

MATCHING PROVISION TO NEEDS: THE EXAMPLE OF VICTIM SUPPORT

by

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Abstract

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Matching provision to needs: the example of Victim Support

The current study is an evaluation of a voluntary sector service, Victim Support. The focal points of this work are the impact of crime upon victims and the extent to which they feel that Victim Support, as a service provider, has helped to restore their sense of equilibrium. In this way the success of a community response to crime is considered.

The research was undertaken between 1998 and 2002 and was largely based upon the work of one local scheme; Victim Support, Plymouth. The study included the views of service users (victims of crime) and those of service providers (paid staff and volunteers).

In contrast to earlier studies, my work looks at Victim Support at a much later date in its history, at a time when service provision has become increasingly professionalised and standardised. Furthermore my work examined Victim Support at a time when it is being charged, fairly overtly, with responsibilities alongside other voluntary and state agencies for the governance of crime. At the same time Victim Support is under pressure to provide a service that is 'community' in nature, whilst meeting the stricter economic imperatives of managerialism.

Previous studies do not appear to have considered the value of all types of service provision that Victim Support makes, nor have they directly included victims who, though quite badly affected, were not typically offered assistance. More recent studies of Victim Support have also been undertaken more as a by product of national victim surveys, with only vague references to the contact made with victims, and within which support is offered/provided. The work that I have undertaken seeks to address these gaps in knowledge, making a clear link between the needs of crime victims and the organisational response of Victim Support at the local level.

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Signed.....*L. A. Simmonds*.....
Date.....*19-4-05*.....

Introduction

Maguire (1985) noted that voluntary organisations in Britain and elsewhere have been less concerned with arguments about establishing standards of need or about entitlement to their services than with discovering where they can be of most practical help with limited resources. Whilst this approach may be viewed as admirable it is one, it may be said, that is losing ground particularly where organisations are funded largely by the state.

Victim Support is a voluntary sector organisation which, in receiving most of its funding from central government and in being closely aligned to the criminal justice system, has come under increasing pressure to show that it does provide a valuable service. Indeed, as will be discussed within this thesis, the government has stated quite explicitly that Victim Support should provide 'value for money'.

This thesis provides an evaluation of how Victim Support addresses victims' needs. It is essentially an empirical examination of the way Victim Support responds to a group of victims across a range of offences. The main research question asked is 'to what extent does the service provided by Victim Support meet victims' needs?' In other words, how far did contact with Victim Support improve the situation that victims found themselves to be in following the crime. This question can be answered in a number of ways. For example, what services did victims receive and how did they feel as a result. At the same time, the research considered what services victims said they wanted in comparison to those they received.

Victim Support has developed and consolidated its position over time, largely as a result of sustained government funding which has allowed the establishment of a national umbrella association, the National Association of Victim Support Schemes (NAVSS)¹. The NAVSS has become the voice of victims within the UK. It also acts as a regulatory body to which local member schemes throughout England and Wales must be affiliated in order to function.

Whilst Victim Support has continued to promote itself as a means of community support for victims of crime, it aims to provide an increasingly professionalised and standardised service. The initial model of support grew somewhat haphazardly, providing assistance to a narrower band of (often burglary) victims. This was the result of selective referral procedures in place at the time, combined with the greater likelihood of certain crimes, such as burglary, being reported to and recorded by the police. A further factor was the extent to which the police were less confident about relatively untrained Victim Support volunteers assisting those victimised by more serious crime, more serious than for example burglary.

More recently there has been a push from the centre, that is from the national association, for local schemes to conform to a core model of service provision and for all volunteers to receive general and, where appropriate, specialist victim training. The organisation has undergone restructuring with the introduction of a new band of management at area level². And, as Maguire and Kynch (2000) note,

¹Throughout this work the shorthand terms 'national', 'national office' and 'Victim Support' are used when referring to the NAVSS which is based in London. The term 'Victim Support' is also used to discuss the organisation as a whole, and when referring to Victim Support, Plymouth on which this study is based.

² This resulted in the local scheme 'co-ordinator' being renamed 'branch manager'. Both terms are used interchangeably throughout this thesis.

Victim Support has taken on the language of managerialism and service provision in the later stages of its development.

Victim Support is therefore an organisation in transition and consequently, as Maguire and Corbett (1987) noted, it is difficult to present a clear picture about what is happening within the service at any one time. The fact that policy developed by Victim Support 'national' takes time to feed through to local member schemes also complicates the evaluative process. The apparent mismatch between what Victim Support 'national' and local member schemes view as operationally appropriate also generates difficulty for those endeavouring to promote clarity within their research. For example in the current project the scheme studied was apparently 'out of step' with 'national' in continuing to use the unannounced volunteer visit as a means of initial contact³ with victims.

That said, the research for this thesis was undertaken largely on the work of one local Victim Support scheme, and clearly this does present difficulties in terms of extending the findings across the organisation as a whole. Indeed given the scheme's continued use of one form of contact which other schemes have eschewed, it may be that claims as to typicality may be less justified than was initially envisaged. However in taking this approach my work looks at specific forms of contact that previous studies have not considered. The research has embraced both a national and local view of Victim Support, and in this way has sought to examine the way in which the organisation responds in its entirety to victims of crime.

³Although I am informed by the scheme's branch manager that this practice is soon to cease.

Chapter one looks at the way in which victims of crime have been 'reborn' and the latent consequences ensuing from this for victimology. Thus we see the influence of positivism within victimology today and the way in which the more recent victimagogic approach to victims (van Dijk 1992) may be viewed as governments being concerned to be seen to be doing something about crime.

In chapter two a review of how crime has been measured over time is undertaken, with particular attention being paid to the impact of crime upon victims. The chapter provides background information against which the findings in the current study can be presented in chapter six. Indeed as discussed more fully in chapter six, it is the impact of crime that produces one measure of victims' 'needs'.

Chapter three focuses specifically upon Victim Support, charting its growth throughout a period when the managerialism that has increasingly been introduced into public sector services, has impacted upon voluntary sector agencies also. Findings from previous evaluations of Victim Support are presented to provide a backdrop for the data presented in chapter seven.

In chapter four the community scheme upon which my research was based is examined. Within this chapter Victim Support is assessed on a micro level, noting the operationalisation locally of structural change and the demands made by recent legislation. Chapter four also examines how this local scheme has preserved its own identity by continuing to use the traditional 'unannounced' volunteer visit, and in providing some assistance for victims of car crime.

In chapter five the largely quantitative methodology employed in the study is considered. The approaches taken in building the samples upon which the research was based and methods of data collection are discussed fully.

Chapters six and seven present findings from my research. Chapter six looks at the impact of crime, whilst chapter seven shows how Victim Support ameliorates the effects of such victimisation. Both chapters discuss the issue of victims' needs, and how Victim Support attempts to meet those needs. The findings are compared and contrasted with those of previous studies in order to evaluate the effectiveness of Victim Support at the present time.

In chapter eight victims' needs are considered from the perspective of the volunteers and paid staff who provide the service. Such discussions are largely based upon my empirical work. More widely an analysis of volunteering is also undertaken. Finally, the implications arising from this research are discussed in chapter nine.

Chapter One: Victims of Crime: from obscurity to centre stage.

Introduction

This chapter begins by looking at the marginalisation that victims faced prior to the second half of the twentieth century, noting the ways in which academic interest in their 'rebirth' in the 1940s and 1950s was less concerned with their well being than with their culpability for crimes experienced. The chapter then moves on to examine victimological developments from the 1960s onwards, as by then the notion of 'victim blaming' (von Hentig 1948) was giving way to a range of concerns relating to crime and its impact upon victims and wider society. The development of support services and victim friendly policies is then examined. This begins with a consideration of some of the earlier concessions made, for example in the UK the creation of compensation schemes and the development of a 'state approved' dedicated victim agency such as Victim Support. The chapter concludes with a discussion of more recent policy developments within the UK and further afield and the extent to which they support victims of crime.

The forgotten actor and the rise of victimology

The marginalisation of crime victims (Rock 1990; Rock 1999) is well documented within the literature, with victims referred to variously as the 'Cinderella of the criminal law' (Schafer 1960 cited in Mawby and Walklate 1994) or the 'forgotten actor' (Mawby and Gill 1987). This process is of note for three reasons, all of which are integral to the rise of victimology. Firstly, victims of crime in times past were at the centre of the 'criminal justice system', but were subsequently marginalised from this position. Secondly, the way in which victims were viewed and analysed within early victimology has had some far-reaching and negative

consequences for them in modern times; indeed the criminal justice system, the state and state funded agencies have not always served victims well. Thirdly victimology has undergone something of a transition in its focus (Fattah 1997a). In its early theoretical form victimology was greatly concerned with the identification of victim types and the 'victim-offender relationship'. In its modern form however, the consideration of the needs of victims have risen to the fore, accompanied by similar concerns regarding the services that should be available for their relief (Fattah 1979; Karmen 1996; Fattah 1997a; van Dijk 1992)¹.

Victims were then very much central characters in considering the harmful actions of others, when no distinction was made between private wrongs and public crimes. The victim enjoyed an 'unchallenged legal status' (Fattah 1997b). However Fattah describes the way in which the 'wergeld', that is the indemnity payable to the victim, was converted to a fine to be paid to the King's coffers (Fattah 1986; Fattah 1997b). This, together with the development of the criminal law system, heralded the disappearance from view of the victim, representing what some have called the theft of conflicts by the state (Christie 1977).

From this point onwards conflicts between two individuals resulted in a debt to society, rather than, as before, an obligation to the victim. The victim became the 'forgotten man' (Shapland et al 1985; Fattah 1986:1) or the 'forgotten figure' (Fattah 1997b:259) within criminal justice; a legal nonentity who could either act as a 'buttress' to the state or to the Crown's case, or suffer certain consequences (Fattah 1986; Fattah 1997b).

¹ See also citation of van Dijk in Frieberg, A., *Working Together to Improve Services for Victims of Crime*. http://www.victimsa.org/conference/arie_frieberg.htm (accessed 4.3.04).

Early Victimology: precipitation and blame

Victims of crime have more recently been discussed in terms of their 'rebirth' as significant actors within the criminal justice system and, indeed, within society itself (Mawby and Walklate 1994). The nature of this rebirth however is complex. Early victimology, as criminology before it (Fattah 1997a), took a positivist standpoint (Miers 1989) by focusing upon conventional (reported) crime (Walklate 1989); crimes of the 'street' rather than crimes of the 'suite' (Mawby and Walklate 1994) and other less visible incidents. In this way, only a partial view of crime and victimisation was gained. Indeed modern victimology has been criticised for restricting its gaze largely towards only those disadvantaged by traditional crime (Fattah 1986).

Early victimologists created strict typologies of victims. Von Hentig (1948) and Mendelsohn (cited in Hoffman 1992) for example drew clear connections between victim type and culpability for the crime committed. This combination of early positivist victimology, and within it notions of victim type, was a toxic mix as it created a legacy whereby certain victims would be viewed negatively (Christie 1986). This legacy persists.

The typologies 'allowed' causal and potentially dangerous (Walklate 1989) explanations of crime and the victim's role therein. Thus some victims were viewed as 'less deserving' whereas others fell into the mould of the 'ideal victim' (Christie 1986). Victims of sexual assaults for example have been particularly prone to the negative effects of such stereotyping, leading to patterns of attrition at the police recording stage; a phenomenon that persists in spite of Home Office intervention (Gregory and Lees 1999).

Von Hentig was one of the earliest commentators in the field of victimology. He created a classification of thirteen victim types (1948) and, in the process, identified what he referred to as a 'nefarious symbiosis' (ibid: see Foreword) within victim-offender relationships. From this he developed the notion of victim proneness (Walklate 1989). Mendelsohn built upon von Hentig's work by producing a framework of victim culpability (Walklate 1989). Blame was therefore assigned to victims for the extent to which they were guilty of contributing to the crime, ranging from the 'completely innocent' to the most guilty victim (ibid).

A number of commentators have taken these theories further. Wolfgang (1958 cited in Walklate 1989) produced the concept of 'victim precipitation' based upon a sample of violent crimes in which victims had struck the first blow. Normandeau (1968, also cited in Walklate 1989) applied Wolfgang's theory to a sample of robbery victims, concluding that some victims create 'temptation opportunity situations' and thus precipitate crime. However it was Amir's (1971 cited in Schneider 2001) controversial use of this theory in relation to rape victims that attracted so much criticism from other (feminist) commentators. For Amir those victims who had consented to sexual relations in the eyes of offenders, but who then retracted, or who did not resist strongly enough, or who entered into a vulnerable sexually charged situation, precipitated their crime (quoted by Morris 1987 and cited in Walklate 1989:4).

The loose application of such theories upon diverse samples of victims and the tendency for a narrow legalistic approach within the work of some commentators has, it may be said, been both questionable and dangerous (Walklate 1989). Thus over the years women rape victims have been shown to experience secondary

victimisation at the hands of the police (Temkin 1999; Jordan 2001), whilst female victims of sexual assaults generally have, on occasions, been equally badly treated by the judiciary².

Whilst the dangers of applying such notions are clear, the theory of victim-precipitation has been supported on the grounds that there is nothing wrong with the theory itself as it provides a more dynamic view of crime (Fattah 1976, cited in Fattah 1979). However, Fattah (1979) later acknowledged the criticisms made, particularly those from feminist standpoints in relation to the treatment of rape victims. Such criticisms focused upon the loose operationalisation of the theory by, for example, Amir in his study of rape (1971, cited by Walklate 1989). According to Fattah, it was not so much 'what' the theory said, but more the way others defined victim-precipitation in their own studies (1979).

Fattah (1979) adds his own critique of those who criticise the notion of victim-precipitation. Fattah believes that they have become confused as to the true nature of the theory because of the legalistic language that was 'borrowed' in producing it. Their confusion, Fattah claims, lies between the intended behaviouristic nature of victim-precipitation as a concept and the legalistic nature that it acquired as a result of terms such as 'guilt', 'culpability', 'responsibility' and 'blame' being used out of context. Indeed Fattah supports Wolfgang's theory as 'basically sound' because victim-precipitation focuses upon crime as a dynamic act, involving the actions of both the offender and the victim. He criticises writers such as Clark and Lewis (1977, cited in Fattah 1979) for failing to appreciate that

² See 'Hold your tongue m'lud' in 'The Times' 15th June, 1993 which cites amongst other cases the remarks of Judge Bertrand Richards who in 1982 told a teenage hitch hiker that she was 'guilty of a great deal of contributory negligence' vis a vis her victimisation.

the offender's interpretation of the victim's attitude and behaviour is necessary for a full understanding of crime. Finally, he defends the use of 'explanatory' concepts such as victim-precipitated, victim-facilitated, victim-initiated, victim-induced and victim-invited criminality in that the theory should 'in no way be interpreted as an attempt on the part of the social scientist to blame the victim or to hold him responsible for the crime' (Fattah 1979:202). This attempt at 'value freedom' has since attracted criticism itself from other commentators (Walklate 1989).

A sea change has however occurred within victimology over the past thirty years, with a desire to assist rather than blame victims. Since the 1970s studies of individual victims have given way to victimisation surveys (Fattah 1989). In the USA for example, the President's Commission on Law Enforcement (ibid) sought to measure the impact of crime and so encourage victims to participate in the criminal justice system. Victimology underwent a 'metamorphosis', finding new focus in the support given to victims of crime (Fattah 1979). The discipline was to focus less on the 'act' of victimisation and more on the 'action' that could be taken thereafter (ibid).

Fattah (ibid) cited three factors for this shift. These included a swing to the right in public opinion and among criminal justice personnel in western liberal democracies. The influence of feminism, especially in relation to the victimisation of female rape and domestic violence victims, and the upsurge of interest in, and funding of, applied research in criminal justice at the expense of criminology.

As in the USA victims in the UK also became a legitimate political target (Phipps 1988). They had gained recognition in the early 1960s via the creation of a state

compensation scheme (Rock 1990) and in the 1970s with the development of Victim Support (Holtom and Raynor 1988). Furthermore, the 1970s saw the utilisation of victimisation surveys which acknowledged the extent of crime both locally, for example in Islington (Sparks et al 1977), and nationally, in periodic sweeps of the British Crime Survey. Both Left and Right, in and out of government, also came to recognise the value of acknowledging victims of crime (Phipps 1988).

For Fattah (1997a), the earlier 'theoretical victimology' gave way to a 'humanistic movement'; from 'scholarly research to political activism' (p186). Whilst accepting this he offers the critique that this has refocused our attention to the more traditional crimes noted earlier. This has been a theme developed throughout this chapter and is something that will be discussed at different points in the following section, where policy and service developments for victims over the past thirty years or so will now be considered.

Victims of Crime: policy developments in the UK, in Europe and the wider international context.

One of the earliest moves towards helping victims of crime came from the state in the form of criminal injuries compensation. The first schemes were developed in the UK, in 1964, and in New Zealand around the same time (Rock 1990). Its champion in the UK, Marjory Fry, had promoted state compensation as a means of achieving restoration for victims and offenders alike; thereby closing the gap between them. However, it was the view that crime victims deserved the same collective welfare response aimed at reducing other social ills in the immediate post war era that won the day (Mawby and Walklate 1994). The state had accepted a duty to support those subject to the negative effects of laissez faire

capitalism (Beveridge 1942). Thus it was argued that the state should also take responsibility for crime and its impact.

Whilst this perspective may be persuasive, Rock (1990) paints the emergence of criminal injuries compensation as more of a concession, both to victims of crime and, indeed, to the wider public (ibid). Rising crime rates in the post-war era fuelled an increasingly punitive atmosphere and, more importantly, were undermining the legitimacy of government. By compensating victims, those in power could be seen to be 'doing something' about crime.

Further formalised arrangements for the financial compensation of victims were made from the 1970s onwards. The Criminal Justice Act 1972 made it possible for the courts to order offenders to pay their victims compensation, such that orders could be imposed in addition to sentence. Further legislation fine-tuned these arrangements. The Criminal Justice Act 1982 provided for the payment of compensation as a sentence in its own right, and for this to be prioritised over the collection of fines. The Criminal Justice Act 1988 required magistrates and judges to record their reasons for not ordering compensation in cases where the circumstances suggested that this should happen (Rock 1990; Mawby and Walklate 1994).

Both of these approaches, however, were flawed. The state scheme was, and continues to be, based upon the notion of compensating blameless victims (Rock 1990; Victim Support 2003c). Thus applications from those adjudged as 'precipitating' crime or whose characters were marred by previous convictions, may be denied or reduced.

Whilst compensation from the state does not rest upon the offender being convicted, court compensation does. Thus when courts order compensation, offenders must be both suitably compliant and have the means to pay. The problems relating to court compensation are currently under consideration; one proposal being the development of a 'Victims' Fund'³ from which payments in full could be made promptly to victims (Home Office 2001a; Home Office 2004).

The creation of Victim Support in the 1970s in the UK may be regarded as a further watershed in recognising the needs of victims. As well as providing a range of services, Victim Support works to raise awareness of the effects of crime and to ensure the recognition of victims' rights (Reeves and Mulley 2000). Indeed whilst avoiding political controversy for the first twenty years or so of its existence (Williams 1999) the organisation has, as Holtom and Raynor predicted (ibid), begun to campaign more vocally and overtly on behalf of victims.

Victim Support commissions research to underpin campaigns for the better treatment of victims; for example an analysis of child witnesses in court (Victim Support 1996). The service convenes Working Parties to review the type and extent of service provision being made at any given time, for example the 1990 National Inter Agency Working Party on Domestic Violence (Reeves and Mulley 2000). Victim Support also enjoys 'extensive contact' (ibid) with government bodies and the main professionals working in the criminal justice system (ibid), and is frequently asked to sit on external working parties and national committees. Victim Support has thus had input into the Victim's Charter, sitting as members of

³ The Home Office are also proposing a surcharge on criminal convictions and fixed penalty notices (Home Office 2004). Monies collected via surcharge will be paid to the Victims Fund.

the Victims' Steering Group that was responsible for its monitoring and implementation (ibid).

In 1995 Victim Support criticised the proposed changes to the criminal injuries compensation scheme (Williams 1999). They have also criticised the scheme's long standing flaws, for example the way in which the notions of 'deserving and undeserving victims' continues to be applied (Victim Support 1995; Victim Support 2002a; Victim Support 2003c). In 1995 Victim Support published a policy paper calling for victims 'rights' to be considered (Victim Support 1995). This represented something of a sea change for a body that had traditionally concerned itself with victims' 'needs' (Williams 1999).

Within this document Victim Support called for an amendment to the courts compensation schemes along the lines of the 'Victims' Fund' that the Government has more recently proposed (Home Office 2001a; Home Office 2004). The Victim Support Manifesto of 2001 also called for, amongst other things, the rights of victims to be recognised and to be enforceable (Victim Support 2001). Victim Support was also 'closely involved' in promoting minimum standards of treatment for victims throughout Europe in order to benefit citizens in their own member states and to assist them in the event of victimisation in a country other than their own (Victim Support 2002c).

Again in their report, 'Criminal Neglect. No justice beyond criminal justice', Victim Support endeavour to raise the profile of victims still further, looking outside the criminal justice system to see how other service providers could help (Victim Support 2002a). A case is made for providers in areas such as health, housing

and finance to consider changing examples of bad practice that are currently operating against the interests of those victimised (ibid). The report points out that most crimes are not resolved or processed by the criminal justice system. Any negative actions on the part of other agencies can only exacerbate the impact of crime.

The Victim's Charter has provided a further example of attempts to support victims in the aftermath of crime. Whilst the charter of 1990 spoke of victims' rights, there were hardly any to be found (Williams 1999). The second charter in 1996 moved away from the language of rights, to that of 'standards of service' where victims were treated as 'consumers' of the criminal justice system. The charter did not however make any new provisions for victims, but reiterated those that already existed; for example the post-sentence contact between victims of serious crime and the probation service, introduced in the 1990 version.

Furthermore, whilst the 1996 charter does notify users of the complaints procedure that is available to them this is not particularly transparent (Williams 1999). The Victim's Charter is also viewed more as a tool of the managerialism (James and Raine 1998) that has swept through the criminal justice system (Williams 1999), providing for example that the police will '...respond to your report as quickly as they can.' In this way it is viewed as reinforcing the performance indicator culture that the police and other state agencies are increasingly required to uphold.

A review of the Victim's Charter, as already noted, took place in 2001; although this has not resulted in an updated version. The government have however created a Code of Practice for victims under section 13 of the Domestic Violence,

Crime and Victims Act 2004. This is the first time that legislation has specifically underpinned the range of services/provisions for victims within the criminal justice process. Furthermore, the Parliamentary Commissioner Act 1967, as amended by the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004, allows for breaches of the Code of Practice to be referred to the Parliamentary Ombudsman. In this way victims have been given rights in law.

Whilst this code has built upon the provisions of the Victim's Charter, Victim Support expressed some disappointment that the 'expected' position of a specific Victims' Ombudsman was not created, although a 'Commissioner for Victims and Witnesses' under section 17 has been provided for (Victim Support 2002b). The Commissioner must generally promote the interests of victims and witnesses and must report to the Secretary of State. Part of his/her role will be to keep under review the Code of Practice. The Commissioner has no direct influence however upon individual breaches of the code. Such matters, as discussed earlier, must be referred to the general Parliamentary Ombudsman.

The 1990s onwards have seen an increasing number of mechanisms for promoting the position of victims within the criminal justice system, under the umbrella of restorative justice. Thus restorative justice seeks to empower victims whilst at the same time reintegrating offenders back into mainstream society. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 for example, provides for victim-offender programmes within youth offending; bringing victims and offenders together for the purpose of mediation. The Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999 created a new youth sentence in the form of the Referral Order and established Youth Offender Panels which again allows for further victim involvement in the criminal

justice process. The Criminal Justice and Courts Services Act 2000 ratified and widened provision for probation contact with victims. Thus the probation service is required to contact victims of serious crime where offenders are imprisoned for one year or more. This is to allow victims the chance to comment on issues pertaining to, for example, release plans.

The opportunity for victims to make a personal statement that can be attached to the case file and used at key stages of the decision making process has more recently been provided for (Home Office 1996), and was to be extended country wide in 2001 (Home Office 2000 cited in Edwards 2001). The Code of Practice laid down by the Domestic Violence, Crimes and Victims Act 2004 reiterates this point providing that the police must advise victims of their right to make such a statement and its purpose (point 7.19; 11).

The mechanisms discussed are not however without their problems. Restorative Justice does not always attract victims into the process, as intended. Indeed victims may be reluctant to become involved (Newburn et al 2002). In addition, the desire to deal with (particularly) young offenders more swiftly may also militate against victim inclusion (Williams 2000a). Probation contact with victims has also attracted criticism as victims may feel that the information that they are given is very limited, and consequently experience secondary victimisation (Crawford and Enterkin 1999).

The opportunity for victims to make a personal statement is again subject to critique, especially at the point of sentencing. Research has found that a degree of confusion has existed concerning the rationale for this type of victim inclusion

(Edwards 2001). In other words whose interests or what purpose do these statements serve (ibid)? On a more positive note for victims in the UK, impact statements have not been used solely at the point of sentencing (Reeves 2000)⁴. This has been welcomed by Victim Support, because of the perceived burden that statements taken at this stage of the legal process can exert upon victims (ibid). However, less positively, the act of taking such statements may raise victims' expectations unrealistically. A range of negative psychological effects (ibid) may follow where victims feel disappointed with the outcome of their cases.

A number of government reports/papers published recently; 'Criminal Justice: The way ahead' (Home Office 2001), the White Paper 'Justice for All' (Home Office 2002) and the national strategy 'A New Deal for Victims and Witnesses' (Home Office 2003), present a range of proposals for supporting victims either in the aftermath of crime generally or, more specifically, for attending court as witnesses. The new Code of Practice for Victims is discussed fleetingly whilst the decision to appoint a Victims' Commissioner rather than a Victims' Ombudsman is not explained. A lot of emphasis is, however placed upon the importance of encouraging victims to report crime and to give evidence at court. Whilst each paper discusses overlapping areas of victim provision 'A New Deal for Victims and Witnesses' (Home Office 2003) enters into a more socially controlling discourse in discussing the government's aim to develop strategies to 'normalise' the reporting of crime, and to turn around the culture in high crime areas of 'not grassing' (Walklate and Evans 1999).

⁴ Unlike for example in South Australia where victims may be permitted to read a prepared statement to the sentencing court under the Victim Impact Statement (Amendment) Act 1998 (Edwards 2001).

The 'victims' movement' worldwide provides a range of services for victims of crime, although the nature of providers is diverse and different types of services are offered to different victim populations (Mawby 2003: 148). Whilst the voluntary sector is the main provider in England and Wales, more state involvement is found in some European countries, such as Spain (Vidosa 1989), Belgium (Peters and Meyvis 1989) and Germany (Schädler 1989). Mawby (2003) qualifies this point however, noting that state involvement is exceptional, as most victim services come from the voluntary or non-profit making private sectors. Whilst in Britain the service offered has largely taken the form of sympathetic support and advice (ibid) to property victims, in the USA it is violence victims who are more likely to be supported in the form of crisis counselling with professional therapists (Young and Stein 1983). In Western Europe more emphasis is placed upon providing legal advice and financial assistance. This diversity of service provision has resulted in varying degrees to which victims feel they have been assisted (Mayhew and van Dijk 1997).

Policy developments at both European and international levels have attempted to standardise victim services. The European Union implemented Recommendation (85) 11 of the Council of Europe on the position of the victim in the Framework of Criminal Law and Procedure on 28th June 1985 (Brienen and Hoegen 2000). This offers guidelines as to how victims of crime should be treated by criminal justice authorities in relation to information, compensation and their treatment and protection, with the intention of harmonising procedures throughout Europe. Whilst this is not legally binding upon member states, there is a moral commitment to comply and states can be asked about their progress by the Committee of Ministers (ibid). Recommendation (85) 11 is viewed as building upon earlier work

by the Council of Europe which created a Select Committee of experts on the victim and criminal and social policy in 1981.

Around the same time, 29th November 1985, the United Nations adopted the Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power (Melup 1991; United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention 1999). By adopting this Declaration the General Assembly affirmed the necessity to adopt national and international measures to secure the universal and effective recognition and respect for the rights of victims of crime and abuse of power (Melup 1991). Member states were therefore called upon to take the 'necessary steps' (ibid) to give effect to the provisions of the Declaration.

The Declaration has resulted in new legislation for the benefit of victims in some jurisdictions (ibid). In 1996, a resolution was made to develop a manual/handbook for the use/application of the Declaration which came to fruition in 1999 (United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention 1999). The Handbook is not meant to be prescriptive and recognition is made of the difficulty of identifying resources for victim services.

In terms of progress made, the review by Melup (1991) acknowledges that whilst the 1985 Declaration has been acted upon quite swiftly in some jurisdictions, this is an ongoing process and it is important that the momentum be preserved. In Europe, Brienen and Hoegen (2000) observed a mixed level of implementation, noting that the perfect implementation of Recommendation (85) 11 cannot be realised.

More recently, the Council of Ministers of the European Union agreed a Framework Decision on the standing of victims in criminal proceedings in March 2001 (Victim Support 2002c). This decision is viewed as 'ground breaking' (ibid) because it seeks to establish a minimum level of service provision to victims throughout Europe concerning their access to justice and rights to compensation. In addition the framework promotes the idea that national victim support programmes should be set up where currently there are none (ibid). Framework decisions have the force of law within member states, however they are binding only as far as the results to be achieved. The way in which provisions are implemented is left to national authorities and in this way an overarching goal for the standardised treatment of victims is promoted throughout Europe. Clearly the progress made under this Framework Decision is yet to be assessed.

Summary

This chapter reviewed the position of victims both traditionally and more recently within the criminal justice system, considering a range of mechanisms whereby the 'voice' of victims has been encouraged. As a result of recent legislation, victims in the UK have been given rights, certainly in remedying breaches of their new Code of Practice.

However a number of criticisms have been put forward along the way indicating that these apparent moves forward are flawed. Ironically some flaws can be traced back to the initial interest shown in victims in modern times. For example the notion of 'deservingness' encourages the state to limit payments of compensation to those adjudged as 'blameless'. Other flaws have emerged as a result of trying consistently to attach mechanisms that support victims onto a

system that really was intended for two main players only; the state and those who offend against it (Crawford 2000). Thus in requiring probation, an agency that was developed *for* offenders, to contact victims of crime following sentencing, it is not surprising that victims' needs are not always met. Equally, by allowing victims to make personal statements about the impact of crime upon them, the confusion concerning how such statements should be used again may not be unexpected within an adversarial court process that was designed primarily for the state and the offender (ibid).

The chapter moved on, beyond the UK, to consider the status of victims within Europe and internationally. Both the European Union and the United Nations are seeking to influence member states to provide minimum standards of treatment to victims. Whilst some progress has been made, this is an ongoing project. In the next chapter the impact of crime upon victims is expanded upon.

Chapter Two: The impact of crime and victims' needs

Introduction

This chapter aims to paint in some of the background to 'the victim experience', particularly in terms of the impact of crime, which is inextricably linked to the notion of victims' needs. One way of measuring need, 'felt need' (Bradshaw 1972) for example, is the extent to which victims are affected by crime. Thus the more serious the impacts are, the more victims may be adjudged to be 'in need' (of assistance). The current chapter looks specifically at victims' needs on the basis of crime impact; whilst chapter six presents the findings from my research in this respect. A full discussion of what we mean by need, from a more philosophical and a social policy point of view, and from that of victimology, will also be undertaken in chapter six.

In order to address the notion of 'need', based upon the impact of crime, several broad areas of discussion will be undertaken. Firstly the extent of victimisation, looking at how crime and victimisation are measured, is considered. The discussion addresses the limitations that are continuously present within official statistics and victimisation surveys, such as the British Crime Survey (BCS). The impact of crime generally and upon victims of the offences included in the current study is then considered. Clearly, some people will be more affected than others in terms of the level of impact that crime makes upon them. The level of impact will depend upon a range of factors including not only offence type but also personal and social characteristics such as age, gender, social class, ethnicity and disability. Such discussions will extend to the effects of crime upon children as a distinct group of victims. Finally two of the more common emotional reactions to crime commented upon in the literature, fear and anger, are examined.

The impact of crime: fear and anger, preliminary discussions

The impact of crime that is generally most often referred to is the fear of crime. However discussions of this concept can be somewhat blurred. On the one hand there is the fear of crime that is experienced by those who are directly victimised; the burglary victim for example, who is fearful of this happening again. On the other hand, there is the fear of crime that is felt by wider society. This is measured by mechanisms such as the British Crime Survey wherein the general public are asked questions about their feelings of safety, for example, how safe they feel walking alone in their area at night. It is important to recognise these two areas of fear impact, and the fact that they may be interlinked. Thus the direct impact of being victimised may also feed into the wider (future) fear of crime.

It is also important to consider anger, which as Ditton et al (1999a) discuss, is a more common reaction than fear. Nevertheless it is the latter that takes priority within policy and within the literature. In discussing anger in this way Ditton et al (1999a) refer to the emotional reaction that victims experience in the aftermath of crime. In other words, anger is discussed as a direct impact of an immediate crime¹.

The public's reactions to crime have shaped certain policy decisions in the past, producing for example a number of crime prevention schemes that seek to reassure 'at risk' populations by target hardening residential properties (Mawby and Simmonds 2003). Such schemes focus upon populations who, whilst they may or may not have been victimised, are as the British Crime Survey indicates fearful of crime irrespective of the risks they face (Hale 1996). Indeed, there is a

¹ Although in their previous work Ditton et al (1999) discuss the wider anger that the public (victims and non-victims) feel at the *prospect* of being a victim of crime (again in the case of existing victims).

vast literature on this subject (Hale 1996; Ditton and Farrell 2000). Victim Support also works towards reducing the fear of crime but does so by working with those directly victimised.

The extent of crime

The measurement of crime and, implicit within this, rates of victimisation, dates from mediaeval times (Hough and Mayhew 1983). Such measurement became more systematic across Europe in the nineteenth century where, in England and Wales, 'Judicial Statistics' provided a record of crimes known to the police. The ground was then set, as noted in chapter one, for the focus of early criminology to be directed exclusively towards the offender (Schneider 2001). However, the growth of interest in victims in the second half of the twentieth century produced a recognition that official statistics provided a very incomplete picture of crime and victimisation. The 'dark figure' of crime (Hough and Mayhew 1983; McDonald 2001) within these statistics therefore concealed levels of offending and victimisation which victim surveys could illuminate (Black 1993).

Victim surveys first appeared in the United States of America (USA) (Hough and Mayhew 1983; Mawby and Walklate 1994; Hale 1996). Whilst they did not appear regularly in Britain until the 1980s² they were exemplified in the UK in the form of the British Crime Survey³, being developed also within an era when academics and policymakers adopted a more 'realist' approach (Downes and Rock 2003). Crime had been 'demystified' in that the proletariat rather than the bourgeoisie were recognised for their victim status (ibid). Crime surveys were then adopted as

² Albeit the General Household Survey of 1972 had asked respondents about their experiences of burglary (Mawby and Walklate 1994) and the first of a series of localised victim surveys was undertaken in London in the late 1970s (Sparks et al 1977). Subsequent surveys were undertaken in London and elsewhere in the UK, for example in Sheffield (Bottoms et al 1987).

³ The British Crime Survey was introduced in 1982 as a bi-annual victim survey; however from 2001 this has been undertaken on an annual basis.

a means of conducting the empirical investigations required (ibid), in order that suitable interventions could be made.

Within this period the need to conduct smaller and more localised surveys was recognised, resulting in studies of crime in London (Sparks et al 1977; Jones et al 1986; Crawford et al 1990) and elsewhere (Bottoms et al 1987). These surveys gave a more specific picture of the 'crime problem' than those implemented on a larger scale because they were geographically linked to the respondents taking part. The early surveys carried out in the London Borough of Islington in the mid to late 1980s (Jones et al 1986) showed that crime was regarded as a major problem in 1985, being second only to unemployment⁴. By 1988, crime had supplanted unemployment as the most readily identified problem (Crawford et al 1990).

Victim surveys collect data on reported and unreported crime, and therefore do go some way towards providing a fuller picture of crime than official statistics. For various reasons however, some gaps remain in their wake. The British Crime Survey is not concerned with victimless crime, 'white collar' crime, or crimes where the 'victim' is a public body or someone under sixteen years of age. Crimes committed against those residing within institutions are also excluded. Whilst the work of O'Donnell and Edgar (1998) discussed the 'routine victimisation' within prisons, it is clear that such incidents are not conventionally part of the 'crime and victimisation' picture. Nor are cases where the victim is no longer alive (Budd 1999), although clearly the families of those suffering crime induced death suffer related trauma.

⁴ More recent surveys ask how big a problem a number of issues, including crime, are within a locality. This allows a relative comparison of crime against other problems; see for example Mawby and Simmonds (2003).

Other less recognisable victims are also ignored; such as the families of those who commit crimes such as murder (Howarth and Rock 2000) or indeed prisoners themselves who suffer physical and psychological harms as a result of their incarceration (Ruggiero 1999). In these ways, the British Crime Survey in particular can be seen to be quite a 'conventional' tool which, by implication, feeds into the conventional view of crime that has persisted within victimology (Walklate 1989).

To add to this picture, victims may not always be willing to talk about the full extent of their victimisation, especially if they have experienced serious sexual offences (Hough and Mayhew 1985) or domestic violence (Mawby and Gill 1987). In addition the British Crime Survey has asked respondents about such victimisation in a sporadic fashion only⁵. The lack of consistency, which persists throughout the range of questions asked within each sweep, also adds to what in reality is a more restrictive view of victimisation. Victim surveys are also subject to a range of methodological difficulties that restrict their ability to collect precise data regarding certain aspects of crime and victimisation (Garofalo 1979; Ferraro and La Grange 1987; Hale 1996; Farrell et al 1997). For example the use of closed questions has been found to produce higher measures of fear than open ones (Farrell et al 1997), whilst the use of 'global' (Garofalo 1979) or 'formless' (Ferraro and La Grange 1987) questions, which simply ask about the fear of crime, have also been criticised for their lack of precision.

⁵ In 1994 the BCS asked about sexual violence and in 1996 about domestic violence. The BCS 2000 also included questions on rape, albeit the methodology for this was the use of a 'sensitive self completion questionnaire'.

Conceptualising the impact of crime

Discussions concerning the extent of crime cannot be based upon numbers alone. Thus although official statistics tell us that 5.2 million crimes were committed in the twelve months prior to March 2001 (Povey and colleagues 2001) or the British Crime Survey indicates that crime has fallen by 12% between 1999 and 2000 (Kershaw et al 2001), there are other dimensions to be addressed. The needs of victims, for example, goes much further than simply considering the numbers of offences committed and victims produced. The current study therefore focuses upon such needs, which have been operationalised both as the various impacts made by crime and the services that victims say they would like or have received. A heavy reliance simply upon raw numerical information would not have been particularly useful in the current project, particularly given the persistent problem of the under-reporting and under-recording of crime (Macdonald 2001)⁶.

Quantifying the extent to which any one person is affected by crime is replete with difficulties. Indeed this can only be compounded over a range of cases where one will naturally be involved in making comparisons (Hinton 1995). To what extent therefore is one person's experience the same as anyone else's, in terms of measuring for example being 'very much affected' by the crime? The waters are muddied still further in knowing that the use of different methods may affect the results; a point made by Maguire and Corbett (1987) in contrasting their use of in-depth interviews and material gathered by means of a large scale survey⁷.

⁶ Although new counting rules implemented by the police (National Crime Recording Standards. <http://www.thamesvalley.police.uk/about/ncrs1.htm>, accessed 23.4.04) should improve the picture of crime at the recording stage, whilst transparency exercises such as The Stephen Lawrence Enquiry <http://www.archive.official-documents.co.uk/document/cm42/4262/4262.htm> (accessed 15.9.04) may be viewed as attempts to improve the willingness of victims to report crime.

⁷ Maguire and Corbett (1987) used information from the British Crime Survey 1984 to substantiate their more focused research.

This point is discussed more broadly by Maguire and Kynch (2000) who note the (im)possibility of drawing comparisons between individual studies involving various methods. They also comment upon the tendency for (small scale) victim studies to overstate the impact of crime, because of their tendency to concentrate on more serious cases (Mayhew 1984; Mayhew 1993; Maguire 1991; Zedner 1997).

The British Crime Survey has been commended on the grounds that the randomness of its approach enables 'a more comprehensive and consistent picture of the impact of crime...' (Maguire and Kynch 2000:3). Other commentators however (Mayhew 1984) pour a certain amount of scorn upon measures of impact based largely upon unreported crime.

Mayhew (1993:196) continues in the same vein by challenging the ability of the large-scale victim survey to do anything more than 'sketch in' the contours of the practical and emotional needs arising from 'normal victimisation'. This claim is made on the grounds that the BCS is based upon responses to a limited number of pre-coded questions. Notwithstanding such inconsistencies and critiques however the victim survey, and particularly the British Crime Survey in the UK, has continued to gain acceptance as the major means of enquiry into the impact of crime and related issues.

Measures of impact: non-specific crime

The BCS first asked victims of crime to indicate the extent to which they felt 'personally affected' by the incident in 1984. Data from the 1988 survey revealed that just over half (56%) of respondents claimed to be affected very much or quite a lot by 'serious personal crimes', reducing to around two fifths for 'less serious personal crimes' (Mawby and Walklate 1994). For 'serious and less serious

household crimes' just under one third and one quarter of respondents said that they were affected very much or quite a lot (ibid).

Respondents were also asked to say whether they, or anyone else in the household, had experienced emotional reactions following the crime. Thus 45% felt anger, 14% were shocked, 9% fearful, 7% unable to sleep and 5% were tearful (ibid). Whilst a precedent was set whereby a range of emotional reactions were measured, indeed with anger being seen to be a more common experience (Ditton et al 1999a), the way in which the BCS tends to reveal lower crime impacts must also be noted. This may be attributable in part to the way in which on some measures the BCS reports 'impacts' which embrace a range of crimes involving a host of individual circumstances.

Later BCS figures have updated these more general figures. In 1998 the British Crime Survey found that one fifth of respondents were affected very much by crime, rising to almost one third where the offence had been reported to the police (Maguire and Kynch 2000: Table 2.2 p5). A large majority (84%) of victims said that they or others in their household had experienced emotional reactions, again across a range of offences. Most respondents (94%) said that they themselves had experienced such reactions and reported at least one effect with anger being most commonly felt (67%), a quarter feeling shock, 17% fear, 13% difficulty in sleeping and 11% tearfulness and crying (Maguire and Kynch 2000). Just under one third (30%) of respondents said that other adults were emotionally affected with very few (7%) saying their children were affected⁸.

⁸ The British Crime Survey 2000/01 does not report the impact of crime generally.

Clearly these figures are 'overall' responses which are tempered by variables such as offence type and, as indicated earlier, certain victim characteristics (Mawby 2001). The effects of such variables however were not that great for those interviewed for the 1998 BCS, although women and poorer people were more likely to report emotional reactions than men and wealthier individuals. On the other hand the influence of offence type was more evident. Victims of burglary, violence and threats were more likely to experience more serious reactions such as fear, crying and difficulty in sleeping (Maguire and Kynch 2000). Furthermore when respondents were asked about the impact of crime on themselves personally the effects were sharper in relation to certain social characteristics. Poor, black or Asian victims, those living in 'striving areas' and females were more likely to say that they had been very much affected by the incident (ibid).

The impact of specific crimes

The present study has examined the impact of burglary, non-relative violence and car crime. The next section of this chapter will therefore discuss findings from previous studies with respect to these crimes. Whilst there is an abundance of work that considers the impact and effects of burglary and violence⁹, this is less evident for car crime. Considerations as to the impact of car crime have therefore drawn upon the British Crime Survey. These will be underpinned with reference to Victim Support's general lack of involvement with such victims.

⁹ Albeit there appears to be little work on the sort of violence that my research focuses upon; physical assaults that do not contain elements of domestic or sexual violence.

Crime, logically, falls into different categories of seriousness. Rape for example is viewed widely as a heinous offence, which seriously impacts upon victims. Trauma is felt not only in the immediate aftermath of crime but also in the longer term (Maguire and Corbett 1987; Mawby and Gill 1987). Less serious crimes however, are generally viewed as impacting less and, as such, have attracted less attention within the literature. Burglary however, is the exception to this rule. Whilst objectively it is viewed as less traumatic than serious assaults such as rape it is, nevertheless, regarded as being potentially serious in its effects both financially and emotionally (Tarling and Davison 2000; Mawby 2001).

