in the United States, Reisig and Parks (2002) concluded that, whilst the perceived quality of

life in a neighbourhood exerted the greatest influence on a person's level of satisfaction with the police, residents' direct encounters with police officers constituted a key element of their overall satisfaction. Reisig and Parks argue that although quality of life perception "offers the police manager little practical application" because they cannot do much about this, attention to police officer behaviour can yield very productive results. LMCS staff would take issue with the assertion that it is impractical to address residents' quality of life perceptions and the results from this evaluation would support them. However, the observation about the quality of encounters between the police and residents formed an important part of the responsiveness and facilitation elements of the community policing intended by the police seconded to or working with the LMCS project. The aim of introducing ABOs was to not only provide residents with greater visibility, accessibility and familiarity but also to increase their level of satisfaction with the police when encountering the officers either on patrol, attending incidents or following up. To test the impact of this approach the experience of victims was examined.

Victims³⁴

Over the two periods a total of 177N and 202N respondents from the full samples (605N and 600N respectively) reported that they had been a victim of crime during the last 12 months. Overall, therefore, self-reported victimisation based on a cross-sectional comparison rose over the two periods by five percentage points from 29 per cent to 34 per cent. Although this rise was greater than that recorded for the BCS 'Striving' group, the amount of victimisation was broadly similar i.e. 32 per cent and 33 per cent for 2001/02 and 2002/03 respectively. When the proportion of self-reporting victims from the two estates was compared, there was only a small difference noted between the two periods with Fishermead accounting for 59 per cent at baseline and 61 per cent at follow up.

To assess these victims' views about the quality of their encounters with the police a checklist of service provision was devised, adapted from a general characterisation of service quality in the private sector.³⁵ Victims were asked to assess how good a job they thought the police did in handling their case and then were invited to comment on particular aspects of their treatment relating to attentiveness, responsiveness, competence and demeanour.

34. Because there were only 19 victims who reported the matter to the police during both the baseline and follow-up surveys, the decision was taken to base the analysis on the relatively larger groups taken from the full samples using the large sample approximation test. Due to the numbers in this cross-sectional comparison still remaining small i.e. 118N at baseline and 137N at follow-up, the data were not weighted.

35. This approach derives from the work of Parasuranam et al. (1988) and has more recently been advocated in the police context by Mastrofski (1999).

Between the baseline and the follow-up, victims' satisfaction with their treatment by the police appears to have improved both in general and with regard to particular aspects of the way officers dealt with them. For example, the proportion stating that the police did an excellent or good job in handling their case rose by 5.3 percentage points though this was not statistically significant and may simply have been a chance result. In Table 4.1 the victims' general and specific ratings of the police officers are summarised. In all ten measures improvements can be noted in the excellent/good ratings and range from just under five per cent to approaching 16 per cent. By the follow-up at least one in three of the victims felt their treatment was either excellent or good. Nearly three out of four of the victims gave this rating to officers in regard to being pleasant and polite whilst over half of them thought similarly in terms of the police officers taking an interest in what they had to say and reassuring them. In two of these positively assessed elements of service delivery the results were found to be statistically significant. These were *Being competent and professional* and *Using common sense and good judgement*.³⁶ Similarly, positive responses were given by the self-reporting victims to the question whether they knew if the police had caught the offender. Not only had the proportion known to have been caught risen by 11.7 percentage points from 15.3 per cent to 27 per cent but the proportion who said that they did not know fell by 20 percentage points from 28 per cent to eight per cent. Both results were statistically significant.³⁷

**Table 4.1: Victims' satisfaction with treatment by police
proportion rating excellent or good in percentages (118N and 137N)**

Service Element	Baseline	Follow-up	Difference
Overall assessment	29.7	35.0	+ 5.3
Acting quickly	29.7	36.5	+ 6.8
Being pleasant and polite	62.7	71.5	+ 8.8
Showing compassion/reassuring	42.4	51.8	+ 9.4
Showing patience/interest	46.6	56.9	+ 10.3
Being competent/professional	51.7	65.7	+ 14.0
Using common sense/good judgement	39.8	55.5	+ 15.7
Answering questions/advising	44.9	49.6	+ 4.7
Effort in dealing with matter	32.2	37.2	+ 5.0
Keeping informed of progress	25.4	32.8	+ 7.4

Rather than being an accidental success, the police officers interviewed thought that these positive findings reflected the improved public engagement derived from the community policing and introduction of ABOs associated with LMCS. One of the police managers observed:

36. $P = < 0.05$ using the large sample approximation test for both measures.

37. Again, $P = < 0.05$ using the large sample approximation test for both measures.

"It's the result of beat officers who are community based that we've developed. Community policing by its very nature is going to be more concerned with victim care. Whereas anecdotally I've taken complaints, numerous complaints or concerns shall we say from members of the public ringing in about the reactive officers that have turned up who – just get the job done, record it and go. Whereas the community officers they know, they work that beat ... they know they're gonna be meeting the person next day, next week so they've got to build up a relationship on their area." (Inspector)

In contrast to any training in interpersonal skills for handling victims or policy directive relating to public relations, the ABO functions of knowing and being known by the community, coupled with the adoption of a problem-solving approach, were seen by the officers themselves to be central to the improvement in victim satisfaction:

"It's improved because this estate now has local officers and we do tend to pick up most of the victims that are being harassed on a regular basis ... we're picking up more ongoing situations than we used to pick up. So I think from that point of view we're having more of an input in problem solving with these people. And a lot of it is their perception. Very often what we're doing is talking to them. You may not actually have done anything. It may be just a visit, just to see how things are with these people. So there's no particular extra training ... it's just because we're there." (ABO)

Between the baseline and follow-up surveys a third of those experiencing victimisation did not report the matter to the police i.e. 33.3 per cent and 32.2 per cent respectively. The top three reasons given for not reporting these incidents again are suggestive of improvements relating to the introduction of ABOs. The view that the police could not have done anything was most frequently expressed both times but fell by just under 10 per cent from 38.9 per cent to 29.2 per cent. The second most often stated reason at baseline by a quarter of the respondents was that they thought the police would not have been bothered or interested (25.4 %). By the follow-up this reason had been relegated to third place and accounted for less than a fifth (18.5 %). Approaching a further quarter of the self-reporting victims at baseline thought that the matter was too trivial (23.7%) compared with a fifth at follow-up (20.0%).

These findings point to the positive impact consequent on the decentralisation of service delivery through the establishment of area beats and the adoption of a problem-oriented policing style. Decentralisation and problem-oriented policing, together with responsiveness and facilitation, represent the four principles of effective community policing described by

Skogan and Hartnett (1997) based on their longitudinal study of the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy. However, for the LMCS project, it is important to bear in mind the difficulties experienced in establishing and maintaining this way of doing police work. The possibility that victim and resident satisfaction could have been even greater is suggested by the high level of staff abstraction and turnover observed over the evaluation period. As noted previously, both the ABOs and the Sector Inspector estimated that, at the very least, 25 per cent of beat officer time was abstracted for other duties. To this difficulty must also be added the problem of a high turnover of staff. During an 18 month period there were six acting sergeants, three inspectors and two changes of ABOs serving the Fishermead estate.

These problems are neither new nor peculiar to Thames Valley Police and are consistent with problems found by the Audit Commission in their study of foot patrol in 1996. Abstracting officers for call-reactive or specialist support duties inevitably carries with it the opportunity cost of not being able to maintain an in-depth knowledge of a particular area and its inhabitants. Two additional problems emerged from discussion with the ABOs. Both further limited the potential impact of the ABO role. First, there was a problem with inadequate supervision.

"We've had a big problem with supervision, in having continuous supervision. We've had six acting sergeants in the last 18 months. That's a lot of change and no continuity."
(ABO)

Formulating clear objectives and co-ordinating the efforts of local officers with those in specialist departments seems to have suffered as a consequence of this organisational problem. Instances were given where specialist departments failed to make use of the intelligence garnered by the ABOs. One officer, for example, relayed how by chance she had been in the office and overheard a CID sergeant talking to her sergeant about a failed operation involving six officers attempting to capture an armed robber. The officer not only knew the address and family 'inside and out' but also that the target had 'been and gone' some while ago. This was not an isolated incident but rather one of several 'big oops [mistakes] over the last few years'.

A second and it seems enduring problem is the low status of the beat officer in spite of the critical observations of various commentators on the incident-oriented versus problem-oriented cultures in police forces³⁸ and the recommendation of the Audit Commission that police forces should "Strive to enhance the status of beat patrol". For the ABOs interviewed, if the saying 'What gets measured gets done' was true, then equally what wasn't measured wasn't valued,

38. See for example Wilson and Kelling (1989) and more recently Tilley (2003).

especially when there wasn't continuity of supervision to become knowledgeable about ABO performance. Whereas call-reactive and specialist officers were able to cite arrest records in their Performance Development Reviews (PDRs), this type of outcome runs directly counter to much of the problem-solving and informal resolution work undertaken by ABOs.

"There's lots of examples where we've had a particular person phoning in, you know, three or four times a day about particular problems that they've been having. We've intervened, involved other agencies, appropriate agencies, to try and assist us in dealing with somebody, particularly mental health issues. Those calls stop. Call-reactive officers, patrol officers do not have to attend any more because we've dealt with that problem. Now, that doesn't really count when you write up your PDR and you want to go for a specialist post. That doesn't sound very glamorous."