The impact of crime generally can be measured both quantitatively and qualitatively and, as noted, an ample body of work exists in these respects. In a narrower sense, victims of property crime can be asked about the financial losses that they have suffered, however a wider view is obtained by considering the personal impacts that victims experience (Mawby and Walklate 1997).

The impact of burglary.

Early examples of research on burglary victims can be found in the work of Maguire (1980) and Maguire and Corbett (1987). They looked not only at the impact of the crime but also the sort of reactions that victims experienced and the fact that the effects of crime continued for some time. Maguire (1980) for example, found almost two thirds (65%) of victims interviewed four to ten weeks after the crime was reported, were still affected by it. A more recent, albeit small-scale study supported these findings (Beaton et al 2000) concluding that the psychological effects of burglary were considerable and that they lasted for a number of weeks following the crime.

The work of Mawby and Walklate (1997) also looked specifically at burglary victims and found that almost seventy percent (69%) were affected either 'very much' or 'quite a lot' as a result of the crime. These results were based upon a comparison of victims drawn from two contrasting areas of the UK, Plymouth and Salford. It is perhaps of note that far more of those claiming to be 'very much affected' were resident in Salford (44%), a more impoverished city, in comparison to Plymouth, where some 31% were so affected.

The vast majority of the sample (96% in Plymouth and 91% in Salford) also reported that they or someone else in their household had experienced emotional reactions following the crime, with most people (91%) overall saying that they themselves were affected in this way. Most respondents (83%) also said that other adults in the household had been affected emotionally with half of those with children (53%) saying that children had been affected.

In Plymouth and Salford, a large majority of respondents (78% and 77%) reported anger, around half (56% and 56%) shock, 43% and 30% were unable to sleep and around one fifth (22% and 21%) were tearful. The greatest contrast was in the sense of fear. Whilst around a third (31%) of Plymouthians were fearful, a greater proportion of the Salford sample (41%) reported fear.

Other adults in the household were said to be angry, shocked and to be tearful in identical or very similar proportions. The figures for anger were Plymouth (61%) and Salford (61%), shock (46% and 42% respectively) and tearfulness (16% and 17% respectively). Following the previous pattern reported more respondents from Salford (30%) than from Plymouth (24%) said that other adults were fearful; however more 'other adults' in households in Plymouth (27%) than in Salford

(18%) had difficulty in sleeping. For the children of these households, anger was more prevalent in Plymouth (16%) than Salford (8%), whereas fear and tearfulness were experienced in very similar proportions (fear in Plymouth 32% and in Salford 30%; tearfulness in Plymouth 21% and in Salford 22%).

Later sweeps of the BCS update these figures on burglary (Maguire and Kynch 2000; Kershaw et al 2000; Nicholas and Wood 2003). The 1998 survey (Maguire and Kynch 2000) looked at the level of impact upon respondents and others¹⁰ in the household, including their emotional reactions to the crime, showing that burglary 'with entry' tended to exert more of an impact upon victims. Thus in 1998, a large majority (87%) of all burglary victims said that 'someone' in the household was affected'. This figure rose slightly (90%) where burglary 'with entry' was focused upon. In terms of the victims themselves, 82% in the 1998 sweep (ibid) and 87% in that of 2000 (Kershaw et al 2000) said that they had been emotionally affected. These figures rose to 85% and 89% where entry had been gained. Just over half to almost two thirds of respondents in the BCS 1998 and 2000 respectively were affected 'very much' or 'quite a lot', with slightly higher results where entry had been gained (65% and 69%).

In the 2002/2003 British Crime Survey (Nicholas and Wood 2003) the majority (83%) of all burglary victims interviewed said that they had been emotionally affected by the crime. This was, again, more likely to occur where entry was gained (85%) than where an attempt was unsuccessful (81%). In terms of impact around three fifths 59% of all burglary respondents were affected very much or quite a lot; this figure rose to 68% for burglary with entry but fell to 46% where attempted burglary was involved.

¹⁰ Although the BCS 2000 asked only whether respondents themselves had been so affected.

The numbers of burglary victims experiencing emotional reactions in the 1998 survey were as follows: anger 65%, shock 37%, fear 30%, difficulty in sleeping 29% and crying/tears 16%. The figures for the 2000 survey followed a very similar pattern: anger 68%, shock 38%, fear 33%, difficulty in sleeping 31%, crying/tears 17%. Where burglary with entry had occurred the figures were, as could be expected, higher, although they were not exceptionally so. The main contrast appeared for crying/tears which in 1998 (Maguire and Kynch 2000) and 2000 (Kershaw et al 2000) was experienced by 24% of respondents.

The BCS 2002/2003 (Nicholas and Wood 2003) again saw anger and annoyance being the most common emotional reactions amongst all burglary victims (49% and 39% respectively). Around one third (32%) felt shock, around one quarter (24% and 25% respectively) were fearful or had difficulty in sleeping. Finally 14% and 11% respectively were tearful or depressed. More concretely perhaps 12% suffered anxiety attacks and 25% a loss of confidence or feelings of vulnerability. For burglary with entry the emotional impacts were higher, whilst for attempted burglary the impacts were generally lower (ibid: 61 table 4e). The exception to this pattern was the annoyance felt by respondents as this wavered around the same level, whether the crime was completed or not.

Two points have been raised within this section of the chapter which, according to the literature, deserve further attention. The first point relates to anger, which has emerged as a very common emotional reaction to crime (Ditton et al 1999a). The second point raised concerns children as the 'indirect victims' (Morgan 1988) of crimes which are aimed in the first instance at other household members or at the household generally. Both of these points will be discussed at a later stage in this

chapter. The next section, however, will examine the impact of violence and car crime upon victims.

The impact of violence

The examination of the impact of violence, in line with the parameters of my research, is not concerned with either domestic or sexual violence, except perhaps for the purposes of comparison. As stated previously it is not easy to access research that is specific in terms of the exclusions noted, and whilst the British Crime Survey is a useful source, the waters are somewhat muddied in that it does not always clearly distinguish certain offence types when reporting its findings¹¹.

The 1998 British Crime Survey stated that approximately 8% of crimes in 1997 were of a violent or sexual nature, excluding common assaults (Mirrlees-Black and Allen 1998), whilst violence made up one fifth of all offences where less serious incidents were included. On the basis of this, at least 12% of violent offences in 1997 could be said to fall into the type included in the current study. The 2000 sweep of the BCS (Kershaw et al 2000), covering offences committed in 1999, reported a similar number (22%) of cases of violence, whilst that in 2002/2003 (Simmons and Dodd 2003) reported statistically significant reductions in the level of violence since 1999 (19%) and 1997 (24%). The BCS 2002/2003 (ibid) reports no change in the level of violence from 2001, whilst police figures report a slight increase (2%) in the same timeframe. Within the BCS, 'violence' is defined as wounding, common assault, robbery and snatch theft (Kershaw et al 2000:33).

¹¹ The points noted are to inform the reader that the literature review may contain examples of research that are not always a 'good fit' with the empirical work undertaken in the current study.

According to the BCS 2000 nearly half of victims of all violence were emotionally affected by the crime (ibid), with a quarter (25%) saying they were affected 'very much' and just under a quarter (22%) that they were 'quite a lot' affected¹². The most common reaction overall to violence was anger (62%), and this persisted across the four offence typology of violent crime created by the BCS (ibid). Thus 68% of domestic violence victims felt anger, as did 66% of mugging victims, 59% of stranger violence victims and 60% of acquaintance violence victims. Other emotional reactions to violence overall were experienced at lower rates; although the next most common reaction was shock at 41%¹³.

The victims of certain types of violence were, not surprisingly, more affected than others. For example, those suffering domestic abuse or mugging were most likely to be emotionally affected (38% and 29% respectively). In addition, victims of domestic violence experienced fear, difficulty in sleeping and upset (crying/tears) to a greater extent. The impact of crimes where the victim is well acquainted with the offender is clearly of interest in comparison with the effects of offences that are more likely to have been committed by strangers. Our perceptions of violence are conventionally tied in with that which occurs 'on the street' and the popular tendency is to view such stranger violence as impacting far more seriously upon victims. This view has been challenged by the work of Mawby and Walklate (1994) who concluded that the impact of crime rises where victims and offenders know each other; indeed the BCS 2000 figures for domestic violence underpins this. Further support is also to be found in Simmonds (2001) wherein generally low level conflicts between neighbours had the potential for exerting much greater impacts than the violent incidents reported generally by the BCS 2000¹⁴.

¹² The BCS 2002 does not report on the levels of emotional impact for violent crime.

¹³ Fear (27%), difficulty in sleeping (17%) and crying/tears (23%) were also expressed.

¹⁴ Although we must not forget that the random nature of the BCS may serve to dilute the impact of crime.

Whilst these findings are illuminating they can be built upon in terms of the psychological impacts that crime imposes. Kilpatrick et al (1987) looked at the psychological effects of a range of crimes including assault, robbery and burglary over time. For some, even though 15 years had elapsed since the crimes, victims continued to show a high prevalence of post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)¹⁵ (ibid). And whilst violent crimes such as rape yielded the highest lifetime and current prevalence levels of PTSD, 57.1% and 16.5% respectively, other non-sexual violence such as aggravated assault and robbery also produced proportionately high impacts. Aggravated assault for example showed lifetime and current prevalence levels of 36.8% and 10.5%. In comparison the victims of non-violent crimes such as burglary also experienced PTSD, albeit at lower levels.

Lurigio and Resick (1990) also pointed out that adverse psychological consequences are not confined to the more serious sexual assaults. Thus drawing on the work of one of the authors, (Lurigio 1987), they confirmed such impacts for victims of burglary, robbery and non-sexual assault. Norris and Kaniasty (1994) built upon this in their comparison of victims of violence and property crime with non-victims. The former 'were still more symptomatic than were property crime victims' (ibid:120) after fifteen months when the study ended.

The impact of vehicle crime

The level of car crime in the UK (theft of and from vehicles) has been high for many years representing, according to Houghton (1992), the most numerous

¹⁵ The authors defined 'post traumatic stress disorder' (PTSD) in the following terms: 'an anxiety disorder produced by an uncommon, extremely stressful life event and is characterised by several symptoms including; (a) re-experiencing of the traumatic event in painful recollections, flashbacks, dreams or nightmares; (b) diminished responsiveness to the environment, with disinterest in significant activities, feelings of detachment and estrangement from others; and (c) symptoms such as exaggerated startle response, disturbed sleep, difficulty in concentrating or remembering, guilt about surviving when others did not, and avoidance of activities that bring the traumatic event to mind. Respondents had to meet all of these diagnostic criteria to be diagnosed as having PTSD' (Kilpatrick 1987: 482).

category of crime over the last five years (ibid). In 1991 for example car crime represented between a quarter and a third (28%) of all crimes recorded by the police compared to burglary (23%) and violent crime (5%) (ibid). In recent years such statistics and the British Crime Survey have shown a reduction in the levels of car crime both in 'real' numbers and proportionate to other offences.

However police statistics reveal that car crime amounts to around one in five recorded offences at roughly one million cases per year in the period ending March 2000¹⁶. Whilst figures from the British Crime Survey concur, certainly in terms of the proportionate extent of car crime (20% in the year 2000) the actual number of offences committed is double that recorded by the police¹⁷.

The extent of car crime is relevant, particularly for those unfortunate enough to have suffered a repeat victimisation (Anderson, Chenery and Pease 1995). However whilst 'numbers' are useful, again the focus of the present study extends to explore the impact of these crimes upon a group of victims whose needs are not typically addressed by Victim Support¹⁸. The study will discuss other issues, such as the way in which car crime occurred and who is at most risk. As will be revealed in chapters six and seven the respondents in my research did, from time to time, comment upon the time of day or the location from which their vehicle was stolen or broken into¹⁹.

¹⁶ <http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk/toolkits/vc020101.htm> (accessed 11.4.02).

¹⁷ <http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk/toolkits/vc020102.htm> (accessed 11.4.02).

¹⁸ Such neglect is interesting in the light of the work of Anderson et al (1995) regarding the efforts made to prevent the recurrence of car crime for those already victimised in this way. In other words there are initiatives which take the victims of car crime seriously; albeit in the case in point such victims have also suffered burglary.

¹⁹ Although such comments were ad hoc, as these notions were not systematically addressed within my work.

The 2000 sweep of the British Crime Survey²⁰ (Kershaw et al 2000:25 - 31) provides a clear picture of car crime in many respects. Somewhere between a quarter and a third (28%) of incidents happened at the weekend, suggesting that the risk of victimisation is little different to that existing during the week²¹. Most incidents (75%) took place during the evening or at night, with just over a third (37%) at night (between midnight and 6 am). Nearly two-thirds (64%) of incidents occurred whilst vehicles were parked near the victim's home with around a third (36%) taking place when the vehicle was parked immediately outside the home, albeit on the street. A quarter of offences occurred where vehicles were parked on the victim's driveway, with just under one fifth (17%) in public car parks.

The most popular method for theft from a vehicle was where the offender smashed the window, whilst for theft of a vehicle most offenders (65%) forced the lock. In 16% of cases valuables, including money, cheques, credit cards, wallets and documents were stolen. In 37% car parts and in 23% car radios were most commonly stolen.

The items stolen clearly will have some bearing upon the impact of this crime. Thus in the majority (83%) of incidents, respondents experienced emotional reactions following the offence with almost half (46%) being affected either 'very much' or 'quite a lot'. However there are differences within the offence types comprising vehicle theft. Whilst a higher number of victims (91%) whose cars were stolen were emotionally affected, fewer (81%) who suffered theft from vehicle

²⁰ The British Crime Survey 2001 (Kershaw et al 2001) has not been used extensively because to date this comprises only 'first results'. Not only does it not provide the level of detail to be found in other sweeps, but the findings are based upon a partial sample.

²¹ Again these figures are not linked to particular places nor do they take account of particular events. See chapter four, which discusses the fact that Victim Support in Newquay in Cornwall deals with the highest number of car crimes in the county. Newquay is a popular tourist destination and so provides greater opportunity for car crimes to occur.

were so affected. At the same time whilst almost three quarters (72%) of those whose vehicles were stolen were affected very much or quite a lot, only two fifths (43%) whose property was stolen from their car were so affected (Kershaw et al 2000).

Similar patterns were reported in the BCS 2002/2003 (Nicholas and Wood 2003) where more of those experiencing theft of car (87%) compared to those experiencing theft from motor vehicle (80%) were affected emotionally. Again more of those whose cars were stolen (66%) were affected very much or quite a lot, with around two fifths of those whose property was stolen from the vehicle saying this (ibid: 61, table 4f).

Anger was felt by the largest proportion of victims overall (89%) and interestingly this emotion did not waver in terms of whether the vehicle was stolen (88%) or whether the offence was theft from vehicle (89%) Kershaw et al 2000. The pattern differed however in the BCS 2002/2003 (Simmons and Dodd 2003) as whilst just over two thirds of victims of theft of vehicle were angry (65%), fewer victims whose cars were broken into (55%) reported this reaction. In contrasting vehicle crime victims with burglary victims, more of the former said that they were affected very much or quite a lot. The level of anger among those whose cars were stolen was also higher than for those burgled.

The British Crime Surveys of 2000 (Kershaw et al 2000) and 2002/2003 (Nicholas and Wood 2003) reported the remaining range of emotional reactions for theft of and from motor vehicle. In the 2000 sweep, victims whose cars were stolen were fearful (9%), unable to sleep properly (14%) and upset (15%). Those whose vehicles were broken into were slightly less fearful. However in terms of difficulty

in sleeping and upset those whose property was stolen from their cars were, unsurprisingly, less affected by difficulty in sleeping (5%) and upset (3%).

The victims of car crime felt angry more than anything else with much less emphasis upon the remaining emotional reactions compared to burglary and violence victims. This comes really as no great surprise given the nature of the offence under consideration, a point that is discussed more fully in chapter six. However when thefts of and from motor vehicle are considered, it seems that those whose cars were stolen did experience the 'more debilitating' emotional reactions to a greater extent than those whose cars were (merely) broken into (Nicholas and Wood 2003). The research also showed that for those whose cars are stolen, shock is the next most commonly held reaction following anger (ibid).

The study by Ditton et al (1999a) looked at victims of vehicle crime in comparison with those of housebreaking, assault and vandalism. High levels of anger were experienced by car crime victims (87%), compared to burglary (56%), assault (43%) and vandalism (73%). Even where the sample was re-interviewed later the people experiencing vehicle crime were amongst those most affected, at least in terms of the anger they felt. Some 70% of vehicle crime victims were angry compared with 63% of burglary victims, 71% of assault victims and 61% of those suffering vandalism. The victims of vehicle crime therefore remained far more constant and so affected by the crime in their angry state (ibid:45).

The above findings may then challenge some of the assumptions made by the organisers of Victim Support in its early days. Indeed because of the 'demand' for the service, even in its pilot stage, a decision was made to concentrate only on those victims with the greatest needs (Holtom and Raynor 1988; Summary of first

six months cited in Rock 1990); a definition that did not include victims of vehicle crime. Even at this early stage, contact, if any at all was to be made with victims of vehicle crime, was by letter rather than by personal outreach visits. As will be discussed later, this is a policy that Victim Support has formalised more recently in its Code of Practice (Victim Support 2000).

Children as victims

Despite the greater recognition of children more recently as victims of crimes at the hands of paedophiles, or within the spate of high profile child abuse cases that occurred in the 1990s, children as the victims of more conventional crimes have tended to be less visible. Victim Support have responded to this by conducting a national survey of children (Victim Support 2003a), showing that they do appear to experience high rates of victimisation, ranging from property crime through to personal violence. Nevertheless, unless it is the more headline grabbing incidents that are involved, child victims have tended to attract less attention from agencies both within and outside of the criminal justice system (Morgan and Zedner 1992). One reason given for this is that children and young people need to 'earn' their victim status (Morgan 1988; Morgan and Zedner 1992); probably because of their dependency on others.

Whilst however the recognition of child victims has been rectified to some extent by the high profile crimes noted above and, to some extent, by the work that Victim Support has undertaken more recently, the gaps in knowledge continue. Very little is known for example about children who are the indirect victims of conventional crimes. Thus children and young people who either witness or who are aware of an offence being committed against a family member or indeed the household are often overlooked. They very rarely feature in the official statistics produced by the

police or in the records of other 'interested' agencies. Indeed the research undertaken by Morgan and Zedner (1992) showed that comparatively little space was devoted to children who had been affected, albeit indirectly, by crime.

This was surprising given that Maguire and Corbett (1987) addressed this issue in their early study of Victim Support, where in such situations children were often found to be 'badly frightened or upset'. This neglect of children, certainly as indirect victims of crime, had also shown itself in the day to day work of Victim Support overall, although Morgan and Zedner's study provided a catalyst for change within the local schemes that had participated in their research²². Furthermore Victim Support 'national' have more recently (Victim Support 2003b) produced a template for good practice and for volunteers to be trained so that local schemes can develop their services for child victims; particularly those indirectly victimised.

The British Crime Survey has to an extent filled in some of the gaps in the knowledge of such victimisation. In response to a request from Mike Maguire and Clare Corbett for the question to be asked in the 1984 BCS, respondents are now routinely invited to comment upon the upset that other members of their household may have experienced. Of those claiming in the 1998 sweep that others in the household were affected by the crime, very few (7%) were referring to their children. However this finding presents a somewhat minimalist view of the problem, especially in the light of what others have had to say on the matter. In the words of Morgan and Zedner (1992) for example.

²² Indeed in talking to Guy Pollard (telephone conversation 27th March 2002), the Training Manager of Bedfordshire County Victim Support, it seems that before this research took place an ad hoc service had been provided to children who were the indirect victims of crime. Such practices were formalised as a result of the work of Morgan and Zedner by, for example, introducing the consideration of children into the scheme's volunteer training.

Over a third of the 400,000 households which experience burglary each year include children. Domestic violence and other serious personal assaults, including rape and even homicide all too often take place in the presence of children or in circumstances of which the children are aware.

(Morgan and Zedner 1992:21)

The low numbers reported in the BCS may be attributed to the methodology on which the survey is based. The fact remains however that reliance upon such findings can seriously understate the problem and can also perpetuate its concealment, with clear policy implications.

The work of Morgan and Zedner (1992) was much more specific as it reflected Morgan's (1988) earlier views in restating concern over the lack of information about children as indirect victims. Part of their remit was then to uncover the extent and the effects of crime on such victims. The research was undertaken, in part, in Bedfordshire and as a result of this work the local scheme has since paid particular attention to children as the indirect victims of crime (Mawby and Walklate 1994). Indeed, as noted, Victim Support national have taken the plight of children as victims to heart (Victim Support 2002d; Victim Support 2003b) and is now providing volunteers with specific training for identifying and supporting children who are affected, directly and indirectly, by crime.

Morgan and Zedner (1992) produced some groundbreaking findings and, as discussed, this proved to be a catalyst in turning attention within Victim Support to child victims. Their research included children who were potentially indirect victims of crime, whether this be crimes such as burglary of the family home or physical assaults on their parents.

In terms of the impact of crime the effects were worse where children were present at the time of the offence or had discovered that the offence had been committed.

In one case a five-year old boy discovered, with his father, that the house had been burgled. The child was 'initially very upset' and obsessed by the 'nasty man who took the video' for some weeks. To add to this distress, the boy had heard the police imply that the family's bread knives could have been used against them had they caught the intruder(s) in the act. Another case was cited in which a teenage girl was so distraught at being burgled whilst her parents were away on holiday, that she could hardly speak coherently when reporting the offence by telephone to the police.

Burglary produces an overwhelming sense of shock for children as indirect victims. It is also the most common cause of indirect victimisation for children and young people. Almost three-quarters of children were upset or very upset following the offence. In several families the children were largely concerned with the material losses, particularly of the television and video recorder. However parents reported that the replacement of such items quickly allowed children to forget about the crime.

The age of children when such crimes occur is clearly significant. Younger indirect victims often feel unable to express their feelings and their behaviour was disturbed. Very young children might be unable to grasp what had happened and were affected by the activity within the house thereafter, such as visits from the police, those undertaking repairs and the like. Again in the case of a five-year old child, he was very excited by the police arriving in a police car; however once he realised that someone had been in the house he suffered sleep disturbance, being unwilling to remain in his own bed.

Whilst children are commonly the indirect victims of burglary it is not them but their parents who are formerly recorded and recognised generally by the police and other agencies as victims. This is the case even though children may have lost property in their own right as well as the property common to the family, and so may be victims in their own right. Furthermore a sense of invasion is also common amongst child victims (Morgan and Zedner 1992).

The effects of burglary lasted for no more than a few days for half of the sample in Morgan and Zedner's work. In many cases, as noted earlier, the effects were forgotten as possessions were replaced. For the remaining half though children remained nervous and fearful and in one fifth of cases behaviour was disturbed. An eleven year old girl for example would not go downstairs alone at night even three months after the burglary, whilst a teenage girl would not go to the bathroom alone. In the latter case her parents decided to move house. Perhaps most worrying was the example given of a four-year old who, when his parents were interviewed nine months after the burglary, said that he was even more seriously affected.

The research also showed that children whose parents or siblings suffered physical assault were very much affected, particularly if they had witnessed the assault²³. However even if children had not witnessed the event, as the present research also illustrated, the sight of physical injury to a parent was upsetting. One man who was assaulted after a minor car accident revealed that his four year-old daughter 'was really upset and in shock for some three weeks afterwards' (Morgan and Zedner 1992). Half the children were fearful and insecure in the

²³ A lot of cases in the study involved domestic or sexual violence, which of course I did not include in my study.

aftermath of the event (ibid), feeling fearful for the safety of their parents and therefore for themselves. Indeed a quarter of children whose parent had been physically assaulted had long-term concerns about safety.

A more crime-specific study of the indirect victimisation of children was undertaken by Mawby and Walklate (1997). In their work, around half (53%) of the sample reported children as having emotional reactions following the burglary. Furthermore, a quarter of younger victims (0 – 5 years) were said to exhibit emotional reactions compared to a substantial majority (71%) of older (6 – 15 years) children.

Mawby and Walklate's (1997) work clearly supports Morgan and Zedner (1992) on several levels. The verbatim comments which they cited showed how the upset that children felt was linked to the fact that their property had been taken.

I feel guilty because of my children. They are devastated and there is nothing I can do. I can't afford to replace their things ... They are still upset and staying with my mum.

(PL17419, Q62: Mawby and Walklate 1997)

Other respondents worried for their children's safety, fearing the worst had the burglars come into contact with their offspring. The fact that some parents were more worried than their children was also taken to mean that in some cases, especially where young children were involved, the child or children had no knowledge of the events. Although in Morgan and Zedner's sample 'hardly any' children were completely unaware of the burglary.

For Mawby and Walklate (1997) around three fifths (61%) of children experienced emotional reactions after the burglary. Whilst generally the overall impact was lower than for adults it was clear that older children, in particular, did feel the

effects of crime. Furthermore in the case of fear older children exhibited higher levels at 44% than their adult counterparts.

Specific Crime Impacts: Fear vs Anger

The next section of this chapter discusses fear and anger as specific crime impacts. As previously stated, the fear of crime has been the subject of a vast literature over the last thirty to forty years: Hale (1996) noted that over two hundred articles, conference papers, monoliths and books had been written, whilst Ditton and Farrall (2000) calculated this figure to have risen to 837. However this grand announcement may be confusing because it does not make clear exactly what is meant by 'the fear of crime'. Do we mean the fear that is felt within wider society by victims and non-victims alike, or do we mean the 'fear' that only direct victims experience? The concept is not a clear one because the fear of crime of non-victims is often fuelled by the experiences of those who are victimised. Whilst in my work I am more concerned with the fear of crime from victims' perspectives, some discussion of how wider society has become fearful of crime is undertaken.

Following on from this, the discussion of anger which those who are directly victimised experience is also of interest in my work. This adds to the work of others who have considered how, in contrast to fear of crime, this victim reaction has been neglected both within the literature and by policy makers alike (Ditton et al 1999a).

Fear as an impact of crime

The previous discussions have highlighted 'fear' as a direct impact of crime upon the 'victim population', and clearly such considerations are important. It is also

important however to consider how such fear affects wider society, that is victims and non-victims alike; hence the need for the current discussion.

The British Crime Survey has consistently explored the fear of crime; indicating in 2000 (Kershaw et al 2000) that 20% of respondents thought they would be burgled in the next year, 10% mugged or attacked by a stranger, 29% that their car would be stolen and 32% that property would be stolen from their vehicle. At the same time 33% of respondents believed that crime nationally had increased 'a lot' between 1997 and 1999, even though such fears were not born out by either BCS or police figures.

The impact of figures such as these is that certain sections of the public will adjust their behaviour to take into account the fear of crime. For example, 29% of the sample in the British Crime Survey 2002/3 said that they would not walk alone at night in their local area, whilst 11% said they went out less than once a month (Fletcher and Allen 2003). Women (43%) more than men said that they would not go out alone in their area after dark; particularly women aged 60 or over (68%) (ibid).

Whilst earlier British Crime Surveys suggested that the fear of crime was often irrational, with those who were either more or less at risk being respectively less or more fearful (Hough and Mayhew 1983), later work has challenged this view. The British Crime Survey of 1994 (Hough 1995) noted how previous victimisation was a powerful predictor of anxiety for burglary and car crime. In this way, the direct experience of crime, and indeed that of family and friends, was indicative of fear. More recently the work of Mawby (2004a) noted the strong relationship between experience and fear, particularly where the experience and the concerns are

closely matched. Victims of aggression were more likely to be concerned about future aggression with a similar pattern emerging for those experiencing burglary, robbery and theft of car (ibid). The British Crime Survey 2002/3 supports these findings, noting that personal experiences of crime are linked to perceptions of victimisation. Almost half of those burgled in the previous year thought it likely they would be burgled in the following year (Fletcher and Allen 2003).

Anger as an impact of crime

Whilst 'fear of crime' has long enjoyed the full attention of policymakers and academics Ditton et al (1999) have revealed that 'anger', rather than fear, is the more common reaction to crime from both victims and non-victims alike (ibid). Ditton et al (1999a) question why anger has been neglected in this way, whilst the fear of crime has attracted so much attention.

A review of previous research shows the incidence of anger, rather than fear, as a direct impact of crime. In Mawby and Walklate (1997) a sample of burglary victims reported high levels of anger not only for themselves but also for other adults in the household. The earlier work of Maguire (1980) also concluded that anger was the dominant first reaction for burglary victims. Examples such as these clearly preceded the work of Ditton et (1999 and 1999a) who specifically hypothesised that anger is a more common emotional reaction to crime than fear.

Ditton et al (1999 and 1999a) studied victims of burglary, vehicle crime, assault and vandalism, who reported anger as their dominant emotional reaction. Indeed these findings reinforced those of a range of earlier studies insofar as they related to burglary victims (Maguire 1980; Mirrlees-Black et al 1996). However Ditton et al (1999a) went much further in their commentary suggesting, as noted, that despite

its dominance, anger as a crime impact has been largely ignored both within the literature and by policy makers.

Whilst Pease (1993) attributed such negligence to what he calls researchers' 'predilections', it is further suggested that anger may be a characteristic that does not fit well with the traditional image of the 'victim'. As discussed in chapter one, the suggestion is made that it is the model of the 'compliant victim', a direct descendent of the 'deserving or the ideal victim', (Christie 1977; Holtom and Raynor 1988) which has persisted and continues to shape policy in terms of whose needs should be addressed.

Prior to this challenge, Ditton et al (1999) had suggested that 'anger', in the same vein as 'fear', may also exert a wider crime impact; that is one which affects non-victims also. The authors again commented upon the lack of investigation into this phenomena saying '...we know of no literature on 'anger' about the threat of criminal victimisation to review' (ibid:88). In this way the work moves our knowledge further in that it considers respondents' levels of anger about the possibility of becoming a victim of crime.

Ditton et al (1999) asked respondents to indicate how afraid and angry they were at the prospect of becoming a victim of crime; whether in their everyday lives they thought about their houses being burgled, being assaulted or having their cars or property from their cars stolen. Feelings of anger were found to be more widespread than fear for men and women and, largely, for young and old alike; although women were more afraid than men and older women were consistently less angry than older men (ibid). Furthermore, they found that respondents claiming to feel more anger than fear in relation to each crime, were more angry

than those claiming to be more afraid than angry. So in a '...second, distinct sense...anger outweighs fear' (ibid:89).

It was also possible to compare the responses of victims and non-victims regarding the threat of victimisation. Victims were more fearful than non-victims, and this finding held for males and females who were consistently more fearful than non-victims across the age groups. However male victims were less fearful than female victims (Ditton et al 1999).

A similar picture developed for those feeling angry. Victims were more angry than non-victims and, again, the finding holds across gender divisions. These findings were constant throughout age groups with the exception of middle aged men, in terms of assault, and older women, with regard to housebreaking. Overall more victims and non-victims were angry rather than afraid. Respondents were not angry about everything or angry about nothing and their anger did not exclude fear. Thus anger and fear are not 'mutually exclusive' (ibid:92).

Ditton et al (1999a) raise further issues. The first relates to the contact policy operated by Victim Support that, generally speaking, does not seek to assist victims of car crime. As Ditton et al (1999a) have indicated victims, including those of car crime, are more angry than fearful, however anger is not recognised as a 'classic' sign of victimisation. If anger was to be given the recognition attributed to fear, Victim Support may well become much more aware that it is ignoring a large pool of victims (of car crime) whose needs they should perhaps address.

Ditton et al (1999a) also maintain that it is now time to pay more attention to 'victim anger' with a view to increasing victim involvement in restorative justice. Whilst, on the basis of their research they make no claim that angry victims would be more likely to participate in such programmes, they do promote the potential for victims, angry or not, to participate more fully in the criminal justice system, by taking part in restorative mechanisms. To this end they cited findings from the BCS 1984 (Hough and Mayhew 1985) where almost half (49%) of victims reported interest in meeting the offender, with a view to agreeing reparation. A further fifth, whilst interested in receiving reparation did not wish to have direct contact with the offender. Whilst Ditton et al (1999a) recognise that further empirical work is needed in this area²⁴, such discussion is timely given the way in which restorative justice is becoming increasingly a part of mainstream criminal justice policy and, within that, the participation of victims and possibly Victim Support²⁵.

Summary

Chapter two has looked at victimisation in a number of ways. It began by discussing the extent of crime and victimisation, looking at official statistics and evidence from victim surveys. This gave way to a consideration of the impact of crime by offence type and looked particularly at children, who as victims of crime have attracted little attention.

Interestingly, where children are concerned, their previous neglect by a range of agencies is now being rectified. Victim Support for example has more recently turned its attention nationally to developing more formally a service for children

²⁴ Indeed in the current study, the sample in phase three were asked about their willingness, 'in principle', to participate in victim-offender mediation.

²⁵ Victim Support does recognise that it can play a part in supporting victims through restorative processes, although does not see that its role is to 'persuade' victims to participate (Victim Support 2002; Simmonds 2002).

(Victim Support 2002d); the seeds for this having been set by the Bedfordshire County Scheme (Mawby and Walklate 1997).

The chapter finally discussed 'fear' and 'anger'. Fear of crime as a direct impact of victimisation was initially considered because of its direct relevance to the present study. It was also discussed in relation to the ways in which it can drive the fear of crime on a wider level within society generally. Anger as a direct impact of crime was also considered, particularly in relation to its neglect by the literature and policymakers alike. Equally, some of the material presented indicated that it is not only those directly victimised who feel angry about crime. As with fear, anger can be experienced by non-victims also.

Chapter three goes on to review the rise of Victim Support from its early beginnings to the present day. Many of the findings presented within chapter two will be returned to in chapter six, and discussed in connection with the findings from my own research.

Chapter three: Victim Support: A modern service

Introduction

This chapter charts the development of Victim Support from the time that the idea was first mooted in the early 1960s to the present day. It looks at the voluntary nature of the organisation as a service provider within the mixed economy of welfare (Woolfenden 1978) and within the mixed economy of criminal justice (Mawby 1989). The ways in which the organisation is becoming increasingly 'managed' by the Home Office are considered, as are the ways in which Victim Support national policy has broadened in promoting the support of a wider range of crime victims. In addition the service's remit has been further broadened by the statutory provision for greater victim inclusion within the criminal justice system, creating the potential for supporting victims who come into contact with agencies such as probation and youth offending teams (YOTs). The day to day policy and practice of Victim Support will also be examined as will the way in which the service engages volunteers; the latter point being examined in greater detail in chapter eight. Finally the success of Victim Support is considered and then linked to findings on 'victim satisfaction' from the present study in chapter seven.

Victim Support: the early days

It would be impossible to provide an account of Victim Support in its present form without paying due consideration to the organisation's early beginnings as a community response to crime (Reeves 1985; Holtom and Raynor 1988). The initial idea behind Victim Support stems from the work of an inter-professional group established in Bristol in 1969 by the Bristol Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (Holtom and Raynor 1988; Rock 1990). Three factors have been cited to explain the way in which Victim Support emerged. First, there

was no group or organisation, particularly in the area of penal reform, that was solely dedicated to victims. Second, this lack of welfare provision was viewed, potentially, as a contributory factor in the apparent polarisation of society at a time when 'law and order' issues were gaining prominence (ibid). In this way, Victim Support may be construed as a tool of appeasement in line with the critique applied to the earlier development of Criminal Injuries Compensation (Rock 1990). Third, there was a lack of information within the developing field of victimology concerning the extent of victims' needs (Holtom and Raynor 1988).

However other factors were also at work. Victim Support emerged in an era of political tension when the Labour government in power faced increasing challenges from the right, particularly in terms of the extent to which the state should provide services. Indeed the 1979 General Election represented a watershed in British politics in that the incoming Conservative (Thatcher) government had broken all ties with the cross party post war 'consensus' that had shaped welfare provision in the UK, driving demands for cuts in the 'nanny state' and, amongst other things, a greater role for voluntary welfare institutions (Pierson 1998). The era in which Victim Support developed was also one of increasing 'political populism' (Ryan 2003) wherein the plight of victims was becoming a useful measure of the 'state of the nation'. Under New Labour, this populism has mutated somewhat into broader notions of active citizenship and a 'responsibilisation strategy' (Johnstone 2004). Thus (government funded) support mechanisms for victims may also be seen as contributing to the governance of crime (Crawford 1997 and 2003).

Victim Support emerged as a standard model of help for crime victims, which was to be 'based on a philosophy of shared community responsibility for a problem to

which we are all equally vulnerable' (Reeves 1985:679). A vision of Victim Support as a 'responsive good neighbour' was created. In other words, the service was to provide a grass roots community response to crime. Clearly this was a shining example of the 'self-help' that the Conservative party of the 1970s onwards had wanted to create within society. The substantial funding provided from around 1986 onwards by the Home Office, reflected the state's belief in Victim Support. This amounted to £3m over three years and was intended to establish the development of services in all local areas (Russell 1990).

This funding offered greater security of tenure to the organisation than was previously the case, allowing more local schemes to employ paid co-ordinators (Mawby and Walklate 1994) and thereby establish a more professional image. This was to be important in terms of ensuring the confidence of the police upon whom Victim Support depended for its workload. However, such funding stopped short of providing all of the running costs that Victim Support incurred (Russell 1990). This was a deliberate decision (ibid) which continues today.

The Home Office and the police (Reeves 1985) welcomed the Victim Support model, which triumphed at the expense of mediation schemes (Rock 1990). For the police, this development constituted a recognition that the responsibility for crime should be borne by the whole community¹. The development of Victim Support as a voluntary sector agency, was then important. It was an agency that, in catering specifically for victims of crime, avoided any confusion as to its remit. In addition, the use of volunteers avoided the stigmatisation that could arise as a result of contact with 'professional social workers' (Reeves 1985; Mawby and Gill 1987; Mclachlan 1992). The essential nature of the service was one of providing

¹ A notion that has been expanded upon within the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

emotional and practical support to victims within a few days of the crime. However if it became apparent that further assistance of a more specialist nature was required, then victims would be referred on to other agencies. In this way, the model of support offered by Victim Support in the UK is quite unique compared to the support of victims elsewhere (Gill and Mawby 1990).

The voluntary nature of Victim Support was, and still is, fundamental to the service provided and to the whole structure of the organisation. A framework for contact with victims was therefore created whereby volunteers would visit those victimised in the community. In this way, an 'outreach' service to provide 'crisis intervention' was developed (Holtom and Raynor 1988). These two points are of particular importance in that they reflect the philosophical underpinnings upon which the service was built. The feeling within Victim Support was that victims should not have to bear the responsibility for contacting the service themselves. In addition, the contact offered would generally be a 'one-off' visit in which volunteers would either be able to assist the victim themselves or be able to refer the victim on to another agency (Reeves 1985). This formed the 'blueprint' upon which Victim Support originated. Volunteers would visit victims in their homes and provide emotional and practical support (Victim Support 1995; National Audit Office 2002). The early model endeavoured to contact all victims of crime, recognising that even the 'less serious' crimes such as burglary could exert a heavy emotional impact, and could be experienced 'like a rape' (Holtom and Raynor 1988).

However it became clear at a very early stage in the organisation's development that the demand for services exceeded the supply of help which was available. Thus a rationing mechanism was needed. As a result, certain victims, such as those of car crime or theft, would be contacted by letter. The assumption being

that the effects of these sorts of crimes would be less than say the impact of burglary. This approach had a number of implications. First, the fact that very few of those who were contacted by letter requested further assistance was taken to be confirmation that the assumptions made about such victims were correct. In addition, the small numbers who did communicate their needs following written contact were construed as further 'proof' that the unannounced visit was the best way of providing services to those who, by reason of the type of crime committed against them, were in more need of help.

As a result, in part of this 'rationing', Victim Support tended to concentrate its efforts largely upon burglary victims. The organisation came to be regarded more as a burglary victims support service (Tarling and Davison 2000). As discussed earlier this was due in part to the referral system that was initially established between Victim Support and the police in the early days and, in part, to patterns of crime reporting and recording at the time.

The referral system

Victim Support developed as a model whereby referrals for help would largely come from the police (Holtom and Raynor 1988; Reeves 1985). Indeed earlier research (Maguire and Corbett 1987) highlighted the fact that some schemes were less than enthusiastic about the idea of supporting self-referred victims who had not reported the crime, from both a philosophical standpoint and from a position of concern for the safety of the volunteers who may visit them.

However, whereas the reliance upon police referrals made good sense for those suffering conventional 'crimes of the street' (Mawby and Walklate 1994) such as burglary, it may have been less helpful for those experiencing less visible crimes,

where the likelihood of reporting and or recording may be lessened. The government have more recently given greater encouragement to Victim Support to accept self-referrals, by funding the running of a telephone hotline (Wilkinson and Maguire 1993; Victim Support 2003). However, much of the organisation's workload results from recorded crime (National Audit Office 2002; House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts 2003). The inclusive image that Victim Support promotes (ibid) may not therefore be matched in reality.

The agency itself views government funding of the supportline as a way of reaching a wider and larger range of victims²; those, for example, who may not have reported the crime to the police. Victim Support does not see that its job is to encourage victims to report crimes (House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts 2003). This is not quite the view held by the Home Office who feel that the aim of supporting victims 'need not exclude the wider objective of encouraging greater reporting of crime' (National Audit Office 2002).

Further problems arose in the past from the heavy reliance placed upon the police for referrals in that the police adopted a gate-keeping role (Wilkinson and Maguire 1993) within the 'selective' referral systems employed at the time. The police would refer cases according to their merits (ibid; Mawby and Gill 1987), clearly restricting access to Victim Support for some victims. Indeed Maguire and Corbett (1987) noted how assumptions about 'need' were linked to victim stereotyping, which in turn confirmed the status of certain victims as 'deserving' (Christie 1977).

² Victim Support. *About Victim Support and Services offered*. www.victimsupport.com/about.htm (accessed 06/02/2001).

The switch to automatic referral systems, wherein the details of victims were referred to Victim Support en bloc (Wilkinson and Maguire 1993) and without any prior selection procedures, resolved this problem to some extent. A Home Office circular in 1988 (ibid) provided the authority for this and, at the same time, also gave co-ordinators greater confidence concerning their 'right' to receive referrals from the police (ibid).

However the literature notes the ways in which police gatekeeping was only to be replaced by that of scheme co-ordinators (Mawby and Walklate 1994) who would employ indicators such as age as a means of rationing scarce resources to those 'needing' them most. Once again then the notion of 'the deserving victim' can be seen to operate (Christie 1977)³.

Notwithstanding the switch to automatic referrals, Maguire and Corbett (1987) still found continued evidence of police gatekeeping in the way in which certain victims known to the police were shown to have 'opted out' of being referred to Victim Support (ibid: 101). Indeed, within my own research, the lack of referrals for some victims was perceived as police driven value judgements⁴.

The referral of victims to Victim Support raises a range of issues, and amongst them is the issue of 'data protection' which Maguire and Corbett (1987) also noted. In their study, a small number of respondents were annoyed to find their details had been passed to Victim Support, a point raised within the current research also. Indeed Victim Support has seen a significant reduction in referrals following the

³ The literature notes the ways in which co-ordinators' identified older (and more deserving) victims, even when factual details were absent from the police crime sheets. Names such as Hilda, Ethel or Albert were therefore taken as indicators of (old) age (Mawby and Walklate 1994).

⁴ Personal communication with branch manager, Victim Support, Plymouth. The literature (Wilkinson and Maguire 1993) also notes that the police may simply overlook asking victims whether they wish to be referred to Victim Support and so will tick 'no' on the crime referral sheets.

Data Protection Act 1998 (National Audit Office 2002). This prompted the Home Office to issue guidance to the police in October 2001, informing them that victims' details should be referred to Victim Support unless they 'opted out' (Home Office 44/2001⁵). In theory, this should ensure that more crimes, where appropriate, were referred.

However differing interpretations by the police concerning their obligations under the Data Protection Act (National Audit Office 2002) have caused problems in that fewer referrals have been made to Victim Support. The National Audit Office (ibid) noted a variance between recorded crimes and referral rates. In 2000-01, only 57% of recorded burglaries were referred (ibid). Notwithstanding the guidance issued, discrepancies between crime rates and referrals continue (House of Commons Public Accounts Committee 2003)⁶.