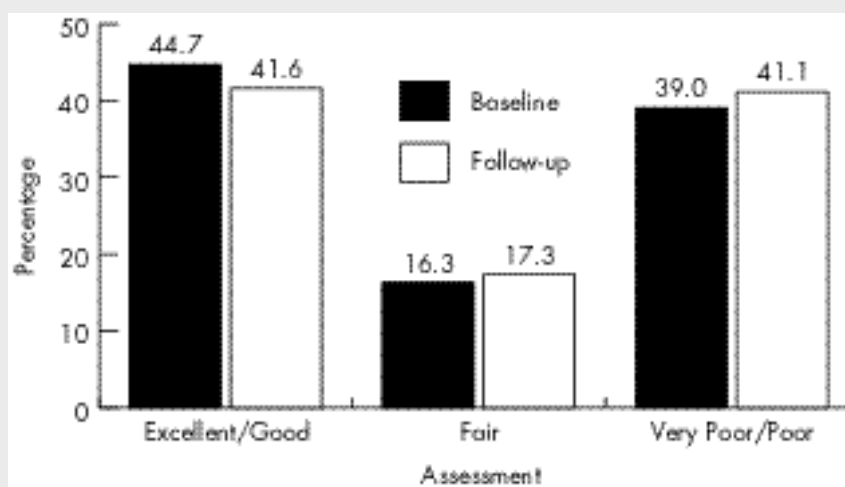
The difficulty in measuring the contribution of ABOs to crime prevention and detection along with their deterrent, problem-solving and intelligence-gathering functions was fully acknowledged by the beat officers and the police managers interviewed. Similarly, none questioned the importance of the call-reactive and specialist roles of their colleagues. Instead the view was that in managing the complexity and volume of demands on the police the potential contribution of the ABO was insufficiently appreciated and endorsed by the organisation. From this it seems reasonable to conclude that if attention is paid to the staffing, supervisory and status problems described, victim and resident satisfaction with the policing delivered is likely to rise even further.

Use of the police non-emergency service

The majority of calls received by the police do not require an emergency response. Indeed, the Audit Commission (1996) found that only 30 per cent of calls relate to crime matters. The provision of a non-emergency telephone number has the potential, therefore, of making call-handling both more efficient and more effective. On the one hand the emergency service is freed from the distraction of non-urgent matters, while on the other non-emergency calls can be either graded for police follow-up or redirected to the appropriate local authority agency. In Chicago the establishment of a central 311 non-emergency service covering all public service departments is one of the successes reported by Skogan and his associates in the evaluation of the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (2003). In Thames Valley Police a centralised non-emergency service has also been established and a local six-digit number made available. While not within the control of LMCS, the expectation was that the non-emergency service would provide a further bridge with residents to access appropriate services along with the PCCSOs, ABOs and parish councillors.

During the baseline and follow-up surveys, respondents were asked if they had telephoned the non-emergency number to call for police assistance and if so to rate the quality of service received from excellent to very poor. Because only a small number reported using the service during both periods i.e. 44N, the assessments of the full sample of residents interviewed are reported in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1 Non-emergency service users' assessments in percentages



Based on 190N and 202N from totals of 605N and 600N respectively.

Although the majority gave an excellent or good rating for both periods, by follow-up a downward shift of just over three per cent can be noted. Similarly, those giving a very poor or poor rating rose by just over two per cent. During the interviews held after the surveys a few described the service positively though even here praise was often mixed with criticism:

“Quite good. I use it from the point of view of the shop quite a lot. More than I would a 999 call because quite often the theft has occurred, the guy has gone, you haven’t apprehended anybody, so there’s no point doing 999 ... I have used it to try and report cars without vehicle tax but I have found that I get passed from pillar to post.”
(Female, 30-39, Fishermead)

Three types of criticism were voiced during both the baseline and follow-up periods. First, interviewees were frustrated with the time taken and cost to get through to the right person, often in regard to the same problem:

"Ninety-five per cent of the time it has been me phoning them over exactly the same type of incident. We have had lads and girls on motor bikes, no crash helmets, roaring through the estate. If your child is walking up your drive – how the child has not been killed I don't know but yet literally all hours of the day and night. And I have phoned over that incident, over and over again like S... said before, you get transferred here there and everywhere. I've regularly done it on a payphone because I've been trying to describe these people and standing there you're in the middle of it coming up down there and it costs me a fortune on my mobile as well. They've been helpful while you've got through but I've fed that phonebox, I've put over a pound in to just get a 'Right we'll come over and sort it out!'" (Female, 50-59, Beanhill)

Second, there was frustration bordering on incredulity and anger with an obviously inadequate central call-handling service – specifically that a so-called local service was neither local nor knowledgeable about the locality:

"When you ring that number you know that that's in the city, I assume – that's in the city centre. Yeah? So you assume that those police know Beanhill and its streets. So you can say 'Look there's a man just about to stab another man on Wastel, right ok?' That's what you expect, don't you. 'Wastel? What's Wastel, where's that then? I don't know that area at all, sorry we're down in Slough.' Aaargghh!" (Female, 30-39, Beanhill)

Sometimes this problem was compounded by the absence of any kind of service being on offer. One man described how his daughter's car had been tampered with twice in the last 12 months. He had called a non-emergency number but was anything but satisfied with the response he got:

"Absolutely appalling. Really, really appalling. First of all she phoned the crime line, you can't report a crime on the crime line between the hours of half past seven at night and 8 o'clock in the morning... because all we got was an answer phone and you leave a message. They'll refer you to the crime desk and after 7 o'clock or half past seven at night there's nobody supervising the crime desk so you leave a message which is pretty pathetic... I was so upset, after 7 o'clock at night you go through to Kidderminster now I think is it [actually Kidlington]? That is so remote from Milton Keynes I don't think you could get any further away could you?" (Male, 50-59, Beanhill)

For this resident and many on the two estates, this lack of access and the remoteness from their estates symbolised a sense of abandonment by the police that was particularly prevalent during the baseline phase. Since this time and the introduction of ABOs and PCCSOs the sense of abandonment has reduced but the frustration with the service remains an issue. The police officers attached to LMCS were fully aware of the problem and gave several examples of their own difficulty in using this service. However, they were more concerned about the adverse effect it was having on their community policing:

"Because we've gone through a new communication system, where we have one direct dial number, people are hanging on for 20-30 minutes to get through to the police station. And we're finding where we're getting deferred jobs to us where normally maybe two or three years ago they'd have had a direct response from a police officer within eight hours, now we're often getting work five days later, if not more. So by the time you've gone round to that person, that person is very dissatisfied with the service they've had from the police." (ABO)

The introduction of new technology, including the provision of geographic information systems enabling call-handlers to quickly locate caller locations, has presented Thames Valley Police with considerable implementation problems. In time it is probable that the technical difficulties will be overcome and the positive potential realised. For LMCS, however, it appears that the positive impression built up through greater visibility, accessibility and familiarity of local officers is being limited by the negative impact of the six digit non-emergency contact number. For the police on LMCS this is likely to affect both citizen satisfaction and crime control:

"Next time they get their car window broken, will they want to be hanging on to the phone for 20, 30? Well I would say probably not." (ABO)

The last problem with the non-emergency service, though much less so at follow-up than at baseline, was that for many of those interviewed the six-digit number was either unknown or hard to remember. One elderly interviewee from Fishermead asked, similar to the example given in the thematic review of the police and reassurance undertaken by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (2001) based on the experience from Chicago Police Department, why not make it 333? Perhaps also, in light of the last quote from the ABO immediately above, it is possibly worth considering the Chicago model whereby a joint responsibility between the police and local authorities is forged in resourcing and staffing the non-emergency service.

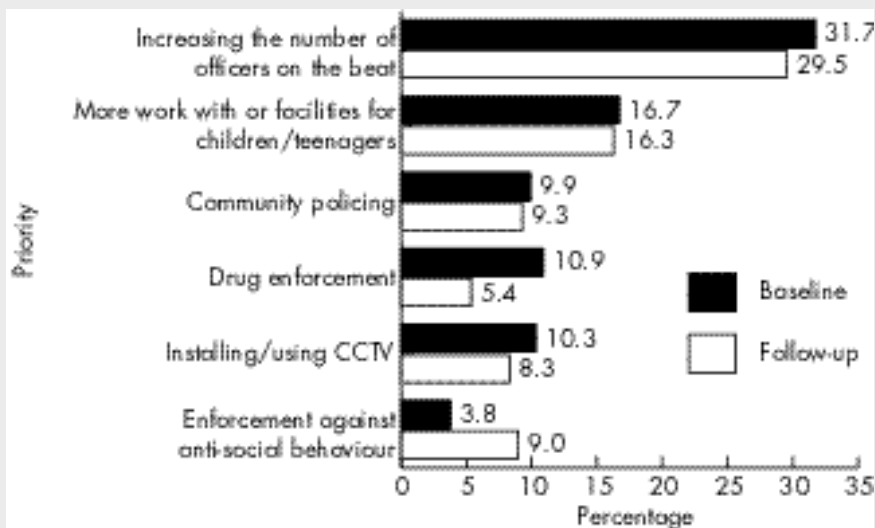
Confidence in Policing

Residents' Community Safety Priorities

To measure the level of confidence in the policing provided, the evaluation focused on residents' community safety priorities and their assessment of the effectiveness of policing representatives in delivering them. Confidence can also be influenced by the probity of policing behaviour but the evidence emerging from the baseline phase indicated that residents were not concerned about issues of corruption or misconduct but rather a sense of distance from and abandonment by the police and authorities. For this reason questions relating to resident expectations that were added to the follow-up survey concentrated on proficiency of service delivery as distinct from probity of performance.

Residents were invited to choose one of 15 options as their first community safety priority. The options ranged over particular policing methods e.g. patrolling, traffic management, the use of informants or CCTV, to focusing on particular crime types or disorders e.g. drugs, hate crimes or anti-social behaviour. In Figure 4.2, the baseline and follow-up results obtained from the recall sample are reported.

Figure 4.2 Residents' first community safety priorities - top six*



*Based on 312N.

As can readily be appreciated, over the 18-month period of the evaluation, members of the recall sample remained fairly consistent in their expectations – although enforcement against anti-social behaviour took precedence over drug enforcement and CCTV at follow-up. Given the range of options from which these residents could choose, two points merit comment regarding the top six chosen. First, increasing the number of officers on the beat remained the top priority accounting for almost double the second most popular option.³⁸ The decision of the police partners of LMCS to introduce ABOs was therefore consonant with residents' expectations. The idea of putting more officers on the beat has been commented on extensively in the literature. The Audit Commission's report *Streetwise* referred to earlier, for example, pointed to the need to find a balance between the public's virtually insatiable demand for more 'bobbies on the beat' and the Service's practical inability to meet such an expectation. However, within the context of the two estates studied, the choice appeared to be between something or nothing with the latter constituting an unacceptable option for the majority of residents who had felt hitherto abandoned and disengaged from the police.

Second, the nature of the top six options illustrate how community safety priorities were broadly conceived in terms of social problem solving rather than being confined to traditional police law enforcement activity e.g. working more with or providing facilities for children/teenagers. This point is relevant to the decision by LMCS to establish PCCSOs and their role of dealing with various social and physical disorders as distinct from crimes.

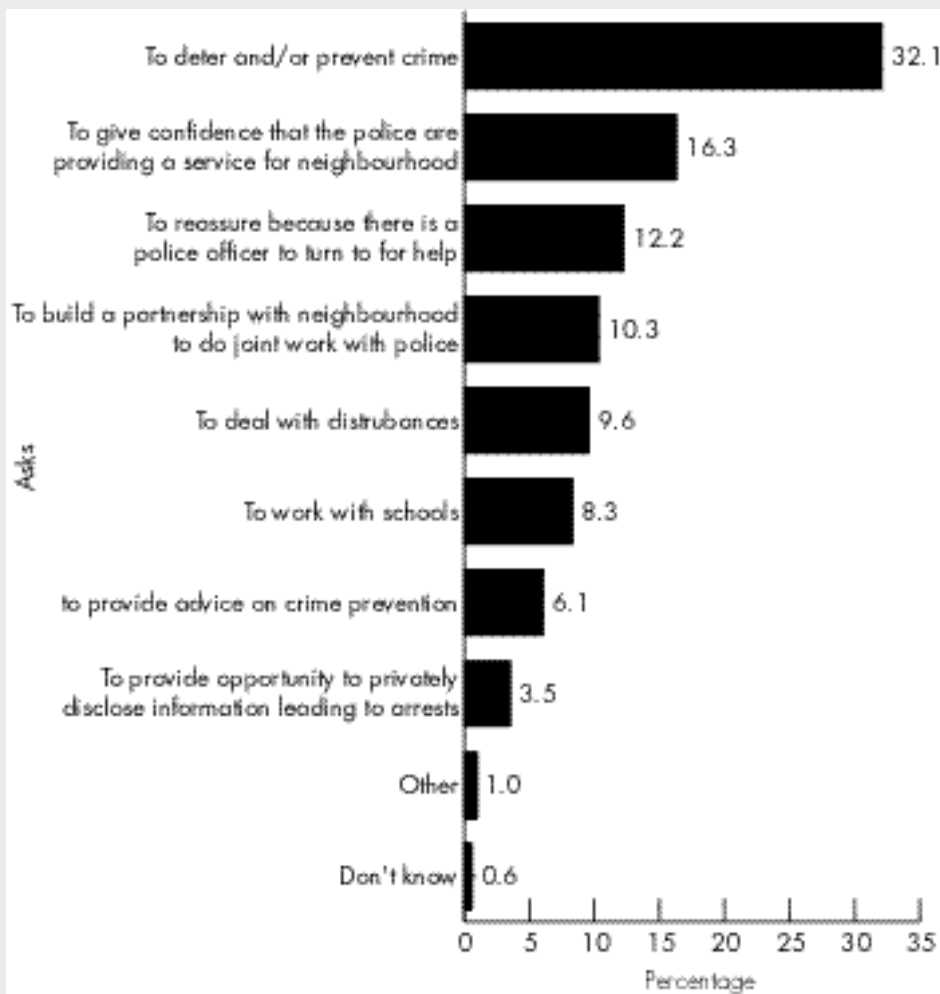
Residents' expectations of ABOs

The expectation that beat officers would be increased begs the question of what precisely they were expected to do once patrolling. While the LMCS team had agreed a role profile for the officers, it did not necessarily mean that this would match the residents' priorities. During the follow-up survey, residents were given a list of eight separate tasks which could be undertaken by beat officers and asked to identify which they thought were the most important jobs to be done. In Figure 4.3 the results are reported. These different tasks can be compared with the three primary roles for ABOs determined by the police managers attached to the LMCS team. The three roles were, it will be recollected from Chapter 2, providing reassurance to residents that the neighbourhood was being policed and something done to deter would-be criminals; engaging proactively with individuals in problem solving; and gathering intelligence about crimes and criminals for crime prevention

38. When the first, second and third priorities were aggregated, increasing the number of officers on the beat was still the top option and this was followed by working more with or providing facilities for children/teenagers. Similarly, when individual preferences at baseline and follow-up were compared, increasing the number of officers on the beat registered the highest level of consistency of response. Thus 47 per cent expressed this as their preference both times whereas the second highest priority of work with children/teenagers only achieved a consistency level of 29 per cent.

and detection purposes. Broadly speaking the residents' top four jobs appear to be in accord with the first two roles specified by the police managers attached to LMCS, particularly in terms of being known to residents and proactively engaging in problem solving with them. So far as the intelligence-gathering role of ABOs was concerned residents did not yet seem sufficiently confident to play an active part.

Figure 4.3 Residents' ranking of most important jobs for ABOs to undertake in percentages



Based on 312N.

Although the survey evidence⁴⁰ relating to victims' reluctance to report crimes because of fear of reprisal was extremely small, subsequent interviews told another story.

"But you do feel intimidated, I've seen loads of things where I wanted to pick up the phone and report it but then you feel if information gets out it's you who's going to get it."
(Male, 30-39, Fishermead)

Whilst the police presence was expected by a few interviewees to allay these fears, for many the problem related to a lack of trust and collective efficacy amongst residents in the neighbourhood:

"The lack of community that goes on because – you are too scared now to say your piece because ... you're too scared to say how you feel about something, you don't know how they're gonna retaliate, you don't know." (Female, 40-49, Fishermead)

"I mean if we had a Residents' Association would we be under threat? I mean if we like make ourselves visible, even by the paper saying look, there's a lot of vandalism. Say I told the reporter there's a lot of vandalism, you know, around this area – I think I'd be under threat, and I'd probably get a brick through the window. You know, what can I do?"
(Male, 50-59, Beanhill)

Residents' assessment of ABOs⁴¹

When residents were asked to rate how good a job the beat officers were doing, the responses were mixed and suggestive of a modest impact being made with scope for improvement. In Table 4.2 the general assessment and the specific ratings made by residents in relation to their own first choices are given.

40. At both the baseline and the follow-up and including both the recall and the full samples.

41. Because no before-after differences could be examined, the results for the full follow-up sample of 600N were analysed. The results were weighted to reflect the age, gender and number of adults in the households of the estates.

Table 4.2 Residents' rating of how well ABOs doing overall and top four most important jobs (in percentages)

	Weighted data based on	Excellent/ Good	Fair	Very poor/ Poor	Don't know
Overall	600N	17.7	38.2	26.8	17.2
Deter &/or prevent crime	195N	17.4	44.1	22.6	15.9
Give confidence police providing service for neighbourhood	105N	20.0	33.3	27.6	19.0
Reassure that police officer there to turn to for help	77N	16.9	29.9	40.3	12.9
To build partnership with neighbourhood to do joint work	61N	16.4	44.3	24.6	14.7

In all but one specific instance the majority of residents thought that the ABOs were doing a *fair* job. Giving confidence that the police were providing a service to the neighbourhood was most positively rated attracting an *excellent/good* assessment for just one in five residents. Conversely, reassuring that the police were there to turn to for help was most negatively assessed with a *very poor/poor* rating for well over one in three residents. The challenge of being visible, accessible and familiar to a parish of 15,000 inhabitants and an estate of 5,000 people was acknowledged by residents. However, the problem of abstraction and especially staff turnover seems to have limited the ABOs familiarity with residents and in turn the amount of reassurance they were able to convey.