A further aspect of the referral process concerns the way in which Victim Support has widened its net in relation to the type of victims to whom support is offered. This will be discussed in the next section of the chapter.

Victim Support: modern developments

Victim Support is renowned for being one of the fastest growing voluntary sector agencies (National Audit Office 2002). In the early 1980s, there were around 67 schemes responding to 14,000 victims (Mawby and Gill 1987). By 1991, there were 350 schemes dealing with at least 600,000 referrals. Currently, there are

⁵ <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/circulars/2001/hoc44.htm> (accessed 4.9.02).

⁶ Although it is acknowledged that a number of other factors could also be at work. For example, different methods of counting referrals by Victim Support member schemes, different interpretations between local schemes and their police as to what crimes should be referred and high levels of victims opting out of referral to Victim Support.

325 community schemes and 381 court witness schemes⁷ in England and Wales, which offered assistance to 1.75m victims in 2003 (Victim Support 2003). At the same time, Victim Support attracted Home Office funding of £25.1m during 2001/2, representing 98% of Home Office funding for voluntary sector-based victim and witness services (National Audit Office 2002), and £29m during 2002/3 (Victim Support 2003).

As discussed previously, Victim Support began its life as a community agency that, in the early days, was a somewhat informally organised affair. Some schemes were run by co-ordinators on a purely voluntary basis, possibly from their own homes; or they were paid an honorarium for undertaking this role. As the model developed, so did the principle that co-ordinators should be paid a proper salary, a principle that became established by the more substantial funding granted by the Home Office in 1987 (Russell 1990).

Victim Support was operationalised on two broad levels. Firstly volunteers were organised to visit, largely, burglary victims in the community. Such activity was organised by a scheme co-ordinator who, as already noted, increasingly took the form of a paid worker. The second level of operations was a management committee to whom the co-ordinator was, as an employee, accountable.

The management committee was made up of volunteers from the community who oversaw issues that were essentially 'housekeeping' in essence; for example the appointment of paid staff. Other committee members were drawn from state agencies such as the police, probation and social services (Gill 1986). This 'mix'

⁷ Ninety two in the Crown Court and 289 in the Magistrates' Court; Malone, L. (Lesley Malone@victimsupport.org.uk) (21.1.04) E-mail to L. Simmonds (L.Simmonds@plymouth.ac.uk).

of lay and professional committee members meant that no one agency could dominate, underpinning the notion of Victim Support as an agency representing the whole community (Reeves 1985).

More recently, Victim Support has undergone restructuring resulting in 450 affiliated local groups and over 500 witness schemes being streamlined into 49 new area charities (National Audit Office 2002). This reorganisation is intended to broadly reflect the forty two criminal justice areas in England and Wales (ibid). Additional funding from the Home Office (ibid) has introduced a new layer of professional management at area level (Devon Association of Victim Support Schemes 2000; National Audit Office 2002).

One of the advantages of this approach is that local branch managers⁸ will be relieved of the responsibility for fundraising (Devon Association of Victim Support Schemes 2000). Indeed the burdensome nature of this was again one of the areas discussed by Maguire and Corbett (1987). The new structure is also designed to relieve the difficulty of finding people who are prepared to undertake management tasks on a voluntary basis (ibid). Thus the new county arrangement has dispensed with local management committees⁹. The new county area structure does, it may be said, link into the more managerialist nature of criminal justice agencies in the early 21st century, an aspect of Victim Support that will be discussed later in the chapter.

⁸ Formerly known as 'co-ordinators'.

⁹ However I am informed by Steven Hanvey, Head of Member Services at NAVSS, that the area management structure will continue to utilise volunteers (personal communication, 13.11.03), although fewer will be required. In Devon for example, eight local schemes have been condensed into five, plus the local management committees have been disbanded. Thus one area management board is responsible for five member schemes.

The National Association of Victim Support Schemes (NAVSS) came into being with Home Office funding of £15000 in 1979/1980 (Russell 1990; Mawby and Walklate 1994). The NAVSS is a regulatory body to which all local member schemes must be affiliated in order to function, plus it is a regulatory, campaigning and policy making body which over time can be seen to have exerted greater influence over its local member schemes. Whilst in the earlier days local schemes were viewed as not working to a 'blueprint' but as '...independent units whose aims, ideas and practices vary enormously. ...' (Maguire and Corbett 1987: 6), the situation has altered to some extent. 'National office' has worked consistently over the years to try to introduce a greater consistency in the services provided to victims by standardising the services provided in line with a national Code of Practice (Victim Support 2000), and in meeting the performance criteria laid down in the Victim's Charter (Home Office 1996). At the same time a national training model has been developed for volunteers and a more managerial approach to the day to day running of the service established. The current restructuring process is one recent example of this.

The NAVSS, as noted, issues a Code of Practice to its member schemes (Victim Support 2000) and generally steers a course nationally. The NAVSS is quite explicit on some things, indicating for example, the types of crime victims to whom member schemes must offer support. Victims of violence and burglary fall within this 'core service'. However, member schemes may, at their discretion, offer support to those experiencing other crimes/incidents. For example, schemes may support victims of car crime and certain non-crime incidents such as road deaths (ibid). Essentially, member schemes tailor their services to match local needs using the resources that national office makes available to them. However,

notwithstanding the devolved nature of the organisation, national office does exert some influence upon the day to day running of local schemes.

Member schemes are, for example, encouraged to accept service providing roles; unlike those adopted by other victim agencies in the UK. Rape Crisis centres and the 'Women's Refuge' movement, for example, assumed a more educational and politically challenging role (Mawby and Walklate 1994). The NAVSS Code of Practice (Victim Support 2000) expressly forbids member schemes from making comments of a political nature or from commenting upon sentencing policy directly.

Rock (1990:185), in his critique of Victim Support commented upon this 'neutrality', a view which he extended to the victims to whom Victim Support would 'typically' offer assistance. Rock felt that the lack of critique presented by Victim Support to the criminal justice system and wider (patriarchal) society generally, produced what he called the 'androgynous' victim.

the sexually neutral subject of burglary, theft and robbery. The victims described in the campaigns of the NAVSS had no discernible gender.

(1990: 185)

By taking a more 'conservative' approach however Victim Support has been able to build up a strong power base within the political establishment and has attracted substantial Home Office funding (Mawby and Walklate 1994), at a time when public spending has been subject to much greater control. Victim agencies, like Rape Crisis centres and the Women's Refuge movement, that have adopted a more critical and challenging stance have not achieved this (ibid). Furthermore Rape Crisis and the Women's Refuge movement have watched Victim Support

extend its remit to their own client base, albeit taking what some have called (ibid), a more 'normalising' approach to such crimes.

Whilst burglary victims continue to form the 'bread and butter' work of Victim Support¹⁰ (Tarling and Davison 2000), the organisation has widened its net in relation to the type of victims who are supported (Maguire and Kynch 2000). Burglary and violence victims made up 80% and 8% respectively of all referrals in 1985 (Mawby and Gill 1987), however only 38% of referrals were for burglary in 1998/99, yet in the same year Victim Support dealt with 4184 cases of rape and 671 homicides (Victim Support 1999). The latest figures presented in the Annual Report for 2003 (Victim Support 2003), show that just over a quarter of referrals (28%) were for burglary victims whilst 31% of referrals were for victims of violence¹¹.

Victim Support: contact policy

As noted earlier, the Code of Practice (Victim Support 2000) states that the coordinator must decide whether to send a volunteer to visit a victim, or to send a letter or make a telephone call offering support. The code does not indicate which type of contact should be offered to victims. Traditionally it has been burglary victims who were visited (unannounced), whilst victims of less serious crimes were contacted by letter or telephone call (Holtom and Raynor 1988). The (unannounced) volunteer visit, with its cost implications and more personal nature, can be considered to be the 'gold standard' offer of support made. Indeed research does seem to support this view in that at one time the unannounced visit was 'the method of contact preferred and advocated by NAVSS' (Wilkinson and

¹⁰ <http://www.victimsupport.org/different.htm> (accessed 26.11.03).

¹¹ One is assuming that by 'referrals', Victim Support means referrals to which a response is made.

Maguire 1992: 11). Reynolds et al (1993) confirmed that volunteers themselves preferred to visit victims unannounced. Victims also found face to face contact (visits) most helpful (Maguire and Kynch 2000), although it was not clear whether they were referring wholly to visits that were unannounced.

Over time the use of the traditional unannounced volunteer visit has declined (Victim Support 1999; Maguire and Kynch 2000). As Victim Support have developed their services, for example with the spread of automatic referral to more victims (Maguire and Kynch 2000) and also to a wider range of victims (Victim Support 2003); the notion of the arranged visit has emerged. The 1998 British Crime Survey for example, revealed that the most common way of approaching victims was by post (Maguire and Kynch 2000). In 2003, volunteer visits fell by 18% whilst telephone contacts rose by 21% (Victim Support 2003).

As indicated earlier, Victim Support 'national' does not explicitly inform local schemes how they must, or must not, contact victims. More specifically the Code of Practice (Victim Support 2000) does not make clear whether, when a 'visit' is the chosen contact, it should be unannounced or arranged. This allows local schemes to use their long held autonomy in deciding for themselves 'how' they should conduct their business. This demonstrates that local schemes (now areas) are independent charities who, although affiliated to the NAVSS, are not totally governed from the centre. Whilst the centre (NAVSS) sets standards, these are not necessarily binding.

Some local schemes (Plymouth being one of them) have continued to use the traditional unannounced volunteer visit for burglary victims. Other schemes, Greater Manchester being one example, have adopted a policy change whereby

all volunteer visits are now 'arranged'. The rationale for this was explained by the Assistant Chief Executive¹², who pointed out that this was a question of resources. Unannounced visits are costly, particularly where volunteers find no one at home. Such visits may also be a cause for concern for the health and safety of volunteers, a point that Reynolds et al (1993) raised. There was also concern that bogus callers may adopt the mantle of 'Victim Support volunteer' as a convincing 'cover'.

Discussions with representatives from 'national office' suggest that a message of resistance has been transmitted from the centre, where unannounced visits are concerned; although such shifts are not, it seems, embedded formally within Victim Support policy. The move away from unannounced visiting in Greater Manchester was, I am informed, adopted with the 'approval' of 'national office'¹³. This facet of Victim Support will be discussed further within the next section of the chapter, linking in to the notion of managerialism.

Victim Support: the era of managerialism

As has been discussed at some length, Victim Support developed originally as a 'community response' to crime with each scheme responding to the local context in which it operates. Victim Support has, however, shifted somewhat organisationally, becoming increasingly influenced by the current managerial environment. The service now incorporates greater professionalism and standardisation of its services using, for example, trained volunteers. The image which Victim Support today wishes to promote is, one may argue, far more

¹² Personal communication, Assistant Chief Executive, Victim Support, Greater Manchester Area, 18.11.03.

¹³ *ibid.*

professional. In order to see how this transformation took place, it is necessary to discuss the growth of managerialism within the public sector in the UK.

The drift towards managerialism within the public sector became firmly established throughout the 1980s, following the election of a Conservative government in a period that had been dominated in the main by the Labour Party. The Conservative party in opposition was increasingly dominated by New Right ideology, and in government led to a return to the supremacy of the free market (Smith 1977) in that market principles would be extended beyond the private sector. Under Thatcherism public services were to be run as businesses, and so principles of cost and efficiency and demonstrable service efficiency were paramount (James and Raine 1998). To achieve this, transparent accountability processes of performance management techniques were increasingly employed to measure achievement against pre-determined targets and priorities.

Whilst the criminal justice system was not subject to the same large-scale structural reforms permeating, for example, the National Health Service or local government, its agencies were nevertheless targeted. The probation service for example was subject to pressure from the Home Office to increase its levels of efficiency and effectiveness; firstly through exhortation (ibid), and then via financial controls and performance monitoring. In the 1980s the Home Office issued a set of national objectives (Statement of National Objectives and Priorities: SNOP) to enable the probation service to achieve greater value for money for the taxpayer. At the same time greater control was exerted centrally in order that the success of local services could be measured against a range of 'key performance indicators' (Cavadino and Dignan 2002).

The police have also been subject to this Home Office consumerism. The requirement to carry out and disseminate the results of service evaluations (Bunt and Mawby 1994; Ashworth et al 2000) and to develop a range of survey based Best Value Performance Indicators, which from 2001 can be measured by the British Crime Survey (Ashworth et al 2000). Finally the Home Office has turned its attention more overtly to Victim Support itself, stating that the time has come for the service to prove its economic worth, and for it to be subject to greater scrutiny (National Audit Office 2002).

The spillover of managerialism, from the private to the public sector has, therefore, been part of a clearly defined process. The voluntary sector, particularly one imagines where the state provides substantial levels of funding, has also taken on board these imperatives; Victim Support being a case in point¹⁴. The government has funded Victim Support since 1987 and, as Maguire and Kynch (2000) note, the language of 'service provision' and concepts of prioritisation, best practice and performance indicators have come to dominate the service.

Victim Support itself has developed a range of 'performance indicators' for its community schemes and witness Services, for local use and national collation (Tarling et al 1998). Performance indicators are viewed as contributing to the assessment of effectiveness, efficiency and user experience. They also aid service development and management planning. Furthermore, in the wake of the Crime and Disorder Act, the report (ibid) proposes that local schemes should be organised into 'families' (ibid) so that more meaningful comparisons can be made

¹⁴ The state provides 80% of core funding for local Victim Support schemes (National Audit Office 2002).

between them¹⁵. Victim Support also view performance indicators as helping 'enable the Home Office to satisfy Parliament that Victim Support is using public money in the best possible way' (ibid: 7). In this way, 'national office' or Victim Support 'national' has clearly taken on board the apparent need for the more managerialist approach that pervades the organisation today.

The extent to which the Home Office has driven this managerialism within Victim Support is not entirely clear. However, whilst 'national office' allocates monies to member schemes, it is the Home Office that provides this funding. Lines of accountability, albeit implicitly, have therefore existed between Victim Support 'national' and the Home Office¹⁶. This must therefore, provide some scope for Victim Support 'national' to regulate the work of its member schemes.

The Home Office and Victim Support

Whilst the Home Office did not originally provide and contract out services for victims, it 'supported' the work of Victim Support¹⁷. However, as Home Office funding has grown, so has the unease as to whether Victim Support is providing 'value for money' (Russell 1990; Coopers and Lybrand 1994 cited in National Audit Office 2002). This has occurred against a backdrop of increased concern for the Home Office to 'spell out' criteria and monitor grants, to ensure that value for money is being achieved by the voluntary sector agencies that it funds (National Audit Office 2002).

¹⁵ For the purposes of crime audits, crime and disorder reduction partnerships are organised into 'families' (Leigh et al 2000). Partnerships displaying similarities are marshalled together so that more meaningful comparisons can be made.

¹⁶ Although as will be discussed this situation is soon set to change.

¹⁷ Select Committee on Public Accounts Minutes of Evidence 6th November 2002, <http://parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk/pa/cm200203/cmselect/cmpublicacc/6> (accessed 1.3.04).

A report from Coopers and Lybrand in 1994 (cited in National Audit Office 2002) noted how the Home Office had never set out clear expectations as to what Victim Support 'national office', and the movement as a whole, should achieve with the funding provided (National Audit Office 2002; Select Committee on Public Accounts Minutes of Evidence 2002 cited in National Audit Office 2002). Other reports have gone further (Home Office 1996 cited in National Audit Office 2002) stating that a 'diversity of providers' should be encouraged.

Issues such as these have been revisited more recently (National Audit Office 2002; House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts 2003), especially in the light of the increased funding (£28 million in 2002-03) made available by the Home Office to Victim Support (ibid), and in view of the government's concern to improve participation by victims and witnesses in the criminal justice system (Home Office 2001; Home Office 2002; Home Office 2003). The proposals put forward (National Audit Office 2002; House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts 2003) suggest that Victim Support will in future come under much tighter scrutiny from the Home Office.

Our examination suggests that the Home Office needs to clarify its specification of its priorities for Victim Support and strengthen its arrangements for monitoring the level and quality of service delivered and the financial sustainability of Victim Support.

(National Audit Office 2002: 2)

One conclusion drawn by the House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts (2003: point 8) was that the Home Office should review the outcome of inspection visits to local schemes via the Charity's Quality and Standards Department (ibid:14). Furthermore, the government is intent upon opening up competition within the voluntary sector for victim services (National Audit Office 2002; House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts 2003). The news that Home Office

monies will be devolved onto Local Criminal Justice Boards who will accept bids from service providers has not been well received by Victim Support; especially as the witness service will face such arrangements in 2005 (Holtom 2003).

Victim Support: new horizons?

Whilst the original purpose of Victim Support was to provide an outreach service to victims in the community, a number of developments have taken place to extend the service offered. In 1991, the Home Office agreed to fund the crown court witness service, following the publication of a report by Victim Support entitled 'The victim in court'¹⁸. By 1996 a witness service was established in every crown court centre in England and Wales (Tarling et al 1998), and by 2003 in every criminal court¹⁹. The witness service mirrors the structure of community schemes²⁰. Volunteers are co-ordinated to support victims and witnesses who are required to give evidence.

A further development has been that of the telephone Victim Supportline in 1998; a mechanism designed to increase access to the service (ibid), for example to those who have not reported their crime to the police. This service ensures the anonymity of victims if that is required, or it can put them in touch with their local branch for further support.

Looking a little wider still, the Home Office has issued guidance whereby Victim Support, as a named voluntary sector agency, can take part in 'community safety' partnership work under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (Home Office 1998; para 2.32). Part of this approach sees Victim Support engaging more specifically with

¹⁸ www.victimsupport.org.uk/about/history.html (accessed 26.11.03).

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Subject to the current restructuring process.

agencies such as youth offending teams (YOTs) and the probation service in supporting victims under the umbrella of restorative justice.

Victim Support can offer support to victims who wish to take part in processes such as Victim Offender Mediation and Referral Order Panels. The NAVSS has advised local schemes that referrals for support should be accepted from Youth Offending Teams, where they are requested by victims (Victim Support 2002e:13 point h). Whilst schemes are expected to provide 'only their usual range of services to victims referred by the YOT' (ibid:13 point i), this may include accompanying a victim to a meeting with an offender or to a group conference. Victim Support is not responsible for liaising with victims in the first instance (ibid; Home Office 2002a). This is the responsibility of the YOT. Victim Support is also clear that it is not their place to encourage or dissuade victims from taking part in restorative justice (Victim Support 2002e).

Whilst this is an opportunity for Victim Support to engage with the wider issue of restorative justice, the extent to which the organisation is involved in these processes is not entirely clear. Indeed, based upon information obtained from localised Victim Support and Mediation services, it seems that participating victims may not always request support from Victim Support. It seems that the youth offending team locally have developed their own expertise for working with victims through these processes, and that this may extend to offering some level of support also²¹. Notwithstanding such considerations, Newburn et al (2002) note that victims do not participate in restorative justice programmes as much as they could anyway.

²¹ Personal communications with branch manager of Victim Support, Plymouth and the Director of Plymouth Mediation, the latter noting that victims who agree to participate in victim offender mediation are given the option of being referred to Victim Support.

A further area in which Victim Support has potential involvement is that of partnership work with the probation service. The Victim's Charter (Home Office 1990; Home Office 1996) and the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2000 provides for the probation Service to contact victims of serious crime, and to obtain their views concerning offenders' future release plans²². Mechanisms have been developed whereby a Victim Support worker can accompany a probation officer on such visits, to offer the victim support (Rogers and Mawby 1999; Rogers 1999).

Whilst research (Rogers 1999; Rogers and Mawby 1999) noted that victims were largely appreciative of the support offered by Victim Support, probation services are developing their own expertise with victims by employing Victim Liaison Officers (Rogers and Mawby 1999). The extent to which Victim Support will involve itself in this type of work is not therefore entirely clear.

Discussions with Victim Support locally indicate that they do not undertake a great deal of this kind of work. This may mean that victims do not necessarily need support or that, as in the example of the Youth Offending Team locally, the role of Victim Liaison Officer within probation also extends to providing support to victims of crime. Later research concerning victim contact work within the probation sphere does not add much to our knowledge of such processes. There is confusion concerning links between probation and Victim Support (Her Majesty's Inspector of Probation Thematic Inspection Report 2003), although the report recommends the facilitation of good communication with such organisations (ibid).

²² Currently victims of serious crime where the offender has been gaoled for one year or more shall be contacted with regard to release arrangements.

Victim Support: meeting victims' needs?

There has been comparatively little work conducted on the support provided to victims by various agencies (National Audit Commission 2002), and the same can be said for the work of Victim Support specifically (ibid). Whilst Victim Support 'national' collects some data from member schemes, to provide some indication of the scope of their work, the organisation has made little progress towards assessing how victims feel about the contact that they have with the service. An attempt to explore such issues was made in 1996 when an 'in-house' set of questionnaires was circulated to local member schemes. However this was not successful. More recently Victim Support national have proposed an evaluation of victim satisfaction which was due to be piloted in the Nottinghamshire area in 2003²³.

Maguire and Corbett (1987) produced the first in-depth and large scale study of Victim Support looking at, amongst other things, victims' feelings about the service provided to them. They considered,

what volunteers actually do for victims, what victims think of the service offered or provided, and, ultimately, whether the organisation can be shown to 'work' in the sense of measurably affecting victim's recovery.

(Maguire and Corbett 1987: 146)

However, this work extended beyond looking at the impact of intervention by volunteer visits alone, as the study also examined the effects of less direct forms of contact upon victims, such as postal and telephone contact. Maguire and Corbett (1987) did not however consider the views of victims who were visited unannounced, but who were not at home at the time. In such cases, volunteers would leave a card to say that the visit had been made and to offer further support

²³ Personal communication with Katherine Chaston 12.11.03, Research Officer with Victim Support 'national'. The findings from this research have not, as yet, been disseminated publicly.

if required. The present study does address this aspect of Victim Support's work. Maguire and Corbett (1987) did however dwell quite explicitly upon the effects of Victim Support upon victims' recovery from crime. This approach has been extended more recently (National Audit Office 2002), in discussions of the way in which Victim Support can not only aid the recovery of victims generally but, more specifically, in the context of aiding their return to the workplace.

In conducting their evaluation, Maguire and Corbett (1987) adopted a three fold view of Victim Support. They looked at the services provided to victims from the victim's point of view, the extent to which Victim Support tapped community resources and, thirdly, the extent to which Victim Support 'works'; whereby victims feel better despite their experiences of crime. My own work, particularly in phase two of the research, followed this pattern.

Maguire and Corbett (1988) asked victims about their immediate reactions to being contacted by Victim Support. Around half (48%) said that they were very or quite pleased, whereas most victims (83%) claimed this as their later reaction. Similar numbers said this whether they were visited unannounced by a volunteer, sent a letter or telephoned. Overall, the reaction to Victim Support was very largely positive, with very few respondents (7% of victims) making negative comments. Indeed the negative comments that were made were based upon either suspicion or embarrassment on the part of victims.

The suspicion that was expressed may well have been rational, given that most of those holding this view had been burgled; however such concerns were dispelled by the volunteers' use of an identity card. Equally those who felt embarrassed that volunteers had taken the time and trouble to visit them were made to feel better

once they had been assured that this was part of 'the job' and was not considered to be a 'waste' of volunteers' time.

For some victims, there was the concern that the police had passed on their details to Victim Support and had, therefore, breached confidentiality. It must be noted however that Maguire and Corbett carried out their study at a time when data protection issues were not necessarily at the forefront of the referral process. Indeed there were greater concerns surrounding the fundamental nature of the relationship that existed between Victim Support and the police at the time with respect to *who* should decide which victims was entitled to help from the service. It was, however, only victims who had been telephoned who had expressed concerns over confidentiality.

Maguire and Corbett (1987) were particularly concerned to know how people who were contacted by letter felt, as invariably only a very small proportion of victims would contact Victim Support to ask for further assistance and/or to say 'thanks, but no thanks', as the original model of Victim Support had predicted (Reeves 1985; Holtom and Raynor 1988). Maguire and Corbett (1987) found that around 80% of victims responded positively to receiving a letter.

Maguire and Corbett (*ibid*) also asked victims to indicate the type of contact that they would prefer. Around 30% of respondents overall expressed no preference with the remainder feeling happy with the contact received. However, about 25% of those telephoned would have preferred some other type of contact or none at all. Those preferring some other type of contact identified the volunteer visit as their preference. Furthermore, one in seven of those who, although not badly affected, were still visited, said that they would have preferred a letter. Maguire

and Corbett concluded that whilst no one method was preferred over another, the unannounced visit was more likely to be welcomed.

As well as finding out how victims felt, Maguire and Corbett enquired whether victims knew about the service before being contacted and knew what Victim Support could offer. Whilst a minority (29%) of their sample had heard of Victim Support, most victims visited said that they knew what the purpose of the service was, once the volunteer had introduced him/herself. A significant minority (15%) of those telephoned, and fewer again of those visited however, were vague and unclear about why they had been contacted. They had misconceptions about Victim Support, feeling that it was a service for violent crime only, that it had feminist connections or that it was offering psychological or psychiatric help. Maguire and Corbett suggested that Victim Support needed better publicity to raise public awareness of what the service does, produce better take up rates and avoid the annoyance or suspicion that some victims felt on being approached.

In terms of victim satisfaction with the service provided, 11% of those visited felt very much better and 71% slightly better and/or had their mind eased. Whilst 16% felt no different, 2% felt worse because the contact made them dwell on something that they had been trying to forget. Whilst a few people thought the volunteer was insensitive, the majority (71%) felt the volunteer made it easy for them to talk. Respondents noted that they valued the opportunity to talk to someone who would listen, but also that that someone was an 'outsider' who offered them a 'special space' or who would reassure them that other people had been in the same situation. Maguire and Corbett (1987) found that well over half of those visited said that such contact had ameliorated the emotional effects of crime upon them.

Maguire and Corbett (1987) also looked at the extent to which Victim Support helped victims with practical difficulties arising from the crime; for example damage to property or, in the case of violence victims, the prospect of applying for criminal injuries compensation. Within this they noted how volunteers could help victims to recognise or 'negotiate' (Maguire 1991) their needs, particularly in practical terms. Practical assistance could then take a number of forms. For example, in the case of damage to property the victim may be advised to contact the local authority housing department; or the volunteer may offer to do this on the victim's behalf. In cases of violence, the volunteer may assist the victim in completing his/her criminal injuries compensation. Maguire and Corbett (1987) found that approximately one third of burglary victims were given 'productive practical advice', signifying that schemes had been helpful to around 18% of all the victims visited. A third of these victims felt that the scheme's help or advice had saved or acquired for them money they would not have otherwise received. Others said that the process of repairing damage had been speeded up by Victim Support's intervention with the local council and by crime prevention advice.

Over two thirds of visits took place within two days of the offence and in the large majority of cases within one week. Most victims were visited only once; 13% of burglary victims and 34% of violence victims were visited again. Around one quarter of victims visited had further contact with Victim Support and about two thirds of respondents thought that the visit should take place within three days of the offence occurring. On the other hand 80% of British Crime Survey respondents, whose responses Maguire and Corbett reported within their study, felt that they would like to be visited on the day of the offence, or certainly, the following day.

Visits were largely made in line with the 'crisis intervention' model (Reeves 1985; Holtom and Raynor 1988) as 'one-offs' and, generally, victims were happy with this. However around 20% of victims who had no further contact with volunteers wanted to see a volunteer again, either for a 'social chat' or to discuss further or ongoing problems relating to the crime. Indeed 16% of those interviewed three to six weeks later still had problems that they thought Victim Support could help them with. This did prompt Maguire and Corbett (1987) to ask whether Victim Support should, as a matter of routine, re-visit certain victims; a question that is posed within my research also. Maguire and Corbett (1987) also observed that volunteer visits tended to be short, again as per the 'crisis intervention' model noted above. However, many victims appreciated the gesture as much as the content of the visit, with 53% noting the visit showed 'the fact someone cared' and that it led to the 'restoration of faith in society' (p163). Few found fault with Victim Support, although 15% thought the service could have done more to help them.

A cornerstone of Victim Support has been the way in which the needs of victims are identified and, where appropriate, are referred on to other agencies (Reeves 1985). Maguire and Corbett (1987) found that referrals to other agencies took place in 30% of burglary cases and that in over half of these a satisfactory outcome was achieved. They also noted the way in which referrals from schemes with a focus on particular crimes, for example burglary, would favour local authority housing departments. However they suggested that the aim of 'referring on' would not necessarily mean that another agency would 'take responsibility' for victims.

Maguire and Corbett (1987) gave three reasons for saying this, which are equally applicable today. Firstly, there may be no agencies that are expert in dealing with

the problems of crime victims; indeed this was the fundamental rationale for developing Victim Support. Secondly Victim Support is increasingly gaining expertise in the field; for example in supporting victims of more specialist crimes such as domestic violence or particular groups of victims such as children (Victim Support 2003b). Finally, a voluntary agency such as Victim Support is in no position to co-ordinate statutory agencies, such as Social Services, on behalf of victims.

Maguire and Corbett (1987) also looked to fill what they considered to be a gap in the existing research literature by testing out whether those visited by Victim Support would 'recover' more than those who were not contacted at all by the service. In this way they rose to the challenge put forward by Stein (1981).

We have available to us precious little evidence to support our case for crisis intervention for crime victims... Although crisis intervention has proven its efficacy to the mental health profession, there are no evaluation studies showing the benefits of crisis intervention to crime victims as a particular group in need of its services.

(cited in Maguire and Corbett 1987: 168)

They were able to 'match' a number of supported and non-supported victims (26 of each), finding that more of the former had shown signs of recovery. For example, only one out of 22 supported victims was 'very much affected' three to six weeks after the crime compared with eight out of 20 who were not supported by Victim Support. Furthermore, two out of the 26 supported respondents compared to 12 out of the 26 unsupported respondents expressed punitive feelings towards offenders generally. Likewise more of those who were supported (11 out of 26) compared to three of those who were unsupported said that they would take part in mediation. On the basis that the samples were small however, these findings were reported cautiously.

In the period since Maguire and Corbett's (1987) study of Victim Support, many changes have taken place. For example, Home Office funding was sustained and increased, bringing with it demands from the centre for a service that would offer 'value for money'²⁴. It is in this subsequent period that Maguire and Kynch (2000) produced an evaluation of Victim Support²⁵ that revisited the sorts of issues that Maguire and Corbett (1987) had considered, although at a much later stage in the organisation's development. In their study, Maguire and Kynch (2000:14) noted the way in which the service had then been taken over by the language of 'service provision' – 'and associated concepts such as prioritisation, best practice and performance indicators'. This was in stark contrast to the ethos of local 'good neighbourliness' that had pervaded Victim Support in its earlier and, perhaps more financially, uncertain days.

Maguire and Kynch (ibid) found that 56% of victims overall recalled getting some help from Victim Support; whether they were seen face to face or were sent a letter. For those seen face to face, 74% said they received moral support, whilst only 25% of those who were sent a letter said that they received this. When asked about security advice, 27% of victims seen face to face and 9% of those sent a letter said that they received this. Furthermore 'someone to talk to for moral support' was the most common service provided no matter how victims were contacted, whilst security advice was cited by 13% of victims as having been received. At the same time 51% of victims who wanted someone to talk to for moral support received this, as did 26% of those wanting security advice and 3% of those wanting information from the police.

²⁴ Although it is only recently that the Home Office has clarified its position with regard to these 'value for money' issues (National Audit Office 2002).

²⁵ This research was based upon the secondary analysis of data from the British Crime Survey 1998.

The majority of victims (58%) said that they found the service 'very' or 'fairly' helpful; in contrast to 65% in the 1996 British Crime Survey (Mirrlees-Black et al 1996) and 60% in the 1994 survey (Mirrlees-Black et al 1996a). Furthermore, when Maguire and Kynch (2000) cross tabulated 'contact' by the extent to which victims felt that the service was helpful, 80% of those who were seen face to face by volunteers said the service was helpful, with 50% saying that it was 'very' helpful. In contrast less than half (46%) of those contacted by letter said the service had been helpful. Maguire and Kynch (2000) also considered the impact of social characteristics upon victims' opinions as to the helpfulness of Victim Support. They found that victims from council housing areas, victims of more serious crimes and younger victims were more likely to feel that Victim Support had been helpful.

Maguire and Kynch (2000) looked at the impact of speed of contact upon victims perceptions of helpfulness. Seventy percent of those contacted in four days compared to 48% of those contacted five days or more after crime was reported felt that the service was 'very' or 'fairly' helpful. Indeed, for around 50% of victims contact was made within the four day period prescribed by the Victim's Charter 1996 (Mirrlees-Black et al 1998).

However the feeling that they had been helped was much higher for victims who received specific forms of assistance which, as Maguire and Kynch (2000) pointed out was less likely to be the case for those contacted by letter only. Practical help or advice, was seen to be just as helpful as moral support. This combination of support, that is personal support and practical help, formed the basis upon which Victim Support was developed (Gay et al 1975; Holtom and Raynor 1988). In the light of their findings Maguire and Kynch (2000) concluded that the early model of

Victim Support remains 'entirely relevant', even today. This message is perhaps further reinforced by their multivariate analysis, wherein the main factors contributing to victims' enhanced perceptions of helpfulness were the more personal types of contact where victims were more likely to feel that some service had been provided.

Summary

Chapter three has investigated a range of issues relating to Victim Support. It has considered the organisation's early beginnings and the ways in which it has developed and broadened its support for victims of crime. Within this the chapter looks at the increasing control exerted by Victim Support 'national' over local member schemes and, within this, the role that the Home Office plays. This is a discussion that will be explored later in the thesis.

This chapter also presented findings from some of the previous work that has been undertaken on Victim Support. The findings from my own research will be offered in the light of these in chapter seven.

Chapter four looks more closely at Victim Support Plymouth by firstly considering the early history of the scheme, and then by taking a look at what is happening today. Attention is paid to the number of staff and volunteers working for the service in Plymouth over the years, and to the way in which this local scheme is organised as a composite part of the greater Victim Support framework that has evolved more recently.

Chapter Four: Victim Support: a local study.

Introduction

This chapter focuses upon Victim Support in Plymouth in order to provide a picture of the local scheme upon which the current research is based. The chapter initially discusses the city of Plymouth itself in terms of its socio-economic status and, using amongst other sources the Crime and Disorder Audit for 2001, discusses the city's criminogenic profile. This is significant in that Victim Support member schemes are allocated their 'share' of Home Office funding on the basis of crime statistics for their areas and population density¹. The chapter then looks at Victim Support, Plymouth over time, following its progression through the major restructuring of Victim Support nationally, which is now nearing completion².

The focus upon Victim Support, Plymouth will be maintained by looking at the 'nuts and bolts of the organisation' in terms of the numbers of staff and volunteers working for the service and the number of referrals responded to³. Some discussion of the extent to which Victim Support, Plymouth follows the general pattern of support offered by Victim Support throughout England and Wales is then provided; with particular reference to the continued use of the traditional unannounced visit by volunteers in the Plymouth area. Within these discussions, the growing centralisation of Victim Support is also considered. Finally the chapter refers to Victim Support, Plymouth's involvement in 'partnership working'; something which has become more formalised under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

¹ Extra weighting is given for serious crime. This information was obtained from 'national office'. Malone, L. (Lesley.Malone@victimsupport.org.uk). (17th March 2004). Re. Email to L. Simmonds (l.simmonds@plymouth.ac.uk)

² http://www.victimsupport.org.uk/about/press/press_release_archive.html (accessed 8.11.03).

³ The discussions at this stage will largely concern the work that Victim Support does in the community as it is this branch of the service that has formed the main focus of the research.

The City of Plymouth: background information.

Plymouth is the largest urban area in Devon and Cornwall (Chalkley et al 1991) with a population of 252,900 (Plymouth City Council 2001⁴). It has been a centre of tourism since the nineteenth century, whilst historically its main industrial focus has been the dockyard; although over time the latter has been subject to decline (Chalkley et al 1991). Plymouth therefore incorporates a mix of relatively prosperous and deprived inner city areas (ibid; Simmonds and Hyde 1998). The wards of St. Peter, Ham and Budshead for example fall within 10% of the most deprived wards within England and Wales on the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2001⁵, whilst Plympton Earl, Plympton St Mary and Plymstock Dunstan are, relatively speaking, more affluent, being ranked 5025, 5217 and 5719 respectively out of the 8414 wards within the index⁶.

This sort of information is important in the current context of Crime and Disorder Auditing, where the higher crime rates that occur within deprived areas can be used to make causal linkages with measures of material deprivation. Whilst the Plymouth Crime and Disorder Audit (Plymouth City Council 2001) does not explicitly do this, a number of wards that exhibit the signs of multiple deprivation (St. Peter Ward being one) are also shown to experience higher crime rates.

In terms of total recorded crimes, Plymouth rates are below the national average with 93.8 per 1000 population compared to the national figure of 98.1 (ibid). When individual crimes are considered, domestic burglary and theft of motor vehicle fall

⁴ Using Oxford University population estimates for wards 1998)

⁵ <http://www.swpho.org.uk/patterns/table2.htm> (accessed 24.11.03).

⁶ [http://www.gosw.gov.uk/A-Z_GOSW_Activities/Neighbourhood Renewal/Geographical_Information/Index_of_Multiple_Deprivation/](http://www.gosw.gov.uk/A-Z_GOSW_Activities/Neighbourhood_Renewal/Geographical_Information/Index_of_Multiple_Deprivation/) (accessed 24.11.03).

below the national average whilst theft from motor vehicle and violence against the person are above it⁷.

The levels of crime in Plymouth can be compared to other geographical locations that, for organisational purposes, also belong to Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership Family 10 (CDRP 10) (Leigh et al 2000)⁸. Plymouth is one of 29 areas that comprise CDRP 10, which includes Blackpool at its most northerly point. Two other areas of Devon, Exeter and Torbay, are also included in CDRP family 10.

Plymouth's position in terms of violent crime nationally is preserved when the figures for Exeter and Torbay are considered. Whilst Plymouth ranks 14th out of the 29 families⁹ within CDRP 10, with 12.5 violent crimes per 1000 population, Torbay ranks 9th with 10.9 violent crimes per 1000 population. Exeter is ranked much lower, 2nd, with 8.9 violent crimes per 1000 population (Plymouth City Council 2001; Povey et al 2001).

Whilst crime rates in Plymouth have declined by 9% between 1998 and 2001, national rates have fallen more slowly (1.2% throughout England and Wales). However, in Plymouth, domestic burglary and auto crime have declined more, whilst violence has increased (Plymouth City Council 2001).

In looking at the percentage change for certain crimes amongst Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership areas in family 10 for the two year period 1999/2000 and 2000/01, Plymouth has been relatively successful in comparison

⁷ The rates for these four crime types are cited because the current research focuses upon them.

⁸ For the purpose of Crime and Disorder Auditing, Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership areas throughout England and Wales have been organised into 'families' on the basis that areas share similar socio-economic and demographic characteristics (Sheldon et al 2002)..

⁹ Ranking within the 29 areas is 1 for least crimes per 1000 population up to 29 for highest (Plymouth City Council 2001).

with the two other family 10 partnership areas that are also located in Devon (Exeter and Torbay), particularly in reducing violent crimes and car crime. Plymouth has been slightly less successful in reducing burglary; the rate per 1000 population in Plymouth reducing by 0.7 compared to 0.82 for Exeter over the course of the two year period. Torbay on the other hand was less successful with regard to burglary reduction with the rate per 1000 population unchanged. Table 4.1 below, which is reproduced from information contained in Povey et al (2000 and 2001), illustrates these figures.

CDRP family 10	Burglary			Violence			Theft of Motor Vehicle			Theft from Motor Vehicle		
	1	2	%	1	2	%	1	2	%	1	2	%
Blackpool	9.8	11.4	16.1	10.8	12.5	15.4	7.3	6.4	-12.3	12.2	10.5	-14.4
Brighton & Hove	10.4	8.9	-13.6	16.4	16.8	3.1	9.5	8.0	-14.5	14.6	13.8	-4.8
Cambridge	10.3	10.4	2.6	11.7	11.2	-2.7	6.0	4.6	-21.6	12.4	11.5	-5.5
Cardiff	8.8	6.8	-22.1	12.4	13.1	6.4	12.8	8.7	-31.9	20.9	15.9	-23.0
City of Bristol UA	16.0	15.1	-5.0	13.4	15.6	17.4	15.0	14.1	-5.1	27.3	25.4	-6.5
Coventry	14.3	12.6	-12.4	15.9	18.6	16.7	8.7	9.5	8.9	16.1	14.7	-9.2
Derby	11.8	12.2	2.0	14.3	15.1	6.0	6.8	6.0	-12.0	18.1	15.6	-13.6
Durham	6.2	4.5	-26.7	9.5	10.1	7.6	5.8	4.5	-21.1	7.8	6.4	-16.1
Eastbourne	7.5	7.0	-5.6	14.4	13.4	-5.3	4.8	4.4	-5.6	13.4	14.1	6.9
Exeter	6.2	5.3	-13.9	8.9	8.9	0.0	3.1	3.2	2.9	16.8	18.0	7.9
Gosport	7.2	6.7	-7.7	11.4	10.7	-6.5	4.1	3.2	-24.3	10.6	11.8	10.7
Hastings	14.3	12.9	-8.2	21.6	22.7	7.2	14.7	10.9	-24.4	31.8	26.0	-16.5
Ipswich	4.3	5.4	25.5	15.1	15.8	4.4	3.5	4.6	30.2	12.1	11.2	-6.8
Knowsley	6.3	6.9	8.7	8.2	8.8	5.8	12.7	13.0	1.7	9.8	9.3	-5.9
Lancaster	6.5	6.3	-2.6	7.1	9.2	31.3	3.2	2.8	-10.4	9.5	7.4	-21.4
Lincoln	16.8	14.6	-13.0	14.1	12.4	-11.9	5.2	4.6	-10.7	18.3	13.9	-23.8
Milton Keynes UA	8.9	5.8	-33.6	8.8	10.0	15.1	10.7	7.4	-30.0	20.5	11.6	-42.5
Northampton	11.0	7.6	-31.2	10.9	11.0	1.6	9.4	9.1	-3.3	20.2	17.2	-14.9
Norwich	9.5	10.5	10.4	15.9	14.5	-9.3	6.4	5.3	-17.8	19.5	21.5	9.9
Oxford	15.1	10.8	-26.8	13.3	13.2	1.7	11.2	8.6	-21.9	25.4	17.3	-30.2
Peterborough UA	15.1	9.7	-35.6	14.5	14.9	2.9	8.9	7.8	-12.0	28.3	24.6	-13.0
Plymouth	7.4	6.7	-10.1	13.7	12.5	-9.0	5.1	4.5	-13.2	18.6	16.6	-10.5
Portsmouth	6.3	6.9	8.3	16.8	17.7	5.0	7.4	6.3	-15.9	14.7	12.8	-13.7
Preston	10.1	9.6	-4.6	10.1	9.9	-1.2	5.8	5.9	2.3	14.3	17.3	21.0
Southampton	5.4	5.2	-4.1	12.9	14.9	15.1	8.3	7.5	-10.0	16.4	15.8	-3.6
Stoke-on-Trent	17.2	12.7	-26.8	16.4	22.3	35.4	8.5	7.4	-13.2	17.0	13.4	-21.2
Swansea	6.6	5.6	-14.6	13.2	12.2	-7.9	18.7	15.4	-17.5	15.5	16.3	5.6
Torbay	10.2	10.2	1.0	11.8	10.9	-6.0	3.3	3.2	0.3	12.3	11.4	-6.1
Weymouth & portland	3.8	4.7	22.9	8.9	10.2	13.3	3.3	3.0	-9.6	8.7	8.1	-8.4

Table 4.1: Comparative changes in crime in Plymouth, Exeter and Torbay*.

For each offence type column 1 = crimes per 1000 population 1999/2000; column 2 = crimes per 1000 population 2000/01; % column = percentage change in total crimes between 1999/2000 and 2000/01

Victim Support, Plymouth: a historical overview

At the time of its creation in 1978, Victim Support, Plymouth was the largest local member scheme south-west of Bristol. It was also, following the development of a scheme in Exeter, amongst the first of a wave of schemes to be established in Devon and Cornwall (Mawby and Gill 1987). Victim Support, Plymouth was established by members of the Council for Christian Care, the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, the Devon Probation and After Care Service and the Guild of Community Service. The Management Committee was originally comprised of representatives from the police, the probation service, social services and advisors from the legal, medical and insurance professions (Victim Support, Plymouth 2000). This reflected the general pattern of Victim Support in the UK whereby local member schemes were the product of a number of agencies, representing the state, the church and the voluntary sector, working together (Holtom and Raynor 1988). A witness service was established in the Crown Court in 1994 and then in the Magistrates' Court in 2000 (Victim Support, Plymouth 2000).