"I know he can't be here 24 hours a day ... you can't just keep him to one area and say 'Oh he can't do anything else other than walk round Fishermead all day' because it would be a waste of resources for the police to be paying him. But I think it does need somebody sort of like there that people can focus on and think 'We know him, that's our beat officer'. But I think it needs more involvement from him as well to go in and make himself known." (Female, 20-29, Fishermead)

Residents' expectations of PCCSOs

When the idea of introducing Parish Crime and Community Safety Officers was discussed during the baseline interviews, the response, as the following exchange illustrates, was mixed:

- *That's a wonderful idea you know because there'd be at least someone here that can liaise with the people and the police.*

- *Yeah, but it's like you just said, they don't have the powers like a policeman, I mean if you've got a trouble, trouble group of kids, they all know that they haven't got the power.*
- *They could pass on information, that's about all.*
- *By the time they've passed on information it's too late.*

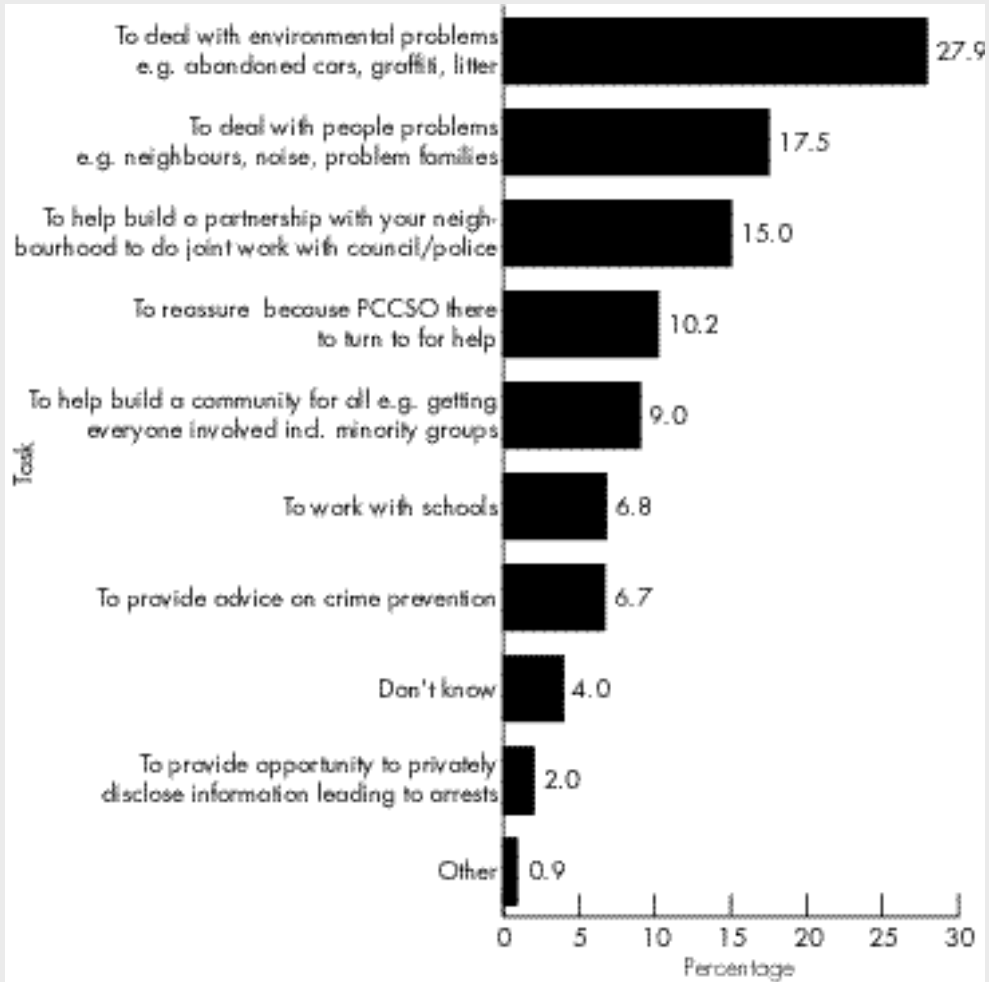
(Males, 20-49, Fishermead)

For others this new post appeared to be a double-edged sword. On the one hand they might have too little authority themselves or back-up from the police so that they ran the risk of “becoming another victim”. On the other hand, with too much power and too little “training and discipline” they might abuse the authority they were given.

Members of the LMCS team were mindful of these concerns and in drawing up a role profile for PCCSOs did not wish to create substitute police officers. Instead the new post was conceived as being complementary to but separate from ABOs, focusing on the policing of physical and social disorders rather than on apprehending offenders. To test whether this perception was shared by residents, the follow-up survey included a list of illustrative tasks and invited respondents to identify which of them they saw as being the most important job to be done by PCCSOs. In Figure 4.4 the results from the full sample are reported.⁴²

42. The weighted full-sample data were used because this was a new post and no comparative before-after analysis could be made with the baseline survey as had been possible with the request for increasing the number of police officers on the beat.

Figure 4.4 Residents' ranking of most important jobs for PCCSOs to undertake in percentages



Based on weighted 600N.

The emphasis on dealing with different types and manifestations of disorder rather than crime is clearly evident in the ranking of tasks. Whereas the top two jobs relate to anti-social behaviour, the bottom two are explicitly crime focused. If the relative proportions are examined it shows how residents gave priority to PCCSOs addressing social and physical disorders over five times more than crime prevention or detection. Although reservations had been expressed about the PCCSO role prior to their introduction, by the follow-up, save for a small minority who did not know, there seemed to be an expectation from the estates in line with the LMCS team's aim for what the PCCSOs were primarily there to do.

Residents' assessment of PCCSOs

As with the ABOs, residents were asked to rate how good a job they thought the PCCSOs were doing. Table 4.3 gives the general assessment and the specific ratings made by residents in relation to their own first choices.

Table 4.3 Residents' rating of how well PCCSOs doing overall and top four most important jobs (in percentages)

Weighted data	Excellent/ based on	Fair Good	Very poor/ Poor	Don't know	
Overall	600N	9.6	23.3	26.4	40.7
To deal with environmental problems	167N	13.2	32.3	27.5	27.0
To deal with people problems	104N	3.8	23.1	29.8	43.3
To help build a partnership with neighbourhood to do joint work e.g. council and police	91N	6.6	17.6	30.8	45.1
Reassure that PCCSO there to turn to for help	62N	12.9	21.0	29.0	37.1

On the face of it these ratings are extremely negative. Although approaching a quarter gave a *fair* overall assessment, exceeding a quarter rated the PCCSOs as being *very poor* or *poor* in meeting their expectations. Similarly, the proportion giving a very poor/poor assessment always overshadowed the proportion giving an excellent/good rating for specific tasks. Apart from the top-ranked job of dealing with environmental problems where the majority gave a *fair* assessment, the rest of the specific tasks were judged by most residents to have been performed poorly. The differences between these positive and negative assessments could, however, have been significantly altered if the substantial proportion of *don't knows* had expressed a view. It will be recalled from Chapter 2 how only 16 per cent of the full sample knew that a PCCSO had been appointed and as few as five per cent had ever seen one. While it is possible that additional assessments could have produced an even more negative result, two independent factors suggest the likelihood of a more positive picture emerging. First, as both the PCCSOs and their parish employers observed, during the start-up period covered by the evaluation, getting the work done took precedence over promoting the post-holders and the work they were doing. This inattention to publicising the work of the PCCSOs – rather than the ability of the PCCSOs to deliver the services expected – was what most concerned the parish councillors:

"We did a lot of work before the survey but we didn't tell anybody about it. We're not good at blowing our own trumpets, it's not in the nature of the people we've got here, we prefer to do the job. But we're being made very aware by the survey that that wasn't good ... people thought we were useless." (Parish Councillor)

Second, during the interviews held after the follow-up survey, none of the interviewees was critical of the performance of the PCCSOs. Instead, the PCCSOs were described as having done "a tremendous job on the estate" as well as being responsible for "a lot of improvements" in the environment. Similarly, on the social side evidence has already been presented in Chapter 3 of the positive impression made on residents relating to the PCCSOs' work with children and teenagers. During the interviews this work, coupled with the aim to build a partnership with the community and provide reassurance, was also acknowledged. One parent for example stated:

"He's been quite heavily involved with the community, trying to talk to the children and the mums and dads at the school and I think a lot of people recognise him now. Although he's not a policeman, it's nice to know that he's there".
(Female, 30-39, Fishermead)

The positive comments about PCCSOs elicited during the interviews cannot be regarded as conclusive. However, they do suggest a more positive impact than that given solely by Table 4.3. The parent's reference to community involvement also provides a useful backdrop to the final assessment made of the LMCS project's ability to meet the residents' community safety expectations measured in the surveys.

Residents' assessment of the community policing provided

Underpinning the residents' expectations of both the ABOs and the PCCSOs was a wish to close the gap perceived to exist between themselves and the police and the council. In terms of residents' first community safety priorities, for example, working with the community became, by the follow-up, the third most important priority ahead of not only tactical options like drug enforcement but also technical solutions such as the installation of CCTV. For ABOs, helping to build a partnership with the neighbourhood to do joint work with the police was the fourth most important job. For the PCCSOs' the third most important task after dealing with physical deterioration and social disorders was building a partnership to do joint work with the council and the police. To measure the extent that LMCS was able to meet these expectations and thereby gauge the level of confidence in policing on the estates, residents were asked to assess how good they thought the community policing

provided was. To highlight any before-after differences and minimise the influence of extraneous factors, the findings from the recall sample were analysed. In Table 4.4 the results are presented and demonstrate a generally positive response.

Table 4.4 Residents' assessment of the community policing provided in percentages*

Rating	Baseline	Follow-up	Difference
Excellent/good	19.9	21.5	+ 1.6
Fair	27.6	31.7	+ 4.1
Very poor/poor	37.8	28.8	- 9.0
Don't know	14.7	17.9	+ 3.2

* Based on 312N P = < 0.05 based on the Wilcoxon matched pairs test.

The most striking feature of the table is the nine per cent fall in the proportion of those assessing the community policing provided as being poor. When individual responses were matched, over a third of those making an assessment i.e. excluding don't know replies, gave a more positive answer at follow-up compared with baseline and the result was statistically significant at the five per cent level. The proportion of don't knows was already high at baseline and increased at follow-up and may once again reflect the inattention of LMCS in publicising those undertaking the work rather than implying a criticism of the work itself.

When discussing with LMCS team members the often positive but occasionally negative results emerging from the evaluation here and elsewhere, they were quick to point to the hitherto seemingly "intractable" character of the challenge they faced and the inevitably long-term nature of the time it will take to address it. Years of perceived and real neglect by officials and the agencies they represent, acute social deprivation and economic disadvantage have combined to create a problem as significant as Wilson and Kelling's Broken Windows: namely broken expectations. Managing expectations, overcoming scepticism, and enabling residents to play their part were seen as being key to both civil and neighbourhood renewal:

"This is very much a work in progress and I think it will take a lot more than 18 months to have a spectacular impact on people. ... I think it is important to manage expectations with people so that you're not over promising because people have had enough of that sort of thing. They've had loads of people saying 'Oh yeah, we'll get this sorted' and it hasn't been ... It's about taking them through it and sometimes actually making sure they know their responsibilities within it. So if it's reporting some

levels of nuisance or tipping or something, let them know as soon as possible that they might have to go to court on this. 'We can do things but our effectiveness will be better if you back us up with a statement. Are you happy with that?' (PCCSO)

In the next chapter an attempt is made to draw out the major lessons learned from the LMCS experience and derive a model of good practice for managing community safety locally.

5.

Partnership and partnering

Twenty years ago the idea of working in partnership for the prevention of crime was given official ratification when the Home Office issued an inter-departmental circular entitled 'Crime Prevention'. The circular began:

"A primary objective of the police has always been the prevention of crime. However, since some of the factors affecting crime lie outside the control or direct influence of the police, crime prevention cannot be left to them alone. Every individual citizen and all those agencies whose policies and practices can influence the extent of crime should make their contribution. Preventing crime is a task for the whole community."

(Home Office, 1984)

Later in the circular reference was made to experience indicating that "a sound policy" for crime prevention partnership should take account of four essential features:

- persuading the community to do more for itself;
- getting the police and local agencies to work together in a co-ordinated way;
- designing preventive measures that reflect local circumstances; and
- changing the environment where opportunities for crime exist.

Since this time partnership working has been the subject of several audits, inspections and research as well as various recipes of good practice.⁴³ Possibly the most significant lesson learned over the two decades is that partners know what the necessary ingredients are but, with a few exceptions, have not been able to put them together to make the partnership work effectively. For example, if the 'elements' described in the Home Office good practice guide *Partnership in Crime Prevention*, (published in 1990), are compared with the 'factors' identified by the Audit Commission in their evaluation *Community Safety Partnerships* over a decade later in 2002, there is a striking similarity (see Table 5.1).

In this chapter an adjunct to the traditional recipe will be described based on the experience of and modest progress made by the LMCS project. Not surprisingly many of the ingredients of success previously identified in the literature could be observed. For example, against the Home Office's checklist of six elements, the project would receive a tick each

43. See for example Home Office, 1990, Home Office, 1991, Liddle and Gelsthorpe, 1993, Hedderman and Williams 2001 and Audit Commission, 2002.

time. However, one important difference was found. In addition to structural matters relating to the establishment of and arrangements for the various elements or factors that have been consistently listed, there was also a cultural component. This related to the attitudes and values that both informed and drove the activity of the project and its partners. This is the difference between a statutory requirement on local agencies to work together⁴⁴ and the belief and will of the parties to work as a team to actually make this happen.

Table 5.1 The official ingredients of partnership success⁴⁵

Home Office 1990 Elements	Audit Commission 2002 Factors
Structure:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gather relevant information ● Formulate local plans ● Make structures flexible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clear focus on the issue ● Solutions tailored to fit the issue and local circumstances ● Flexibility and willingness to experiment
Leadership:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Focusing effort ● Directing strategy ● Project leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Effective leadership ● Effective leadership direction
Information:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gather accurate up-to-date information ● Monitor and evaluate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Thorough analysis of the issue ● Evaluation built in at the outset
Identity:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure that objectives are not lost from view of the public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Effective communication ● Consultation with all affected people
Durability:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure long-term commitment from both local agencies and the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sustainability/maintenance built in at the outset
Resources:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pool resources ● Draw on government and private sector sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adequate capacity and resources to deliver

Put another way, this is the difference between legally prescribed partnerships and voluntarily agreed partnering. Partnering is more than simply a commitment to make agency

⁴⁴As per section 5 of the Crime and Disorder Act enacted in July 1998.

⁴⁵The Audit Commission's factors are taken from Table 3 of the report but the ordering has been rearranged to demonstrate the similarity with the Home Office guide.

time or resources available. It is about thinking and acting in a trusting and co-operative way. In Australia and the United States where this practice has become popular, partnering has been defined as:

"A working relationship with a high level of trust and close co-operation between two parties that contract with each other to accomplish mutually beneficial outcomes ... Partnering is a form of implicit contracting; although not legally binding, it is self-enforcing because it is in the interests of both parties to honour the agreement. The partnering agreement does not replace the legal contract, but is additional to it."

(Domberger *et al.*, 1997)

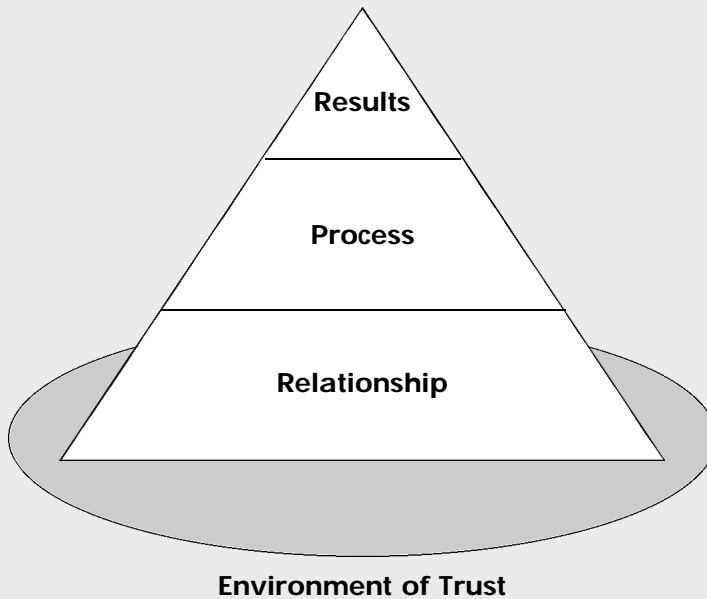
Whereas contractual approaches have been found to work well when simple repetitive tasks are involved, for the delivery of complex professionally based services, partnering is seen to offer much needed flexibility. Domberger *et al.* argue that, instead of operating at arms length in a quasi-adversarial relationship engendered by traditional contracting, partnering encourages the parties to work together as a team. The emphasis on a close alignment of objectives serves to improve co-operation and integrate the effort between the agents and agencies. In the private sector this has been described as 'Putting the handshake back into business'. In the LMCS context the chair of the Steering Group confirmed that this was precisely the approach of the project:

"We're finding that because there's a friendship been built up and because it is a – it's partnering rather than a partnership, we haven't signed agreements that said you will do x, y or z ... It's a partnering based on mutual respect and understanding of a joint need."

As with the literature on partnerships in England and Wales, there is a growing body of research and commentary on effective partnering.⁴⁶ Key elements identified have included commitment, equity, trust, mutual goals/objectives, implementation, continuous evaluation, timely communication and responsiveness. Some of these factors are similar to those identified for partnerships and have been described in Table 5.1. What, however, is different is the emphasis in partnering on what Ford (2001) describes as the "Environment of Trust" within which a partnering triangle is able to flourish. The triangle is reproduced in Figure 5.1.

46. For a summary see Bennington and Cummane, 1999.

Figure 5.1 The partnering triangle



Based on ideas originally formulated by Crane *et al.* (1999)

The environment of trust secures a context whereby productive working relationships can be established and maintained. The relationship foundation of the triangle concerns the intentions and interactions of the team members. Trust is not, however, something which can be taken for granted. As one of the LMCS team members put it "Trust is something that you can't presuppose; it's got to be earned". Trusting relationships are evidenced by high levels of co-operation and collaboration and provide a solid base for processes, for example information systems, action plans, communication strategies, to be developed, implemented and reviewed. In turn, effective processes lead to the delivery of the intended outcomes.

This is not to say that relationships will be automatically or, once established, always harmonious but rather that an environment exists to acknowledge and address disagreements as they arise. Throughout the life of LMCS there has been an acknowledged tension between the district and the parish councils. Officers of the former were clear about the vital contribution of the latter to the delivery of community safety locally but on many occasions were frustrated by parish members' single-minded behaviour. For example, in one of the parishes there was a dispute about the job description and person specification for the PCCSO leading to a delay in the appointment of a post holder and the project overall.

The parish councillors conceded that they had been “quite stroppy” at the time in resisting the suggestions of the district council “We live here. We know what is needed. We will do it our way”. One district officer likened the situation to a child-adult relationship reminiscent of Transactional Analysis.

“I think from the parish council’s point of view, Milton Keynes Council is big brother. It’s the one that hands out the resources, sometimes unfairly ... If you look at it in Transactional Analysis terms, for many years there’s been a child-parent relationship and it’s beginning to change now and it’s becoming an adult-adult relationship. But in the course of doing that, there’s quite a lot of pain ... I think the tensions are entirely positive because the unitary council does see things from the point of view of the whole of Milton Keynes, it’s got to. It finds it very difficult to see things from the point of view of a particular area and that’s the vision that the parish puts in.”

For the LMCS team, the articulation of and working through of differences in viewpoint came to be a strength not a weakness, based on a partnering approach rather than adherence to a legalistic requirement that the parties were required to work together and somehow get along. The chair of LMCS explained that, for her, being a successful project and being a successful leader of the project entailed engendering a “good spirit”. This good spirit lies at the heart of the partnering philosophy and the cultural component of effective partnerships.

“There’s been considerable hostility between the parishes and Milton Keynes Council in this city ... We have got a very good spirit now but there’s been some hard work with that. I think if you want a successful chair you need someone who understands the police and you need someone with an ability to persuade people to work together and in particular engender a good spirit. We don’t have very many shouting matches at LMCS meetings, we do have a fair bit of laughter, we do have people understand the others’ problems and that’s been a good thing.”