More recently Victim Support, Plymouth has been reorganised in line with the restructuring that occurred nationally. Member schemes throughout the country are now largely organised and managed on an area level. Victim Support, Plymouth is now part of Victim Support, Devon and so is managed by an area management board. Whereas eight local schemes previously operated in Devon, three have now been amalgamated¹⁰. Victim Support Devon is therefore comprised of schemes in Plymouth; North Devon; Exeter, East and Mid-Devon; Torbay and South and West Devon (Victim Support Devon 2003).

¹⁰ Schemes in Tavistock and Totnes were amalgamated with Teignbridge to form South and West Devon, whilst the scheme for East and Mid Devon was amalgamated with Exeter to form Exeter, East and Mid Devon.

This reorganisation along area lines was intended to broadly reflect the 42 criminal justice areas in England and Wales that form the basis of policing, probation and the crown prosecution service. Local Victim Support groups have, as a result, reported improved communications within local agencies (National Audit Office 2002). Two of the Devon area schemes, Plymouth and Torbay are clearly coterminous with their respective Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership areas, again no doubt aiding the 'partnership working' required under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The remaining schemes however are each linked with more than one Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership. This is in contrast with the situation in the adjoining county of Cornwall where each of the six local schemes there are coterminous with the six Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships.

Whilst local schemes had been responsible for employing and training staff and volunteers (Victim Support 2000) and for fundraising, these activities will in future be carried out at area level. In Devon's case, paid employees will undertake such tasks. Indeed a professional fundraiser for Devon is already in place, while efforts are being made to recruit a Training Manager¹¹. This model of organisation will move Victim Support, Plymouth away from the locally and independently managed service that it once was.

The area structure has introduced a new layer of professional management (Devon Association of Victim Support Schemes 2001; National Audit Office 2002) into Victim Support, while at the same time dispensing with local management committees. One of the advantages of this approach is that local branch managers can be relieved of certain responsibilities that can impinge on the day to

¹¹ Personal communication, branch manager of Victim Support, Plymouth 3 12. 03.

day running of schemes, for example fundraising (Devon Association of Victim Support Schemes 2000). This was something that Maguire and Corbett (1987) discussed in their earlier study of Victim Support, although at the time, the organisation was only just entering into a period of more stable funding arrangements, as a result of relatively generous Home Office grants.

Mawby and Gill (1987) found that management committees, certainly in the southwest, always contained representatives from the police (indeed some contained two officers or more) and from the probation service. They also included representatives from social services, although this was a less frequent occurrence. When the current research began in 1998, the management committee followed the same pattern, incorporating advisors from the insurance, legal and medical fields; something that Victim Support, Plymouth had done from the outset. The situation following restructuring is somewhat different however. Whilst volunteer advisors, including those from statutory agencies such as the police and probation, do still sit on the Management Council, there is currently no social services representative or anyone from the legal, medical and insurance fields¹². However, representatives from the crown prosecution service, the courts and the youth offending service are members of the Management Council.

Victim Support, Plymouth today

The staff and volunteers

The current research spans a period during which Victim Support, Plymouth has undergone restructuring along Area lines. One effect of this is that the latest information about Victim Support, Plymouth is contained in the Annual Review of

¹² Although this is more a question of not being able to secure representation from these fields, personal communication with branch manager, Victim Support; Plymouth, 3. 12. 03.

Victim Support Devon 2003; although there is little that is specific to the Plymouth scheme. The most up to date information pertaining to the Plymouth scheme is found in the 2001 Annual Review of Victim Support, Plymouth, published prior to restructuring.

Some of the information that I will present in this section of the chapter therefore reflects the 'old' structure of Victim Support, Plymouth, with its own management committee in place. However, a view of Victim Support, Plymouth in its current form is also presented.

As at 1st July 2001, Victim Support, Plymouth comprised five paid staff, 20 volunteer visitors, 30 witness service volunteers and nine management committee members¹³ (Victim Support, Plymouth 2001)¹⁴. The annual report for 2001 indicated that the staff and volunteers working in Plymouth were largely female (62%), largely older (20% under 45 years of age) and largely white (98%) with 8% of them having a disability. The area figures for the newly restructured agency, Victim Support Devon, continues these themes as there are fewer younger volunteers and paid staff and more females both working and volunteering (Victim Support Devon 2003). My own findings and those of others (for example Gill 1986; Mawby and Gill 1990) also support this view of the service.

A further insight in this respect is raised by Krishnamurthy et al (2001), reporting a gender division within voluntary work. Men, for example, were more likely to engage in committee work than women. This pattern is repeated within the

¹³ Some of whom sat as representatives of state agencies such as the police and probation in keeping with the original management format described by Holtom and Raynor (1988).

¹⁴ The latest annual report (Victim Support, Devon 2003) does not break down the figures for each branch but simply states that there are 10 trustees, 178 volunteers within the community and witness services and 23 employees working for Victim Support, Devon.

management of Victim Support locally, both prior to and following the restructuring process (Victim Support, Plymouth 2001; Victim Support Devon 2003).

The latest annual review (Victim Support Devon 2003) showed that 0.02% of all personnel (paid and volunteer staff) are members of ethnic minority groups (ibid). The 2001 Census shows that ethnic minority groups make up 1.13% of the population in Devon¹⁵, indicating some level of under representation within Victim Support locally.

The referral system in Plymouth

An 'open referral' system currently operates between Victim Support, Plymouth and the police. For crimes such as burglary, theft, actual bodily harm (ABH) and grievous bodily harm (GBH), the police will refer victims details to Victim Support unless their consent is withheld. For more serious crimes, such as rape, manslaughter, murder and domestic violence, the police must seek the specific consent of victims prior to making referrals (Victim Support 2000). Clearly then the police are responsible for asking victims whether they wish to have their details passed to Victim Support (ibid).

The police may not however always follow these procedures. The current research revealed cases where the co-ordinator was unsure whether a victim had declined the offer of help, whether this had been overlooked by the police or, as Maguire and Corbett (1987) discovered, judgements as to 'deservingness' were at work¹⁶. Such examples may contribute to the 'under referring' noted by the Home

¹⁵ www.devon.gov.uk/dris/census/cen2001.html (accessed 22.12.03).

¹⁶ Information concerning issues such as these was gleaned in the course of conversations with the staff at Victim Support, Plymouth.

Office (National Audit Office 2002), which I discussed in chapter three of this thesis.

Under the current system, the branch manager is able to raise concerns with the police about any victims who have not taken up the offer of help. This is not only a measure of the relationship enjoyed by Victim Support with the police locally, but is also a mark of the extent to which branch managers can exercise discretion. This is something that will possibly be lost when the new electronic referral system that is currently being piloted in Manchester, Hertfordshire and Surrey (National Audit Office 2002; Victim Support 2003) is adopted more widely, as the details of victims who have refused assistance may not be supplied. Whilst this may make more sense in terms of 'system management', it does narrow down local schemes' 'take' on crime in their areas, which may be important at the Crime and Reduction Partnership level.

As noted earlier, local Victim Support schemes are funded on the basis of crime levels in their areas; however it is the offers of help that they make, in the form of letters, telephone calls and volunteer visits that comprises their work. These offers must then be distinguished from referrals that are received from the police. Again, as discussed in chapter three, once the referrals from the police are received, the co-ordinator (now branch manager) must decide which form of assistance to offer, that is whether to write a letter, to telephone, to visit or, indeed, to do nothing. It is the monthly returns of these actions to 'national office' that provide another measure of the work that schemes/areas undertake. Victim Support publishes these figures nationally in their annual review, to provide an overview of the level of support to victims throughout England and Wales¹⁷. However, local schemes

¹⁷ Victim Support in Scotland and in Northern Ireland publish separate figures.

also publish their monthly returns for the year. In Plymouth, this has coincided with the scheme's general annual meeting. However since restructuring area figures, which include a breakdown showing each local schemes' workload, are now published¹⁸.

Table 4.2 overleaf illustrates the work that Victim Support, Plymouth has undertaken in the community with victims over several years. Throughout the period 1996 to 2000, offers of help to victims increased by 14% (6013 in 1996 to 6867 in 2000) overall, reflecting trends within Victim Support throughout England and Wales (Victim Support 2003). However within this overall increase, the number of victims supported dipped down to 5579 in 1997 and further again to 4939 in 1998, catching the tail end perhaps of the reduction in crime overall in the Plymouth area throughout the three years 1998 – 2001 (Plymouth City Council 2001). The latest figures for Victim Support, Plymouth (Victim Support Devon 2003) however do show a reduction in offers of help, from 6867 in 2000 – 2001 to 6644 in 2002 – 2003.

¹⁸ The information contained in the Victim Support Devon Annual Report 2002-2003 presents a slightly confusing picture in that the figures for support given is entitled 'Referrals April 2002 to March 2003'. However the report discusses the fact that the overall area figure of referrals for the period amount to 19350, and then states that 'During the period from 1 April 2002 until 31 March 2003, Victim Support Devon took action on over 19,000 referrals; I have assumed from this that it is in fact offers of help that are being referred to.'

Crime Type...	1996		1997		1998		1999		2000		April 2002- March 2003	
	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)
Homicide	5	(0.08)	2	(0.03)	2	(0.04)	3	(0.04)	0	(0)	3	(0.04)
Attempted Murder	4	(0.06)	6	(0.10)	8	(0.16)	7	(0.10)	5	(0.07)	1	(0.01)
Rape	24	(0.39)	25	(0.44)	27	(0.54)	31	(0.47)	39	(0.56)	38	(0.57)
Sexual Assaults	28	(0.46)	18	(0.32)	40	(0.80)	63	(0.95)	72	(1.04)	67	(1.00)
Sexual Offences	18	(0.29)	27	(0.48)	16	(0.32)	51	(0.77)	59	(0.85)	52	(0.78)
Robbery	170	(2.82)	162	(2.90)	138	(2.79)	169	(2.56)	173	(2.51)	217	(3.26)
GBH	174	(2.89)	196	(3.51)	157	(3.17)	153	(2.32)	160	(2.32)	140	(2.10)
ABH	827	(13.75)	1091	(19.55)	1139	(23.06)	1544	(23.46)	1684	(24.52)	2010	(30.25)
Aggravated Burglary	18	(0.29)	26	(0.46)	18	(0.36)	21	(0.31)	23	(0.33)	12	(0.18)
Burglary/Theft Dwelling	3329	(55.36)	2522	(45.20)	2376	(48.10)	2593	(39.41)	2200	(32.03)	2045	(30.77)
Burglary Artifice	99	(1.64)	56	(1.00)	71	(1.43)	10	(0.15)	24	(0.34)	51	(0.76)
Theft-Person	84	(1.39)	72	(1.29)	65	(1.31)	139	(2.11)	129	(1.87)	235	(3.53)
Other Theft	809	(13.45)	871	(15.61)	420	(8.50)	817	(12.41)	1052	(15.31)	596	(8.97)
Fraud/Deception	2	(0.03)	4	(0.07)	3	(0.06)	14	(0.21)	9	(0.13)	17	(0.25)
Criminal Damage	156	(2.59)	172	(3.08)	127	(2.57)	429	(6.52)	665	(9.68)	662	(9.96)
Threats	77	(1.28)	101	(1.81)	102	(2.06)	235	(3.57)	279	(4.06)	276	(4.15)
Arson	150	(2.49)	156	(2.79)	132	(2.67)	181	(2.75)	207	(3.01)	127	(1.91)
Other Crime	28	(0.46)	52	(0.93)	86	(1.74)	99	(1.50)	74	(1.07)	79	(1.18)
Road Death/ Crime	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)
Road Death/No Crime	2	(0.03)	6	(0.10)	4	(0.08)	4	(0.06)	5	(0.07)	4	(0.06)
Non Crime	9	(0.14)	14	(0.25)	8	(0.16)	19	(0.28)	8	(0.11)	12	(0.18)
Grand Totals	6013		5579		4939		6579		6867		6644	

Table 4.2: Offers of help by Victim Support, Plymouth 1996 – 2002/2003¹⁹.

Looking more specifically at the types of crime victims who Victim Support assists we can see that the shift nationally towards those experiencing violent crimes (Mawby and Walklate 1994; Maguire and Kynch 2000; Victim Support 2003) is also being reflected in the work of Victim Support locally. Thus in 1996 Victim Support, Plymouth assisted 3329 victims of burglary in contrast to 2200 in 2000; a reduction from 55% of all offers of help to 32% (Victim Support, Plymouth 2001). In the same time frame, the number of violence victims assisted increased from 17% in 1996 to 30% in 2000 (ibid). This trend has continued in 2002 – 2003 where, again, more violence victims (36%) and fewer burglary victims (31%) were offered assistance (Victim Support Devon 2003)²⁰. Clearly whilst this trend reflects

¹⁹ There are no figures available for the period 2001 – 2002 because of restructuring. The figures for 1996 to 2000 are reproduced from the Victim Support, Plymouth Annual Report 2000-2001. Those for April 2002 to March 2003 are from the Victim Support Devon Annual Report 2002/2003.

²⁰ I have included cases of robbery, GBH, ABH and aggravated burglary as 'violence'.

the shifting client group with which Victim Support engages (Mawby and Walklate 1994; Maguire and Kynch 2000), the impact of local crime patterns must also be recognised (Plymouth City Council 2001).

The shifting patterns within Victim Support's client base, both nationally and locally, have also influenced the way in which the organisation offers help; certainly throughout England and Wales overall, as fewer traditional unannounced visits are now made (Maguire and Kynch 2000; Wilkinson and Maguire 1993; National Audit Office 2002; Victim Support 2003). Research has shown that some schemes have relied on the unannounced visit more than others. Mawby and Gill (1987) noted how most schemes in the South West operated a policy of visiting all victims referred. This, in part, was linked to the lower workloads that resulted from more selective referral systems operating at the time (ibid; Gill and Mawby 1990), and the need to utilise volunteers and maintain their motivation levels. In addition, Victim Support in the early days tended to focus upon burglary victims; a group which traditionally attracted volunteer visits (Holtom and Raynor 1988).

However times change and in more rural schemes such as those in Cornwall, there is now a greater reliance upon letters and telephone calls. The St. Austell scheme tends to use telephone contact, whilst Newquay and Carrick favour the use of letters (Mawby 2002). Whilst this can be attributed to a combination of factors such as their rurality together with increased workloads as more schemes adopt open or automatic referral systems, the types of crime involved is also a factor. The Newquay scheme, for example, dealt with over half (57%) of all referrals for car crime (theft of motor vehicle) in Cornwall during 2000-2001 (Mawby 2002: Table A3.2). This type of crime would generally attract contact by

letter (Holtom and Raynor 1988), if indeed any contact at all is made (Victim Support 2000).

Whilst Victim Support, Plymouth has continued to use the traditional unannounced volunteer visit for burglary victims, other schemes have, as discussed in chapter three, retracted from this. Carrick in Cornwall now avoids 'cold calling' (Mawby 2002). The Greater Manchester Area has also taken this approach, albeit such policy developments there have been undertaken under the approving gaze of Victim Support 'national'. Despite the placatory rationales of volunteer safety, the effective use of resources and crime prevention, one may conclude that such moves are more about the ascendancy of centralising and managerial aspirations that are current within the organisation, that is at the level of 'national office'. These tensions are nothing new and have long been met with suspicion by local schemes (Mawby and Gill 1987).

The work of Mawby and Walklate (1997) also illustrated how schemes in different geographical locations make contact with victims, citing the examples of Victim Support in Plymouth and Salford. Although this research was conducted a number of years ago, it demonstrates the way in which Victim Support, Plymouth tended to favour the traditional volunteer visit for burglary victims. Plymouth used this in 58% of cases, whereas the Salford scheme visited only 29% of victims unannounced. On the other hand whilst Plymouth contacted only 23% of victims by letter, Salford did so in 40% of cases (ibid).

The co-ordinator for the Plymouth scheme expressed a commitment to visiting burglary victims, especially older victims, supported by factors such as a reliable, albeit stretched, pool of volunteers. However the research revealed that the

situation in Salford was different. Salford was a much more urbanised area with relatively fewer volunteers and higher levels of serious crime; burglary victims were therefore, increasingly, less likely to be visited (ibid).

My research shows that Victim Support, Plymouth continues to uphold a commitment to visiting burglary victims in the traditional unannounced fashion²¹; although this approach is to be withdrawn in the near future. Indeed returning to my original trawl through referrals for the period 15th to 21st May 1998 (detailed in chapter five), it is evident that of 39 cases of burglary referred to Victim Support, action was taken in 38 cases (97%). The majority of victims (82%) were visited unannounced, 15% were sent a letter and in only one case no action at all was taken²². This reliance upon the 'traditional volunteer visit' has continued despite the somewhat 'lukewarm' view from 'national office'.

In some ways this is an illustration of the continuing 'federal' nature of Victim Support in terms of the relationship that local schemes have with the centre. The centre can impose a certain level of regulation, but schemes locally continue to develop their own policies. In terms of contact policy the current Code of Practice aids this autonomy, as the only stipulation made is that the co-ordinator must decide whether to offer help via a personal visit, a letter or a phone call (Victim Support 2000). It is interesting to consider the extent to which this autonomy will continue following restructuring, and the increasing extent to which the Home

²¹ Although one refinement has been made as a result of the current research as burglary victims who live in multi-occupancy buildings are now written to in the first instance. This policy was introduced to reduce the number of volunteer visits where victims were not seen, the conclusion drawn being that multi-occupancy dwellers are more likely to fall into this category. It was also apparent from some of the multi-occupancy dwellers who I interviewed that when volunteers visited and had left cards informing them of this, that such communications were often not received.

²² It is important to note that the police in Plymouth pass the details of all crimes committed to Victim Support within an 'open referral' system. This may include the details of victims who have declined the assistance that Victim Support can offer.

Office is seeking to increase the accountability of Victim Support (National Audit Office 2002) by virtue of its role as the main funding body.

However if the proposal for devolving the funding of member schemes to local criminal justice boards (ibid) goes ahead then potentially there is less opportunity for 'national office' to determine how schemes should work. On the other hand the Home Office's remit for a more accountable service is partly based upon the notion of 'national office' undertaking periodical inspections of member schemes (ibid). Victim Support, nationally and locally, is then at something of a crossroads in its history, and it will be interesting to see what ensues.

As discussed in chapter three, a service is offered to a range of victims by virtue of the 'service model' of support that is (currently) laid down by 'national office' in the Core Service Statement²³ and in the Code of Practice (Victim Support 2000). The new training manual also specifies the range of people to whom support should or should not be offered (Victim Support 2002f). The service model lists 15 types of crime for which services must be available from every area and branch and included in this are burglary, GBH, ABH, attempted murder, people bereaved by homicide, rape and sexual assault. The service model also provides that schemes may assist those attending the Coroner's court following bereavement through crime, those bereaved by (non crime related) road deaths and those experiencing vehicle crime where the offence has had a particularly serious effect.

Whilst Victim Support, Plymouth does not offer support to victims of theft from motor vehicle, those whose cars have been stolen may be contacted. Again the

²³ This is not available in the public domain but was forwarded to me by email from 'national office' on 12.12.03.

original trawl through referrals for one week in May 1998 (detailed in chapter five) revealed that whilst the vast majority of car crime victims will not be offered any help at all, a few (3 out of 26 cases in phase two of the research) will be; although this will generally take the form of a written contact. The lack of prioritisation of car crime victims, as discussed in chapter three, was laid down at a very early stage of Victim Support's history (Holtom and Raynor 1988) and is continued today (Victim Support 2000).

The level of help that each form of contact provides is an interesting point to consider because the Code of Practice does not place different values upon the different types of contact that local schemes make. Furthermore, in talking to representatives from 'national office' they are quite certain that one form of contact is, in theory, no better or more valuable than any other. However within the course of the research, it became clear to me that different values are placed upon these contacts at the local level and, by extrapolation, upon the victims to whom they are offered. This returns us to the point raised by Mawby and Walklate (1994) who saw Victim Support co-ordinators as the 'new' gatekeepers to the service. The fact that Victim Support, Plymouth offers a more personalised service for burglary victims than for those experiencing car crime does provide a sound framework for this argument.

Subject to enough resources, Victim Support, Plymouth offers burglary victims an unannounced volunteer visit as the initial response in these cases. The fact that this is regarded as something of a 'gold standard' level of service was illustrated in previous research (Mawby and Walklate 1997) where the co-ordinator at the time said 'we still try to visit all burglaries'. This has continued and was noted in my own work where the current branch manager voiced opinions to the effect that the

Plymouth scheme tries to send out volunteers to burglary victims wherever possible because, in her words, 'burglary is a messy business'. This commitment was again evident from my initial search of Victim Support records in May 1998.

On the other hand victims of car crime will, if Victim Support, Plymouth decides to make contact, be sent a letter offering recipients the opportunity to request further 'personal' contact if they so wish. By sending a letter, Victim Support expends much less by way of its resources, and in these circumstances the letter can be viewed as a lower level of service. In my visits to Victim Support, Plymouth at the outset of this research, the deputy co-ordinator at the time suggested letters could be used for people who were in less need²⁴.

Some mention should be made of victims who may receive no offer of help at all from Victim Support, even though the crime suffered would normally attract a response, and where they would be happy for the police to make referrals. This occurred in a number of instances throughout the course of the research. In one case, for example, a young couple began to argue whilst they were 'out on the town' and an assault took place. In these circumstances the victim was considered to be 'undeserving' (Christie 1986) and so was not contacted at all.

Victim Support, Plymouth: partnership working

The preceding sections have looked specifically at the work of Victim Support, Plymouth. However as well as offering direct support to victims of crime, Victim Support schemes throughout the country work in other ways in order to promote the best interests of victims. The notion of 'partnership working', in the current

²⁴ Perceptions gleaned from contacts with scheme staff 8.10.98.

sense of the term, is one way whereby Victim Support is represented by its paid staff on various local committees.

This notion of partnership working is not anything new for Victim Support, as it has a long history of involvement with other agencies. Indeed by virtue of its very constitution, Victim Support was built upon a model of partnership working. A number of statutory agencies, particularly the police and probation, were involved in its creation (Holtom and Raynor 1988) and, furthermore, these agencies continue to be represented at management committee (now area 'Council') level.

Victim Support, Plymouth is involved in a number of local partnerships which are an explicit example of the work that is now undertaken under the auspices of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (Hester 2000). This Act states that Victim Support, in particular, 'must be invited' (ibid) to take part in the partnership process locally, in support of crime and disorder reduction imperatives.

Victim Support, Plymouth is represented on a number of partnership bodies; the Community Safety Partnership, including the Burglary and Domestic Violence sub groups of that body. Other partnership work includes participation on Domestic Violence Forums, the Resettlement Committee for Dartmoor Prison and the Trials Issues Group.

At the same time co-operative working on a day to day basis with the police in particular has been, and still is, vital for the smooth running of local schemes. This point is paralleled in the form of the work that Victim Support has more recently undertaken in supporting victims and witnesses in court. Volunteers must engage with court and crown prosecution service personnel in order to provide an efficient

service to victims and witnesses. Further examples of this more practical 'partnership working' can be found in the opportunities for Victim Support to work with the probation service and with the youth offending team.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 has given Victim Support access to a wider audience under the umbrella of community safety, than was previously the case, as Victim Support is a named invitee within the meaning of the act (ibid). At the same time there are a number of agencies who continue to be, or who can be, involved in Victim Support itself. In this way the act has created a two way street within the framework of community safety.

Summary

Chapter four has looked briefly at the City of Plymouth, and at Victim Support as it operates within this environment, in terms of the numbers of staff and volunteers working for the agency and in analysing 'who' these people are. The staff and volunteers of Victim Support appear to be older and largely female, with fewer men who are likely to undertake management roles. This view has been presented on the basis of facts and figures that Victim Support itself has collated, although they also run parallel with findings that the literature to date presents and with my own findings detailed in chapter eight.

This chapter also examines the day to day running of Victim Support, Plymouth, in terms of referrals and the contacts made, and noting the shift towards victims of violence. It also considers local schemes in Cornwall and Salford for comparative purposes, noting the way in which Plymouth has continued to use the traditional volunteer visit for burglary victims; an approach that was fundamental to the model of support offered in Victim Support's early history (Holtom and Raynor 1988;

Reeves 1985). The extent to which this will continue is considered in the light of the influence that both 'national office' and the Home Office may bring to bear.

Finally, chapter four has considered the partnership work that Victim Support undertakes. The implicit work, with agencies such as the police and probation is discussed, with their continued involvement in the 'Victim Support model' in mind. The more explicit partnership approach, under the umbrella of 'community safety' and the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, is also considered. Chapter five looks at the methodology underpinning my research.

Chapter Five: Methodology

Introduction

The overall aims of this chapter are to present an account of the methods employed within my research. The aims of the current project, as noted earlier, are to evaluate the service provided by a voluntary organisation, Victim Support. I have undertaken this by examining the service provided primarily through the eyes of victims who have used the service, and the volunteers who provide it.

It would be wrong however to assume that this is the only way of assessing the value of such services. Other studies, for example, have explored the impact of crime in terms of its psychological effects, interviewing victims and non-victims at timed intervals (Norris and Kaniesty 1994). Donaldson (2003) also compared matched victim and non-victim populations. The approach that I adopted was then only one of a number of ways in which a study such as this could have been conducted.

Research aims and background

This study has essentially sought to consider the way in which Victim Support meets the needs of victims on a day to day basis, and so cases involving more serious crimes were excluded. The study therefore challenges the critique that has been directed towards smaller scale victim studies (Maguire 1991); that in concentrating upon more serious crime they tend to overstate its effects. The main focus of the current study is Victim Support and so the emphasis upon victims, in terms of their reactions to crime and to Victim Support intervention, is really simply a vehicle for this focus. Furthermore, it is the types of crime

experienced that appears to provide the broader stimulus for Victim Support to act. Thus it was by focusing upon certain offences, to which Victim Support would respond in particular ways, that a sample of victims could be drawn.

The offences included in the study were burglary¹, non-relative violence and car crime. Burglary has routinely attracted unannounced visits by volunteers; an approach that although declining nationally has persisted in Plymouth². Victims of violence however are usually contacted by letter or telephone initially, with the potential for further personal contact to be made. Finally, those experiencing car crime are not typically contacted at all; although in keeping with the Code of Practice (Victim Support 2000) Victim Support, Plymouth tends to offer support to certain victims of car crime³. The inclusion of non-relative violence, or rather the exclusion of other violence such as domestic violence, is discussed more fully at a later stage in this work.

One point that did become apparent was that the vast majority of contact was a 'one off'; that is it took the form of a single letter, telephone call⁴ or visit, where the victims actually saw a volunteer. This indicates the endurance, certainly in

¹ Following the lead of Mawby and Walklate (1997) I included burglary as defined by the Theft Act 1968 S9 (1) where entry may be gained yet no goods actually stolen. The offence of burglary hinges therefore upon unlawful entry of property. I also included cases of attempted burglary, that is where entry was not gained. The rationale for this was that Victim Support would offer contact, often in the form of a volunteer visit, in a number of cases where burglary was attempted. As my study is essentially one centring on services provided, the inclusion of such cases was considered appropriate, although clearly such inclusion may in fact 'water down' the levels of impact recorded by the research. I also included cases involving what Victim Support refer to as 'burglary artifice' where offenders gain entry to property by fraudulent means; for example by posing as public servants. Although victims of this type of offence tended to be older people, this was not, as my research indicated, always the case.

² Although I am informed by Victim Support, Plymouth that this practice is to be withdrawn.

³ In particular younger women whose cars have been stolen. This type of approach was adopted by a previous co-ordinator and was based upon assumptions that women of certain ages would have a childcare role, with the attendant difficulties that the loss of transport could therefore pose for this group. Notions of 'deservingness' (Christie 1986) may be seen to be at work.

⁴ There were no cases included within my research where the main contact was by telephone.

burglary cases where the visit has often been the initial contact anyway, of the 'crisis intervention' model (Holtom and Raynor 1988: 19) upon which Victim Support was originally built⁵. I should also reiterate that most volunteer visits within this study were made as 'unannounced' ones.

Research approaches

A number of approaches were taken in order to complete the study. These include the secondary analysis of scheme records; personal interviews with volunteer staff and employees, and surveys of volunteers by means of self-completion questionnaires. Face to face interviews were conducted with victims across the range of crimes in phase two of the research, whilst burglary victims only were interviewed by means of a computer assisted telephone interview survey (CATI) in phase three.

In addition to these more conventional methods I was also able to rely on less formal approaches. Whilst examining scheme records at Victim Support, Plymouth I asked questions of the paid staff, which was invaluable in building up a picture of the day to day business of the scheme. I also attended several informal and formal gatherings in aid of Victim Support including coffee mornings, a charity evening and the Plymouth scheme's Annual General Meeting (AGM) over several years. I was asked to say a few words about my research at one of these meetings and therefore took the opportunity to thank volunteers publicly for their continued help. This also provided an opportunity for me, in the words of the coordinator, to show the volunteers that 'all the form filling can be converted into

⁵ Although as the research indicated volunteers did, at their own discretion, occasionally re-visit burglary victims.

human interest information'⁶. I was also able to ask the volunteers for their continued participation in my research.

On a wider scale I attended the National Association of Victim Support Schemes National Conference in 1998 and 2001. The conferences are themed in order to provide an overview of the direction that Victim Support is taking nationally. The 2001 Conference for example was very much about widening access to and improving the service provided for particular sections of the community⁷. I also attended an evening conference hosted by the Devon Forum for Justice in Exeter, a main feature of this event being to discuss the restructuring of Victim Support along county lines⁸. I have also presented papers based on my research at the British Criminology Society Conference in 2000 and 2001 and at the World Victimology Society Conference in Stellenbosch, South Africa in 2003.

Throughout the course of my work I have been in contact with management and employed staff in schemes, such as Greater Manchester and Bedford. I have also obtained information from 'national office' using informal telephone interviews and email. Whilst in Western Australia in 2003, I also took the opportunity to speak to the Manager of Victim Support in Perth. This allowed me to contextualise even more the voluntary nature of Victim Support in the UK.

The Home Office have also been a useful source of information. I have approached representatives there for clarification on a number of points regarding

⁶ See letter of thanks from the co-ordinator of Victim Support, Plymouth in appendix 1.

⁷ The theme of the 2001 Conference was that of 'Opening Doors'. Victim Support were questioning the accessibility of the service provided to 'hard to reach' groups and people with learning disabilities.

⁸ For a discussion of this please see chapter three.

changes in the criminal justice system that may affect victims; for example the decision not to appoint a Victims' Ombudsman. Again, I have used telephone and email contact.

The research

The project began life as a period of contracted research looking at the wider community response to crime. To some extent I had 'inherited' the initial phase of the research design (within phases one and two). This included the decision to involve victims who had not been contacted by Victim Support, as well as those who had, and to include victims of certain offence types only. In addition the choice of face to face interviewing had already been made.

I conducted the research in three phases from 1998 to 2002. Phase one took the form of a census of referrals (secondary analysis of scheme records) to Victim Support over the course of one month. The objectives were firstly to find out what types of action were taken for victims of particular crimes and secondly, in the light of this, to design a sampling frame of victims for face to face interviewing within phase two of the research. I also interviewed the co-ordinator and volunteer staff face to face at this stage of the research. In all, 168 victim respondents, 33 volunteer respondents and the local scheme co-ordinator were interviewed.

Phase three consisted of a computer assisted telephone interview survey (CATI) of 100 burglary victims, who had all been visited and seen by Victim Support volunteers. I also circulated self-completion questionnaires to volunteers⁹. Burglary victims as a specific group were focused upon at this stage of the

⁹ The details of volunteer samples are discussed fully in chapter eight.

research in order to obtain a solid body of data about those who have been described as the 'bread and butter' work of Victim Support (Tarling and Davison 2000: 6). The views of volunteers were sought throughout in order to obtain some degree of triangulation concerning the needs of victims and the impact of service intervention (Bryman 1988)¹⁰.

Victim respondents: breakdown of personal and social characteristics

Table 5.1 overleaf provides a breakdown of the personal and social characteristics of the victims included in my research. I have addressed such issues at this point because, as the table illustrates, the samples drawn in phases two and three are clearly quite different. Phase three was comprised of burglary victims, all of whom had been visited and seen by a Victim Support volunteer. Furthermore, as previous research (Maguire and Kynch 2000) had also shown, those contacted by Victim Support were more likely to be female and older. Phase two however included more men and younger people because the sample was purposely designed to incorporate those who Victim Support did not offer services to.

¹⁰ It should be noted however that survey methods continued to be used for this part of the enquiry and so the term triangulation is used cautiously.

	Gender		Age		Material wealth		Ethnicity	
	Male	Female	49 or less	50 and over	Yes	No	White	Ethnic minority group
Phase 2: n=168	89	79	133	34	135	33	165	3
% of sample...	(53%)	(47%)	(79%)	(20%)	(80%)	(20%)	(98%)	(2%)
Phase 3: n=100	32%	68%	47%	53%	62%	38%	NC*	NC*

Table 5.1: The personal and social characteristics of victims¹¹

Of further note is the measure of material wealth that I adopted. Following the lead of Mawby and Walklate (1997) and Mawby et al (1999), I based measures of 'wealth' on the ownership of two or more consumer goods¹². This approach was adopted because of the general difficulties associated with measuring social class in the late twentieth and early twenty first centuries (Rose and O'Reilly 1998). In hindsight, however, the use of this measure may have been less appropriate within the current study. My research was not based upon populations resident in newly consumerist capitalist societies, as was that of Mawby and Walklate (1997) and Mawby et al (1999). However having used this measure in phase two of my study, I applied this in phase three also, in order to preserve methodological consistency.

Research methods

A quantitative approach was employed because of the relatively large numbers of respondents involved (ibid). This entailed a multi-method research design (Brewer and Hunter 1989) using non-reactive and reactive methods; albeit this approach

¹¹ In phase three details of ethnicity were not collected (NC) because of the small number of victims who were members of ethnic minority groups in the previous phase of my research.

¹² Either a car, a home computer or a home video player.

was more about using different data collection strategies that were appropriate at various stages in the research process than about validating results¹³. As discussed earlier, the construction of sampling frames relied upon archival searches of Victim Support records, whilst the views and accounts of victims, paid staff and volunteers were obtained by face to face interviews; CATI survey; self-completion questionnaires and, finally, the use of semi-structured interviews.

Most of the research design fell into the category of non-probability sampling techniques. Whilst some concerns are raised within the literature, for example issues of representativeness and external validity (Henry, 1990; Lavrakas 1993), practical issues within the current research left little option but to adopt these approaches. The time taken to build a probability sample for example would have caused huge delays in the data collection process. This is significant where one is relying upon respondents to provide quite detailed information about potentially upsetting events that had occurred some weeks earlier.

Ultimately the decision to use a particular approach rests upon the aims and overall purpose of and, indeed, the level of resources available for the research. The British Crime Survey (BCS), for example, seeks to provide a national picture of crime victimisation. The survey is therefore mainly looking at what the general, as opposed to specifically the victim, population has to say about crime and so probability sampling is clearly the appropriate method to use. Furthermore funding is not an issue. Similarly the work of Maguire and Kynch (2000), sought to

¹³ Although as it happened the validation of results was achieved in a broader sense in that information collected via informal/formal interviews with paid staff and by the examination of scheme records largely confirmed the operation of different aspects of Victim Support contact policy.

analyse the perceptions of Victim Support held by 'the British public'. This work made use of data collected within the BCS 1998.

The problem of recall was illustrated on several occasions throughout the study, as victims were not always able to remember the nature of the contact made with them. Confusion was most likely to arise concerning the type of written contact made, that is whether a letter was received through the post or by means of a note through the door. Indeed, in some cases the respondent may not recall any contact at all. The way in which written contact was made was important, largely because this can represent a different level of service from Victim Support. Clearly when a card had been pushed through the door of a burglary victim the implication was that the offence warranted speedy and personal attention in the form of a volunteer visit.

Confusion about contact on the part of victims appeared to be more likely for those living in multi-occupancy buildings, but it also arose as a result of what may be called 'unforeseen' circumstances. In one case I interviewed a young man who had been burgled and who, according to Victim Support records, had been seen by a volunteer. The respondent told me that he had not seen the volunteer at all. This meant that he could only be interviewed on that basis. The respondent was a student living in a multi-occupancy house to which there were frequent visitors. In canvassing the opinion of his housemates it transpired that the volunteer had spoken to whoever had opened the door at the time; someone who in fact did not live there but who was merely visiting.

Problems can arise where the recall of events is concerned, especially when significant time delays have occurred and/or other factors militate together to cause further confusion. Where elderly respondents are concerned, Frey (1989) suggests that questions requiring limited recall should be used. Clearly within my work the accounts given by some respondents did not, if we are to assume that the scheme records examined were correct, always reflect accurately what actually occurred in terms of contact; for example victims may not realise that they had been visited by a volunteer. While this is potentially worrying, I gained comfort from the knowledge that this had occurred in only a very small minority of cases, thus preserving overall the rigour of my work.

Phase 1: Obtaining samples via archival searches

In the initial phase of the research, my first task was to examine scheme records for a typical week to gauge the number of referrals to Victim Support and the responses made to victims of crime, as per table 5.2 on page 121. The overall aim was to interview roughly equal numbers of victims who had been contacted, or not, by Victim Support. Of those contacted, I wished to interview people who had experienced either personal contact with a volunteer or those who had received written or telephone contact from the service. Those falling into the 'written contact' category would either have been sent a letter through the post or visited unannounced but not seen. In those cases volunteers would leave a card to notify victims that they had been visited.

The information collected allowed the design of a sampling frame based on offence/contact types, as noted above. The details of offences were to be collected in the following proportions; all cases of burglary, all cases of non-

relative violence, all cases of theft of car and 25% of cases involving theft of property from car. Using this range of offences I would, as noted earlier, be able to construct a sample of respondents who had experienced each type of contact on offer from Victim Support; or not as the case may be.

I collected eleven 'mini samples' over a nine-month period (see appendix two); the first nine mini samples contained the details of cases for three full weeks across the range of offence types discussed earlier. The final two samples comprised cases where the volunteer had achieved personal contact with the victim. These were included to boost the small number of cases where victims had actually seen volunteers.

I did not include corporate victims generally, other than crimes involving small 'family run' businesses¹⁴. Victim Support, Plymouth has more recently responded to a spate of 'hold ups' involving small shopkeepers and post offices, illustrating once more how local schemes respond to local crime patterns. I also did not include victims of domestic violence¹⁵ or those of sexual assault as I did not wish to include more serious crimes. Furthermore, the methodology employed would have been inappropriate for such cases. Individual appointments were not made with respondents, and my interviews were not 'in-depth'. I did send out a general

¹⁴ Victim Support do not generally support corporate victims but may offer help where small businesses are concerned; for example where a shop owner actually lives on the premises. Victim Support, Plymouth does respond in such instances.

¹⁵ The categorisation of cases as 'domestic violence' had implications for other cases where perpetrators were partners or ex-partners. In all cases where this was apparent Victim Support, whether or not violence was involved, would not typically visit a victim without firstly making contact by letter. Victim Support are reliant upon the police for information concerning the circumstances of each case and from time to time this does not provide a full or clear picture on which to base decisions regarding the type of contact that will be made.

letter of introduction before undertaking my research, thus providing respondents the opportunity to opt out.

Offence type: corporate crime/no. individual victim	Action taken			
	Do nothing	Letter	Phone call	Visit
Shoplifting	35	0	0	0
Burglary	12	1	0	0
Criminal damage	4	0	0	0
Chq/card fraud, handling stolen goods, obtain property by deception	24	0	0	0
Breach probation/community service or other order	7	0	0	0
Theft	3	0	0	0
Others	16	0	0	0
Offence type: crimes involving private individuals as victims	Action taken			
Household burglary	1	6	0	32
Burglary 'other'	8	4	0	0
Theft of cars	13	2	0	0
Theft from cars	84	0	0	0
Criminal damage	44	1	0	1
Theft from person/by slight	5	3	0	1
Other theft	71	3	0	1
Robbery	0	3	0	0
GBH	0	2	0	0
ABH or less serious assault	15	18	2	0
Domestic violence	3	14	0	0
Sexual offences	0	4	0	0
Possession/supplying drugs	28	0	0	0
Obtain property by deception/handling stolen goods/cheque fraud	8	0	0	0
Drunk and disorderly	13	0	0	0
Public order/offensive weapons/harassment	9	1	0	0
Taking car without consent	6	2	0	0
Others	18	4	0	1
Total	427	68	2	36

Table 5.2: Decisions made as to action taken by Victim Support, Plymouth for the seven day period 15th May 1998 to 21st May 1998.

Notwithstanding these arrangements I did inadvertently call upon one person whose case fell within the 'domestic' range of offences. The perpetrator was the victim's estranged (at the time) partner. The information provided to Victim

Support by the police gave no indication of this, simply stating that the respondent had been the victim of a burglary. I also had no idea that a reconciliation had occurred so that the 'burglar' was now living in the family home once more. This did produce potentially an unethical situation in that the respondent's now reconciled partner arrived home partway through the interview. Sensing the respondent's obvious discomfort I departed as speedily and as diplomatically as I could.

Finally I did not include victims who were under sixteen years of age¹⁶; a precedent that has evolved within victim surveys (Mayhew 2000). I adopted this approach because of the policy followed by Victim Support, Plymouth where only limited contact is made with people falling into this age group. The reason for this is that incidents involving young people often appear to be fairly trivial in nature, being more about day to day scuffles and accidental injury as a result of supervised activities. Notwithstanding this such cases are, increasingly according to the assistant co-ordinator at the time, being reported to the police. The service does get in touch with young people where it is clear that the crime committed is serious, however in such situations Victim Support must firstly seek parental permission¹⁷.

The more complex access arrangements where young people are concerned persuaded me not to include such cases within my research. In addition, I did not

¹⁶ Although I did collect data from adults about the impact of crime upon children living in their households who are therefore 'indirectly' victimised.

¹⁷ On the other hand cases of child abuse can result in the service making contact with a family, albeit to offer support to a parent. In past instances of this kind Social Services have identified the need for such assistance and so have contacted Victim Support accordingly. I am grateful to the co-ordinator of Victim Support, Plymouth for this insight; personal communication, 8. 10. 01.

feel that the inclusion of often predictably minor incidents would have benefited my work, as others before me have noted (ibid).

Phase 2: Face to face interviews with victims of crime

The survey used three interlocking questionnaires; one for victims who were visited and seen by volunteers; one for victims who were contacted by letter or by receiving a card through the door or by telephone; and finally a questionnaire for victims who were not contacted at all. In the tradition of large-scale surveys the questions asked were largely closed. However with respondents' permission I recorded verbatim any comments made. I also included a number of open ended questions which I recorded verbatim. I followed the same procedure when interviewing volunteers face to face and, in phase three when I interviewed burglary victims by telephone. In these ways I collected qualitative data as well as quantitative. Whilst I acknowledge that the former was not qualitative work in its truest sense (Denzin and Lincoln 1995), by coding the information provided, I was able to develop my analysis beyond merely 'sketching in' (Mayhew 1993: 196) the details, achieving what has been referred to as 'a qualitative dimension' (Williams 2000b: 209) within my work.

The use of face to face interviews can be justified on several grounds. The sample design provided for victims who had either had contact, or no contact, with Victim Support. I had envisaged that the latter group could well be less interested in taking part in the research, but more likely to agree if an interviewer was present. In this way the research followed the lead of the British Crime Survey where, similarly, not all respondents may necessarily have been victims of crime. Using the personal approach is though more likely to produce reasonable

response rates. Furthermore, even where Victim Support had been in contact, victims were sometimes vague in their recollections of this. Indeed it would have been difficult to have successfully used a less direct research method, for example a postal questionnaire, where there is less opportunity to offer guidance or to probe answers and so qualify the responses given.