Four cornerstones have underpinned LMCS’s successful partnership and partnering. In the remainder of this chapter their model of working together will be described and illustrated. As will be seen, there is little in the ideas or examples emerging from this evaluation that will be new to the literature. However, the particular combination and application of the cornerstones to local community safety may provide a fresh perspective for understanding how LMCS has started to make a difference and others may also be able to do so in future.

Comprehension

The first cornerstone refers to comprehension and entails inclusion, information and interpretation. From this an authentic, as distinct from assumed, understanding is generated. Right from its inception the 'local' in LMCS was intended to mean a partnership involving not only the relevant agencies tasked with responsibility for community safety but also representation from those living in and having a direct stake in the neighbourhood. As noted in the Introduction, various possibilities were considered by the Community Safety Co-ordinator and partnership inspector seconded from Thames Valley Police including work with residents' associations, ad hoc interest groups, local businesses and charities. However, parish councils were preferred because of their election by and accountability to the community. Additionally, parish councils have a statutory duty for community safety together with access to funding for this purpose as well as the opportunity to lever in further resources through their precepting authority. As the co-ordinator noted:

"There's more and more awareness of parishes. Gradually the elections are becoming more vibrant and as they become more vibrant I think the councillors themselves are having to respond increasingly to the wishes of the electorate. And that's why I believe the parish council is the way forward for local people ... as well as that they've often got the money to employ people."

Having the mandate and money was complemented by an understanding of what mattered most to local people and a preparedness to address these issues.

"Parish councils understand their patch better than a unitary authority, better than incoming agencies with a headquarters elsewhere ... We're very much a group that in the parish we see an issue and we immediately latch on to it and start thinking of how we are going to move that forward. That's been our success."

(Campbell Park parish councillor)

In the chapter on public engagement a variety of methods to facilitate dialogue with residents on the two estates studied were described. These ranged from community meetings on Fishermead organised by the parish councillors and inviting selected groups and members of grass roots organisations to personal visits by the Beanhill councillor to local shops and new arrivals to the estate. On both estates the ABOs and PCCSOs had a key role to play in proactively engaging with residents, both listening to and providing advice for them. The purpose of this information receiving and giving was to get behind the official statistics and generate an understanding of local problems and priorities from the residents' perspective.

The limitations of relying solely on deprivation indices and crime statistics can be illustrated by two examples taken from experience on the Fishermead estate. The first relates to a large influx of people onto the estate from East Africa. The co-ordinator acknowledged that it had taken the professionals a long time to “wake up to the fact” that a double problem was developing. On the one hand, members of the East African community, particularly their young people, “were completely disassociated from their own country, probably frightened” and hanging around on the streets “because there was nothing else for them to do”. On the other hand, established residents were becoming anxious because they were thinking, “Oh these people are causing crime which actually there was very little evidence of.”

This instance highlights the absence of visibility of these problems in official statistics. The second example demonstrates how official statistics could lead to a misinterpretation of the problem given priority by residents. Whereas the professionals had thought that one of the biggest concerns on Fishermead would be high levels of crime and drug use – as per the official statistics:

“In actual fact the highest single concern in Fishermead when the PCCSO started talking to people was rubbish dumped on the streets, not picked up. You know people were always on about that, the number of calls that came in and the feeling that the council doesn’t care for us anymore. It’s relatively easy to resolve but you can’t resolve it until you start asking the right questions and you can’t ask those questions until you’re actually based out in the community.”

(Community Safety Coordinator)

Commitment

The second cornerstone is commitment and entails passion, perseverance, and proportionality. From this a determination to work with and, on a number of occasions, through the different perspectives and priorities of the various participants is derived. Instead of merely paying lip-service to the rhetoric of local governance and the injunction to find local solutions to local problems, members of LMCS were passionate in their commitment to make a difference. Although passion can be a mixed blessing because of the tension it can engender between the goals of the group, the individuals that comprise it and those of the organisations or constituencies that the individuals represent, on balance team members saw this very high level of motivation as a positive factor. The chair of LMCS reflected:

"I have a particular style of chairmanship and I'm noted for being uncompromising. But I'm also noted for a reasonable degree of passion and I think there's been a passion about this committee that it's a method of bettering people's lives. It's a method of giving us decent places to live in. And I think that passion has actually driven us and that passion has fended off a lot of the clashes that might have come because everybody understands that we all have that desire and that passion to succeed."

The passion shared by members of LMCS was matched with a commensurate measure of commitment to persevere, not so much in spite of but rather because of the tensions generated. For the partnership inspector:

"Any sort of committee where there aren't any tensions you get apathy creeping in. Tensions mean that the individuals are committed to achieving their aims, whatever those aims are, and that's a damned good starting point."

This is not to deny several occasions when behind-the-scenes meetings were staged by the inspector and co-ordinator to overcome differences but what appears to have characterised LMCS and its successful partnership and partnering has been a determination to resolve rather than to deny or run away from any disagreements.

Attempts to find a point of agreement between disputing parties or to think laterally and transform negatives into potential positives were not always possible. However, because of the commitment of the area commander, chief executive and cabinet member responsible for community safety in Milton Keynes council, recourse to shuttle diplomacy was sometimes successfully made. This proportionality, whereby an equal and substantial commitment went right to the top of the various partners' hierarchies, was a third and important feature of the commitment cornerstone.

"We've had situations where either one of the partners has threatened to withdraw or there's been acute tensions that have actually resulted in a breakdown in communications between some of the partners. And twice we've judged that it's been so severe that we've actually gone to the executive of the partnership, chaired by the area commander, with the chief executive on it, and also the cabinet member for the council and they have actually facilitated meetings which have resolved the problem."

(Co-ordinator)

Co-ordination

Having an understanding of local problems and a determination to develop local solutions requires a structure for the ensuing effort to be managed effectively. This introduces the third cornerstone of co-ordination and entails producing a plan, devising programmes of work to achieve it and harmonising their implementation. LMCS did not start with a shopping list of problems to be fixed. Instead primacy was given to the community policing principles of responsiveness and facilitation (Skogan and Hartnett, 1997). On the one hand the LMCS plan was to identify the key concerns and priorities of residents, not only for the majority but also for particular groups e.g. the elderly, youths and members of minority ethnic communities. On the other hand the plan required work with individual residents, local groups and statutory agencies to arrive at jointly agreed courses of action where each could play their part in addressing the problems raised.

Through the monthly meetings of the LMCS Steering Group a plan was developed for translating these principles of responsiveness and facilitation into a working model. At the centre of the model were the deployment of ABOs and the appointment of PCCSOs by the parish councils. As already noted, both of these roles were intended to make an important contribution to listening to residents' concerns and, where appropriate, providing advice for them to help themselves. For the ABOs this involved using the problem-solving approach whilst for the PCCSOs it was achieved through their Linkman role of putting residents in touch with the relevant council personnel.

ABOs proactively interacting with the public to solve the problems presented or underlying them, together with PCCSOs recording local community safety needs and facilitating community resources on behalf of the parish councils, can be regarded as programmes in themselves. Additionally and along with other partners comprising or called on by the LMCS Steering Group, major programmes of work were initiated including the crime and environmental clear-ups of Operations Dignify and Spring-clean on Fishermead and Deep-clean on Beanhill described in Chapter 3. Discrete programmes associated with improved lighting for the elderly, landscape management and the provision of youth shelters were also carried out. This reflects the diverse areas of work prompted by LMCS and how it drew on the services of various district council departments.

This joined-up way of working illustrates the joined-up nature of the problems perceived by residents. This perspective cannot claim to be new, but what appears distinctive about LMCS is how the resolution of problems from planning through to programme implementation was always shared with both the statutory agencies and the residents. Instead of doing things to

the neighbourhood, action was always undertaken with its residents. As well as the examples already reported, the community safety co-ordinator cited a recently developed parenting scheme:

“What I think we have done is show people that a real genuine interest is being taken in the estate and that it’s a co-ordinated interest, perhaps for the first time ... We’ve got a parenting co-ordinator now working within the council and developing parenting schemes on the estates, identifying young offenders or the likely young offenders, going out there, helping the parents without – not parenting orders – more proactive than that, training parents then to train other parents. That’s one scheme which we’ve developed.”

The Steering Group of LMCS took responsibility for the strategic co-ordination of the project using their monthly meetings to review progress against the plan and to ensure that its implementation kept on track. Early on it was recognised that for the plan to succeed there was an additional need for operational co-ordination of the various day-to-day activities so that they were undertaken to an acceptable standard and harmonised. With the variety and volume of programmes and personnel involved there was always a high risk of conflict, dilution or duplication of effort. A sergeant from Thames Valley Police was therefore seconded to LMCS as a project manager and came to perform a vitally important function. The Community Safety Co-ordinator and partnership inspector explained that a lot of credit for the effective co-ordination of LMCS work was attributable to the project manager. This was not simply about having the right kind of personality:

For the job – for this co-ordination – you need somebody that’s extremely politically skilled, that believes in the job, and basically has got a lot of people skills. But also has got the management skills to maintain a clear focus, you know, budgetary and administrative, despite whatever else is happening. Because you’re actually talking about a job that’s built on conflict. It’s all about getting people to co-operate who wouldn’t normally co-operate unless you put a bit of effort into it and then once you’ve got that co-operation you can step back a bit. (Co-ordinator)

“Yeah but always be ready to jump in again. And of course the other thing that I think probably we haven’t emphasised enough is that we have to keep our lords and masters informed all of the time so that when we do ask them to step in, it might not be very often, but at least they know what they’re stepping into. And the project manager does brief them constantly.” (Partnership inspector)

Capacity

The final cornerstone of the LMCS partnership and partnering relates to capacity – specifically having the right staff and skill mix embedded within a structure that is sustainable. Four lessons from the LMCS experience and its capacity to deliver up a difference can be noted. First, there is the principle of tailoring the capacity of the project as opposed to adopting a Tayloristic approach reminiscent of Frederick Taylor’s scientific management (1911) where there is only ‘one best way’. While LMCS may provide a model for other partnerships to consider, it is, as the Community Safety Co-ordinator pointed out “the reverse of a one-size-fits-all approach”. The number and type of staff and their associated cost can be as little or as great as the needs require.

Second, before bringing in additional resources it is important to undertake a resource audit to identify hitherto latent resources:

“You’ve got to do a resource audit, what have you actually got. What have you got and what could be developed? I mean this project would not have been possible unless we’d tapped a source of funding that was there but latent, and that was the parish council.”

(Co-ordinator)

Parish and town councils are able to raise revenue by setting an agreed precept through council tax in the area. This enables them to provide resources to each locality based on need. For example, the total revenue raised through this method by Campbell Park in 2003/04 was £180,000 (at £38.54 per band D property) and Woughton raised £208,000 (at £59.78 per band D property).

Third, and consistent with findings from police research reviewed by Sherman and Eck (2002) on the relationship between police numbers and crime levels, it is not how many staff you have but the particular activities they are assigned to undertake which is critical. As the partnership inspector observed in relation to the ABOs:

“Police beat officers aren’t costing any more, it’s re-diverting resources into a more practical focus.”

Given the very high level of abstraction of ABOs during the period of the evaluation, there remains an open question of whether the BCU was so under strength that it required additional officers to support LMCS or had this way of working been more extensively applied it would have constituted a more effective use of existing police officer time.

Fourth, whilst the appointment of PCCSOs may only be suitable for the parishes of Milton Keynes⁴⁷ and other areas may consider the appointment of neighbourhood wardens and/or Police Community Support Officers better meets the needs identified, there is one essential resource common to any project:

“In view of the complexity of the model, it is essential that the scheme is co-ordinated centrally by a project manager. This is one cost that cannot be side-stepped.”

(Co-ordinator)

In Tables 5.2 and 5.3 the extra costs of the LMCS project and the funding sources are summarised.

Table 5.2 LMCS costs October 2002 – September 2003 relating to Campbell Park and Woughton parishes

Item	£
Project manager and on costs	30,000
Set up local offices (computers/phones etc)	5,000
2 PCCSOs and on costs	55,000
Training (including national courses)	2,500
Special operations in the areas ⁴⁸	10,000
<i>Total</i>	<i>102,500</i>

Table 5.3 LMCS funding sources

Source	£
Milton Keynes Council (PSA Funding)	37,500
Milton Keynes Council (CS Partnership)	10,000
Campbell Park Parish Council	27,500
Woughton Parish Council	27,500
<i>Total</i>	<i>102,500</i>

The resources invested in LMCS in both cash and kind have been relatively modest and spread among a range of partners. This augurs well for the project’s capacity to be sustained. It is unlikely that, for example, given the very positive reception of the PCCSOs,

47. At the time of writing LMCS has been extended to incorporate a total of five parishes – all with or intending to appoint PCCSOs.

48. For Fishermead the parish council made an additional £4,000 available to cover police overtime during Operation Dignify and £3,000 for environmental services during Operation Spring-clean. On both occasions the funds were not required.

the parishes will readily part with them. Similarly, whilst the organisation and delivery of special operations could be costly and time consuming, their main purpose was to make an immediate and demonstrable impact on crime and disorder. With the deployment of ABOs and the work of the PCCSOs, spectacular one-off operations can be superseded by more co-ordinated action from the partners based on existing responsibilities and resources. Indeed, from an invest to save perspective, it is perhaps fitting to close the chapter with the partnership inspector's observation:

"Long term if you can reduce the incidences of crime, disorder, damage, vandalism, you're gonna save the council money as well as improve community reassurance. So it could be cost effective in that way long term."

In the foreword to the recent Green Paper describing various options for police reform (Home Office, 2003a), the Home Secretary identifies a need to transcend traditional notions of *policing by consent* with a new principle of *policing through co-operation*. The keystone to this new approach is a citizen-focused police service acting in concert with other public services to work with local people to “build mutual trust and engagement”. In the National Policing Plan 2004-2007, published simultaneously (Home Office, 2003b), reference is made in the section devoted to delivering key priorities to the Police Standards Unit supporting the development of a model that “places local priorities at the heart of community policing”. Since October 2003 16 trial wards in eight police forces across England and Wales have been participating in the National Reassurance Policing Programme. The aim of the project is for the police to engage with local communities and partner agencies to ensure that local policing is conducted in a way that not only reduces crime but also makes people feel reassured. This report, also supported by the Police Standards Unit, has described the results of an evaluation of a project that was designed, named and delivered according to this new co-operative way of working: specifically, the Local Management of Community Safety.

To assess the impact of LMCS, a triangulated methodology comprising material from surveys, interviews and observations was employed. Concentrating on two socially deprived estates, pre- and post- intervention data were collected and compared. Wherever possible the before-after responses made by individuals were analysed. The concept of reassurance policing was used to give theoretical coherence to the aspirations and activities of the LMCS team. Because of the inclusive treatment of the term reassurance in policing commentary and research, four strands were identified and examined: namely, engagement from and with the public; feelings of safety and security; satisfaction with the policing provided; and confidence in the policing to be delivered. Similarly, the policing reviewed entailed analysis of not only the contribution made by the police – particularly in relation to ABOs – but also from the complementary policing directly delivered or co-ordinated by the PCCSOs.

Unlike Wilson and Kelling’s New Briarfield, promising rather than spectacular results have been indicated to date. The positive findings recorded are suggestive of the reassurance policing starting to make a difference in relation to an extremely challenging array of issues presented by the local management of community safety. In this concluding chapter the key

findings for each reassurance strand are summarised and provide a backdrop for the recommendations prompted by the results emerging from this evaluation.

Public engagement

Consistent with the community policing principles of responsiveness and facilitation described by Skogan and Hartnett, LMCS conceived and operated their public engagement based on the view that it was equally important to improve engagement from as well as with residents on the estates. This co-production of community safety did not operate in a vacuum and was constrained by socio-economic and housing factors. Nevertheless, a modest rise in collective efficacy or social capital was achieved. For example, although residents' sense of belonging and trust on the estates showed no improvement, the precursors to this in the form of higher levels of participation and greater knowledge of people in the area did register positive increases in the order of six percentage points. Similarly, whilst knowledge and sight of the newly created PCCSOs – as distinct from the outcome of their efforts – was limited, residents' awareness of who the parish councillors were and what they did both rose by around eight percentage points.

Facilitating engagement from residents was found to be closely related to what was termed a pyramid of participation. The pyramid comprises a small number of parish councillors at the apex elected to govern, through interest group leaders negotiating issues and services to volunteers, loyal residents and disengaged residents at the base interested in consulting, listening or ignoring respectively. A targeted and multi-faceted engagement strategy, employing different media and messages, helped to cater for these diverse population segments whilst simultaneously signifying a genuine commitment to help the community to help itself.

Improvements to engagement with the public were also found especially in relation to the introduction of ABOs serving the parishes and their estates. The aim of making these officers more visible, accessible and familiar to the public appears to have been achieved in spite of a high level of abstraction and staff turnover during the evaluation period. Thus there was an 11 percentage point rise in the proportion of people reporting that they saw an officer walking in their neighbourhood. Similarly, regarding familiarity, there was a five percentage point fall in the number of residents who knew neither the name nor the face of their local officer.

Beat patrolling was not, however, considered equivalent to foot patrolling and evidence was presented from ABOs how a motor vehicle could be a bridge rather than a barrier to public engagement.

As already noted, the knowledge of PCCSOs on the estates at the time of the follow-up survey was very limited but the value of their five different functions was unequivocally popular with councillors and residents later interviewed. The PCCSOs' liaison role with service providers on behalf of the parish was universally praised by the councillors. The PCCSOs linking people up with the right personnel from council departments or acting as caseworkers in more complex cases was positively regarded by residents. The photographic evidence also suggests that whilst for residents there is still much to do, the environmental clean-up projects have started to make a difference. Although not primarily tasked to act as wardens, a measure of the value of this function as well as the challenge presented by it is reflected in the post-evaluation decision by Milton Keynes Council to augment LMCS by contributing separate wardens to the project.

Safety and security

From both a social and a psychological perspective crime and the fear of crime remained of major relevance to residents. At both the baseline and the follow-up, reducing crime was ranked the top priority for the parish council. Similarly, fear of becoming a victim of crime was the second highest ranked worry behind something bad happening to a loved one.

Recorded levels of crime over the three financial years pre-dating and covering the implementation of LMCS increased in the BCU by 11 per cent whereas on Beanhill it fell by 19 per cent and only rose by seven per cent on Fishermead. In spite of the disappointing results from Fishermead, the proportion of residents on both estates who thought there was more crime fell by six percentage points. This was a statistically significant result and compares favourably with their BCS counterparts where a three per cent rise was found.

Attempts to measure feelings of safety using traditional questions did not reveal any statistically significant improvements but did indicate the limitations caused by the confounding influence of fear of the dark. For example, residents feeling unsafe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark irrespective of any fear of the dark they might have generated a two per cent rise between baseline and follow-up. However, when the responses of those not at all fearful of the dark were examined, a different picture emerged with a one per cent fall of those feeling very unsafe and a two per cent rise in those feeling very safe.

In contrast to the results relating to safety, the measures concerned with feelings of security were much less equivocal and much more positive. Statistically significant reductions in worry about becoming a victim of burglary, sexual assault, physical assault, and being

attacked due to skin colour, ethnicity or religion were achieved. Worry about being mugged/robbed also fell. Compared with their BCS counterparts this is a more positive outcome, bearing in mind that burglary was the only statistically significant reduction recorded and that this was three times less than LMCS i.e. two per cent against six per cent.