The administration of face to face surveys have long enjoyed a reputation for superiority, particularly where response rates are concerned and in comparison with other methods (Dillman 1978). In addition and, in spite of criticisms raised within the literature (Sykes and Collins 1988; De Vaus 2002), the face to face method continues to enjoy a positive image within social research. The British Crime Survey continues to rely predominantly upon face to face interviews, on the basis that it produces better quality data and high response rates¹⁸, although in certain quarters the claims concerning data quality have been challenged (Smith 1989 in van Kesteren et al 2000).

It was envisaged that asking respondents about their victimisation could provoke upset, something that clearly poses ethical problems for the project. I did encounter one burglary victim who having been devastated by the offence felt extremely upset within the interview itself. She told me that her young daughter had died quite recently and so the burglary was the 'last straw'. I reminded her of her right to withdraw from the interview at any time¹⁹, in line with the ethical principles governing social research, however despite her upset she told me that

¹⁸ Myhill, A. (Andy.Myhill@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk) 3rd October, 2001, *British Crime Survey*. L. Simmonds (L.Simmonds@plymouth.ac.uk).¹⁹ British Society of Criminology *Code of Ethics* <http://www.britsoccrim.org/ethics.htm> (accessed 11.3.04).

she wished to continue. On this occasion I felt that the face to face approach was both a more sensitive and successful one to take.

By the end of phase two I had recorded details for 484 victims of crime, however the exclusion of 75% of 'theft from car' cases, as discussed earlier, reduced this to a working sample of 297 cases. The breakdown in appendix two provides a detailed picture of the working sample. The final response rate for face to face interviews was a respectable 57% representing interviews with 168 respondents. This was achieved, as indicated, by calling on respondents without an appointment and being prepared to call back if the respondent was out or if the timing of my visit was inconvenient.

Much as the doorstep approach tested my powers of persistence, it did pay dividends in that only 4% of the sample refused my doorstep request whilst 24% refused overall. I must however acknowledge that the 4% quoted may in reality have been an undercount as seven people (2%) said they were not the person I was trying to contact nor did they know him/her and 13% appeared to be out. This, clearly, may or may not have been the case. For those categorised as not contactable (13%), I had attempted contact on at least three occasions.

I was also 'requested' not to contact one victim in particular, by the co-ordinator of Victim Support, Plymouth (mini sample 'E' in appendix two). Apparently he had been very abusive to the volunteer who had called upon him and so the co-ordinator did not wish me to 'make waves' by doing a follow up interview. Clearly the co-ordinator held a gatekeeping role and so after consultation with my supervisor I felt obliged to comply with this 'request'.

Phase 2: Face to face interviews with volunteers

Throughout the interview period I also spoke to volunteers in the 33 cases where the victim had been seen. This involved talking to some volunteers more than once. The aim of interviewing the volunteers was to obtain feedback regarding their view of the needs of victims and the extent to which the visit had helped²⁰.

In one case, I interviewed a volunteer prior to the victim, a young woman who had been burgled. The volunteer was very clear about the impact of the crime upon her and the background to the crime that had occurred. In calling to interview the victim later, she had no recollection of the volunteer's visit; although the background information that she provided matched that of the volunteer. In this instance I removed the respondent's name from the sample, as I could not proceed with the interview. There was nothing to be gained in trying to find out 'what really happened' and, again, this example illustrates the difficulty of recall for some respondents.

Phase 3: Telephone interviews with victims

The third phase of the research concentrated on only those burglary victims who had been visited and seen by a Victim Support volunteer. The focus upon burglary victims was maintained on the basis that Victim Support continues to focus attention upon this group (Tarling and Davison 2000; Mawby 2001), despite shifting patterns in their client group (Maguire and Wilkinson 1993; Victim Support 1999; Maguire and Kynch 2000). Furthermore phase two of the research, by virtue of its design, had involved a relatively small number of victims visited and

²⁰ As noted earlier a full discussion of the data collected from volunteers will be conducted in chapter eight.

seen by volunteers. In view of this, the continued focus upon burglary victims within the research was considered to be justified.

Phase 3: obtaining samples via archival searches

A non-probability sample was again employed, the collection of which followed a similar pattern to that used in phase two. I collected twenty mini samples over a period of eight months by trawling through the referral sheets that Victim Support received from the police. This took place between October 2000 and May 2001. Each mini sample contained the details of burglaries for a period of seven days and they were collected weekly initially; however I quickly reduced these collections to fortnightly, to avoid delays within the sampling/interview process. I wished to interview 100 burglary victims and in order to achieve this number I collected details from 591 burglary cases who were either visited, contacted in writing or telephoned, or not contacted at all. The final sample was made up of 135 burglary victims who had been visited and seen by a Victim Support volunteer. Of these 100 took part in interviews giving a response rate of 74%.

Whilst I recorded the names and telephone numbers of victims who had actually had personal contact with volunteers, there were occasions where someone other than the 'named victim', for example a partner, could equally legitimately take part in the interview. In these circumstances, I interviewed whoever had been present at the time the volunteer called and who was, at the time of my telephone call, willing to participate in the research.

In a few cases where the police had not recorded a telephone number, nor could one be traced through British Telecom, I made visits to victims and conducted

interviews face to face. I also did this in a few cases where elderly respondents, whilst happy to be interviewed, were resistant to the telephone approach (Herzog 1986), or had physical impairments which would reduce the potential for obtaining quality responses (West 1987). The conclusion that I came to was that for certain members of a sample, for example the elderly, telephone interviewing could be less successful. Frey (1989), states that interviewing elderly people over the telephone is viable providing that one is prepared to adapt one's approach by using amplification devices and questions that require limited recall. In my experience, it was necessary to adapt the research approach to one that suited particular (elderly) respondents. This would then produce work that was more inclusive and representative of the population sampled.

Why choose CATI (computer assisted telephone interviewing)?

Several methodological and non-methodological considerations contributed to this decision. One desired outcome was that Victim Support could be provided with a research tool for ongoing service evaluation. As discussed earlier, Victim Support is sensitive to prevailing pressures regarding the need to provide a valuable service and, equally important it seems, to be able to provide evidence of this. The new status of victims as 'consumers' of criminal justice services (Home Office 1996) further contributes to such pressures; indeed as mentioned earlier Victim Support 'national' circulated a series of self-completion questionnaires to local schemes as a suggested model of evaluation in 1996. Furthermore, the drive to evaluate has remained on the agenda. In 1998, the concept of evaluation formed the basis of a plenary session at Victim Support's National Conference, whilst

more recently 'national office' have piloted a survey of victims in the Nottingham area²¹.

Research tools such as CATI (computer assisted telephone interview) fall within a generic framework, of CASIC (computer-assisted survey information collection) approaches whereby data collection is controlled through a computer (Thomas et al 1998). This approach has been the catalyst for a major transformation in the nature of survey research over the last half-century. For example the Office for National Statistics (ONS) decided to convert its continuous household surveys to CAPI (computer assisted personal interview), a variant of CASIC (ibid). Interviewers working on the BCS now also use CAPI rather than the traditional paper and pen approach.

Whilst the telephone variant of CASIC, CATI, has been less well used in the past, the situation is now changing. The Home Office for example has considered using CATI as an additional means of data collection within the British Crime Survey²², whilst the International Crime Victim Survey (ICVS) has increasingly used the telephone and CATI approach. The barriers to the use of the telephone and, as an extension of this, CATI, as a research tool have diminished considerably; indeed the 2000 sweep of the ICVS indicated that a high level of confidence could be placed in CATI 'where telephone penetration is high' (van Kesteren 2000: 18). A similar point was made by Ashworth et al (2000) who comments that increased

²¹ The results of which do not appear to have been publicly disseminated as yet.

²² This insight was provided to me by a Home Office representative. Myhill, A. (Andy.Myhill@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk) (3rd October, 2001) Re. Email to L. Simmonds (lsimmonds@plymouth.org.uk).

telephone ownership, standing at 97% of the population makes it possible to regard this level of coverage as a 'satisfactory surrogate' for all households.

Notwithstanding this optimism however problems have emerged as a result of the growing proportion of households that rely on either unlisted numbers or mobile phone ownership (ibid), especially as they appear to differ demographically from the population at large (ibid). In the light of this the use of telephone directories becomes less reliable for producing a representative sample of the general population, particularly in the case of young urban female residents who have high levels of mobile phone ownership (ibid).

Whilst this is clearly a problem, particularly within large-scale research projects based upon probability samples, it has been less so within my own work as the records to which I had access supplied, amongst other details, telephone numbers and addresses for potential respondents. Where the records were annotated as 'no phone' and a number was not available from British Telecom, I was therefore able to interview respondents face to face. The number of people without access to a private telephone within my research was small and whilst the incorporation of face to face interviews in such instances detracted somewhat from the CATI approach, this was useful because I could include all of those falling into my sampling frame. In this respect I would argue that my sample was more representative than one excluding those who, apparently, do not have access to a private telephone.

The use of CATI represents an extension of the telephone interview method itself (Lavrakus 1993). Whilst there are certain advantages and disadvantages

particular to CATI, it is impossible to discuss the two research approaches separately. In discussing telephone interviewing I will, therefore, be discussing the CATI approach for just as CAPI is a refinement of paper and pen interviews, so CATI is a refinement of the telephone interview. To 'do' CATI one must use a telephone and now, quite typically in quantitative research, if one is interviewing by telephone one is more than likely to use a CATI approach.

I have already discussed how one potential disadvantage of CATI has dissipated as the proportion of telephone ownership has increased within the general population (Ashworth et al 2000; van Kesteren et al 2000)²³. There are however other methodological advantages and disadvantages in using this approach, a discussion of which appears under the headings of 'economy', 'administration', 'data quality' and 'response/non-response' in appendix three.

Phase 3: Self completion surveys of volunteers

In addition to interviewing victims I also surveyed volunteers in phase three of the research, between October 2001 and April 2002, using 'self completion questionnaires. I took this approach in order to achieve time economies for myself and for the volunteers. I had already undertaken one round of face to face interviews with Plymouth volunteers and would be asking many of them to participate further. The fact that Victim Support volunteers are an 'interested group' (Dilman 1978) led me to believe that the postal questionnaires would produce good response rates.

²³ Although clearly the term 'general population' is not all inclusive in terms of those who fall into what may be termed 'hard to reach' groups; homeless people and those incarcerated by the state.

Two questionnaires were circulated. The first asked for feedback from volunteers concerning their contact with the burglary victims who were taking part in the telephone survey. The second asked volunteers for their perceptions of actually 'doing the job'. This questionnaire was produced separately to include insights from volunteers in another Victim Support scheme. This would provide comparative data and increase the numbers within my sample. Questionnaires were circulated to volunteers working in Plymouth and in Salford. The latter scheme was chosen because of its involvement in an earlier piece of comparative research (Mawby and Walklate 1997; Mawby et al 1999).

I received, as anticipated, a high response from the Plymouth volunteers. The response from Salford was however less promising. I had sent out letters explaining the purpose of my research to all of the volunteers, and the coordinators of each scheme had encouraged their participation using scheme newsletters. My assumption was that Plymouth volunteers responded more positively because many of them either knew me or knew of me from the times when I have been working at the scheme's office or attending Victim Support functions.

Further details of the sampling and response rates achieved with volunteer participation in the research are provided at the beginning of chapter eight.

Summary

Chapter five has looked at the methods used in carrying out this research. These have embraced non-reactive and reactive approaches and, whilst largely involving quantitative survey work, have achieved a 'qualitative dimension' (Williams 2000).

The merits of using face to face, telephone interviewing techniques and postal questionnaires have been discussed and in relation to the current project. Each has served a particular purpose either in securing good response rates and collecting more qualitative data; in exploring the use of a fairly new approach to research in victim surveys and in extending data collection from a group of respondents who have already been canvassed.

Space has been devoted to discussing the CATI approach used in phase three of the research as it is this that has allowed comparisons to be made with other methods. Indeed whilst the work of earlier writers appears to have expressed a more negative view of using the telephone as a research approach, such views dissipated within the literature of the 1990s; particularly in relation to using CATI and therefore combining the use of the telephone together with computers for survey work. The work that I have undertaken has supported this more positive view of the CATI system. Chapter six now looks at the needs of victims, based upon the findings from my research.

Chapter six: Victims' needs and the impact of crime.

Introduction

This chapter begins by examining the phenomenon of victims' needs and the ways in which they have been conceptualised within the victimological literature. The 'needs' discussed within this chapter take the form of crime impact, and they are based upon the empirical work undertaken in this respect. 'Crime impact' is just one way in which victims' needs are measured. Their needs are also measured in terms of the services delivered to or demanded by victims. However the findings from my research in these respects will be discussed more fully in chapter seven.

Prior to discussing victims' needs from a victimological perspective, some consideration of how they fit into the wider understanding of 'need' within social policy may usefully be undertaken.

'Need': the view from Social Policy

Need within social policy has long been subject to debate. Fundamental to this debate is whether need is an objective or a relative measure. Those who view need as an objective measure argue that it is universal and fixed, in other words, need may be defined as a standard which can be ascribed to the population as a whole (Doyal and Gough 1991). Those taking a relativist stance however would measure an individual's need against those of the reference group to which he or she belongs (Sheppard 1996); such needs would not therefore be static but would be dynamic, and not universally knowable.

One policy area that may be used to illustrate more concretely the objective or relative nature of need is poverty (Holman 1978). Holman discusses poverty as the objective concept developed by Charles Booth and Seebohm Rowntree in the

late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and then as the relative measure produced by Townsend in the postwar period. In terms of the former, a level of subsistence was identified that could be applied to families throughout Britain, taking no account beyond their physical requirements of the psychological, social and cultural factors that shape their lives. An objective approach did not allow for comparison between people but comparison between people and an absolute measure of subsistence. In other words a policy was applied that, in reality, was unresponsive to those adjudged to be in need.

The subsistence level of poverty was criticised from the 1950s onwards and its inadequacies led to the formulation of an alternative measure, that of relative poverty. As the term suggests this measure rests upon comparisons between people, rather than comparisons between people and a fixed benchmark. Thus the incomes of the poor minority are compared with those of the majority or the average. Relative poverty is a measure of the community's prevailing living standards and so is a dynamic (and responsive) concept.

The significance of whether need is viewed objectively or relatively is important for the way in which policy makers deliver services. Are services to be based upon an objective, external view of what those 'in need' need, rather than responding to service users in terms of what their 'felt' (Bradshaw 1972) or 'expressed' (Shapland 1985) needs may be? Whilst this is something which state welfare services have more recently come to grapple with, it is something that voluntary welfare service providers may also need to consider, particularly as in the current case the views of service users are likely to be valued.

Whilst in this chapter I discuss victims' needs as victims see them, in terms of crime impact, they cannot be argued to be anything other than relative to the individual. As my findings show, whilst some victims will be very much affected by the offence, others suffer minimal effects. However the stance that Victim Support has taken in identifying need cannot be ignored. As I will argue this may account, to some extent, for the way in which the service has developed over time and the extent, therefore, to which victims' needs are or are not met.

The conceptualisation of victims' needs

Few victimologists have looked in any depth at the notion of victims' needs, save for Maguire (1985) and Mawby (1984; 1988). Indeed the earliest research on Victim Support as an appropriate response to crime victims (Gay et al 1975) referred to victims' needs with no mention of the wider social policy debate on need generally. In some ways one could argue that the term 'need' has been adopted by victimology simply to add greater legitimacy to the victims' cause (Maguire 1985), whilst its neglect in a more philosophical sense has continued to the present day.

Following in others' footsteps (Culyer et al 1972; Armstrong 1982), Maguire (1985) noted that need is a concept that has long provoked ambivalence within the literature, using a number of 'confusing taxonomies' (ibid), involving concepts such as 'felt', 'expressed' and 'comparative' needs (Bradshaw 1972¹).

¹ 'Felt need' is equated with want; when assessing need for a service, people are asked if they feel they need it. Expressed need is viewed as demand turned into action; for example hospital waiting lists are evidence of a demand and therefore a need for a service. Comparative need is based upon the notion that one group of people may be defined as 'in need' on the basis that they share similar characteristics with another group but do not have access to a service. Bradshaw (1972) also spoke of normative need, that is that there should be some standard below which a group should not fall; for example levels of nutrition.

These concepts do not appear to remain constant within the literature², and both crime impact and the services demanded and/or provided to victims appear to be used quite interchangeably (Maguire and Corbett 1987) as a measure of need. Whilst this may be linked to the fact that early research on victims in the UK (Gay et al 1975) focused upon the impact of crime, but always with a view to establishing Victim Support as a service provider, this adds to the general confusion surrounding the notion of needs.

The rationale for developing Victim Support was based upon the premise that victims have needs that somebody should address (Holtom and Raynor 1988) and, as Gay et al (1975: 263, 267) argued 'a need has been demonstrated, unmet by existing agencies'. The further ramifications of this were that Victim Support, and the overall approach to victims in the UK, was situated within the 'care ideology' (van Dijk 1988), rather than the more rights orientation of victim services in the USA (Mawby 1988). Victims in the UK continue to be viewed as having needs that Victim Support should meet (Davies 2003)³; indeed if that were not the case, the fact that governments of differing political hue have continued to provide substantial support to this organisation would be questionable⁴.

As noted much earlier in this thesis, Maguire (1985) commented on the way in which voluntary welfare providers are less concerned with arguments about establishing standards of need or entitlement, focusing more on where they can be of most practical help with their limited resources. However the way in which

² Thus Shapland et al 1985 used the term expressed needs to define a situation where victims may be asked to say what kinds of help they require; Bradshaw (1972) however used the term 'felt needs' to define this approach.

³ Although one acknowledges the moves made towards providing victims with rights within for example the Domestic Violence and Victims of Crime Act 2004.

⁴ Although as we have seen throughout this thesis, Victim Support has served purposes other than those of meeting victims' needs.

Victim Support was originally developed may contradict this viewpoint. Indeed whilst offering support, data was also collected on the impact of crime; leading to the early identification of certain victims as less likely to be in need. As Maguire notes there was the danger that conclusions about the level of need would arise from,

'a researcher's (or, subsequently, program designer's) own perceptions of what various kinds of impact mean for victims: hence there is a danger of recommending solutions which do not coincide with victims' subjective understanding of the problems they face, leading ultimately to the provision of inappropriate kinds of service.

(1985: 542)

In this way, just as Booth and Rowntree argued for an objective measure of need, so Victim Support has adopted a similar approach, certainly in terms of aligning services to certain types of victim; in the past burglary victims, and with a continuing tendency to favour women and older people. However Victim Support does, as my research shows, respond to need in a relative fashion also; indeed as my findings in chapters seven and eight demonstrate, volunteers are prepared to respond to particular needs that individual victims express. In this way one may argue that whilst Victim Support displays an 'objectivist core' (Sheppard 1996) in the way in which it identifies the needs of victims, some level of fitting the service to individual requirements is undertaken.

The examination of victims' needs is important if the current research is to rise to the challenge set. This challenge asks whether the services provided by Victim Support do in fact meet the needs of victims and, less obviously, whether the funding provided by the state is, therefore, justified (Maguire and Kynch 2000).

As noted victims' needs within victimology have been discussed largely in terms of the impact of crime, and in terms of the services supplied to and demanded by victims. Such needs fall therefore into a more relativist framework of 'felt' (Bradshaw 1972) and expressed (Shapland 1985) need. However, as discussed also, Victim Support itself makes assessments of need based upon typologies of victims and the crimes suffered, and upon judgements of crime impacts. It is in these respects that 'objective' assumptions about need may be entertained.

Needs are also discussed relatively on the basis that they can be elastic, that is subject to some degree of negotiation between victims and volunteers (Shapland et al 1985; Maguire 1991). More concretely, the earlier analysis of victims' needs by Maguire and Corbett (1987) separated the idea of practical problems that resulted from a crime from practical problems that victims could not solve; the latter meaning that victims were 'in need'. They also considered the emotional support that may have been available to victims, judging them to be 'in need' if in fact they had no one close to them to whom they could talk. The question of what constitutes 'need' is then variable and not always easily identifiable.

My research has looked at victims' needs in a number of ways. I have utilised notions of felt and expressed need by looking at the impact of crime, and these are discussed in the current chapter. However whilst victims' needs from this perspective intertwine with felt and expressed needs that are based upon service delivery, that is the take up and demand for support, these will be discussed in chapters seven and eight⁵. The assessments that Victim Support makes about victims' needs are then an implicit, rather than explicit, part of these discussions.

⁵ This may be interpreted as creating an artificial dichotomy within my discussions of 'need'. However splitting the reporting of my findings on impact and the services provided by Victim Support into chapters six and seven has been necessary in order to organise and disseminate my work in the clearest way possible.

Respondents were asked to comment on the extent, and the ways in which, they had been affected by crime. Furthermore they were also asked to comment upon how others in their households had been affected. Whilst, as noted earlier, there are other methodologies that can be employed in studies such as these, they each share a common aim of viewing the impact and related consequences of crime for victims, whether these show themselves behaviourally or in terms of increased levels of anxiety or distress.

The impact of crime as a measure of need.

Victims' needs have been assessed within this research by reporting the impact of crime upon respondents and other members of their households. In order to do this I interviewed the adult victims named by the police in line with much of the literature on this subject; asking them to report the level of impact upon themselves and others in their households. I did not interview other adults separately for their views. Nor did I interview respondents' children, who are often the 'indirect' victims of crime (Morgan and Zedner 1992). To some extent, this approach limits the level of analysis that one can conduct. Indeed the fact that the extent of victimisation spreads beyond the one adult respondent within households (Maguire and Corbett 1987) suggests that the current orthodoxy within research, where only one respondent is interviewed, may well conceal rather than reveal the full impact of crime and the needs of victims thereof.

The tables that follow provide 'evidence' of crime impact, indicating the sorts of distress that victims experience as a result of crime; which may be exacerbated if social support is lacking. Thus whilst some victims' needs are directly shaped by their crime experiences, the way in which Victim Support responds to them can, as this thesis argues, affect the way in which they recover from this trauma.

Throughout the analysis, the reader is reminded that not all victims had been contacted by Victim Support⁶, neither had they experienced identical crime types. Furthermore, the figures presented in tabular form do not always add up to 100%. This is due to the 'rounding up' or 'down' processes that are inherent within quantitative analyses. Furthermore, responses given as 'don't know' or 'missing' are generally excluded from the analysis.

The impact of crime.

Table 6.1, overleaf, shows the extent to which respondents from phase two, who experienced a range of crimes, and those from phase three, who all experienced burglary, were affected. In phase two 29% of victims stated that they were affected very much and 31% quite a lot, with 28% and 46% respectively reporting as such in phase three. Whilst direct comparisons between the two samples are perhaps less helpful at this stage, the heavier impact of burglary is immediately apparent. For example, whilst more burglary victims were affected 'very much or quite a lot' than was the case for victims across the range of crimes, fewer burglary victims (26% compared to 39%) reported being much less affected⁷. These findings support those from the British Crime Survey 1998 (Maguire and Kynch 2000) where a similar proportion of victims, experiencing a range of crimes, were affected either very much or quite a lot⁸.

⁶ Typically the victims of car crime, particularly theft of property from motor vehicle.

⁷ The fact that a telephone survey was conducted in phase three compared to face to face interviewing in phase two of the research may also be relevant to the greater expression of impact from the sample of burglary victims only, in terms of producing less socially desirable answers (Kury and Wurger 1993).

⁸ The more recent British Crime Surveys for 2000 and 2001 do not appear to provide figures for this more general crime impact.

% Respondents affected...	Phase 2 N=168	Phase 3 N=100
Very much	29	28
Quite a lot	31	46
A little or not at all	39	26
Total	100	100

Table 6.1: The impact of crime.

Table 6.2 presents the emotional reactions that respondents in phase two of my work experienced, compared with respondents from the British Crime Survey 1998 (Maguire and Kynch 2000). Whilst the BCS reported 94% of victims as being emotionally affected, the proportions experiencing each of the reactions listed were smaller than those found in my study.

% Respondents feeling...	Phase 2 N=168	British Crime Survey 1998
Anger	81	67
Shock	46	25
Fear	21	17
Difficulty in sleeping	23	13
Upset	39	Not reported
Other reactions	33 ⁹	Not reported

Table 6.2: The emotional reactions to crime

The fact that victims interviewed as part of a small scale specialist survey appear to be affected more severely by crime than those interviewed as part of a more general national survey, was discussed by Maguire and Corbett (1987). They considered the way in which different sampling methods and the approaches taken by interviewers/researchers within small and large scale surveys could impact upon the results obtained. Thus for my own purposes, in making such comparisons, it should be noted that the respondents interviewed in phase two were victims of burglary, car crime and violence. The range of offences

⁹ A range of other reactions were reported; ten respondents wanted revenge, 11 were worried/anxious, seven felt a sense of surprise and disbelief, 16 were frustrated, annoyed, confused or sad, five were depressed, two felt guilty, a further two were elated/relieved, one person turned to drugs/alcohol and one person was indifferent.

experienced by those reported in the work of Maguire and Kynch (2000) however was somewhat wider, comprising of burglary, violence, thefts, vandalism and threats. Clearly then, the fact that 'like with like' offences are not being compared may contribute to differences between these two sets of figures.

Within both data sets (phase two of my research and that contained in the BCS 1998) the proportions of victims experiencing emotional reactions followed similar patterns. More victims felt anger than any other of the emotional reactions asked about; a finding that concurs fully with the work of Ditton et al (1999a). Anger then gave way, quite incrementally to the remaining emotional reactions.

However a significant minority of my respondents (39%) said that they were upset following the crime; a finding that deserves greater attention. As discussed later, more women were upset than men. A number of factors were therefore considered; for example whether the current sample was skewed towards female respondents. In fact the sample was slightly skewed towards males¹⁰. One may then have expected the slightly higher number of male responses to depress the level of upset expressed, especially following Mawby and Walklate (1994) who thought that men were less likely to report such emotions. A further factor was the method of data collection used. Face to face interviewing was employed, which Kury and Wurger (1993) argue is more likely to produce 'socially desirable' responses from participants; thus we may have expected lower levels of upset being reported. Finally however, as a sole researcher pursuing her PhD, I was very interested in obtaining robust data. I was therefore prepared to put every effort into engaging with respondents and to provide ample opportunities for them

¹⁰ Some 89 men and 79 women were interviewed.

to give full responses to the questions asked. This may have affected the results obtained.

The British Crime Survey 1998 (Maguire and Kynch 2000) also looked at the influence of victims' personal and social characteristics on the impact of crime as well as considering the impact that offence type makes. I have adopted this model of analysis within the current project, although will consider these effects later in this chapter.

The impact of burglary, violence and car crime.

The notion that 'crime type' can influence the level to which victims are affected is well known (Maguire and Corbett 1987) and, again, was one of the founding principles upon which Victim Support was built (Holtom and Raynor 1988). A number of empirical studies have reported the impacts of different crime types, forming the foundation for my own work.

I will present some of my own findings, suggesting links between the range of crimes included in the present study, burglary, violence and car crime, and the impacts made, in the next section of the chapter. The purpose is to pave the way for later discussions concerning the way in which Victim Support targets its services towards those victims who are considered 'a priori' to be affected more severely by crime, particularly burglary victims (Tarling and Davison 2000).

I will discuss the impact of each of the four crime types, burglary, violence, theft of motor vehicle and theft from motor vehicle, on two levels; using the findings from my research and drawing upon other sources. I will firstly consider the impacts

exerted 'discretely' by each crime type. I will then compare the impact of each crime type in relation to each other.

The impact of burglary.

Over the last two decades or so burglary, or at least household burglary, has attracted greater attention within the crime agenda, being seen in policy terms as 'public enemy number one' (Mawby 2001). This suggestion is made because statistically burglary is common enough to touch many individuals and households and, at the same time, is also serious enough to affect victims both financially and emotionally (Tarling and Davison (2000). Indeed, throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, burglary rates rose inexorably (Mawby 2001), whilst public opinion polls and Home Office research in the form of the British Crime Survey established this crime as a major threat within the national psyche (ibid). A number of researchers have reported the impact of burglary, describing some of the effects on victims; the invasion of privacy that they experience, their anxieties about future security or the mental torture of surmising who could have perpetrated such a crime. The findings from my own research resonate with such issues, and will be reported against the background of what others have found.

The BCS 1988 found that 42% of burglary victims were affected 'very much' or 'quite a lot' by the experience, noting more broadly that 31% of victims of 'serious household crime' were also so affected (cited in Mawby and Walklate 1994). The findings resulting from my work, in table 6.3 overleaf, show that almost two thirds of burglary victims in phase two and nearly three quarters in phase three felt they had been affected 'very much' or 'quite a lot'.

Whilst in terms of the 'serious household crime' to which the BCS refers, the figures may not always be exactly 'like for like', the data that I have collated show a greater impact upon the two samples. This can, as noted earlier, be attributed to the use of different methods within victim surveys.

% Respondents affected...	Burglary (phase 2) N=70	Burglary (phase 3) N=100	Theft of car N=26	Theft of property from car N=35	Violence N=37
Very much	24	28	42	26	32
Quite a lot	37	46	31	14	35
A little or not at all	37	26	27	60	32
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Table 6.3: The impact of crime by offence type

Table 6.3 provides data that represents a useful starting point for discussing the impact of crime. However the following comments from a burglary victim add greater depth.

...I'm registered blind and when you come home after visiting family – the trauma of a long rail journey – my heart sank, I knew somebody had been inside, not invited. We tried to wake up our neighbour, he was elderly – he died a couple of days later – he was ill, but it really shook him up. He'd held our key, he knew we'd been away. If we'd got home at the scheduled time it wouldn't have happened – we'd have been home. They'd looked everywhere – even lifted up the mattress and then it was the thought of getting into bed where they had been scrabbling about.

(elderly male victim of burglary; 73/22986)

Kershaw et al (2000) considered how impact increased where burglary 'with entry' had taken place. Whilst this was something that my research did not systematically measure, a number of respondents did comment upon this aspect of the crime. The following case study illustrates how burglary 'with entry' can exert a heavy impact, throughout the whole household.

The respondent, a lorry driver had been away when the burglary took place. His wife was alone in the house, in fact she was in bed, asleep. Both the respondent and his wife were present when I called to interview them. The respondent's wife, in particular, gave a very detailed account of the crime in terms of the impact that it made on her, and the way in which she had come to realise that the burglary was taking place.

Thank goodness for my neighbours being so observant – one of them rang to say you've got four people in your house – she kept me talking and gave me reassurance because I was frozen to the spot. The phone call disturbed them, and so they ran off. My son was in - on holiday and my husband was on backshift.

They took...Luckily they were downstairs only. I'm not going to exaggerate and say they were armed, but one of them had a knife – they cut through the wires on the video and the control box for the satellite dish.

I couldn't go to work for two days, I didn't even want to be in the house on my own in the daytime.

Anger came last – shock was first – I can't say I was upset – it was shock, fear, difficulty in sleeping in that order, nothing else. I just didn't know what I was doing – the anger set in a long time after.

(female burglary victim, 50 – 59 years, affected 'very much')

Her husband, a middle-aged man, told me that he was affected 'quite a lot' and felt angry. He also felt guilty because he had not been in the house at the time of the incident and uneasy when returning to work.

I could have killed them if I'd got hold of them – I was on my way home with the lorry at 1pm in the morning. X rang me up in the lorry. I asked her if she was alright and as I was coming back I got more and more wound up

...I felt guilty when I thought of what my wife went through, I felt guilty because I wasn't there, I was in the lorry - working. I felt very uneasy doing my night shift again – leaving my wife in the house alone.

The impact of crime is not therefore restricted to one 'snapshot' quantitative measure. To take account of this, the methodologies of several earlier studies

(see Maguire 1980; Maguire and Corbett 1987; Beaton et al 2000), considered the impact of burglary over time. Whilst my methodology did not incorporate this approach directly I did gain some insights into how the effects of crime continues to be felt over time. The comments relayed to me by an elderly lady victimised by a bogus caller¹¹ suggested that the effects of crime were ongoing when I interviewed her some three to four weeks after the incident.

...he didn't seem like a young man like that – I thought he was being friendly and helpful. I haven't felt right since – I was knocked over by a car twelve months ago – to have this on top of that.

(female, 70 years or over: 245/24248)

The next section of this chapter considers the emotional reactions that burglary victims experienced which, again, can be used as a measure of crime impact/victims' needs. I will confine the discussion of findings to those gathered in phase three of the research as a larger sample of burglary victims was included at this stage of my work. Table 6.4 illustrates the emotional reactions that burglary victims, from phase three, said they experienced following the crime.

% Respondents feeling...	Burglary (phase 2) N=70	Burglary (phase 3) N=100	Theft of car N=26	Theft of property from car N=35	Violence N=37
Anger	79	82	85	89	76
Shock	53	77	58	17	54
Fear	27	54	4	6	38
Difficulty sleeping	26	58	23	9	32
Upset	41	71	31	26	51
Other reactions	29	35	27	38	41

Table 6.4: The emotional reactions to crime by offence type

¹¹ Burglaries committed by 'bogus callers' are termed 'distraction burglaries'. Perpetrators use 'trickery' in order to effect the crime (Thornton et al 2003); for example posing as council officials in order to gain access into the victim's property.

The research showed that 82% of burglary victims were angry, 77% were shocked, 54% fearful, 58% had difficulty in sleeping and 71% were upset following the crime. These findings support those of Mawby and Walklate (1997), whose study of burglary revealed a high proportion of respondents who were angry, whilst decreasing numbers reported experiencing a range of emotional reactions. My findings were also supportive of the British Crime Surveys of 1998 and 2000 (Mirrlees-Black and Allen 1998; Kershaw et al 2000) where, again, more respondents felt angry but also reported feeling shocked, fearful, unable to sleep and upset (crying/tears).

What does become clear from my work, and that of others (Mirrlees Black, Mayhew and Percy 1996; Mawby and Walklate 1997; Ditton et al 1999a), is the extent to which victims felt predominantly angry. In addition the ways in which, depending upon the crime involved, respondents experienced a range of more 'serious' (Maguire and Kynch 2000) emotional reactions, such as fear, difficulty in sleeping and upset, were illustrated. In some ways the fact that those burgled are more fearful, upset and unable to sleep peacefully at night than those who experience, for example, car crime is not surprising. Burglary victims clearly worry about a number of issues such as the invasiveness of the crime, the possible threat to personal safety, and the likelihood of burglars returning.

It did upset the applecart – I was listening out for everything. It did upset me, I didn't like to think of anyone doing things like that. ...it was my memories they took – things I'd saved for my family – sentimental value and they also had a monetary value.

(female victim, 70 years or over: 65/22844)

We can't sleep, its what was taken from the house – the TV. I went to the bathroom at 3 am, I looked into the room and thought what the – drawers on top of one another, TV gone – it was a special one because I can't see – we never heard a thing, and we were all locked up. The thought that they passed where we were asleep – I don't know how long they were in here. ... In the drawer dad had watches, both our gold watches – dad's watch was beautiful, had it for years – that

upset me more than the TV. Ooh its dreadful, I said, how a person on their own would cope.

(partially sighted female victim, 70 years or over: 45/22764)

Furthermore, the views expressed within the earlier case study (page 147) also supports Ditton et al (1999a), who looked at how emotional reactions shift over time. Although, the victim in my study felt shock initially, and then anger¹².

One point of further note is the large number of respondents reporting upset in my work, compared to fewer in the work of Mawby and Walklate (1997), where approximately a fifth of respondents from Plymouth (21%) and Salford (22%) were 'tearful'. These lower figures may be explained by the different terminology used, as fewer men for example may experience or be prepared to admit this type of reaction.

The high proportion of respondents reporting 'upset' within my work at this stage may again be explained by looking at the composition of the sample interviewed and at the methods used. Almost 70% of the phase three sample were female who, as already discussed may, more than men, feel and/or feel able to admit this type of emotion (Mawby and Walklate 1994). Secondly, the telephone survey it is suggested produces less socially desirable answers, and so respondents may have been more willing to report their feelings honestly (Kury and Wurger 1993). Thirdly, as noted earlier, I was the sole interviewer for this work with a prime focus of completing my PhD. I was therefore willing and able to spend as much time as was needed in order to build up a rapport with respondents. This may have affected their willingness to reveal their true feelings to me.

¹² For Ditton et al (1999a) anger was the initial emotional reaction amongst victims.

Whilst the chapter began by discussing the tentative link between offence type and impact, the way in which burglary affects victims is now discussed in greater depth. Table 6.3 (page 146) showed that 61% of burglary victims in phase two and 74% of burglary victims in phase three were affected 'very much' or 'quite a lot' by the crime. The feelings of invasiveness that burglary produces, which Holtom and Raynor (1988) and Tarling and Davison (2000) have commented upon, is then illustrated within some of the more qualitative data gathered.

It's quite scary really...and it's the thought of people going through your things...in fact we want to move. They took everything, videos, tele, playstation, hi fi, a lot of my jewellery – like sentimental pieces my Gran left me – things I can't ever replace.

(female, 30 – 39 years: 1/361)

The impact of burglary can also be contrasted to that of other crimes included in the research; violence and car crime. Table 6.3 shows that victims of violence and car crime (theft of motor vehicle) are substantially affected. The comments from a victim of car crime indicate this as she noted her sense of invasion, the sort of feeling that in her opinion would be more likely to follow a burglary.

It's difficult to put into words really...but it was so unreal, someone sitting in my car. It's invasive...the feeling of being violated because they were in my car and how much greater that feeling must be when they've been in your home.

(female, 50 – 59 years: 3/238)

However, as table 6.4 (page 148) shows, burglary does affect victims more than car crime, certainly in terms of the more serious (Maguire and Kynch 2000) or 'debilitating' impacts produced. Thus whilst anger may be felt across a range of crimes, it is burglary victims who are more likely to be unable to sleep or upset. This was particularly the case for victims in phase three of the research. Victim Support's continued concern for burglary victims (Tarling and Davison 2000), may therefore be explained in part by findings such as these.

The impact of violence

Thirty seven people were asked about their experiences of violent crime and, as indicated in table 6.3, 67% were affected either 'very much' or 'quite a lot' by the incidents that had occurred. The comments below, made by a female aged seventeen years, who was assaulted by a girl of similar age, add support to this finding.

...since this happened I don't feel like going out. Since she hit me I just feel I can't move, I've had really bad headaches and I'm always tired.
(17 year old female: 2/128/8656)

The findings from my research support the British Crime Survey 2000 (Kershaw et al 2000) where anger was the reaction most commonly cited. The British Crime Survey found that 62% of violence victims were angry, 41% were shocked, 27% fearful, 17% unable to sleep and 23% were tearful.

A higher proportion of victims in my research were strongly affected by the crime. As in the BCS, most respondents (76%) were angry, 54% shocked, 38% upset, 32% unable to sleep, 51% upset and 41% experienced 'other reactions'¹³. Some respondents noted how their victimisation had fuelled their fear of future crime, supporting the findings of Mawby (2004a).

It's made me much more wary about going out at night, I'm much more cautious. I think it happened because they saw my purse, they did threaten to stab me a few times. I tried to put up a fight, but had to be careful not to push it too far.
(female, 40 – 49 years, robbed of cash at knifepoint: 2/11580/463)

... I was more fearful because these type of people often follow you to the residence and take action – I was fearful for my family.
(male, 50 – 59 years, assaulted outside his house: 2/10697/331)

¹³ The range of other reactions was as follows: victims wanted revenge/to punish the offender, victim worried/anxious, victim surprised/disbelieving, victim frustrated/annoyed, victim confused/sad, victim depressed and victim felt guilty.

Although I did not undertake in-depth interviews with respondents, their comments illustrated the effects of crime over a sustained period (Kilpatrick et al 1987). Respondents also noted how they may avoid certain activities that would bring the traumatic event to mind.

Every time I walk past – you know I get a shiver – I always look around. For the first two weeks I went by bus and got a taxi home.

(male, 50 – 59 years, violent attack: 3/042)

More recently the work of Norris and Kaniesty (1994:120) concluded that victims of violence 'were still more symptomatic than were property crime victims' after 15 months when the study ended. Again whilst I cannot make clear claims regarding the length of time over which the impact of violence persists, it is obvious from tables 6.3 and 6.4 that such levels are significantly high in contrast to those following, for example, the less serious crime of theft of property from car. As with burglary, the emotional impact of violence will be significantly greater than car crime. Victim Support may need to look more closely at continuing towards helping greater numbers of violence victims, although this may have far-reaching implications for the very nature of the service itself.

The impact of car crime¹⁴

Table 6.3 on page 146 shows around two fifths (42%) of victims whose vehicle had been stolen were 'very much affected', compared to just over one quarter (26%) whose cars were broken into. In addition fewer of those whose cars were stolen (27%) were affected less severely, compared to 60% whose vehicle was broken into. It is evident, therefore, that theft of, rather than theft from, motor vehicle exerts a greater impact upon victims, a trend which has also been

¹⁴ Two types of car crime were included in the study; theft of motor vehicle (TOMV) and theft from motor vehicle (TFMV)

identified by the British Crime Survey (Kershaw et al 2000: 31 and table A.5 17: 87).

Table 6.4 (page 148) indicates that anger was felt by the majority of victims of both theft of (85%) and from (89%) motor vehicle. These figures support those from the British Crime Survey (ibid) where victims of both types of car crime cited high levels of anger¹⁵. Again high levels of anger compared to the more debilitating effects of crime should be expected as it is unlikely, as the figures show, for auto crime victims to be particularly frightened or to have the same levels of upset or difficulty in sleeping that those suffering burglary and violence have reported. The following quotes indicate the angry feelings that victims of car crime had.

We're on social security at the moment – although the car is insured, if it was damaged – we're only insured third party fire and theft, also the baby's pram was in the car – it was so inconvenient. I was so angry, just really angry – well we both were.

(female, 40 – 49 years, affected quite a lot by theft of motor vehicle: 3/004)

I was completely gutted because the wheels were so expensive - if I'd caught them in act God knows what I'd have done. The same night mine got nicked (alloy wheels worth £1500) other cars got done.

(male, under 30 years, theft of property from motor vehicle, victim very much affected and angry: 3/079)

These high levels of anger support the work of Ditton et al (1999), who found victims of car crime were more angry than those experiencing burglary and assault. More victims of car crime within my study were angry compared to around 80% of burglary victims within phases two and three of the research and 76% of those experiencing violent crime.

¹⁵ Although interestingly slightly fewer of those whose cars were stolen as opposed to those losing property from their vehicles, in my study and in the British Crime Survey (88% TOMV and 89% TFMV), were angry.

In terms of the more 'debilitating effects of crime', such as shock, fear, difficulty in sleeping and upset, victims of car crime were generally less affected (see table 6.4, page 148). The exception to this was 'shock', which those whose vehicles were stolen proclaimed to feel at levels paralleling those experiencing burglary and violence. Over half of theft of car victims (58%) were shocked, as were burglary victims (53% in phase two and 77% in phase three) and victims of violence (54%).

I just felt numb and unbelieving – it was early in the morning, 6 o' clock, before I went to work – I was just looking up and down the street, couldn't believe there was a gap where the car was. I don't believe people realize how much it affects you – I felt I wanted my car back but didn't because it would be violated.

(female, 50 – 59 years, theft of car, victim very much affected and shocked: 3/445)

It is not surprising that victims of car crime were less likely to feel fearful, upset or to be unable to sleep compared to, for example, victims of burglary and violence. However, the high levels of shock that some car crime victims experienced may be something that Victim Support should consider in view of their current contact policy.

The impact of crime by the personal and social characteristics of victims¹⁶

Gender and the impact of crime

One of the findings from my research was the effect of gender upon crime impact. Women were clearly more affected than men within phase two of the research, where impact was measured across a range of crimes¹⁷. Thus 73% of the women in my sample (58 from 79 cases) were affected 'very much' or 'quite a lot'

¹⁶ I had wished to consider the effects of ethnicity upon crime impact. However the very small numbers (three of the 168 respondents) of 'ethnic minority group' members within my phase two sample means that any findings must be reported more as indications. Even then great caution must be exercised in discussing them. Two of the three ethnic minority group respondents did say that they were very much affected compared to 29% of white respondents (47 out of 164). Some support is then offered to the British Crime Survey 1998 (Maguire and Kynch 2000), which reported greater impact upon Black or Asian victims, albeit such respondents were also resident in 'striving' areas.

¹⁷ Burglary, violence and car crime.

compared to 49% of men (43 from 88 cases). At the same time far more men were affected minimally by the crime (51%: 45 from 88 men compared to 27%: 21 from 79 women). In phase three, which comprised wholly of burglary victims, the gender gap lessened, although women were still affected more than men. Thus 78% of women (53 from 68 cases) and 66% of men (21 from 32 cases) were affected 'very much' or 'quite a lot'. More men (34%: 11 from 32 cases) than women (22%: 15 from 68 cases) were affected minimally. These findings resonate with those from the British Crime Survey 1998 (Maguire and Kynch 2000:)¹⁸ where females were more likely to have been very much affected by crime.

A gender analysis of the emotional reactions that victims experienced within phase two of my research showed that women were more affected than men with the exception of anger overall. In phase two, roughly the same number of women (n=79) and men (n=89) were angry (82% of women and 80% of men); 60% of women were shocked compared to 35% of men; 24% were fearful compared to 19% of men; 34% had difficulty in sleeping compared to 14% of men and 47% were upset compared to 32% of men.

For burglary victims in phase three, a slightly different pattern emerged. More men (n=32) than women (n=68) were angry (91% compared to 78%); a finding that concurs with the work of Ditton et al (1999a). However, for the remaining reactions, the positions were reversed. Thus a higher number of women (85%) were shocked compared to men (59%), and around twice the number of women (65%) were fearful. This again reflects the work of Ditton et al (ibid) where 65% of women compared to 44% of men had difficulty in sleeping and 73% of women

¹⁸ Which does not differentiate between male and female reactions to individual offence types.

compared to 69% of men felt upset. One may again question the extent to which 'socially desirable answers' were being given by men where fear and difficulty in sleeping were concerned (Kury et al 1993)¹⁹.

Material wealth and the impact of crime

In phases two and three, respondents who were categorised as less materially wealthy were more affected by the crime²⁰. Thus 72% (23 out of 32 cases) of those in phase two, owning one or none of the consumer goods asked about, were 'very much' or 'quite a lot' affected by the crime, compared to 57% (78 out of 135 cases) owning two or more items. In phase three, 81% (31 out of 38 cases) of those categorised as 'less materially wealthy' said that they were 'very much' or 'quite a lot' affected by the burglary, compared to 69% (42 out of 61 cases) of those adjudged to be more affluent.

In both phases of the research, more of those who were considered to be affluent on the measures used were affected minimally by the crime. In phase two, 42% (57 cases out of 135) of those owning two or more items compared to 28% (9 out of 32 cases) owning one or none of the goods were less affected. In phase three, 31% (19 out of 61 cases) of those owning two or more items were less affected by the crime compared to 18% (7 out of 38 cases) owning one or none of the goods. Whilst these findings support the work of others in this way (Mawby and Walklate 1997; Mawby et al 1999; Mawby et al 1999a; Maguire and Kynch 2000)²¹, they are reported cautiously, given the size of the samples and in view of the measure of wealth applied within my work.

¹⁹ Albeit the interviews in phase three were conducted over the telephone.

²⁰ 'Material wealth' as explained in chapter four was based upon owning two or more consumer goods; those owning one or none of the consumer goods asked about were not considered to be materially wealthy.

²¹ Maguire and Kynch (2000) measured material wealth by income.

Age and the impact of crime

An analysis of impact by age did not produce any identifiable patterns in both phases two and three. In phase two roughly the same number of respondents aged 49 and under (35 out of 47 cases: 75%) stated they were affected 'very much' or 'quite a lot' over the range of crimes, whilst 73% (39 out of 53 cases) aged 50 and over reported this impact. In phase three also whilst 60% (80 out of 132 cases) of those aged 49 and under said that they were affected very much or quite a lot by the burglary, 59% (20 out of 34 cases) of those aged 50 and over reported feeling this. These findings support those from the British Crime Survey 1998 (Maguire and Kynch 2000), where age was not viewed as significantly affecting crime impact²².

One might argue that such findings are unexpected, particularly when one considers the generally reported propensity to crime fear that older people experience (Hindelang and Richardson 1978 cited in Kury et al 2001); which as some suggest may be related to their perceived vulnerability to cope with the effects of crime (Mawby 1988). Furthermore, age has been closely connected to feelings of safety when some measures are employed (Kershaw et al 2000)²³.

It is also possible to consider the way in which another variable, that of material wealth, interacts with age in affecting the level to which crime impacts upon older victims. Within phase three of my research, respondents who were less wealthy were more affected by the crime (burglary), than a younger group of victims. Of

²² Although the question asked in that survey focused upon the emotional reactions experienced by victims.

²³ Although the methodology employed in asking about fear of crime has attracted criticism where for example 'formless' questions are used or where respondents are required to place themselves in hypothetical situations in order to respond (Feraro and Le Grange 1987:8). The ability of the closed questionnaire is also challenged in terms of teasing out the feelings of different sections of the population in relation to crime fear. Thus Farrell et al (1997) note the work of Harris and Associates (1975) and Yin (1982). In the former 23% of elderly respondents said, in response to a closed question that they considered crime to be a serious personal problem. Where open questions were asked (Yin 1982 in Farrell 1987) only 1% of a comparable sample said this.

those who were 50 years and over, and who were less materially wealthy, 21 out of 26 respondents (80% of the sample) said that they were affected very much or quite a lot. For those in the same age group, but who were more materially better off, 17 out of 26 respondents (66% of the sample) said that they were affected very much or quite a lot. These findings support Pantazis and Gordon (1997 cited by Pantazis 2000) who found that older people living in circumstances of multiple deprivation were more likely to be affected by crime than older people who were materially provided for.

Whilst age alone does not appear to be a sufficient indicator of crime impact, other variables, such as wealth, also come into play. However an individual's perceptions of their own ability to cope can also influence the extent to which they will be affected by crime. The following quote indicates perhaps the level to which a person's internal coping mechanisms, shaped perhaps by life experience, can aid this.

Just a minute ... I started work in 1940, I've lived through the war, I've lived in a place in Cornwall which is a harbour, Falmouth, which got a lot of bombing and no mention of alarms – you'd look up and you'd see a Messerschmitt²⁴ – I used to be working – you never knew quite when you were going to get home. I mean I had to deal with that ... so if you can cope with that you know, you learn to cope with lots of things.

(female, over 70 years, victim of burglary: 242/24262)

The wider impact of crime

The chapter so far has looked at the impact of crime upon the victims who took part in my surveys. In order to discover the fuller picture of crime impact,

²⁴ A German fighter plane used in World War Two.

respondents were asked to comment upon the way in which other members of their households, adults and/or children, had been affected²⁵.

The impact of crime upon other adults in the household

Many of the respondents within both phases of the research said that they lived with other adults. Of 127 respondents in phase two, 98 (77%) said that other adults had been affected emotionally by the crime²⁶. In phase three, 61 respondents said that they lived with other adults. Fifty eight of these other adults (95%) were reported experiencing emotional reactions following the crime. The phase three sample consisted entirely of burglary victims and so these results are not surprising. The findings from my research indicate a greater impact upon the wider household, than for example the British Crime Survey 1998, where although 84% of respondents said that they or someone else in the household had been affected, only 30% identified other adults as being so affected (Maguire and Kynch 2000). The findings from the BCS are however based upon a larger range of crimes than were included in my work.

The findings from phase three of my research (burglary victims only) can also be compared with those from other smaller scale studies of burglary (Mawby and Walklate 1997)²⁷. Again more victims within my research said that other adults had experienced a range of emotional reactions. As table 6.5 overleaf indicates, 89% of other adults were angry, 54% shocked, 34% fearful, 38% unable to sleep and 56% upset.

²⁵ The author acknowledges the possible limitations concerning this approach in comparison with actually interviewing other adults and children. However the advantages of this approach lie in terms of the immediate availability of at least some information about other household members who may, for one reason or another, prove difficult to access and the cost savings therein.

²⁶ For the purposes of this analysis, cases where respondents said that they live with other adults were specifically selected.

²⁷ Albeit the samples for that piece of work were drawn from two separate areas within England and Wales.

% of other adults feeling...	Burglary (Phase 2) N=37	Burglary (Phase 3) N=61	Theft of car N=21	Theft of property from car N=23	Violence N=20
Anger	73	89	83	74	80
Shock	46	54	50	26	40
Fear	14	34	0	9	20
Difficulty in sleeping	8	38	11	9	15
Upset	35	56	33	39	55
Other reactions	11	34	6	0	10

Table 6.5: The emotional reactions of other adults to crime²⁸.

A comparison of the figures in table 6.4 (page 148) with those in table 6.5 reveals the high levels of anger that respondents reported affecting other adults. This finding may be a reflection of the high number of female respondents within that sample²⁹, a point commented upon by Ditton et al (1999a)³⁰. However, within the course of the interview process some interesting insights were revealed concerning how 'other adult' household members reacted to the burglary. One female respondent explained that her partner had taken to hooking a cup onto the bedroom door at night, to act as a wake up call should an intruder try to enter. A number of respondents reported their partners or other people in the household became much more security conscious.

He's obsessed with his cameras and alarms, goes and checks it every morning or whenever, or if we've been out checks to see if anyone's been anywhere near the house.

(176/23878)

He's awful now for making sure doors are locked, its made him very wary, he's like me, if we go upstairs we lock the door now.

(298/24522)

²⁸ Not all respondents indicated the emotional reactions that other adults experienced, despite their claim that other adults did indeed experience emotional reactions.

²⁹ Almost two thirds of the phase three sample was comprised of females.

³⁰ Although in making this point the assumption that other adults in the household are male is just that.

The impact of crime upon children

Children are perhaps more prone than adults to becoming the 'indirect' victims of crime, particularly in cases where property losses are involved. Certainly in cases such as burglary and car crime, children are less likely to be viewed as directly suffering because of their lack of 'ownership' status. Such victimisation is an area that has attracted little attention so far (Morgan and Zedner 1992). Partly in response to this neglect, I sought to discover the effects of crime upon children as indirect victims within my own research.

Within the current research, 64 respondents (approximately one third of the phase two sample), and 20 respondents (around one fifth of the phase three sample), said that they had children living with them. These cases were then selected for further analysis. Of the 64 respondents in phase two, 18 (28%) said that their children had experienced emotional reactions following the crime. The British Crime Survey 1998 (Mirrlees-Black and Allen 1998) found a much smaller proportion of those living with children saying that the children were emotionally affected (7%). In both cases these figures are quite low which may reflect the fact that both samples had contained victims of a range of (including 'less serious') crimes. Children may be less affected by less serious crimes such as car crime. Furthermore, these types of crimes may be less 'immediate' to the household. In other words they fall into an 'out of sight out of mind' category, and parents may be less aware of their children's feelings on the subject.

Phase three of my research revealed a much higher proportion of respondents saying that their children had been affected (12 out of 20 cases: 60%). Mawby and Walklate (1997) reported similar findings. These results may be linked to the type of crime that both Mawby and Walklate (ibid) and myself focused upon. Each

sample consisted of burglary victims alone, a crime that is popularly perceived to be more serious. The impact of burglary, one may argue, is also much more immediate, because it is a crime that breaches one's personal living space. This may also explain why, within burglary studies, respondents appear to be knowledgeable about the effects upon their children.

The following section considers the emotional reactions that respondents reported their children experiencing in the aftermath of crime. The findings must however be treated with caution as the numbers upon which they are based are very small. Table 6.6 presents the extent to which children were emotionally affected by crime. It becomes obvious from looking at these findings that whereas adults are more likely to feel angry, this is much less likely to be the case where children are concerned. Indeed higher proportions of children tended to feel upset (11 out of 18, that is 61% and 9 out of 12, that is 75% in phases two and three of the research respectively), whilst only six out of eighteen and four out of twelve (33% in phases two and three respectively) children were angry. My work therefore supports the work of others, Morgan and Zedner (1992) and Mawby and Walklate (1997), who concluded that children were more likely to feel fear and upset than to feel angry. In examining the impact of burglary in particular, my study (phase three) found that 75% were said to be fearful and upset; 67% had difficulty in sleeping and 58% were shocked.

% Children feeling...	Phase 2 N=18	Phase 3 N=12
Anger	33	33
Shock	22	58
Fear	33	75
Difficulty in sleeping	22	67
Upset	61	75
Other reactions	11	8

Table 6.6: Victims' assessments of the emotional reactions experienced by children in the household

The comments made by respondents illustrate more qualitatively the impact of crime, particularly the impact of burglary on their children.

They were scared to go to bed and afraid to get up early - normally they would get up and play in their bedroom and come and get me - they were afraid to come out of the room in case anyone was there. (86/22926)

My daughter thought they might come back. (446/25720)

She wouldn't go in any room, the first week...on her own. She was fine when she was out the house, it was just when she came back in. She was scared that they were going to come back again. (130)

For one respondent the fearfulness that burglary had created for his daughter extended beyond the parameters of the household.

She's petrified now... she likes to know there's someone in the house. First thing she does when she comes in is to check all the doors. Whereas before she would quite confidently do her paper round in the morning she now won't go down certain streets unless I'm with her. (101/23147)

Mawby and Walklate (1997) found that older rather than younger children were more affected by burglary. Whilst I did not specifically investigate these age related differences within my own work, nor did I interview children, it was possible to form impressions from some of the comments made by adult respondents. Younger children were considered to be less, if at all, affected, especially where they had not actually witnessed the crime taking place or the aftermath of the offence. The parents of younger children shielded them from the knowledge that anything untoward had occurred.

I just didn't want them to know anything about it, my little girl gets worried about the idea of Santa Claus going into her room. (121/23227)

They wouldn't have understood to be honest they're two and three, there's no point in bringing it up really with them. ...X did say where's my tele gone - we said it had gone to the menders. (176/23878)

Of course this parental shielding becomes less possible depending upon the age of the child and, in some cases, the child may have had his/her own property stolen or may be missing communal household property. Indeed in interviewing one respondent, I was told that following the burglary her son slept downstairs with a baseball bat, in case the offenders returned. In two other cases the fear of re-victimisation prompted fairly extreme responses. One respondent's thirteen year old daughter was so fearful that she would not sleep alone, whilst in the other case, the respondent's daughter wanted locks to be fitted to her bedroom door. It is perhaps the instances where older children are affected that present most problems potentially, and which offer Victim Support the greatest opportunity to assist³¹.

The way in which adults fear for their children when a crime has taken place (Morgan and Zedner 1992), was also highlighted by my research. Thus in one case of burglary the respondent was very angry because her children had come into contact with the offenders.

They [respondent's children] seen them, they went into the kids room and told my little boy to shut up – that was the worst – they could take the stuff but to go near my kids is a different matter. (20/22605)

In the second case the respondent was upset because her little boy had answered the door to bogus callers.

I went to the cashpoint and my son wanted to carry the money home - I was upstairs - they knocked on the door, one of them asked my son if he could get his ball from the garden. When I came downstairs I found my purse missing – the one at the front door had acted as a diversion. (2/8964/184)

The respondent said that she felt 'sick'.

³¹ This topic will be discussed later in chapters seven and eight.

...I didn't like the idea of someone in my house especially with my little boy here.

Indeed to add to the upset in this case, the respondent's son who was six years of age was also upset.

...because he felt it was his fault because he opened the door.

Other crimes, such as violent attacks, also impact upon children to produce substantial levels of fear. In my research three out of the six children (50%) who were emotionally affected by crime were fearful, following an assault on their parent, a finding which offers tentative support to those of Morgan and Zedner (1992). Again, however, caution must be exercised in reporting my findings because of the very small numbers concerned.

Morgan and Zedner (1990) pointed out that a child will not only be badly affected if he/she were to witness an attack, but also if the results of the attack are apparent to the child. If a parent has been assaulted, the cuts and bruises that they suffer will probably be seen by their child/ren. Within my research a respondent, who had been assaulted in the course of her work, made the following comment.

...I was also worried about my little boy, he's only six, he doesn't want to see his mummy with a black eye. (1/12401/497)

Interestingly whilst adults did not express high levels of upset where car crime was concerned children tended to be more upset, although again the very small numbers involved means that the findings presented must be done so with caution.

The fear of crime.

Analyses on two levels were undertaken to examine the fear of crime amongst victims from phase two of my research. The initial analysis was carried out on the basis of a range of offences and then individual offence types. A second level of analysis was conducted on the basis of gender and age³².

Fear of crime: analysis by crime type

Respondents were asked to think about the extent to which they worried about crime in the everyday course of their lives. In taking this approach I followed the example of Ferraro and La Grange (1987), who advise against asking questions which require respondents to place themselves in hypothetical situations³³. Thus 59% of my sample were 'very' or 'fairly worried' about burglary, 49% about being the victim of violence, 53% about their motor vehicle being stolen and 49% about having property stolen from their vehicles. These figures can be contrasted to those from the British Crime Survey in 2000 (Kershaw et al 2000) where roughly the same proportion of respondents were 'very' or 'fairly worried' about burglary (57%), slightly fewer about violence (physical attack: 43%), and slightly more about theft of and from motor vehicle, 57% and 53% respectively.

The extent to which victims of particular crimes in my sample were 'very worried' about the same crimes, was examined. Thus 39% of burglary victims (27 out of 70 cases) said they were 'very worried' about burglary, while 43% (16 out of 37 cases) of violence victims said they were 'very worried' about violence. Some

³² These two social characteristics were focused upon because the numbers within each of the subsamples were more substantial, thus findings could be presented with greater confidence than for those pertaining to material wealth and ethnicity.

³³ For example by asking respondents who say that they do not go out alone at night to imagine how safe they would feel if they did this.

35% (7 out of 20 car owners) of those whose vehicle was stolen were 'very worried' about theft of car, whilst 16% of those whose cars were broken into (3 out of 16 car owners) were 'very worried' about this offence. These figures are fairly congruent with the BCS 2000 (ibid: table A7.10) with the exception of violent crime, where my sample was more worried. The BCS 2000 found that only 22% of those subject to physical attack were 'very worried' about violence, compared to 43% of my sample. Furthermore, whilst substantially more 'theft of car' victims in the BCS 2000 were 'very worried' (27% compared to 16% in my sample), the worry about crime in that survey was based upon a global concept of 'theft of/from a vehicle'.

As a number of authors point out (Norris and Kaniesty 1994; Hough 1995; Norris et al 1997; Kershaw et al 2000 and Mawby 2001), those who have been recently victimised, are more likely to feel fearful of crime. Furthermore, both Mawby (2004a) and the British Crime Survey 2002/3 (Fletcher and Allen 2003) report a strong relationship between experience and fear, particularly where the experience and the concerns are closely matched. My work, as table 6.7 overleaf shows, largely supports this view.

Victims feeling 'very' or 'fairly worried' about...	Burglary victims		Violence victims		Theft of motor vehicle victims		Theft from motor vehicle victims	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Burglary	43	62	20	56	16	64	18	53
Violence	34	49	27	73	7	29	13	38
Theft of motor vehicle	27	47	18	67	15	65	15	44
Theft from motor vehicle	27	46	17	63	9	41	16	48

Table 6.7: Experiences of crime and fear of crime³⁴

As table 6.7 shows a higher proportion of burglary victims (62%) were 'very' or 'fairly worried' about burglary, in contrast to worry about violence and car crime. For victims of violence more respondents (73%) were 'very' or 'fairly worried' about this than burglary (56%), although high proportions were worried about car crime generally. Whilst victims of theft of car were equally worried about that crime and burglary, they were less worried about violence and theft from a car. The findings for those victimised by theft from a car are less clear however with, perhaps unsurprisingly, a similar number feeling worried about theft of car. Those whose cars were broken into appear to be slightly more concerned about burglary. In this way the victims of theft from a car do not follow the pattern revealed by Fletcher and Allen (2003) and Mawby (2004a).

Fear of crime: analysis by gender and age

Further analysis of the fear of crime³⁵ was undertaken, focusing upon gender and age. More women (51 out of 78 cases: 65%) than men (46 out of 87 cases: 53%) were very or fairly worried about crime, a pattern which was repeated when

³⁴ The sample sizes do not remain constant within this table, depending upon the exclusion of missing answers, 'don't know' or those saying they do not own a motor vehicle.

³⁵ Using burglary as the proxy for 'crime'.

burglary victims only were isolated (68% of women: 28 out of 41 cases, compared to 52% of men: 15 out of 29 cases). My findings therefore support those from the British Crime Survey 2000 (Kershaw et al 2000), where the same pattern was reported.

However, where age was concerned, 68% of those aged fifty and over (23 out of 34 respondents) were very or fairly fearful of crime, whilst slightly fewer of those aged forty nine and under (56%: 73 out of 130 cases) reported this. In this way, my results support those reported within the literature where age is viewed as a significant factor within the fear of crime (Hough and Mayhew 1983; Kershaw et al 2000). Interestingly, however, when burglary victims only were isolated, the effects of age were negated. In both age groups 61% of the sample reported being very or fairly worried about crime (31 out of 51 cases of those 49 years and under and 11 out of 18 cases of those 50 years and over).

Summary

Chapter six has presented the findings from my research in the light of those from a range of literature. The chapter has been concerned with illustrating the extent of victims' needs, using the impact of a range of crimes in phase two and that of burglary in phase three. Victims' needs have thus been measured by considering the extent to which respondents and other adults and children within their households were affected by crime. Furthermore, as discussed in chapter three and later in chapter eight, the fact that Victim Support is developing volunteer training for supporting children as victims, including those who are deemed 'indirect' victims following offences against their households and/or parents and carers, is justified given the extent to which children were seen to be affected by crime within my research.

The impacts of burglary, violence and theft of and from motor vehicle have been considered discretely, and in relation to each other. Whilst anger was seen to be a common reaction to each crime, the more debilitating effects of burglary and violence were discussed in relation to car crime, where these are generally lacking. However whilst car crime generally leaves victims angry more than fearful or upset, the level to which the shock of those whose cars were stolen in relation to those burgled or assaulted was noted. The literature shows that whilst car crime does not generally impact as seriously upon victims, theft of vehicle rather than theft from vehicle effects a greater impact. This may be important, bearing in mind that Victim Support does not routinely offer support to such victims.

The impact of crime has also been considered in the light of victims' personal and social characteristics. Gender and material wealth for example, are shown to affect the level to which victims experienced crime. Age on the other hand did not affect this. These results were in keeping with those from the literature.

The fear of crime was considered in two ways. Firstly I looked at the sample generally in terms of their worry about future crime, regardless of the offence currently experienced. I then linked their current crime experience to the fear of future crime. My findings have, largely, supported those found within the literature. The fear of crime was also considered in connection with victims' personal and social characteristics. Again my work largely supports findings within the literature in terms of analyses by age and gender. Chapter seven will now look again to my empirical work, to consider the extent to which the service provided by Victim Support meets the needs of victims.

Chapter seven: Victim Support: Meeting victims' needs?

Introduction

Whilst chapter six considered the extent of victims' needs, measured by the impact that crime has made upon them, the current chapter turns to the services that Victim Support provided, as a further measure of victims' needs. The extent to which victims 'take up' services (Mawby 1988) and the extent to which they 'expressed' (Maguire and Kynch 2000) or 'negotiated' (Shapland et al 1985; Maguire 1991) their needs for services is therefore considered in this chapter.

Chapter seven is divided into three sections. The initial discussion focuses upon links between crime impact and the support that Victim Support offers to victims of crime. It then considers the extent to which victims felt that they had been helped by the service. This is a useful starting point because, as already noted, Victim Support contacts victims in different ways; depending upon a number of factors such as the offence committed and/or the availability of volunteers. In this way these discussions link into the 'objectivist core' (Sheppard 1996) of Victim Support which I identified in chapter six. In other words the organisational view of victims' needs which influences who should be supported and the nature of the support offered.

It would be useful therefore for Victim Support to see how its contact policy is working, not only in the extent to which services are being targeted appropriately but also in terms of the impact that each type of service intervention makes upon victims. Within this section service 'satisfaction' across the three crime types included in phase two of the research is considered, before looking more specifically at the views of burglary victims interviewed within phase three.

Section two of chapter seven looks specifically at the impacts of age and gender upon the satisfaction levels of respondents within phase two of the research. This approach has been taken because age and gender have been shown to influence Victim Support when services are being allocated (Mawby and Gill 1987; Maguire and Kynch 2000). Finally, section three focuses upon phase three of the research, providing a general account of the extent to which burglary victims were satisfied with the service provided. Further analysis by age and gender is also presented.

Victim Support: a general overview of service provision

As discussed in chapter three, Victim Support makes contact with victims in a number of ways. The most costly approach is the volunteer visit that, more recently, is used predominantly for burglary victims and for those who have experienced more serious crime, such as violence (Maguire and Kynch 2000). In its traditional unannounced form, face to face contact was used for all victims, however over time this model of support has been applied to burglary victims only. It was then the 'unannounced' element of the visit, together with the apparent focus upon burglary victims, which formed the basic model of Victim Support (Reeves 1985; Holtom and Raynor 1988; Maguire and Kynch 2000). Indeed the majority of face to face contacts on which this research is based took the form of unannounced visits.

Victim Support has increasingly adopted other types of contact, such as telephone and postal approaches. Postal contact is clearly cheaper and is thought to be a more appropriate means of contacting violence victims in the first instance. Contact by telephone is also cheaper and can be used for burglary victims in the first instance when volunteer resources are scarce, however there are no such

cases included within this study¹. Whether victims are contacted by letter, telephone or by being visited will depend broadly upon the type of offence. Although as Maguire and Kynch (2000) note other factors can affect the type of contact offered, such as age, gender and the material wealth of victims. Indeed, with the introduction of automatic referral policies, contact by means other than the volunteer visit has become a way of rationing services (ibid).

Not all victims are contacted, even though a referral may have been made to Victim Support. Again, this is often dependent upon offence type and the way in which local schemes interpret national policy. Some schemes may contact victims of car crime, even though the core services that Victim Support 'national' stipulate must be offered does not include theft of or from motor vehicles (Victim Support 2000). Conversely, schemes may not contact every victim whose details they receive, whether or not the crimes committed fall into the 'core' work undertaken by the service (Maguire and Kynch 2000).

The cumulative effects of these filtering processes are that some victims are more likely to be contacted than others, whilst of those who Victim Support contacts, some victims are more likely to be visited by volunteers (ibid)². Whilst one would imagine that contact would be made with those who are more badly affected by crime, this may not always be the case. Table 7.1 overleaf presents this information.

¹ My research focused upon the main form of contact that Victim Support had with victims, thus there were none within my study whose only contact had been by telephone.

² Although, as discussed, volunteers do not always manage to see the victims who they visit (Wilkinson and Maguire 1993). In at least one case within my research a volunteer who visited a victim living in a block of apartments was unable to gain access to the victim's front door. Victim Support therefore followed this 'visit' up by means of a letter offering support.

% Contacted or not...	Victims very much affected N=49	Victims affected a little or not at all N=66	Victims fearful and or upset N=77
Yes	55	50	71
No	45	50	29

Table 7.1: The impact of crime and contact made

Thus whilst Victim Support contacted 55% of those who were 'very much affected', almost half of those expressing this level of impact were offered no support at all. It is also of note that equal numbers of those affected minimally by crime were contacted. At the same time whilst more of those who reported experiencing the more serious emotional impacts, such as fear and/or upset (71%), were contacted, a sizeable minority were offered no support at all.

As chapter six indicated, 'offence' type is one means by which Victim Support determines who needs help. However, as has been discussed, this is not always a reliable indicator of 'impact/need'. While 16 of the 17 burglary victims (94%) and nine of the 12 (75%) violence victims in phase two, who were 'very much affected', were contacted by Victim Support, support was offered to only two of the 11 (18%) victims whose cars were stolen, and to none of the nine whose vehicles were broken into and from which property was removed, despite the fact that they also expressed this level of need. Again whilst the majority of burglary and violence victims who were fearful and/or upset were contacted by Victim Support, the majority of those whose cars were stolen or broken into, who were also fearful and/or upset, were not offered support (5 of the 8 victims of theft of car and all 11 victims of theft of property from car³).

³ The numbers involved in the analysis at this stage are very small, and so these findings are reported cautiously.

Contact type, needs and service satisfaction

The analysis will now consider the type of service delivery offered to victims in relation to the impact of crime upon them. Again we might presume that those most badly affected will be offered immediate personal contact with a volunteer; that is by means of a traditional unannounced visit⁴. We must also remember that whilst the use of unannounced visiting has declined nationally (Victim Support 2003), the scheme upon which this research is based has continued its use.

Table 7.2 shows that, in reality, a minority of those who were 'very much affected' (14 out of 49: 28%) were offered personal support in the form of a volunteer visit. At the same time approximately the same number of those who were minimally affected were also offered this level of service.

Type of service delivery	Victims very much affected N=49		Victims affected a little or not at all N=66		Victims fearful and or upset N=77	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
No support offered	22	45	33	50	22	29
Letter	13	27	16	24	25	33
Volunteer visit and card left	5	10	7	11	9	12
Volunteer visit and victim(s) seen	9	18	10	15	21	27

Table 7.2: The impact of crime and type of service delivery

The impact of crime, measured by victims reporting being 'very much' affected for example, does not seem to be a good indicator of victims receiving support whether by personal visit or by letter. Clearly this may be linked to the range of

⁴ Clearly we must remember that violence victims are not contacted in this way in the first instance. This is not so much a reflection upon their needs but, as discussed, is a matter of 'health and safety', and sensitivity on Victim Support's part.

crimes sampled because, as already discussed, those experiencing car crime would be less likely to be contacted. However, as discussed in chapter six, high proportions of car crime victims did report feeling affected 'very much' or 'quite a lot'.

The emotional impact of crime provides a more accurate indication that victims will be contacted and, indeed, visited by volunteers. The majority of those feeling fearful and/or upset were visited (30 out of 77: 39%), with a much larger majority being contacted when those who were sent a letter were included (55 out of 77: 72%). The fact remains however that a substantial minority of victims who were fearful and/or upset were offered no support at all. Again this may be linked to the offences involved.

When offence type was incorporated into the analysis fairly predictable patterns emerged. Burglary victims who were 'very much affected' were more likely to be visited (unannounced) by Victim Support (13 out of 17: 77%), as were those burglary victims who were affected minimally (17 out of 26: 65%). Similarly more burglary victims who were fearful and/or upset (29 out of 36: 81%) were visited. Violence victims, as expected, were largely contacted by letter, whether they were very much or minimally affected, or whether they were fearful and/or upset. However none of the car crime victims who were 'very much affected' or 'fearful and/or upset' were visited; the service offered to such victims was by letter.

Respondents were asked what type of service they received, in accordance with the way in which they had been contacted by Victim Support. One basis for this approach is linked to some preliminary analysis of the data which suggested that, on some measures, those who were visited and seen by volunteers felt more

positive about the services received (Simmonds 2003). National research has also promoted this view (Maguire and Kynch 2000).

Table 7.3, below, offers an overview of the services provided to victims according to how they were contacted by Victim Support. The table clearly shows that more victims felt that they had received personal support from Victim Support than any other service, regardless of the form in which contact took place. However contact by letter, or where a volunteer actually saw a victim, was more successful in terms of the number of victims saying that they had received personal support, compared to those who were visited by volunteers but not actually seen.

Numbers saying Victim Support provided...	Contact by letter		Contact by card		Contact by personal visit	
	N=44		N=19		N=33	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
No help	11	25	7	37	9	27
Personal support	30	68	10	53	22	67
Advice on practical help	1	2	0	0	12	36
Advice and information re compensation	3	7	0	0	3	9
Link with the police	1	2	0	0	3	9
Suggesting other services	2	5	0	0	3	9
Other	5	11	1	5	1	3

Table 7.3: Services provided according to contact (phase 2)

The high levels of personal support received by victims seen by volunteers is not surprising, given that this type of service response is the model upon which Victim Support was originally built. These findings also support those from the British Crime Survey 1998 (Maguire and Kynch 2000), where 75% of victims who were seen face to face felt that they had been provided with 'someone to talk to/moral support'.

The following comments from respondents in phase two of the current study illustrates the way in which victims viewed their contact with Victim Support.

It was nice that someone else was 'out there', I was very pleasantly surprised – I felt the police treated me like just another statistic.

(victim visited and seen by volunteer: 1/11169/360)

I felt personal support because if I needed anyone it was there.

(victim contacted by letter 2/7688/024)

As table 7.3. indicates, respondents who were contacted by letter were therefore just as likely as those who had personal contact with volunteers, to say that they had received personal support from Victim Support. This was a pattern which diverged from findings within the British Crime Survey 1998 (ibid Table 5.3: 35) where only a quarter of victims contacted by letter felt that they received this type of support, compared to around three quarters of those who saw volunteers.

However those who whilst visited were not seen by volunteers, but for whom cards were left, clearly saw this as 'symbolising' the service that was on offer. As a result they felt personally supported.

Yes, I got personal support because the card came through the door, if I'd needed someone to speak to and had no-one else, I knew Victim Support were there.

(victim contacted by card through door 2/9382/192)

'Personal support' was also considered to be the most useful service that Victim Support provided, regardless of the type of contact made⁵. All six respondents contacted by card, 16 out of 19 (84%) who were written to and 13 out of 19 (68%) who were seen by a volunteer said this. A victim of violence made the following comment on receiving a letter from Victim Support.

⁵ Only those who said that they had received real help or advice from Victim Support (44 respondents) were asked this question.

I felt personal support because if I needed anyone it was there. (2/7688/024)

The letter (appendix four) that Victim Support sends out to victims gives a clear message as to the availability of further assistance, including a volunteer visit, on request. Furthermore, where incidents amounting to 'grievous bodily harm' are involved, the letter (appendix five) mentions the possibility of claiming criminal injuries compensation, and an information leaflet would normally be included. It notes also that Victim Support provide a free advice service in this respect. Thirty violence victims were sent letters, however only four said that they received a leaflet. Whilst this is a very small number on which to base any 'pattern', three of those four people said that they found the leaflet to be useful.

Approximately one third of respondents said that they had received advice on the practical steps needed following the crime. This could take any number of forms depending upon the offence committed; for example, the need to board up a broken window or to track down stolen items. However, only those who saw a volunteer identified the provision of such practical help. This comes as no real surprise given the fact that this sort of advice probably necessitates personal contact. Of further significance is the fact that in all but one case the respondents had been burgled. This type of offence is seen to impact upon victims in particular ways, for example the upset caused by the invasion of their privacy (Holtom and Raynor 1988; Tarling and Davison 2000). The provision of personal support however, by its very nature, may not depend upon face to face contact being made.

Whilst victims appear to feel supported on these two measures specifically, between one quarter and one third (see table 7.3: 178) said they received no help

whatsoever from Victim Support. Fewer of those who saw a volunteer or who received a letter said that no help had been received. More of those who received a card through the door expressed this view.

With the card just coming through the door its obviously nice to know they are there if you want them – but ... its not until you have personal contact.
(victim contacted by card 2/8638/107)

This does suggest that Victim Support perhaps needs to relay its message more successfully to victims who, whilst visited, had no contact with volunteers. The card that is left does give some information about Victim Support (see appendix six), and volunteers usually add a handwritten note to say they have called. However a more formal communiqué, by way of a personalised letter, left at the time or sent after the unsuccessful visit, may reinforce the fact that Victim Support has responded to their needs.

I asked a number of questions about respondents' feelings of satisfaction with the service provided, linking these to the type of contact made. Table 7.4 shows the extent to which victims felt better, worse or no different.⁶

% of victims feeling...	Contact by letter N=44	*Contact by card N=18	Contact by personal visit N=33
Better	52	28	61
No different	48	72	36
Don't know	0	0	3

**one non response has been excluded.*

Table 7.4: Victims feelings of satisfaction with Victim Support by contact (phase 2)

⁶ No victims felt worse following their contact with Victim Support.

Of those victims feeling better for this contact, almost two thirds were visited and seen by volunteers and approximately half were contacted by letter. Fewer of those visited and seen by a volunteer said that they felt 'no different'; again supporting the worth of this approach.

It certainly made me feel better, it was like you weren't forgotten about.
(1/11169/360)

These results add weight to the point made earlier. If Victim Support goes to the lengths of sending a volunteer to visit, then it makes a good deal of sense to ensure that the victim knows this. Clearly, the fact that volunteers have visited but have not seen victims may make much less of an impression than contact by letters or by successful visits. Indeed a further justification for capitalising on visits where victims are not seen lies in the very evaluative nature of the current study, and the extent to which Victim Support now seeks 'evidence' of the worth of the services it provides⁷.

Personal contact with volunteers does not, however, always produce a wholly positive response from victims. For example, the following respondent felt 'no different' following the volunteer's visit.

Maybe if it [the visit] had been in the evening, when it was quiet when I wasn't being intruded on by all these people... As it was I had so many people here, I wasn't able to ask all the questions I wanted to.
(1/111666/358)

This may have been linked more to the respondent's inability to accept the offer of help at the time the volunteer visited. This demonstrates one way in which deploying volunteers to visit victims in the 'traditional' unannounced fashion may not achieve its intended aims.

⁷ See for example the report by Tarling et al (1998). Victim Support nationally are currently seeking to evaluate the service provided to victims by the Community Service; however the results have not as yet been disseminated.

On a different measure, more respondents felt that the volunteer visit was the most helpful form of intervention. Thus 59% of those who saw volunteers reported receiving real help or advice from Victim Support, in contrast to 43% who were contacted by post and 32% who received a card through the door.

He was pretty helpful – obviously if someone didn't turn up you would think why isn't someone bothering. (visited and seen 1/055/8135)

I got as much help as I needed – as you know everyone is on a different scale, but for me – he came here and had a chat, left me the leaflet so if I felt the need I could have further contact. (visited and seen 1/11633/481)

Its nice to know they are there if you need help – some people they crack up over it – but its always nice to know there's someone you can go to. (victim received card through the door 2/010/7673)

Yeah it gave me advice but I didn't need it. (letter received 2/062/8141)

This pattern of 'helpfulness' reflects the perceptions of victims in the British Crime Survey 1998 (Maguire and Kynch 2000) where face to face contact was considered to have been more helpful than other approaches.

Fewer of those seen by volunteers (11 out of 32 cases: 34%) than sent letters (22 out of 44 cases: 50%) or visited unsuccessfully (11 out of 19 cases: 58%) said that they did not receive 'real help or advice'. These findings are supported again by those presented in table 7.3, where victims who were visited but not seen (visited unsuccessfully) were more likely to feel that they received no help at all (7 out of 19 cases: 37%), compared to those who did have personal contact with volunteers (9 out of 33 cases: 27%) or who received a letter (11 out of 44 cases: 25%). Successful face to face and postal contact, was therefore more likely to produce positive responses from victims when they were specifically asked to comment on whether they actually felt helped by the service.

However, when respondents were asked 'why' they felt they received no help, the least likely response was that Victim Support did not do a good job, a finding which held across each type of contact. The most likely reason given by respondents who said contact with Victim Support was not useful, was that they received help from other sources. These could include friends, family and other organisations such as the police.

My husband, plus the insurance company and the police. The police were here ages, they ensured that I phoned the bank to place a 'stop' on the cards. They were very helpful and almost like a 'victim support' in the first instance.
(1/2452/502)

Whilst personal contact with volunteers does seem to achieve success, a significantly higher number of those contacted by letter (93%) and by card (89%) said that the type of contact made with them suited their needs. This was in contrast to 73% of those visited and seen. For those contacted by letter such responses may well be more of a lifestyle issue.

It suited me fine – I was disappearing off to sea the next day so I wouldn't have been here – and when I return it takes two or three days before I want to see anyone.
(letter received 2/009)

It was just nice knowing they were there and there was somebody to talk to if I needed to. I didn't get any help or advice because I didn't need it.
(2/009)

Most respondents (85%) in my study were happy with the type of contact made with them, a point noted by Maguire and Corbett (1987). Of the 14 people in phase two who said that they would have preferred some other form of contact only three said they would have preferred a visit by a volunteer, and even then they would not have wanted to have been called upon 'cold'. In contrast to this Maguire and Corbett (1987) found that most respondents, in preferring a different type of contact, specified a visit, but an unannounced one.

The apparent rebuttal of the traditional volunteer visit within my research is, to some extent, not that surprising given the different offence types involved within phase two. However four out of 14 car crime victims who were not contacted by Victim Support, and who said that they were affected either 'very much' or 'quite a lot', said their preference would be for a volunteer visit. In three of these four cases, an arranged visit was preferred. Some burglary victims, visited and seen by volunteers, thought the approach was unnecessary because they were not badly affected by the crime. It is findings such as these that point to the many difficulties that arise for Victim Support in targeting its resources towards those most in need; a problem that others before me have also identified (Mawby et al 1999).

...if they'd phoned up first it would have saved having to get anyone out. If they had phoned up first I would have said I didn't need any help. (1/11227/429)

Respondents were asked whether they felt Victim Support could have done more for them. A large majority within each contact type, 71% of those contacted by letter, 74% of those contacted by card and 76% of those seen by a volunteer, thought that Victim Support could not have done more.

It was just right. The bloke saw that I was alright and saw that there was no help needed. (visited and seen 055/8135)

However one respondent who was visited and seen, said that Victim Support could have done things differently.

I think if this person appears, comes and helps, then he's gone and you're vulnerable again. If he said he would call the next day, in other words if the responsibility for further contact could lie with Victim Support. Had he said obviously I can see that you are busy and I'll call again tomorrow it would have made me understand. I'd have recognised him and related to him as someone who's come to help and then you'd have been able to lean on that person and trust them. Your trust goes out of the window, it's terrible. (1/11166/358)

This does raise an important issue concerning the nature of the support provided which, as discussed in chapter three, was intended traditionally to be one of 'crisis intervention'. Visits to the sort of victims who Victim Support helped in the early days, largely burglary victims, were not intended to continue beyond the first visit. Whilst this has changed to allow serious crime victims the longer term support they need, burglary victims are generally still visited as a 'one off'; although that is not to say that volunteers never make a return visit to them.

Within the course of my research in phase two it appeared that only a very small number of return visits were made (1 out of 33 cases)⁸. Clearly then the volunteer must make a decision around the time of visiting a victim to negotiate a return visit if he/she feels that this is needed⁹. The following comment from a burglary victim indicates the way in which a second visit can build upon the support provided initially.

*Another visit, and they rang up to see if I was alright, they were really good.
(burglary victim 1/11224/425)*

Whereas this respondent clearly wanted a second visit for further support, the earlier case that I cited (1/11166/358) on page 182 was less clear. The victim in that case had wanted the support that was on offer, but was not able to see the volunteer at the time of the visit. The volunteer had offered further support, however the victim was left to contact Victim Support herself.

⁸ Albeit the sample of burglary victims within phase two of the research is small, therefore this finding is presented cautiously. However my impression from speaking to the volunteers and the branch manager at Victim Support Plymouth was that few second visits were made, certainly to burglary victims.

⁹ The questionnaire that I forwarded to volunteers in phase three of the research actually raised this issue. The questionnaire prompted one volunteer to realise that she did have the option to re-visit victim if she thought this was necessary. This feedback was provided to me by the branch manager of Victim Support, Plymouth.

My impression from talking to the victim was that she would have liked the volunteer to take responsibility for making contact with her. In some ways the 'offer' of further support can seem less apparent where the onus is placed upon the victim to request further support, in contrast to situations where the volunteer takes responsibility for this him or herself.

However to place this in context, only a few victims (11%) who were contacted in any manner said that they wanted further contact with Victim Support, a point that Maguire and Corbett (1987) also reported in their findings. Additionally my research showed that some 92% of respondents generally felt that the offer of further support was there if it was needed. This pattern was reflected when the sample was broken down into the different forms of contact, although those receiving cards were less likely to say that an offer of further contact was made. This again indicates the need for volunteers to leave more concrete evidence of their visit for those they do not see.

The vast majority of respondents (89%) said that they would like to be contacted again by Victim Support in the event of being a victim of crime again¹⁰.

*Yes, definitely if it happened to me a second time – it would affect me more.
(burglary victim visited and seen: 1/055/8134)*

This pattern was repeated across contact types, with slightly fewer of those who were seen by volunteers (28 out of 33: 85%), compared to those written to (91%: 40 out of 44) or left a card (17 out of 19: 90%), saying this. Clearly, on this measure, the vast majority of victims were left with positive feelings about the organisation, irrespective of the type of contact used.

¹⁰ The offence example suggested was that of burglary.