During the baseline survey female residents were identified as the most vulnerable group and, by follow-up, statistically significant reductions in worry about the four crime categories of burglary and the various types of assault were noted for them. There was less evidence to support the idea of the elderly perceiving themselves to be a vulnerable group at baseline. Although the proportion of those aged 65+ who reported feeling unsafe walking alone in the neighbourhood by day fell by over eight per cent, this was not statistically significant and may be a chance result. The most dramatic and positive outcome for LMCS in terms of potentially vulnerable groups relates to members of minority ethnic communities who recorded an 18 percentage point decline in their fear of being attacked due to their skin colour, ethnicity, or religion.

The results relating to improvements in physical and social disorders were more mixed. For graffiti just under a third of the residents thought that things had improved between baseline and follow-up compared with approaching a quarter who thought it was worse. The survey result for litter and rubbish was even less positive. In spite of post-survey interview and photographic evidence to the contrary, only 14 per cent of the residents said there had been an improvement compared with over 50 per cent who stated that the position had deteriorated. In contrast, LMCS appears to have been more successful in addressing various social disorders of concern. Drugs, drunkenness and teenagers hanging around all recorded statistically significant reductions as being a very big problem for residents.

In exploring residents' feelings about crime and disorder it became clear that both constitute real and relevant concerns to them. However, at the affective level, a boundary could be noted between residents' fear of crime on the one hand and their anger with various manifestations of disorder on the other.

In assessing the connection between the various improvements recorded and the action taken by LMCS, the evidence suggests that success to date has not been the product of a single tactical option such as the conducting of special operations nor the deployment of ABOs and/or PCCSOs. Instead the success makes more sense if understood as the conducting of various activities within a framework of policing through active co-operation and collaboration.

Satisfaction and confidence

Overall, the evaluation of satisfaction and confidence suggested often positive but occasionally negative results. Victim treatment by the police based on a cross-sectional comparison, for example, improved in general by five percentage points and positive ratings across the dimensions of attentiveness, responsiveness, competence, and demeanour were recorded between baseline and follow-up. The level of reporting crime to the police by victims over the evaluation period remained fairly stable with approximately a third not reporting the matter to the police. However, rather than signifying dissatisfaction with the policing provided, the reasons given for non-reporting were suggestive of enhanced police-community relations. For example, the view that the police could have done nothing fell by just under ten percentage points and the perception that the police would not have been bothered or interested also fell by just under seven percentage points. Instead of a change in force policy or the provision of special training for front-line officers these improvements were attributed by the police officers interviewed to the adoption of a community policing problem-solving approach by the ABOs.

The high levels of abstraction and turnover in ABOs and their supervisors leaves an open question whether greater gains could have been made. What, however, is not in question are the enduring problems attending the ABO role – specifically, the inadequate supervision received by ABOs, their low status relative to other roles in the force, and the inadequacy of current performance measures.

In spite of 70 per cent of calls for service to the police not relating to crime matters, LMCS was unable to benefit from the enormous potential offered by the single non-emergency police number. Although the majority using the service gave excellent/good ratings at both baseline and follow-up, a downward shift was noted of just under three per cent coupled with a rise of two per cent in the very poor/poor ratings. Three types of criticism of the service were made by users: namely, the time taken and cost to get through to the right person, the service being neither local nor knowledgeable about the locality, and the difficulty of remembering the six-digit number.

Not surprisingly, top of the residents' list of community safety priorities at both baseline and follow-up was increasing the number of police officers on the beat. Through establishing ABOs the LMCS laid an important foundation for developing greater confidence in the local police. Residents' community safety priorities were, however, broader than pure law enforcement activity and encompassed social problem solving as well. This serves to endorse the policing rather than police-only model developed by LMCS.

The residents' expectations of both ABOs and PCCSOs were generally consonant with the roles identified for them by LMCS. ABOs and PCCSOs delivered reassurance through meeting residents' expectations that the former would deter would-be criminals whilst the latter, as a complement rather than substitute, attended to the physical and social disorders prevalent on the estates. There was, however, a much lower expectation from residents regarding the intelligence-gathering function of ABOs because of the fear of reprisal. Comments from residents suggest that this is neither an inappropriate nor impossible objective to achieve but that the tipping point in public confidence has not yet been reached.

In the follow-up survey the residents' assessment of the ABOs' and PCCSOs' performance of what they considered to be their most important jobs was moderately rather than spectacularly positive. The majority gave the ABOs a fair rating for their performance in deterring would-be criminals and/or preventing crime. Similarly, for the PCCSOs, from a much smaller proportion of residents who knew of them, a fair assessment was given by the majority for their performance in dealing with environmental problems.

However, when the combined efforts of LMCS were assessed in relation to the community policing provided, a more positive response was given. The excellent/good ratings rose by just under two percentage points and the very poor/poor ratings fell by nine percentage points. This reflects the fact that over a third of the matched responses gave a more positive response at follow-up compared with baseline.

In working to increase the satisfaction with and confidence in the policing of the estates LMCS staff were very conscious of the years of perceived and real neglect by officials and the agencies they represent. This combined with acute social deprivation and economic disadvantage added up to a recognition of the long-term nature of the challenge faced and the importance of mending not only broken windows but also broken expectations.

Partnership and partnering

The practical lessons learned from this evaluation of managing community safety locally can be summarised in three main points. Taken together they provide a basis for developing a model of effective practice.

First, the challenge of effective partnership endeavour is less about knowing what to do than how to do it. A case of 'How Works' rather than 'What Works'. Second, a vital ingredient missing from various recipes of good practice has been partnering and the cultural

component. This is the difference between legally prescribed partnerships and voluntarily agreed partnering characterised by high levels of co-operation and trust. Third, four cornerstones of successful partnership and partnering were observed in LMCS: namely, comprehension, commitment, co-ordination and capacity. Comprehension entails inclusion, information and interpretation. Particular emphasis is given to the partnership not only including statutory agencies but also the inclusion of residents in both defining the problems and sharing in the delivery of the solutions. Commitment involves passion, perseverance, and proportionality. Passion means wanting to make a difference matched by a commensurate commitment to persevere through disagreements with recourse, if necessary, up the chain of command of the various agencies in the partnership. Co-ordination comprises a plan along with programmes to achieve it and the harmonising of their implementation. Lastly, capacity is about having the right number of staff and skill mix embedded within a structure that is sustainable. Experience from LMCS demonstrates that a successful project does not automatically require additional and substantial resources. Instead, having tailored the resources to meet the requirements identified, an audit of existing capacity needs to be undertaken. This can result in the freeing up of hitherto untapped sources, as was the case with the parish council and its authority to precept. Similarly, instead of assuming that new ways of working require more of the same resources, primacy was given to revising the activities that existing staff were assigned to do e.g. the ABOs. However, whatever the staffing structure and skill mix determined, LMCS also demonstrated the critically important role of and need to appoint a project manager.

Running through each of the reassurance strands and the reassurance policing activity has been the idea of partnership in both defining the problems and determining the solutions. Instead of doing things to the community, LMCS has concentrated on doing things with local people – not simply to demonstrate a genuine concern and commitment but to form a new partnership where the community is empowered to direct the policing experts and officials. This is what the community safety co-ordinator described in Chapter 3 as “giving local control” and what may form in future a basis for delivering policing through co-operation.

Recommendations	Home Office	Police forces	CDRPs*	Researchers
The policy and practice development of reassurance policing should comprehensively address the variety of strands constituting reassurance as well as the benefits to be derived from a multi-faceted response by police and council/parish officers working together.	✓		✓	
Public engagement strategies should treat engagement from and with the public as being of equal importance.		✓	✓	
The potential of parish councils in contributing to the local management of community safety should be explored and exploited.			✓	
Public engagement should be informed by knowledge of the pyramid of participation and messages and media to the different audiences tailored accordingly.		✓	✓	
Drive-by or walk-through policing should be enhanced by proactive engagement coupled with a problem-solving approach.		✓	✓	
Local community safety initiatives should include a member or members of staff tasked to undertake the five functions of liaison with service providers, linking residents with statutory/voluntary agencies, casework, project work and neighbourhood surveillance.		✓	✓	
Traditional measures of safety, including walking alone in the neighbourhood after dark, should be revised or replaced.	✓			✓
Community safety initiatives should identify those groups most vulnerable to fear of crime e.g. females, the elderly, those on low incomes and members of minority ethnic communities, and target their action accordingly.		✓	✓	
The police and statutory agencies in consultation with local people should consider conducting a special crime and environmental operation as a first-step in a strategy for establishing community safety.		✓	✓	

Recommendations	Home Office	Police forces	CDRPs*	Researchers
Further investigation into the distinction between fear of crime and anger with incivilities should be undertaken to inform future policy and practice development.	✓			✓
The status, supervision and performance measurement of ABOs should be addressed and consideration given to special priority payments and the adoption of quality of service and problem-solving measures.	✓	✓		
Action should be taken in relation to establishing/improving police non-emergency call handling supported by local statutory service providers who can assist with physical and social disorders.	✓	✓		
The management of broken expectations requires as much attention as that paid to broken windows.		✓	✓	
Partnerships and their sub-groups should explore and develop methods of partnering.		✓	✓	
Partnerships should audit their structure and functioning to ensure that the four cornerstones of comprehension, commitment, co-ordination and capacity are in place and operating effectively.		✓	✓	
The results of this evaluation should be disseminated to managers and practitioners responsible for neighbourhood policing, including the National Reassurance Policing Programme and other partnerships engaged in the local management of community safety.	✓			

* Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships

Exhibit 3.2: Before and after LMCS action on Beanhill



Before



After





Exhibit 3.3: Before and after LMCS action on Fishermead









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