Victims' satisfaction with particular types of help received

Maguire and Kynch (2000) considered the extent to which victims, who had received broadly different sorts of help from Victim Support, were satisfied with the service provided. Following their example I found that those who said they had received personal support or practical assistance from Victim Support, were more likely to say they got real help or advice from the service; 68% (42 out of 62) and 78% (14 out of 18) respectively. However only one person out of the 26 who said they did not receive any help from Victim Support, felt nevertheless that 'real help or advice' had been given. Less tangibly perhaps, more of those who received no help from Victim Support, nevertheless felt better for having been contacted (7 out of 27:26%). A far higher proportion of those who received personal support (63%: 39 out of 62) or practical assistance (67%: 12 out of 18) however also said that they felt better.

These findings may come as no surprise. Thus it was the receipt of particular services that made victims feel that they had overall received help and advice, rather than simply feeling better. These findings support Maguire and Kynch (2000: appendix A.6: 56), although, more of their sample who received no help 'felt better' anyway.

Contact with burglary victims: phase two of the research

A further level of analysis compared the responses of burglary victims who saw volunteers with those who were visited but not seen, and with those who were contacted by letter. Sixty two burglary victims were contacted by these means; 11 (18%) by letter, 19 (31%) were unsuccessfully visited and 32 (52%) had personal contact with volunteers.

The analysis largely mirrors the approach taken in the last section of the chapter. Whilst one could be tempted to view contact by letter or card (where the victim was visited but not seen) falling into a broad category of victims 'unseen', this may be problematical in that the approaches to victims by letter or unannounced visit are based on quite distinct rationales; as previously discussed. Furthermore, as one of the aims of this study was to produce an evaluation of services provided by Victim Support Plymouth, there is an advantage in continuing the analysis largely as before.

Table 7.5 overleaf shows the types of services that burglary victims felt they had received from Victim Support. Again, these results generally mirror those reported for all crimes in section one. Thus for burglary victims only, the proportions saying that they received 'no help' followed the same pattern shown in table 7.3 (page 178). Those who were visited and not seen by a volunteer (7 out of 19 cases: 37%) were more likely to say they had not had any help, compared to those who were either sent a letter (2 out of 11: 18%) or visited and seen by a volunteer (8 out of 32: 25%). Contact in the form of a letter, which for burglary victims usually includes a burglary specific information leaflet, is perhaps a more tangible form of assistance than the cards that volunteers leave when a visit is unsuccessful. As indicated earlier, these results may point to the need for Victim Support to consider amending their approach when visits have not been successful.

Numbers saying Victim Support provided...	Contact by letter		Contact by card		Contact by personal visit	
	N=11		N=19		N=32	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
No help	2	18	7	37	8	25
Personal support	8	73	10	53	22	69
Advice on practical help	1	9	0	0	12	38
Advice and information re compensation	0	0	0	0	3	9
Link with the police	1	9	0	0	3	9
Suggesting other services	1	9	0	0	3	9
Other	0	0	1	5	1	3

Table 7.5: Services provided to burglary victims by type of contact. (phase 2)

The findings regarding the level to which ‘personal contact’ was received by burglary victims again mirrors those presented earlier (in table 7.3). Victims who were visited and seen by a volunteer (22 cases out of 32: 69%), as well as those who received a letter (7 out of 11: 64%) felt fairly equally personally supported. Those contacted by card did not enjoy this to the same degree and so the worth of the volunteer visit where contact occurs is indicated, as is that of the letter. Indeed the value of the successful volunteer visit was further indicated when variables were re-coded into contact by letter or card as ‘unseen’. Thus 22 out of 32 (69%) of those who were ‘seen’ by a volunteer compared to 18 out of 30 (60%) of those who were ‘not seen’ reported feeling personally supported.

Almost two fifths of the sample who were successfully visited by volunteers (12 out of 32: 38%) said that they had received advice on practical help from Victim Support. These findings again replicate those presented in table 7.3, where ‘advice on practical help’ was reported overwhelmingly by those who were visited and seen by volunteers.

When respondents were asked to say which service had been the most helpful, 'personal support' was again cited by more respondents across the three forms of contact, as it had been earlier when 'all crimes' were considered. Furthermore, the same pattern emerged when each type of contact was examined. Five out of six (83%) of those contacted by letter, all six respondents who had received a card through the door and 13 out of 19 (68%) who were visited and seen by a volunteer said that personal support was the most helpful service that they had received¹¹.

The second most useful service for burglary victims was advice about the practical steps needed following the crime. More of those who were seen by volunteers (5 out of 19: 26%) compared to those unseen (1 out of 12: 8%) reported feeling this. Again, this comes as no surprise given the traditional role played by Victim Support in supporting burglary victims in particular and the practical problems that being burgled raises. The following quote expresses the view of a number of respondents who, in appreciating the service provided, commend the voluntary nature of Victim Support.

...I appreciate people giving their time, there's so much else people can do with their time.
(1/11166/358)

There was little difference between the results for burglary victims who Victim Support contacted by letter and those who were visited by volunteers where personal contact took place, when asked about the extent to which they felt better having had this contact. Interestingly, a substantial number (7 out of 11: 64%) of those who were written to and slightly fewer (19 out of 32: 59%) of those visited

¹¹ The numbers involved at this stage of the analysis are small. They are also further reduced because only those saying that Victim Support had been helpful to them (31 respondents) were asked to identify which service had been most helpful.

and seen said they felt better. However, for those visited and not seen, fewer (5 out of 18: 28%) said that they felt better for having this contact.

Slightly more burglary victims who had seen a volunteer (19 out of 32: 61%) felt they had received 'real help or advice'. Of those contacted by letter, six out of eleven respondents (55%), compared to around one third (32%) of those unsuccessfully visited, said this. While it is hard to envisage how anyone could feel 'advised' by receiving a card through the door¹², such results may be linked to the question asked. Thus in giving their answers, respondents may have focused more upon the the less tangible notion of 'help' than the 'harder' notion of advice.

As discussed earlier, respondents were asked to say whether the type of contact made with them had suited their needs. Bearing in mind that this sub-sample consisted of burglary victims only, we may have expected those who were not seen by a volunteer to feel less satisfied with the form of contact made. However, this was not always the case.

The majority of burglary victims overall (80%: 49 out of 61 cases) said that the contact made suited their needs. While a large majority of those who were contacted by post (10 out of 11 cases: 91%) took this view, fewer victims who saw a volunteer (23 out of 32: 72%) reported this. Interestingly, a large majority of those visited unsuccessfully (16 out of 18 cases: 89%) also reported feeling happy with the approach made. The high number of respondents who saw a volunteer and who were happy with this contact does, one may argue, confirm the usefulness of the volunteer visit. However, the fact that more respondents who

¹² Although the card (see appendix 6) does inform victims that volunteers called, and provides details of the services available from Victim Support with contact details.

were visited and not seen expressed satisfaction, suggests that victims like the idea of a volunteer visit just as much as the visit itself.

Of the 12 burglary victims who would have preferred some other form of contact, six respondents identified telephone contact as their preferred approach. Four respondents would have preferred a letter and the remaining two an arranged volunteer visit. Interestingly it was only those victims who had been visited (2 out of 9 cases: 22%) who said that their preference would have been a volunteer visit, but by arrangement. Four out of the nine (44%) would have preferred telephone contact, whilst three out of the nine (33%) would have preferred a letter offering support. Neither of the two respondents from the original 12, who were visited and not seen, said that they would have preferred face to face contact with a volunteer. Neither did the victim who was contacted by letter.

Finally, when respondents were asked whether Victim Support could have helped them more the majority of the sample (53 out of 62 cases: 86%) said 'no', with slightly more of those who saw volunteers giving this response. Thus nine of the 11 respondents who were contacted by letter (82%), 11 of the 16 (84%) visited unsuccessfully, and 28 of the 32 (88%) who had personal contact with volunteers said the service could not have helped them more. In this way, face to face contact gave greater satisfaction to respondents. These findings also reflect the work of Maguire and Corbett (1987) who found that only four (8%) of those who were visited felt that the volunteer could have done more to assist them. Within my research only one person who was contacted by post (1 out of 11 respondents: 9%) felt this way.

As noted earlier, very few victims wanted any further contact with Victim Support (5 out of 61 burglary victims: 8%); this figure hardly varied over each contact type. Again as noted earlier the vast majority of victims (52 out of 56: 93%) felt that they had been offered further contact if they needed it; all those who were written to said this and the vast majority of those visited and seen (26 out of 28; 93%) and visited and not seen (15 out of 17: 88%) agreed.

Again mirroring the results for all crimes in phase two, 87% of respondents said that they would like to be contacted again by Victim Support in the event of further victimisation. This finding held across contact types although slightly fewer of those who were visited and seen (27 out of 32: 84%) said this¹³.

Burglary victims' satisfaction with particular types of help received (phase two of the research)

Maguire and Kynch's (2000) methodology was again employed to explain the extent to which burglary victims in phase two of the research said that they had received help from Victim Support¹⁴. This was done to identify the extent to which those who said that they had received no help or who had received personal support or practical assistance¹⁵ from Victim Support felt that they had got 'real help or advice' or 'felt better'.

¹³ Ten out of eleven (91%) of those written to and seventeen out of nineteen (90%) of those visited but not seen said they would like to be contacted again in the event of being a victim of crime.

¹⁴ Whilst Maguire and Kynch (2000) were interested in the extent to which victims found Victim Support 'helpful', I asked about the extent to which they felt they received 'real help or advice' and the extent to which they felt better.

¹⁵ As in advice on practical steps to be taken following the burglary, information and advice on insurance and compensation, a link with the police or suggestions as to other services that may be of help to the victim.

Not surprisingly, none of the victims who felt they received 'no help' from Victim Support reported obtaining 'real help or advice' from the service. However 30 of the 40 (75%) who had said they received personal support, and 13 of the 15 (87%) who identified receiving practical help, felt they had been given 'real help or advice'.

Five of the 17 (29%) victims who said they had no help from Victim Support nevertheless said they felt better for having been contacted. However, more of those who felt they had received either personal support (25 out of 40: 63%) or practical help (9 out of 15: 60%) said that they felt better.

As Maguire and Kynch (2000) concluded, my research showed that victims who felt they had received some sort of service were more satisfied on measures of 'real help or advice' or 'feeling better'. This may be attributed to the type of crime experienced by the sample and the type of contact provided by Victim Support. The victims had all been burgled, and were visited by Victim Support volunteers. They were therefore more likely to gain the emotional support and practical help that Victim Support was developed to provide; again supporting the assertion by Maguire and Kynch (*ibid*), that the traditional model of Victim Support has continued relevance today.

The next section of this chapter considers service satisfaction by age and gender of respondents. In other words to what extent does Victim Support meet the needs of older and younger people¹⁶, or males and females. In undertaking these analyses, a more limited range of variables are reported.

¹⁶ Younger people were categorised as those 49 years and under, and older people as 50 years and older.

Meeting the needs of victims, an analysis by age and gender (phase two of the research)

The sample was comprised of 76 respondents of 49 years and under, and 19 who were 50 years and older. There were almost equal numbers of males (89) and females (79). Respondents were asked to identify which services they received from Victim Support, and table 7.6 illustrates their responses.

% saying they received ...	Victims 49 years and under		Victims 50 years and over		% saying they received...	Men		Women	
	N=76		N=19			N=48		N=48	
	n	%	n	%		n	%	n	%
Personal support	50	66	12	63	Personal support	32	67	30	63
Advice on practical help	10	13	3	16	Advice on practical help	5	10	8	17
Information and advice on insurance and compensation	6	8	0	0	Information and advice on insurance and compensation	4	8	2	4
Link with the police	3	4	1	5	Link with the police	2	4	2	4
Suggestions as to other services	4	5	1	5	Suggestions as to other services	1	2	4	8

Table 7.6: The services received by younger and older victims and male and female victims. (phase 2)

As in the earlier analyses, personal support was the service most victims felt that they received, regardless of age and gender and with approximately equal numbers within each sample reporting this. Whilst fewer younger people reported receiving advice on practical help, slightly more men than women received this type of support. This latter point is interesting, given the potentially paternalistic standpoint that Victim Support Plymouth, and the organisation more widely

(Mawby and Gill 1987; Maguire and Kynch 2000), has tended to adopt in supporting women to a greater extent than men¹⁷.

Not unexpectedly, personal support was considered to be the most helpful service by more respondents, whether younger or older or male and female. However while more older than younger respondents identified personal support as the most helpful service provided, there was little difference between the views of male and female respondents.

For those visited and seen by a volunteer, whether younger or older or male or female, the over riding view was that the volunteer had treated them with sensitivity. More older people (89%) than younger (77%) said that the volunteer had shown an identity card; something which may be a response to the growing awareness of crimes perpetrated by bogus callers upon older people¹⁸. Similarly all female respondents (100%) and most males (9 out of 10: 90%) said that the volunteer did this¹⁹.

Respondents were asked how they felt having been contacted by Victim Support, whether this was by letter or a card, or by means of a volunteer visit where a volunteer was seen. More older (14 out of 19: 74%) than younger people (33 out of 75: 44%) and more women (62%: 29 out of 47) than men (40%: 19 out of 48) said that they felt better.

¹⁷ Anecdotally I was informed that the local scheme tended to support female car crime victims, presuming that women may have childcare roles, and so would be more affected (than men) by this type of crime.

¹⁸ Although good practice as per the Code of Practice (2000) denotes that an identity card should be shown on all occasions.

¹⁹ Again, we must remember that such responses rely upon the respondents' powers of recall.

When asked if they received any 'real help or advice' from Victim Support, roughly equal numbers of men and women (46%: 22 out of 48 and 47%: 22 out of 47 respectively) and equal numbers of older and younger people (47% for both: 9 out of 19 and 35 out of 75 respectively), said that they did. Of those who felt they did not receive this, the overriding reasons were that the respondent did not need help or that he/she had got all the help needed from elsewhere, for example family and friends.

Literally only one or two people said that Victim Support did not do a good job with little to choose between the numbers of women and men holding this opinion (2 out of 24 women; 8% compared to 1 out of 21 men: 5%). Younger rather than older people were critical of Victim Support as it was only they (three out of thirty five: 9%) who said that Victim Support do not do a good job.

More women (69%: 33 out of 48) than men (50%: 24 out of 48) were contacted within the four days prescribed by the Victims Charter (Home Office 1996); this was also the case for older (15 out of 19: 73%) rather than younger (41%: 42 out of 76) people. This may be a further evidence of the way in which Victim Support prioritises women and older people (Mawby and Gill 1987; Maguire and Kynch 2000).

Whilst only a few respondents within phase two said they wanted further contact with Victim Support (11%), most respondents (92%) felt that they had been offered this if they needed this. Slightly more older (3 out of 18: 17%) than younger people (9%) said they would have liked further contact, whilst almost equal numbers of men and women (10% and 11%) gave this response. Younger people (5 out of 7: 71%) and men (4 out of 5: 80%) wanted further contact with Victim

Support for a specific purpose, whereas older people (all three cases where further contact wanted) and women (3 out of 5; 60%) wanted further contact to obtain general support for themselves or others.

For the respondents who did not want further contact with Victim Support, only one or two said this was because they had not benefited from the service; findings that remained constant when age and gender were applied²⁰. Slightly more younger (94%) than older people (13 out of 15: 87%) felt that the offer of further contact was there if they needed or wanted it, a pattern that was repeated for slightly more women (95%) than men (88%).

Approximately the same proportions of younger and older people felt that the type of contact had suited their needs (85% of younger people and 17 out of 19: 90% of older people), whilst slightly more men (92%) than women (79%) thought this. Those who said that the type of contact had not suited their needs specified the type of approach that they would have preferred.

The two older people who would have preferred some other form of contact specified a volunteer visit, albeit by prior arrangement. Only one younger person would have preferred an arranged visit, with the remaining ten (91%) saying that they would prefer telephone or postal contact. More men, likewise, would have preferred contact by telephone (2 out of the 3 cases) or letter (1 out of the 3 cases). Three out of the 11 women (27%) would have preferred an arranged volunteer visit, whilst five (46%) preferred telephone contact and the remaining three (27%) postal contact.

²⁰ Two percent of men; 2% of women; 2% of younger and one out of fifteen (7%) older people.

The samples upon which these analyses were conducted are small, however they do indicate that support is more likely to come from older people and women for personal contact with volunteers. Younger respondents and men were more likely to prefer less direct or personal forms of contact with Victim Support.

When asked if victims thought Victim Support could have done more to help them, more men (around 25%) compared to women (15%) affirmed this, saying that Victim Support could have done things differently, that the help needed fell outside the remit of the organisation or that Victim Support could have tried to contact them further. Fairly similar proportions of younger and older people (20% and 15% respectively) expressed these views. Men and younger people therefore appear to have been more critical of the service on this measure.

Finally, as discussed earlier, the majority of respondents had said that they would like to be contacted by Victim Support in the event of being a victim of crime again. Whilst more older (18 out of 19 cases: 95%) than younger people (87%) responded in this way, similar numbers of men and women (88% and 90% respectively) gave this response also. The numbers saying that they did not wish further contact with the service were too small to identify any meaningful patterns by gender and age.

Meeting the needs of burglary victims? (phase three of the research)

This final section of chapter seven focuses upon phase three of the research which comprised of 100 burglary victims, all of whom had been visited and seen by Victim Support volunteers. Whereas the responses analysed in section one and two of this chapter were the result of face to face interviews, those now considered were gained by the use of a CATI (computer assisted telephone

interview) survey. The initial analysis is broad in that it looks at the responses from burglary victims overall. In the final stage of this chapter however, the analysis is conducted along the lines of age and gender.

Speed of contact

Whilst all of the respondents had been visited and seen by volunteers they were not all visited in the first instance in the 'traditional' unannounced fashion. Four people had been contacted by telephone and one person had received a card indicating that a volunteer had called. Each of these respondents therefore accepted the offer of and/or requested further assistance. One additional person had not been contacted at all by Victim Support but had referred him/herself to the service. A further respondent was unable to recall how he/she had been contacted in the first instance²¹.

The following two quotes are from respondents who were visited unannounced.

He just turned up actually, yeah, he was ever so nice even the policeman was good as gold. (133/23703)

I had a card from the police and then she popped in one evening. (409/25363)

For those visited unannounced²² the majority (75%) had been seen within four days of the offence being committed, as prescribed by the Victims Charter (Home Office 1996; Maguire and Kynch 2000). Furthermore, most respondents (83%) felt that the timing of the visit was 'just right',

²¹ The fact that respondents don't always remember the exact way in which events unfold can explain the way in which the numbers within a quantitative analysis do not always add up. In this case for example 94 respondents commented upon the speed with which they were visited unannounced, whereas only 93 respondents had said that this was the way in which they had been contacted initially.

²² That is without prior appointment on the part of Victim Support (94 out of 100 respondents).

I think it was about right, the way I was feeling I wouldn't have been able to speak to her before that – if she'd left it later I wouldn't have remembered much anyway.
(480/25998)

Oh no its about right cos we're getting over the initial shock and I mean he was seeing if we needed any help and he asked about security and things like that so I would say yes, he came at about the right time.
(298/24522)

A few people (8%) said that the visit had been made too soon.

A little swift, we hadn't thought things through – we were a bit overwhelmed with what we had to do – perhaps two days later – nevertheless it was nice to know we could get back to them.
(73/22896)

I think it was too soon really ... I hadn't had much sleep. I was still gathering me thoughts together.
(220/24187)

And a further four respondents said that the visit was too late.

By the time she arrived I had healed myself.
(516/26291)

...most intense feelings are on the day and the next day. To be honest it would have been more helpful to have someone to talk to earlier.
(450/25699)

Those who were contacted 'too soon' had been visited within three days of the offence occurring; and in this way the nature of their comments may be appreciated. However, for those saying that the visit was 'too late', two of the four were contacted within the four day period laid down by the Victims' Charter. Indeed these less positive responses to the timeliness of visits do seem to be somewhat arbitrary, indicating that, in some ways, Victim Support cannot win. The fact is however that a large majority of victims said they were happy with the speed with which they were visited, affording therefore a high degree of confidence in this finding.

The speed of contact has possible implications for the way in which victims perceive Victim Support to have been helpful to them. As Maguire and Kynch

(2000) noted, more of those contacted within the four day standard laid down in the Victim's Charter (Home Office 1996) reported favourably on the assistance provided. Whilst my study upheld this view, the results were less dramatic. Some 61% of victims contacted within four days said that they felt better compared to 55% who were contacted over a longer period of time. In terms of receiving real help or advice, 54% of those contacted within four days reported this compared to 52% of those contacted over a longer time frame²³.

Victims' satisfaction with the unannounced volunteer visit

Victims were asked for their views on the face to face contact that they had with Victim Support volunteers. The majority of respondents (82%), thought that the visit took place at a convenient time, and even those (16%) who disagreed said that they nevertheless spoke to the volunteer. Furthermore whilst some respondents made comments along the lines that the volunteer was 'lucky to catch me in' or the visit just happened to be made at a convenient time, some 70% (65 out of 93) of respondents, regardless of whether they thought the visit was convenient, were happy with this approach and would not have preferred some other form of contact.

This was interpreted as support for the 'good neighbour' approach that Victim Support has fostered over time (Holtom and Raynor 1988). This is a model of support which rests upon the notion of someone from the locality simply calling in on someone in need. Indeed the comments made by respondents below showed continued support for this in terms of their support for the 'spontaneity' of the unannounced volunteer visit.

²³ This analysis was based on those who were visited unannounced by volunteers, an approach which is largely representative of the whole sample.

No I was quite happy that she just turned up because that again added to the feeling that somebody's been thinking of you – they thought oh I'll just go and see Mrs X, she's been burgled, its like as if it's a uniform thing to do, its not like oh I'll make an appointment to go and see her, but somebody catches you on the hop like that, I think its lovely. I appreciated it anyway. (410/25367)

...fine because if you had to make an appointment it would have been just one more hassle.... If she hadn't done it we probably wouldn't have contacted her. Its nice for someone to be proactive rather than waiting for someone to contact. (131)

The following comments in particular indicate how victims appreciated being relieved of the burden for making contact with Victim Support. This again illustrates how victims of crime are supportive of the unannounced volunteer visit which formed the original model of support that Victim Support adopted. As discussed in chapter three, those responsible for establishing Victim Support felt that unannounced visits by volunteers was the most effective way of providing support to victims of crime (Reeves 1985; Holtom and Raynor 1988).

I was glad she turned up out of the blue because if I'd had to ask her to come I would have felt awkward, but with her just arriving it seemed to be just the right thing. (235/24282)

I think in a lot of ways it is actually better if somebody just turns up, ...reason being is because if somebody phones you and you say 'I don't know' on the phone but if somebody actually turns up on the doorstep with the card from Victim Support I think that's better because its not burying your head if you know what I mean. So I think that's better it's the best way really. (225/24202)

Some respondents however would have preferred some other form of contact from Victim Support. Whilst 24% (22 out of 93 cases), said that they would have preferred the option to arrange a volunteer visit, a further five respondents said they would have preferred contact by letter or telephone. One person would have preferred the police to be more specific as to when the volunteer would call.

The limits of contact – further contact with the victim, other adults and children

A further factor to consider is whether Victim Support was prepared to extend the contact made with victims. First, did victims have any further contact with Victim Support? Second, did volunteers offer a return visit to those who, while affected by the crime, had not been present at the time of the original visit? This may include other adults and children within the household.

Beyond the initial visit 90% of burglary victims said that they had no further contact with Victim Support. However, whilst the same number of victims said they had been offered further contact, 92% of victims said they did not want this anyway.

Sixty five respondents said that they lived with other people. However in 48% (31 cases)²⁴ of these households adults and children who may have been affected by the crime were not present at the time the volunteer called. According to respondents, volunteers offered to return in only nine of these thirty one cases (30%) of which the majority of 'others in the household' were adults. No return visits were made.

However, to place this in context, whilst volunteers may offer to return, they may also be dependent upon some indication from the victim that this is what is required. In the main, victims did not request further support. A number of reasons why no further contact was made with volunteers can be seen from the following comments. These indicate that further help, and in the second case, the initial help offered, was not needed.

²⁴ Only households where the victim lived with other people were selected for this analysis.

When wife came back at night we discussed it – decided to put it behind us.
(101/23147)

I told her not to. Basically thought well bless her heart she's come all this way so I invited her in, made her feel quite comfortable, offered her a cup of tea, but I didn't need any help whatever – I just wanted to make her feel that her journey wasn't wasted really. But to be quite frank with you I didn't need any help.
(261/24431)

A third comment however indicates something quite different, in that the respondent thought her daughter would be more worried to see further unknown visitors to the house following the burglary.

I left it I would contact her – since the burglar alarm fitted my daughter is much happier and we've tried to play it down – she was more upset when the police arrived – they intimated they (the burglars) might come back. (537/297421)

Support for children

The current research has looked especially at the way in which the children of burglary victims may have been supported by Victim Support. This is in the light of Morgan and Zedner (1992), who highlighted the lack of attention paid to children within the literature, particularly as the *indirect* victims of crime. In the current study, volunteers spoke to children in only one out of the ten cases where children were present at the time of their visit. However this apparent neglect should be considered in context as, overwhelmingly, parents were not in favour of any support being offered to their children. Some parents had managed to withhold the knowledge that they had been burgled from their child(ren), and so clearly did not wish the volunteer to speak to the child.

Just the fact that we hadn't told her – she didn't know about it full stop. If circumstances had been different and she did know...I mean yeh brilliant, talk to someone else would be lovely, I wouldn't stop it but we had a chance opportunity not to let her go through it all. (409/25363)
They wouldn't really have understood to be honest, they're only two and three, there's no point in bringing it up with really with them. I mean XX did say where's my tele gone – we just said its at the menders. (176/23878)

For some respondents however the conversations that children may overhear between their parent(s) and volunteers were thought to be upsetting.

...had told the children burglars would not come back but my daughter was asking 'why is the volunteer saying put more locks on if they're not going to come back?'
(20/22605)

This respondent spoke of the anxiety that this had provoked for her inasmuch as she felt that a mixed message was being given out to her daughter. Volunteers may then need clearer guidance in handling such situations, which may arise as more volunteers undertake the new training for supporting child victims. At the same time, and as the research indicates, the parents of indirect child victims in particular, may need some persuasion to accept on their child(ren)'s behalf the help that Victim Support can offer. Such barriers may break down as volunteers become more used to offering support to children on a more formal basis.

The services provided to victims of burglary: a market research approach

To assess direct measures of service satisfaction, I incorporated a market research type of question into phase three of my research, following Davis et al in their evaluation of victim services in the USA (1999). Respondents were asked to identify the services they and others in their households needed following the crime. They were then asked to identify the services they felt they received from Victim Support specifically. In this way victims were being asked to identify their 'expressed' and possibly their 'negotiated' needs (Maguire and Kynch 2000). This was a step forward from the questions asked in phase two of the study where respondents had simply been asked to identify the services that they had received from Victim Support.

The combination of these two questions caused consternation for some respondents as they were required to think about each of the questions quite separately in order for their answers to be accurate. Some respondents, for example, quite routinely denied needing a particular service in cases where the police had already provided assistance to them. In these cases, I took time to reiterate that I needed to know what their needs were following the burglary, irrespective of whether the police or some other agency may have helped them. Secondly, I needed to know whether Victim Support specifically had (also) provided support.

This gave me cause to reflect upon my chosen method and to acknowledge that my choice of an interviewer based approach was, in the circumstances, an appropriate one. By being on hand, albeit by telephone, I was able to give fuller explanations to respondents where required. In this way, and especially with the greater complexity of the 'market research' question in mind, I was able to encourage greater validity within the responses obtained.

Column 1 (Col. 1) in table 7.7 overleaf indicates the number of respondents desiring particular services that Victim Support, amongst other agencies, can provide in the aftermath of the crime. Column 2 (Col. 2) shows the numbers of respondents saying that Victim Support did supply those services, thereby indicating the extent to which victims' expressed needs were met.

Type of help needed and received from Victim Support	Col.1: % saying they needed this type of help	Col. 2: % of those who felt they received this type of help		Col. 3: % saying they did not need this type of help	Col. 4: % of those who felt they received this type of help	
	N=100	N	%	N=100	N	%
Personal support	33	27	82	67	46	69
Advice on practical help	39	12	31	61	18	30
Information on compensation and insurance	18	5	28	82	13	16
Links with the police	22	4	18	78	11	14
Suggestions as to other services that may help	31	16	52	69	22	32
Crime prevention advice	40	23	58	60	19	32

Table 7.7: The expressed needs of victims and the services that they feel Victim Support provided (phase 3).

Columns 3 and 4 present the extent to which victims' needs may have been over-provided by Victim Support. As Mawby et al (1999) reported, this was the case in their study which compared service provision (by Victim Support) in England with that in a number of newly emerging capitalist countries. Column 3 shows the numbers of victims who said they did not need any help from anyone, whilst column 4 shows that services were nevertheless provided by Victim Support.

Overall table 7.7 indicates that more victims who said they needed certain services (see Col. 1) felt that they had received them (see Col. 2), compared to those saying that although they did not need help (see Col. 3) they nevertheless

received particular services (see Col. 4). On the one hand this is a positive finding for Victim Support, as on these measures victims' needs were (largely) met. This is in contrast to the situation in the USA where research has shown (Davis et al 1999) that victim services do not necessarily meet victims' needs.

On the other hand however, quite significant numbers who said that they did not need help were still provided with certain services. For example 67 respondents felt they did not need personal support, but 69% said that this was provided anyway. Furthermore whilst 61 respondents did not want advice on practical help, 30% said that they had received this.

The results from this analysis suggest that whilst there was some shortfall between the numbers saying that they wanted help and those saying they had received it. For example, whilst 33 respondents said they wanted personal support, not all (82%) received such assistance. For 69% of those who did not want personal support, the service was nevertheless provided. Only 31% of those who required 'advice on practical help' felt that they received this, but 30% who did not want this also felt that such advice had been given. Certainly in terms of 'advice and practical assistance', warning bells should be ringing, particularly as the sample on which these results were based was made up entirely of burglary victims.

As indicated, some service needs were met to a far greater extent than others. However, personal support (82%), crime prevention advice (58%) and

suggestions as to other services that may help (52%)²⁵ were the types of support that more respondents reported receiving.

This should come as no real surprise given the nature of the offence experienced by respondents in the sample and the fact that face to face contact was made with volunteers. Clearly personal support was the 'success story' both quantitatively, as table 7.5 indicates, and qualitatively as per the comments below.

Yes, very much so. I think it was nice – helpful, that they actually came round – somebody out there actually taking an interest in your problems.

(228/24227)

Made me feel someone outside of family ...yes it was nice to talk and to know there are people about.

(584/26514)

The fact that a very high number of respondents felt that they had received 'personal support' in particular is largely a legacy of the 'good neighbour' approach upon which Victim Support was founded. As for phase two of the research, respondents in phase three also thought that 'personal support' had been the most helpful service provided to them, although fewer respondents in phase three (44%) said this.

Personal support persists, especially in schemes such as Plymouth where cold calling has been 'the norm' for burglary victims. Indeed it may be difficult for volunteers not to give some level of personal support when undertaking visits, even where victims declare that they are alright. It also appears that victims encourage such over-provision by inviting volunteers into their homes on the

²⁵ This may include referrals to agencies such as Plymouth Homesafe which provides free home security to (generally) low income households.

basis that it would surely seem churlish to simply say 'thanks, but no thanks'. The excerpt from a quote used earlier reinforces this view.

... Basically thought well bless her heart she's come all this way so I invited her in, made her feel quite comfortable, offered her a cup of tea, but I didn't need any help whatever – I just wanted to make her feel that her journey wasn't wasted really...
(261/24431)

It may also be very hard for victims to perceive the nature of the contact with volunteers as anything other than 'personally supportive' because, again, this is a cornerstone of the service that Victim Support provides.

Did the volunteer provide ID and leave leaflets?

The issue of volunteers identifying themselves is, one may argue, an important issue especially for those who have been recently burgled, and perhaps even more so for those who have been victimised by bogus callers²⁶. In almost every case (96%), respondents reported that volunteers had introduced themselves clearly and showed an identity card.

Respondents were also asked whether volunteers had left leaflets or other items as part of the visit. They were also asked to comment on their usefulness. Whilst this information is not particularly indicative of service satisfaction, it is helpful for Victim Support to know how useful such aids are. Such items are, after all, resources that are supplied either by Victim Support 'national' or other bodies²⁷. The most commonly left leaflets were those focusing upon burglary (58%) and those focusing upon the work undertaken by Victim Support (53%). Fewer respondents however said that post-coding materials were left (21%) and, if they were, that they were useful (20%).

²⁶ See Age Concern Factsheet 33: Crime prevention for older people (October 2003). http://www.ageconcern.org.uk/AgeConcern/information_313.htm (accessed 27.7.04).

²⁷ The Western Power Company for example supplied low energy light bulbs to Victim Support, Plymouth.

Just over two fifths of respondents (44%) were left low energy light bulbs; the aim being that particularly elderly and poorer victims could leave lights on without worrying about costs²⁸. Approximately the same number (40%) reported that they were useful.

The data collected from victims show lower numbers saying they received leaflets or items such as low energy light bulbs, in contrast to the information obtained from volunteers. The volunteer feedbacks, discussed in chapter eight, showed leaflets being left in 70% of cases and post-coding materials in 80% of cases²⁹. The branch manager of Victim Support, Plymouth, also thought that the figures from victims were very low, stating that volunteers should (and would) leave burglary leaflets, particularly for burglary victims. Whilst the period between the volunteer visits and the telephone interviews was relatively short (approximately two weeks), we cannot rule out the possibility that victims' powers of recall were being challenged.

Further measures of victim satisfaction

Respondents were asked whether volunteers were sensitive to their needs. The majority (89%), reported that this was the case.

She was here some length of time, she didn't rush things, very sympathetic and helpful.
(74/22901)

Yes he seemed very friendly and if we'd needed more help I'm sure he'd have been fine.
(130)

²⁸ Drawing upon Rational Choice Theory (Cornish and Clarke 1987) whereby lights left on at night time suggests the presence of a 'capable guardian' and so, in theory, deters potential offenders from committing crime.

²⁹ The raw numbers for these percentages are 22 out of 30 cases for burglary leaflets and 23 out of 30 cases for post-coding materials; this point will be picked up again in chapter eight which provides an account of the work that Victim Support volunteers undertake.

However, eight people said that the volunteer who visited was not sensitive to them.

Not particularly...my partner literally begged her for a personal alarm for me ... she didn't seem to understand I was feeling threatened because I was pregnant. My mother lives two and a half hours away and has been suggesting that I go for counselling or something because I'm still not sleeping at night time at all. I'm quite young myself and we're unmarried so I didn't know if she was thinking ---. I get it a lot at the moment anyway. I feel generally threatened for my baby as well.

(206/24152)

He was an older gentleman, he did say it was a voluntary thing – I just felt – I didn't think he was very sensitive.

(247/24233)

He was an older gentleman, not rude but very to the point – the way he spoke, mannerisms – not very friendly.

(121/23227)

The three quotes illustrate how difficult it can be for volunteers to achieve a rapport with the people they see; however such cases are relatively rare. Whilst the quantitative nature of the survey did not allow me to pursue this issue any further, the findings regarding this and other issues that the research has uncovered may be useful for the appointment, training and on-going supervision of volunteers.

Respondents were also asked whether they felt 'better', 'worse' or 'no different' following the volunteer visit. As in phase two, the majority in phase three (62%), reported feeling better.

It made me feel considerably better to think there were people out there who were interested in our problem.

(49/22770)

Made me feel a lot better, like I say particularly because you think then that somebody does care out there, you're not just being shoved off to the side somewhere, somebody has took the time to come out and visit you to see if you're okay, that's really nice.

(225/24202)

These positive comments indicate the respondents' appreciation of the community response to crime (Holtom and Raynor 1988; Reeves 1985). Some respondents felt that they did not want to burden their families with their anxieties

and so in effect could not talk to them. This was something that Maguire and Corbett (1987) also commented upon.

Yes it did make me feel better – I felt if I needed help there was help there that I could go – when you get to my age that makes a lot of difference. I mean I know I've got my family and that but sometimes you want to say things ... you don't want to upset your family. If my family knew I was still thinking about somebody going up in my room they'd say don't be silly mum like. I make a joke of it now – but I don't think younger ones can realise how it can get to you. But no, it is nice to know somebody's there. (410/25363)

The majority of victims who were visited were then satisfied with the service that Victim Support had provided to them. This is important to bear in mind, as is the fact that it is only a minority of victims who did not feel this way. Two respondents did say that they felt worse for having been visited by volunteers. One of these expressed dissatisfaction with the volunteer, again linking into the discussions above regarding the approach that different volunteers may take.

...he was silent, but these (silences) were not appropriate. ...He wasn't sensitive – he could have said, I can see you're busy and offered to go away and come back. (358/25095)

One respondent said he felt 'annoyed' and 'worried', and was clearly concerned about data protection issues that being visited had raised. Such concerns were also noted by Maguire and Corbett (1987). The respondent in the current case said that the police had not confirmed his agreement to being contacted by Victim Support³⁰.

Made me worried that so many people knew, that details passed to Victim Support... (101/23147)

³⁰ Whilst the police should do this the co-ordinator at Victim Support told me that this was not always the case. Indeed I was told that the police may 'forget' to check with the victim and so simply tick 'yes' against the space for referral on the crime sheets that are supplied to Victim Support. In some cases the reverse may be true so that on reading the crime sheets the co-ordinator may feel that the circumstances of the case must surely mean that the victim would have agreed to a referral being made; in such cases she would telephone the police to double check this.

Respondents were then asked if they felt that they had received 'real help or advice' from Victim Support. As in phase two, approximately the same number of victims visited (56% in phase three compared with 59% in phase two) said that they had received real help or advice. Of those (42%) who did not find the volunteer visit helpful, almost three quarters (73%) said that they either did not need any help or that they had help from other sources, such as family and friends.

I'm so used to sorting things out myself – I didn't need their help.

(47/22766)

Cos we're a close knit family – we're always there for each other.

(101/23147)

Five people (12%) said that Victim Support could not help in their particular case.

It took me 19 days to get the window back in, that was the sort of thing I needed help with – it was most frustrating – I could never get the council on the telephone.

(39/22709)

The comments from this respondent are, in some ways, quite surprising as this is the type of practical problem that Victim Support would typically offer to assist with. Clearly, volunteers would need to ensure that victims are aware that they could help, if required.

Finally, three respondents (7%) said that Victim Support did not do a very good job. The quotes below resonate with issues raised earlier pertaining to the appointment, training and ongoing supervision of volunteers.

I just felt ...because I haven't got physical damage in the room ... I just felt because he couldn't visually see anything wrong he came and did what he had to and left.

(247/24233)

One of these respondents felt that the volunteer did not stay long enough. She also believed the volunteer assumed she could cope. The victim felt this was because the volunteer knew about her family background. The victim's son was known locally to have a current burglary career. The victim's view was that the volunteer had made 'moral judgements' about her, based upon her son's lifestyle³¹.

Overall, the majority (70%) of respondents were happy to have been visited unannounced by the volunteer, again supporting the findings of Maguire and Corbett (1987). One victim, who initially had not been at home at the time the volunteer called, also supported the 'cold call', as did one victim who self referred. Of those visited unannounced and seen, approximately one quarter (24%) said that they would have preferred an arranged visit. This was a higher proportion than in phase two. Five people would have preferred telephone or written contact rather than the volunteer visit.

Finally, respondents were asked whether, in the event of being a victim again, they would like to be contacted by the service. As in phase two, the vast majority said that they would (79%). Just under one fifth (18%) said they would not like to be contacted again, although for three quarters of that group their views did not reflect negatively on Victim Support. The reasons given mirrored earlier findings. Respondents reported having enough support from other sources, that they would prefer to sort things out for themselves, that they did not need any help, or that they would prefer to self-refer.

³¹ Whilst my reporting of this has not been empirically tested, it may raise important issues for the supervision and training of volunteers.

*...I have so much support anyway from friends and family and all that...
(victim felt got all help needed: 188/23972)*

*...I didn't really require it. Things like that don't bother me, my character's not affected, don't feel personally targeted. Because of my job we're taught not to be affected. Laugh things off – just crack on.
(victim did not need help: 530)*

*...I could understand if you didn't know what to do, but my husband and I are capable of doing it for ourselves.
(victim felt could sort things herself: 63/22804)*

*I feel as if I need I should be able to contact them – I know they're trying to help but it's a bit intrusive.
(victim feels would like to contact Victim Support him/herself: 446/25720)*

Burglary victims' satisfaction with particular types of help received

Analyses carried out in section one of this chapter were repeated to investigate the extent to which burglary victims, who were all seen by volunteers, believed they received 'real help or advice' from Victim Support or that they felt better having been contacted in this way. These measures were cross-tabulated with the broad types of services provided. For those who said they received 'real help or advice', 25% (3 out of 12) had not received any of the services listed, 66% (47 out of 71) received personal support and 75% (44 out of 59) received practical help³². Of those who said that they 'felt better' following their contact with Victim Support, 33% (4 out of 12) reported receiving no help, 73% (55 out of 73) received personal support and 74% (45 out of 61) practical help in one form or another.

The numbers arising from these analyses are higher than those for phase two of the research. This is not surprising given that in phase three of the research all victims had been visited and seen by volunteers and all of them had been the

³² Advice on practical help needed following the crime, for example changing locks and repairing damage, information and advice about compensation, a link with the police to keep the victim informed of the progress of the case, suggestions as to other services that may be helpful and crime prevention advice.

victims of burglary. Thus the nature of contact and the type of offence experienced, from the range of offences included in this research, was more conducive to practical support being provided. Again, as Maguire and Kynch (2000) noted, these results show that the traditional model of Victim Support is still 'alive and well'.

Service satisfaction by age and gender

The final stage of the analysis was undertaken to identify differences in the ways older and younger people, and men and women, perceived Victim Support to have been of benefit to them, and thus meeting their needs. Table 7.8 shows the services that younger and older people said that they needed following the crime, and those that they received.

% of those who wanted and received...	Victims 49 years and under wanting...		Victims 49 years and under receiving...		Victims 50 years and over wanting...		Victims 50 years and over receiving...	
	N=47				N=53			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Personal support	16	34	11	69	17	32	16	94
Advice on practical help	22	47	6	27	17	32	6	35
Information and advice on insurance and compensation	12	26	4	33	6	11	1	17
Link with the police	13	28	2	15	9	17	2	22
Suggestions as to other services	19	40	9	47	12	23	7	58
Crime prevention advice	27	57	14	52	13	25	9	69

Table 7.8: Victims' needs and the services provided by Victim Support: analysis by age and gender (phase 3)

More younger people reported wanting each of the services identified within the research. However, it was older people who tended to receive more help, particularly where personal support, suggestions as to other services and crime prevention advice were concerned. This may be due to the priority that Victim Support continues to show to older people (Mawby and Gill 1987; Maguire and Kynch 2000) and also the degree of inter-agency work that takes place with local bodies such as Plymouth Homesafe (Mawby and Simmonds 2003; Mawby 2004); which works to target harden the homes of vulnerable residents.

Further analysis was conducted, using gender as the independent variable. The results are presented in table 7.9 overleaf. The findings revealed that more women than men required personal support, advice on practical help, suggestions as to other services following the crime and crime prevention advice. The fact that fewer men wanted 'personal support', or were prepared to admit this, may be attributed to the reticence that some men may experience in expressing their feelings in the aftermath of crime; a point noted by Mawby and Walklate (1994). However although fewer men reported wanting personal support, as many men as women said they received this service from Victim Support. On the other hand, whilst approximately the same number of men and women wanted information and advice about insurance and compensation and links with the police, more men than women reported having received these services. More women than men wanted advice on practical help, suggestions as to other services and crime prevention advice. Furthermore, more women received these services.

% of those who wanted and received...	Male victims wanting...		Male victims receiving...		Female victims wanting...		Female victims receiving...	
	N=32				N=68			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Personal support	6	19	5	83	27	40	22	82
Advice on practical help	10	31	1	10	29	43	11	38
Information and advice on insurance and compensation	5	16	2	40	13	19	3	23
Link with the police	8	25	2	25	14	21	2	14
Suggestions as to other services	7	22	3	43	24	35	13	54
Crime prevention advice	10	31	3	30	30	44	20	67

Table 7.9: The needs of victims according to gender, and the services that they felt Victim Support provided to them (phase 3)

Respondents were also asked to say which service they found most helpful. Again personal support was cited, with very little difference between the numbers of younger (43%) and older (46%) victims saying this and between males (41%) and females (46%). They were also asked whether they thought the volunteer was sensitive to their needs. Fewer younger (78%) than older (98%) respondents answered affirmatively, whilst approximately the same number of men (90%) and women (88%) said this. These findings parallel those reported earlier in this chapter.

Respondents were also asked if being visited by a volunteer made them feel, 'better', 'worse' or 'no different'. Slightly fewer younger (57%) than older (66%)

people, and fewer males (59%) rather than females (63%), reported feeling better for this contact.

As in phase two of the research, respondents in phase three were asked if, in retrospect, they would have preferred some other form of contact with Victim Support. Older people (83%) were more likely than younger people (56%) to express satisfaction with the traditional unannounced volunteer visit. Slightly fewer men (63%) than women (73%) reported this. These results may come as no great surprise given the reduced labour market involvement of older people and, to some extent, that of women.

More older respondents (60% compared to 48% of younger people) reported having had 'real help or advice' from Victim Support. More women (62%) than men (45%) said this. Again the reasons given for not feeling helped by Victim Support, for both younger and older victims as well as for males and females, was that they did not need any help or that they had got all the help they needed from elsewhere. Each of the three respondents who felt Victim Support did not do a very good job were aged 49 or under. There was little difference between the numbers of men and women who thought Victim Support did not do a good job (women: 2 out of 24: 8%, and men: 1 out of 17: 6%).

Respondents were asked if, in the event of their being a victim of crime again, they would like Victim Support to contact them. More older (87%) than younger people (70%), and more women (87% compared to 63% of men) said they would like to be contacted. For those who disagreed, older people were more likely to say they had other sources of support, or that they felt themselves to be self reliant. For younger people however, three out of 14 respondents (21%) said that they did not

think Victim Support could help them and a further three said that they did not think Victim Support did a very good job. None of the older respondents expressed negative views. This may illustrate the need for greater support for younger people, particularly in the light of my previous finding that whilst more younger people wanted/needed help, more older people received it. In contrast to my earlier findings, two out of nine women (22%) compared to one out of nine men (8%) said that Victim Support was not helpful, and so they would not like to be contacted again.

Summary

Chapter seven reviewed the assistance that Victim Support offers to a range of victims. The initial discussion focused upon different forms of contact to evaluate how this has affected victims' views of the service they received and whether their needs have been met.

A number of conclusions are possible at this stage of the discussion. While I began this research with the view that victims would be more appreciative, or feel that their needs have been better met by seeing a volunteer from Victim Support, this has not always been the case, certainly not on all the measures used. It is evident that many victims felt personally supported whether they were contacted by letter only, or by receiving notification only that a volunteer had called. In this respect, this is a measure of Victim Support's success in that for the price of a postage stamp, or on the basis of a hand delivered post card, the organisation still transmits its message to victims of crime.

However, it is clear from the research that where more practical support is required, this rests upon personal contact with volunteers. Furthermore, it was

those who had this type of contact who tended to feel that they had received real help or advice from the service.

Whilst approaches that do not involve personal contact with volunteers can to some extent communicate the fact that support is available, and indeed can be viewed as providing personal support, it is contact with Victim Support volunteers that provides the more tangible service response. It is notable that most respondents who said that they did not receive any help from Victim Support were those who were unavailable when the volunteer visited. This is important given the higher costs involved in sending volunteers out on visits and because, in terms of the goal of 'value for money' to which the government has committed itself (National Audit Office 2002), these efforts can represent wasted resources.

If Victim Support Plymouth were to continue using the traditional unannounced visit, then consideration may need to be given to incorporating written contact as a follow-up means of contact for victims who are unseen. On the other hand, this may also point to the need to consider further the deployment of volunteers in the traditional unannounced fashion. Indeed the scheme has already done this for victims who reside in multi-occupancy buildings³³.

The majority of respondents felt that Victim Support could not do any more to help them, and only a small number of victims, who had been visited and seen, received or desired further contact with Victim Support. However, the majority of respondents felt that if they had wanted further contact then this would have been

³³ As noted earlier, as a consequence of my research Victim Support, Plymouth decided to contact burglary victims living in multi-occupancy buildings by letter or telephone in the first instance, because of the numbers of unsuccessful volunteer visits to victims living in such accommodation. Furthermore, the overall policy of unannounced visiting is to be withdrawn in the very near future.

forthcoming. In these ways, the traditional crisis intervention approach can be seen to be an appropriate response, which on a number of measures has largely met the needs of victims within the current research.

Most of those who were visited unannounced by Victim Support, were happy with this form of contact. A few would have preferred some other approach and were less in favour of the traditional unannounced visit. They were more likely to want telephone or written contact, with the few who did specify a visit as their preference, saying that this should be 'arranged'. These findings contrasted with those of (Maguire and Corbett 1987) whose work found greater support for the unannounced visit, however their work was undertaken some time ago.

The overwhelming view from respondents was that they would like to be contacted by Victim Support again, should they be re-victimised. This response was constant across each type of contact.

The research has shown that any contact with Victim Support appears to hold benefits for victims. However, the more substantial support is found where direct contact occurs, where volunteers can provide emotional and practical support to victims. Paradoxically, it seems that sending volunteers out can be a waste of resources, however if visits are not undertaken then victims can miss out.

However the research has also shown that not all victims who are in need are in fact offered any support by Victim Support. At the same time some victims' needs were found to be overly provided for. A mismatch of services to need has therefore been identified by my work, a point that will be returned to in chapter

nine. Chapter eight looks at the volunteers who work for Victim Support, both in terms of the work that they do and in terms of who they are.

Chapter Eight: Volunteering and Victim Support

Introduction

Previous sections of this thesis have explored the impact of crime and the work of Victim Support. However this has been done exclusively from the perspective of victims. The current chapter continues to focus upon victims' needs. However, at this stage of my work, the views of volunteers are also incorporated. In following this line of enquiry my study also looks at the perceptions of service users and service providers in order to present a more holistic view of Victim Support. In this way I have followed in the footsteps of others (Rex 1998), who have also taken this approach for the purposes of evaluation.

In this chapter, further details of the sampling design and response rates achieved with volunteers will be reviewed. As discussed in chapter four, I conducted the research for this project in three stages, with volunteers becoming involved in phases two and three.

Including volunteers: methodology

In phase two I had wished to interview volunteers for each case where face to face contact with victims had occurred. Potentially this would provide feedback for 33 victim encounters. However, as the figure in appendix seven shows, only 22 volunteer interviews were included at this stage of the analysis. Volunteers were unwilling to be interviewed in seven cases, something that I attributed to 'respondent fatigue' in that some volunteers did not wish to take part in a number of interviews. A further three cases were excluded from the analysis when it transpired that volunteers had not made face-to-face contact with the same victim

who I had interviewed. In the final case the volunteer had made face-to-face contact with two (non-related) burglary victims who shared a house together. While I had interviewed each of the victims separately, the volunteer had seen one of them for a longer period than the other and so felt confident to talk about this one case only. The 22 cases examined within this analysis gave a response rate of 67% of the original sample.

In phase three of the research community volunteers in Plymouth were sent a postal questionnaire and again were asked to give feedback for the victims visited¹. The adoption of this method was, as noted in chapter five, a reaction to the non-response from volunteers in phase two of the study. I had interviewed 100 burglary victims in phase three using a computer assisted telephone survey (CATI), and volunteers had visited and made contact with each of these victims. In order to further encourage volunteers to co-operate I decided to ask for a maximum of four feedbacks per volunteer. I did not do this immediately but waited until the latter half of phase three² of my research was under way. This approach produced 30 out a possible 34 replies (see appendix seven); a response rate of 88%. Not all volunteers had undertaken face-to-face contact with four victims and not all volunteers had provided the feedbacks requested. The response rate was however extremely good and the inclusion of open-ended questions allowed for more qualitative data to be collected³.

¹ At this stage of the research I was able to ensure that the volunteers had visited the same victims who I had interviewed.

² In effect feedbacks were collected from volunteers throughout the final sixty interviews that I conducted with victims. Feedback from volunteers therefore covered a slightly longer period than discussed. This was however unavoidable in the circumstances.

³ The approach was perhaps less useful in collecting 'ad hoc' qualitative information that researchers are able to note in the course of interviewing respondents face to face which enrich the bare quantitative data.

A further postal questionnaire was circulated in phase three of the research to all volunteers working in the community, in the court witness schemes or in management roles. It was not uncommon for volunteers to undertake one or more of these roles simultaneously. A decision was made to exclude volunteers who had been inactive for a long period prior to the research⁴. As previously discussed, volunteers from a scheme in Salford were also asked to participate for comparative purposes⁵. This increased the numbers within my overall sample, adding rigour to some of the findings.

Of the 38 volunteers working for Victim Support Plymouth at the time, some 27 responses were received; a response rate of 71%. Of the 27 volunteers from the Salford scheme, eleven replied; a response rate of 41%. The high response rate achieved in Plymouth was attributed to the enthusiasm shown by the current branch manager for this research. Encouragement was provided to volunteers via the scheme newsletter. In addition my previous work with volunteers in phase two of the study generally secured their participation⁶. The branch manager in Salford was also very helpful, for example sending out reminders to his volunteers to complete the questionnaire, however their co-operation was less forthcoming⁷. In this way the value of being 'known' to a particular scheme became apparent.

⁴ The branch managers of Victim Support Plymouth and Salford used their discretion in terms of making such judgements.

⁵ The decision to include Salford volunteers for comparative purposes was made on the basis that previous research had compared the work of Victim Support in Salford (Mawby and Walklate 1997; plus cross national study Mawby et al 1999) with that in Plymouth.

⁶ The branch manager advised the exclusion of one volunteer for personal reasons. A further two were excluded because in phase two of the study they had each expressed some resistance to participating in the study.

⁷ In addition to a reminder in the Salford scheme newsletter, I had sent out an initial explanatory letter to accompany the questionnaire in October 2001. I then sent a reminder to those who had not responded in February 2002.

Chapter eight is divided into two broad areas on the basis of the findings from this research. In terms of organising the chapter, I will firstly review the data collected in phase three from Plymouth and Salford volunteers, focusing upon a number of issues relating to volunteers themselves, their recruitment and training and how they view the work that they do. The second broad area of analysis focuses upon the work of Plymouth based community volunteers only. This is based upon findings from phases two and three of the research, looking at victims' needs and the services that volunteers provided. Finally the views of Plymouth volunteers and victims from phases two and three of my research are matched in order to examine the extent to which they are congruent.

The chapter begins with a discussion of the notion of voluntarism and of other work that has been undertaken in this area.

Background to the study – The spirit of voluntarism and Victim Support volunteers

The use of volunteer labour is a cornerstone upon which Victim Support was, and still is, based to provide a 'community' response to crime (Holtom and Raynor 1988; Reeves 1985). This may suggest that those undertaking such work could be expected to share the same characteristics as those they seek to help. Indeed, as I have already discussed, Victim Support has been promoted as representing all facets of the community (Gay et al 1975; Reeves 1985).

The research to date however has found this not to be the case (Gill 1986; Mawby and Gill 1987; Gill and Mawby 1990; Russell 1990; Reynolds et al 1993). The majority of Victim Support volunteers were found to be female, largely married and

middle class. Mawby and Gill (1987) found that one third of Victim Support volunteers were educated to degree standard, whilst around a fifth (22%) had undergone post secondary education. Half of the sample was over 55 years of age with one third over 60 years. This analysis, based upon data collected by Gill (1986), extended the stereotypical view of volunteers from that of 'middle aged, middle class and married women' (Aves 1969) to 'elderly, middle class and married women'. Volunteers also seemed to be drawn from those living more socially inclusive and more traditionally conventional lives. The unemployed were therefore 'significant by their absence', around a half (47%) were employed, roughly one fifth (18%) described themselves as 'housewives', and one third as retired. The slightly later study of Reynolds et al (1993) did little to amend this view of Victim Support volunteers.

More recent research on volunteers generally shows that they are not largely representative of the general population (Institute for Volunteering Research (IVR) 1997), perpetuating what Mawby and Gill (1987), in their reading of Webb (1981), termed the new 'middle class' imperialism. Again those who are in paid work are more likely to volunteer and the age bias persists (IVR 1997). One deviation noted is that women and men were found equally likely to volunteer (ibid). The British Crime Survey (Krishnamurthy et al 2001) also noted the age bias, but added that male volunteering was more limited due to the types of activity in which they tended to be involved. Men for example were more likely to undertake committee work (ibid).

Previous research has then noted a tendency for 'homogeneity' amongst volunteers generally, particularly amongst Victim Support volunteers. Part of the

'problem' for Victim Support has been linked to certain recruitment practices (Mawby and Gill 1987; Gill and Mawby 1990; Russell 1990). Indeed Gill and Mawby (1990), in considering the reliance upon 'word of mouth', expressed no surprise in reporting homogeneity as one defining characteristic of Victim Support volunteers.

Mawby and Gill (1987) considered why people volunteer generally compared with volunteering for Victim Support. Most respondents (40%) undertook voluntary work generally for their own 'self-directed' reasons (Gill and Mawby 1990); in other words there were benefits they could gain in the process. Older volunteers for example (Rochester et al 2002) found a new impetus for life, forming for example a transition between paid work and retirement; something akin to the 'reciprocity' that Titmus (1997) had noted. Fewer respondents (18%) volunteered for purely altruistic (other directed) reasons and 16% merely 'drifted' into doing voluntary work. In other words there was no conscious decision made. Only 9% of volunteers were interested in doing voluntary work because of the organisation (agency led) involved whilst 13% of respondents volunteered for religious reasons. In considering volunteers' reasons for wanting to work with Victim Support specifically a higher proportion (38%) gave an 'agency led' response (Mawby and Gill 1987). These results are interesting given the fact that police volunteers for example are much more likely (59%) to give this response; something which researchers attributed to the strong culture that police volunteers perceived to exist, in contrast to those volunteering for Victim Support (ibid).

Over half of Victim Support volunteers indicated that they had 'drifted' into the service and many of these had been recruited by word of mouth (Mawby and Gill

1987); something Reynolds et al (1993) also noted. Such 'drift' was also explained with regard to the way in which some volunteers were directed to Victim Support by a volunteer bureau, and some responded to notices in the press.

A closed question was also put to respondents which cast more light on their decision to join Victim Support. Whilst almost half (49%) said that they joined the service because of their interest in it, fewer (46%) joined because of an interest in voluntary work generally (Gill 1986; Gill and Mawby 1990). Gill (1986) construed this to mean that the nature of the agency was more persuasive than the notion of doing voluntary work generally for Victim Support volunteers.

Gill (1986) further endorsed this view by asking respondents to rank their responses to a number of statements pertaining to their decision for joining Victim Support. He found, more than anything, that Victim Support volunteers wanted to help people. However ranking second and third was their interest in victims and in working for Victim Support specifically. In this way the importance of 'agency led' influences were further illustrated. Reynolds et al (1993) added support to this as their research indicated overwhelmingly that volunteers were making 'agency led' decisions.

Victim Support volunteers were also keen to uphold law and order, as this ranked fourth in their list of reasons for becoming a volunteer. In this way Victim Support volunteers shared some similarities with Police Specials, but not with Probation volunteers, who ranked 'law and order' seventh when they were asked the same question (Gill 1986). Indeed this may point to the fundamental differences

between different volunteers within the criminal justice system which, bearing in mind the nature and purpose of the different agencies, is not surprising.

Respondents gave a number of reasons for continuing to volunteer for Victim Support. Twenty seven percent continued for altruistic (other directed) reasons and 24% because of their attachment to victims and Victim Support (agency led). A further 15% continued because they enjoyed the work and 15% because of their 'stickability' (Gill 1986); in other words continuing to work as a volunteer for Victim Support was a matter of principle.

Who are Victim Support volunteers today?

As indicated earlier, 27 volunteers from Plymouth and 11 from the Salford scheme participated in the research. In both samples some volunteers performed more than one volunteering role. In Plymouth, ten volunteers worked solely in the community, nine solely in court witness schemes and three in local management committee roles⁸. A further four volunteers were both community and court witness volunteers, whilst one more was a court witness and local management volunteer. In the Salford sample, five volunteers worked solely in the community, four worked solely in the court witness scheme and one undertook a management role. The remaining volunteer worked both in the community and as a management committee member.

⁸ When the research began Victim Support Plymouth still had a local management committee. Since restructuring the local management committee has been disbanded.

Victim Support volunteers: a demographic study

This section of the chapter provides a profile of the volunteers working for Victim Support, in terms of their age, gender, ethnicity and social class. The findings presented are from phase three of my research and are based upon responses from volunteers working in both the Plymouth and Salford schemes. The current research seeks to discover whether Victim Support volunteers are more diverse almost twenty years on from the earlier studies reported. In this way the claims that Victim Support volunteers are providing a truly representative 'community response' to crime will be tested.

In my research, the volunteers from Victim Support Plymouth were more likely to be older than younger; indeed 63% were aged 50 years and over, and over one third (37%) 60 years and over. In this way the age bias that previous writers reported, not only in Victim Support (Gill 1986; Mawby and Gill 1987; Gill and Mawby 1990; Reynolds et al 1993), but in volunteering generally (IVF 1997; Krishnamurthy et al 2001), persists. The volunteers from the Salford scheme were also predominantly older with nine out of the 11 (82%) being over 50 years of age. Salford is a metropolitan area and this, together with the results from the national study by Reynolds et al in 1993, suggests that the age bias amongst Victim Support volunteers is not merely a rural phenomenon.

My research also indicated that a gender bias continues, again supporting earlier research (Gill 1986; Mawby and Gill 1987; Gill and Mawby 1990; Reynolds et al 1993). More women (17 out of 27 cases: 63%) than men volunteered in both Plymouth and Salford (9 out of 11 cases: 82%). My findings are further supported by figures obtained from the recently formed Greater Manchester Area division of

Victim Support, where only 15% of nearly 200 volunteer applications were from men⁹.

The majority of volunteers, certainly in the Plymouth scheme (18 out of 27: 67%), were married. This pattern was not repeated within the Salford sample. However the small numbers involved make pursuing this line of argument difficult. On the bases of age, gender and marital status therefore, Victim Support volunteers, wholly or largely within the two areas examined, continue to match the typology devised by Gill (1986). Again in line with this work (ibid) unemployed people did not feature strongly in my sample as only two out of all 38 (5%) respondents were unemployed. The two unemployed respondents were from the Plymouth sample (2 out of 27 cases: 7%). Around one third of the sample was employed, in contrast to almost half in Gill's (ibid) work. More respondents in my study were retired people (16 out of all 38 cases: 42%: that is 10 out of 27 cases (37%) in Plymouth and 6 out of 11 cases (46%) in Salford).

In contrast to the findings of Gill (1986), the respondents in my study were less likely to have degree level qualifications (6 out of all 38 cases: 16%: that is 4 out of 27 cases (15%) in Plymouth and 2 out of 11 cases (18%) in Salford). Approximately similar numbers from each area however had undertaken post-16 education. Again my research was based upon smaller numbers of volunteers than the work of Gill (1986) and so my results at this point are presented cautiously.

⁹ Personal communication, Assistant Chief Executive 18.11.03.

The majority of volunteers (82%) held either 'intermediate' or 'managerial and professional' status within the meaning of the three class version of the Socio-Economic Classification developed by Rose and O'Reilly (1998). The pattern revealed reflects the middle class bias that others have also reported (Gill 1986; Mawby and Gill 1987 and Gill and Mawby 1990).

Previous research reported only a very small proportion of Victim Support volunteers performing manual occupations (ibid). My findings however indicated a higher proportion (18%) being categorised as 'working'; that is performing routine tasks with little autonomy. Indeed when the five class version of the Socio-Economic Classification was applied, this proportion was able to be described as 'working class'. This apparently marked increase in working class participation within Victim Support may be attributable to the way in which the new Socio-Economic Classification is applied. The measure provides for, amongst other things, greater coverage of the population; for example the inclusion of non-working volunteers in accordance with their last main occupation. At the same time, the slightly more transparent recruitment processes at work today may also influence the apparent participation of volunteers from a wider social background.

In terms of ethnicity my research showed that only one volunteer was Black/Black British in the Plymouth scheme, whilst in the Salford scheme only one volunteer was of mixed race¹⁰. Superficially these findings offer some challenge to earlier research (Maguire and Corbett 1987; Russell 1990; Reynolds et al 1993; Victim Support Devon 2003) showing the under-representation of ethnic minority groups

¹⁰ A subsequent telephone conversation with the branch manager of the Salford scheme (17.11. 03) revealed that approximately one year on from when the postal questionnaire was circulated there were only three volunteers from an ethnic minority background.

within Victim Support volunteers. However, the samples in my work are very small and, particularly for Salford, the response rate was fairly poor. It is not possible therefore to report this data at this point in a meaningful way.

It is important to note that the lack of volunteers generally from a more diverse ethnic background has been highlighted more recently as a problem within the southwest of England. The Volunteer Bureau in Exeter became the focus of the local media¹¹, urging people from Black and other ethnic minority groups to participate in voluntary work in order to overcome racism and to break down cultural barriers. The same point has been made nationally (Rochester et al 2002), albeit in relation to older people from ethnic minority groups. That said, as chapter four indicates, the ethnic minority population in Devon is very small¹². The issue of recruiting volunteers from ethnic minority groups is therefore one that could benefit from further research of a more qualitative nature. This would explain rather than simply measure this phenomenon.

Linked to this my research has highlighted the potential for volunteers from ethnic minority backgrounds to face prejudice, particularly perhaps in areas such as Plymouth where the population historically is less ethnically diverse. One volunteer spoke very candidly about his experiences, recalling instances of hostility and rudeness from those he was seeking to assist. I will return to this point at a later stage of this chapter.

¹¹ The BBC South West 'Spotlight' news programme on 1st October 2003.

¹² www.devon.gov.uk/dris/census/cen2001.html (accessed 22.12.03).

Perceptions of volunteering

Volunteers from both Plymouth and Salford were asked a number of questions about their work with Victim Support in order to obtain an overview of their perceptions. They were asked to say approximately how many hours each week they worked for Victim Support, on the basis that a low level of activity could be just as de-motivating for volunteers as feeling over burdened (Mawby and Gill 1987). Most volunteers worked three to five hours per week, with more of those in Salford (6 out of 11: 60%) making this time commitment compared to those in Plymouth (10 out of 27: 37%); however in Plymouth the same number again worked between six and ten hours per week. For the majority of volunteers (31 out of 37: 84%) this workload was 'about right'. This pattern was evident in both areas as the majority of volunteers (22 out of 27: 82% in Plymouth and 9 out of 10: 90% in Salford) in each sample confirmed this.

Following the lead of Gill (1986) I asked volunteers to give their reasons for wanting to do voluntary work generally, irrespective of the fact that they undertook work for Victim Support. Thirty seven responses were given with the most popular response (15 out of 37: 41%) being that they had the time to spare. In other words, the reason for volunteering given by a significant minority of the sample was, as others before me have indicated (Gill 1986; Mawby and Gill 1987; Gill and Mawby 1990), 'self directed'. In eight of these fifteen cases, retirement had been a catalyst for undertaking voluntary work; a factor which resonates with some of the current government's views on how older people should be spending their time¹³ (Rochester et al 2002).

¹³ See 'The Mail on Sunday' (23rd April, 2000) in which affluent over-50s were exhorted to 'get off the golf course and do more voluntary work'.

I knew before retirement that I had to have 'plans' and be involved in 'projects' for my own benefit. Consequently I knew that one of my plans was to do some voluntary work where I would have control as to how much or little I did...

(LS103)

When I retired from work I enrolled at college and did various courses...I decided that with the skills I had and the time to spare I would be a volunteer.

(LS105)

A number of other 'self-directed' reasons were given for engaging in voluntary work. Three people had wanted to change their life course, two more to gain some sort of social outlet and a further four to satisfy college criteria. Three people had 'drifted' (Gill 1986; Mawby and Gill 1987; Gill and Mawby 1990) into voluntary work, being persuaded by other people or, as the quote below indicates, external events.

Was working in the Civic Centre saw a body as a result of student committing suicide, began training with the Samaritans.

(LS7)

Only four out of the thirty seven responses were 'agency led' (ibid) that is respondents chose to do voluntary work because of their desire to work specifically with victims.

Because of my background in the RAF police I feel very strongly about people who commit crime and I also feel that criminals are given lots of civil rights by law, but that victims of crime get very little rights or help. For this reason I wanted to do voluntary work, but especially to help victims of crime.

(LS6)

Volunteers were then asked to say what it was about Victim Support that attracted them to this area of work. Whereas previous research (Mawby and Gill 1987) showed a significant minority (38%) expressing an interest in victims specifically,

thereby being categorised as 'agency led', my findings differed as only six out of the 36 (17%) who responded said this.

I genuinely feel for victims and wish to support them. (LS31: victim related)

It is the only (respondent's emphasis) organisation for the victims of crime so there was no choice on any other. (LS77: victim related)

They are a well deserved group. (LS102: victim related)

... I had felt for a long time that the justice system was looking after the offenders needs and the victims were left to sort themselves out. (LS105 victim related)

On the other hand five out of 36 volunteers (14%) gave answers that were categorised as 'law and order' style responses to this question.

The Law has always interested me and the Crown Court held an immediate attraction. (LS30: law related)

Witness service because I would be helping others to do their duty. (LS4: law related)

The remaining respondents identified a diverse range of reasons for joining Victim Support. Six respondents (17%) gave altruistic reasons for being attracted to Victim Support. One stated:

I felt that my own life experiences and the way I dealt with them could help others. (LS21)

Six more (17%) said that others had persuaded or recommended them to Victim Support, or that they had seen an advertisement for the service. Clearly then, a small number gave 'drift' as the reason for joining. This is surprising given the fact that my later findings show that up to one fifth of volunteers in Plymouth had joined

Victim Support by what could be termed 'word of mouth'; something which Gill (1986) linked to the notion of 'drift'. Thus for one volunteer in the current study, the fact that his wife worked as a volunteer was given as his reason for joining Victim Support.

However my findings do not wholly support those of Gill whose 1986 study had found that over half of the volunteers had 'drifted' into Victim Support. Furthermore the fact that six (17%) of my respondents were specifically attracted to Victim Support is again a much lower figure than that uncovered by Gill (1986).

Four respondents gave a 'self directed' reason for joining Victim Support in that this type of work offered them specifically what they needed, either in terms of work placements or in terms of the work fitting into their own lifestyles.

They were able to offer me a placement for my course. (LS117)

I intentionally looked into the work of several voluntary organisations. The one that suited my lifestyle was Victim Support ... also I could do as much or as little as I wanted to do. (LS103)

The two remaining respondents' comments did not fall into any of the above categories, although the first of these responses, as discussed earlier, may be construed as 'drift'.

X and I were on counselling course together. (LS9)

I have no problems talking to strangers – I am a very good listener. (LS10)

Again following the lead of Gill (1986), respondents were also asked to consider a number of factors that may have influenced their decision to become a Victim

Support volunteer. However whereas Gill compared the views of Victim Support volunteers with those of Probation Associates and Police Specials, I analysed the responses of community volunteers alongside those of court witness and management volunteers¹⁴. I must also point out that whereas Gill (1986) had been able to rank the responses given, the data provided within my research did not allow me to do this. Indeed this is one area where the use of a self administered questionnaire was less advantageous. Table 8.1, overleaf, illustrates the findings for this analysis, from which a number of themes emerge¹⁵.

¹⁴ Although the main foci of my analysis are the differences between community and court witness scheme volunteers.

¹⁵ Please note having cross tabulated 'nature of voluntary work' with 'factors influencing joining Victim Support as a volunteer' I proceeded to redistribute responses from those who perform more than one role. As table 8.1 shows there were 38 volunteers in all, 6 of whom perform community and court, community and management and court and management roles.

% of volunteers saying that the following factors attracted them...	All volunteers		Community volunteers		Court witness volunteers		Management Volunteers	
	N=38		N=15.5 – 17.5		N=13.5 – 15.5		N=4 – 5	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
May like to work in cjs	14	37	6	38	8	57	0	0
Genuine desire to help people	33	87	13.5	87	12.5	93	3	60
Working with VS interesting	31	82	15.5	89	13	87	2.5	56
Victims of crime are a group that needs help	33	87	16.5	94	14	93	2.5	56
Time on my hands	34	90	14.5	83	15.5	100	4	80
Improve non cjs job opportunities	12	32	3.5	21	7.5	52	1	25
Someone close/myself already a victim of crime	16	42	8	50	8	57	0	0
Strong commitment to law and order	26	68	11.5	70	14	93	0.5	11
Previously/currently employed in cjs	14	37	15.5	35	7	50	1.5	33
Opportunity to meet new people	21	55	7.5	45	11	79	2.5	55
Useful skills to offer	28	74	13.5	77	10.5	68	4	80

Table 8.1: Factors influencing the decision to become a Victim Support volunteer

Victim Support volunteers, certainly those working in the community and court witness schemes, can be seen to share ‘a genuine desire to help people’, a finding that mirrored Gill’s (1986) earlier work with Victim Support volunteers¹⁶. Again for community and court witness volunteers the commitment to victims is more visible, indicating an ‘agency led’ rationale for joining the service. This again upholds the findings of Gill (ibid).

¹⁶ That is those visiting victims in the community.

Court witness volunteers however did seem to display a more legalistic outlook. Almost three fifths of the responses indicated a desire to work in the criminal justice system compared to just under two fifths of community volunteers, whilst a higher proportion of court volunteers had been employed previously in that sector. Furthermore the overwhelming majority of court volunteers were committed to upholding law and order compared to slightly over two thirds of community volunteers. In these ways court witness volunteers shared the more legalistic view that Gill (1986) discovered in his analysis of Police Specials.

Volunteers were also asked to choose which of two statements applied to their decision to work for Victim Support. Whilst roughly equal numbers of community volunteers said that they were interested in doing voluntary work (47%) or specifically interested in working with victims (40%), fewer court witness volunteers (39%) wanted to do voluntary work generally, but a much higher proportion (54%) were interested in working with victims. Thus clear differences between community and court witness scheme volunteers emerged, the latter favouring 'agency led' reasons for volunteering.

Respondents were also asked to explain what the best and worst things were about volunteering for Victim Support. Of the 37 responses received, 46% felt that helping people was the best thing, 14% (5 cases) thought that it was victims' expressions of gratitude, 6 (16%) that it was the sense of achievement and 16% because it was 'doing the job'.

I don't like to think of the work I do as enjoyable because of the subject matter. You meet people after a very traumatic event in their life, which I think can only be outweighed by a bereavement. However I do think it is satisfying when I visit a

victim (especially the elderly) and have a positive effect on them, to help them get over a stressful event.

(LS6: helping people is the best thing)

In court when someone says I could not have gone through it without you. After helping someone to apply for criminal injuries compensation he/she says thank you for letting me talk about my feelings.

(LS23: victims' gratitude)

I find the most satisfying part is when a client is back leading a more normal life again and able to go out again without being terrified.

(LS104: sense of achievement)

Supporting and explaining to the victim the court procedures and what will happen when and where.

(LS128: doing the job)

The camaraderie and joy felt when the wronged receive justice they rightly deserve. However this has got to be tempered with the disappointments when for various reasons this is denied.

(LS41: other responses)

Thirty six responses were received when volunteers were asked to identify the least satisfying aspects of working for Victim Support. The main reason given by eight volunteers (22%) was that, for one reason or another, the victim had not been helped as much as he or she could have been.

The feeling of anger and frustration when trying to comfort someone in court who has just seen a defendant walk free due to errors made by the police or CPS.

(LS23)

When a client says they are okay and do not need any help, when you know if they could only open up you could help.

(LS104)

The other main 'complaints' concerned either the difficulties of actually making contact with the victims visited (6 out of 36 cases: 17%).

Ringling or knocking at a client's door, knowing full well that they are inside and them not opening or answering the door.

(LS 75: difficulties contacting victims)

*Finding people not at home. Not being able to find the address the first attempt.
(LS12: difficulties contacting victims)*

Others complained there was too much paperwork (7 out of 36 cases: 19%).

*Doing statistics for the government and feeling like a secretary for the CPS.
(LS31: too much paperwork)*

*I have experienced the changes in education since 1988 and I fear that Victim Support may follow a similar regime/course. If so I will become a volunteer for the PDSA or RSPCA.
(LS103: too much paperwork)*

Some volunteers (5 out of 36: 14%) commented on the fact that in working for Victim Support they encountered hostility, bigotry¹⁷, danger and a lack of hygiene. The reference to 'hostility' is important when one considers that the volunteers interviewed had largely visited people in their homes without any prior appointment and very little real knowledge about them; a point that Maguire and Corbett (1987) also reflected upon. One of the volunteers in my study stated.

*Very occasionally the person you are visiting has become bitter and angry and often rather aggressive to almost everyone. At that point there is nothing much that can be done until a later date.
(LS77)*

Volunteers may then find themselves dealing with a wide range of people from backgrounds that vary quite markedly from their own. This is significant considering the traditional view, in theory at any rate, of Victim Support as a (representative) community response to crime.

A number of other issues were raised; the fact that Victim Support work/training can involve the sacrifice of leisure time, and the issue of claiming expenses. The

¹⁷ Albeit the volunteer expressing this view was referring to the bigotry of other volunteers.

latter point was again discussed in the work of Maguire and Corbett (1987) where volunteers did not always claim their expenses.

Three volunteers could not identify any negative points. However the remaining four cited the agency's lack of funds, a negative view of 'management', the very fact that there is a need for Victim Support anyway and the fact that some volunteers may not recognise the sensitivity that this area of work requires.

Volunteers were also asked to give their reasons for continuing to work for Victim Support, a line of enquiry that Gill (1986) had initiated. The main response was categorised as 'self-directed' in that volunteers said the work was useful and challenging (10 out of 37: 27%).

I am satisfied that I have a useful function and that I am 'contributing'. I have met new people and enjoy moving in a different circle from my previous one which was related to employment. (LS33)

The training was very demanding and made you think and challenge things in order to improve them. By continuing I repay the time and effort invested in me by Victim Support and hopefully turn it into a credit rather than a debit investment. (LS41)

A further nine volunteers (24%) replied that Victim Support is a worthwhile cause with six more (16%) saying that victims need support. In total therefore 40% of volunteers seemed to be saying that they continue as a volunteer for 'other directed' that is altruistic or agency-led reasons, compared with 51% of the Gill's (1986) sample. The two quotes below illustrate my point.

I enjoy the work and feel I am helping others in some small way. I find it satisfying. (LS37)

I continue as a volunteer because crime is an ever present element of our society. Hence there will always be victims of crime, so there will always be a need for these victims to be supported and assisted. So while I have the time to assist the victims, I shall continue to do so.

(LS6: victims need support)

Five respondents (14%) gave answers that categorised them as 'people, people'.

In some ways these answers link into 'self-directed' reasons for continuing, in that there was some benefit for the volunteers personally.

I like people! Helping in any way however small. Each person you meet has individuality so it is never boring.

(LS112: 'people, people')

The last five comments took various forms. Three volunteers said that they would continue because they liked being a Victim Support volunteer, something akin to the 15% of responses in Gill's (1986) sample which he categorised under 'stickability'. One person hoped that the experience would aid the search for employment in the criminal justice system, whilst the final respondent was a new entrant to the service who did not feel able to comment.

Training and Supervision

I will now focus upon the responses of Plymouth volunteers, with particular emphasis upon those working in the community. The national Code of Practice (Victim Support 2000) stipulates that management committees are responsible for the selection, training and supervision of volunteers. All newly recruited volunteers, whether community or court witness scheme, must undergo a period of basic training. Indeed at the time of my research the community and court volunteers who participated were more likely to have followed an initial common training period before branching off into their chosen area of work; a situation

which is reflected within table 8.2. Victim Support training is changing however, in that community and court volunteers will no longer receive the same core basic training. In this way, greater levels of specialism will be introduced at an early stage of their careers.

Type of training	Number of volunteers receiving training ¹⁸			Number of volunteers who felt adequately prepared by their training					
	Community	Court	Management.	Community		Court		Management.	
	N=14	N=14	N=4	N	%	N	%	N	%
Basic training	14	14	2	13	93	12	86	2	All
Community.	12	11	1	11	92	10	91	1	All
Court	7	14	1	5	71	14	All	1	All
Diversity	3	6	1	3	All	6	All	1	All
Serious sexual assault	6	9	2	5	83	8	89	2	All
Domestic violence	5	9	1	5	All	8	89	1	All
Murder	1	3	2	1	All	3	All	2	All
YOT	3	4	1	1	33	2	50	1	All
Joint probation visits	1	1	0	0	0	0	0		NA

Table 8.2: The training received by Plymouth volunteers

The basic training that volunteers undergo can attract formal recognition. Thus the training provided by Victim Support Plymouth for example was accredited through

¹⁸ The numbers within each sub-sample do not add up to the total number of Plymouth respondents (27) because several volunteers undertake more than one type of volunteering.

the Open College Network, a mechanism of Plymouth College of Further Education. It is envisaged however that the basic training developed more recently (Victim Support 2002) will attract National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs).

Basic training currently takes place within a classroom setting. However those wishing to work in the community must shadow more experienced volunteers for an initial period. This allows the co-ordinator to appraise their performance before confirming them as fully-fledged Victim Support volunteers.

Once they've completed the sort of classroom training they go out with other more experienced volunteers who they shadow and then are shadowed by experienced volunteers. If everything goes well we ask them in for another interview and if we feel happy and they are happy then we ask them to be a volunteer.

(unstructured interview with co-ordinator, Plymouth Victim Support 4.1.01)

Volunteers can also follow more specialist training courses. The national association has produced training packages which contain the standards that specialist training should reach; for example *Women victims of sexual violence* (October 1994) and *Supporting people bereaved by homicide* (1999). This training is offered selectively as the following quote shows.

Once they've actually done a core community training and they've been with us for six months and we're happy that they're going to stay with us, when specialist training comes up we do actually ask them if they would like to take part.

(unstructured interview with co-ordinator, Victim Support, Plymouth 4.1.01)

Specialist training can therefore take a variety of forms. More recently and, more formally, 'national office' is rolling out specialist training which is likely to be delivered in residential settings. The area management board will select

volunteers for this training¹⁹, rather than the local member scheme. At the same time volunteers must continue to attend six volunteer meetings per year where representatives from other agencies often speak. In addition local branch managers may arrange to link up with training opportunities locally, as illustrated by the following two quotes.

...we provide here specialist training in supporting victims of serious sexual assault, diversity training, and then we have obviously in the evenings we have our volunteers meetings and we have specialist speakers in for that.

We're also trying to link up at the moment with the domestic violence co-ordinator for Plymouth to take part in city wide domestic violence training. What we receive at the moment really is what is available and some of our volunteers have had training with Plymouth Homesafe when they brought speakers down from the Women's Aid and some of them have been on that.... And also supporting victims in murder and manslaughter – our volunteers have received that but some of its just awareness training.

(unstructured interview with co-ordinator, Victim Support, Plymouth 4.1.01)

Whilst it seems that the model of volunteer training within local schemes is to be organised more centrally, there will no doubt still be room for local schemes to be creative in adding to the menu of training that national office provide; for example Victim Support Plymouth organised a trip to Dartmoor Prison for volunteers in 2002. Nevertheless, it appears that volunteer training will over time become more centrally organised and, by default, more standardised. The following quote illustrates this point.

I think you know once we go to Area then I think county wide training will be more viable in specialist subjects.

(unstructured interview with co-ordinator, Victim Support, Plymouth 4.1.01)

In view of the importance of training volunteers (Aves 1969), I asked volunteers to say which type of training they had undertaken and the extent to which they felt

¹⁹ Victim Support Devon are seeking to appoint a paid Training Manager.

this had prepared them for their work (as per table 8.2²⁰). Five community and two court witness volunteers said that they received other training also, such as child abuse awareness, loss and bereavement training, drugs awareness, administration and clerical training and assertiveness training. Overall, as table 8.2 indicates, volunteers across the board felt particularly happy with the basic training received, feeling that they were 'adequately prepared' for the work ahead. These findings are supportive of the work of Reynolds et al (1993) who also found that the majority of volunteers in their study (73%) felt adequately prepared by the core training that they had received.

Volunteers were less positive about the training received for Youth Offending Team work and joint visits with probation. The branch manager for Victim Support Plymouth explained why this should be, relating the fact that very few volunteers participated anyway and that the training for each area of interest was limited to no more than one day. In comparison, the core training is mandatory and, as indicated, there are drives afoot for this to be enhanced by NVQ accreditation.

Volunteers were asked if they thought their training could be improved in any way. Whilst in the main they appear to be happy with the training provided, a number of suggestions were made. Two volunteers said that they would prefer 'more in depth training'. Another said that the 'constant brainstorming at training is tedious'. Two more wanted a more practical approach to be taken, for example more training from professionals who are 'in situ' and more practical things like

²⁰ Since this research was conducted other forms of training have been introduced by national office. For example a training pack for volunteers for supporting children as the direct or indirect victims of crime is currently being introduced.

accompanied visits in the community and observations sessions in court. The final volunteer found some aspects of training frustrating.

I do sometimes feel that some of the training is a waste of time as common sense is all that is needed to answer some of the so called problems presented during training. (LS23)

As well as being responsible for training volunteers, the current Code of Practice (Victim Support 2000) also stipulates that adequate supervision must be provided. This takes a number of forms; regular one to one meetings, group meetings, plus an annual review of volunteers' work in which training and support needs can be discussed (ibid). Supervision is provided by a staff member from the local office and seems set to continue in this fashion²¹.

The majority of volunteers (21 out of 24: 88%) thought the level of supervision was 'about right'. They were also asked to say what their understanding of the supervision process was. Most perceived it to be a safe, supportive and educational process. At the same, the monitoring aspect of the process was also identified.

To discuss issues and concerns, also to offload in complete confidence. (LS20)

To make sure the volunteer is not taking the burden of the problems of cases on too much. Its used as a sounding post for the volunteers so they can 'unload'. (LS34)

To oversee that procedures are carried out correctly. (LS31)

An opportunity to receive constructive feedback – to evaluate the way in which you work – to help you with decision making – identify areas where improvement could be made. (LS28)

²¹ Personal communication, branch manager Victim Support Plymouth 8.12.03.

Community volunteers: perspectives on volunteering

Volunteers working in the community were asked whether in the last six months they had referred victims on to other (non criminal justice) state or voluntary agencies. Just under half (7 out of 15: 47%) said that they had, citing a diverse range of agencies. Two of the Plymouth volunteers cited Plymouth Homesafe, a voluntary community safety organisation that provides free security to less affluent householders. Other agencies cited were those dealing with issues such as housing, family support and community mediation²². In this way volunteers showed how they were making use of community resources, in keeping with the traditional model upon which Victim Support was based (Reeves 1985; Holtom and Raynor 1988).

Five out of the 13 Plymouth volunteers (39%) said that they had encountered rudeness or hostility from victims, and gave their opinion why this should be. One volunteer thought this was a sort of 'spillover' from the crime itself.

They are angry because of the crime committed against them and therefore they take their anger out on whoever and sometimes that is us. (LS27)

Three volunteers thought that it was because they were from Victim Support, as opposed to being directed at them personally. In the first case the victim blamed the volunteer for what she saw as shortcomings of the system, whilst in the second case the victim's daughter declined the offer of help; and in the third the volunteer simply noted 'homeowner busy' (LS9).

²² Court witness scheme volunteers were not asked this question. However one court witness volunteer noted how he had helped the wife of a defendant contact an agency that assists prisoners' families.

One lady I visited was most upset because I was unaware of all the circumstances of the crime committed against her. I did explain that the police did have to keep cases confidential which was obviously in her interest. (LS 65)

Daughter of victim was also a victim, but did not want to speak with me – she was coping even though she was fearful to the point of sleeping with a knife beneath her pillow. (LS79)

The fifth volunteer, who was black, reported the victim saw him at the door and did not bother to answer. Whilst he did not specifically say that he felt the victim to be racially prejudiced, his comments from an earlier interview in phase two indicated that this was part of his experience of volunteering.

...I feel colour is a problem, sometimes you feel people see a black person coming to the door and think oh here comes trouble. Once they see the VS card, they accept me. (501)

When this volunteer reflected on whether he had ever considered leaving Victim Support, his response was as follows.

Seeing me at the door and not bothering to answer it. When I encountered...wondered what the hell am I doing? (LS75)

Interestingly, none of the community volunteers from Salford reported such experiences.

Volunteer recruitment

The ways in which Victim Support recruits volunteers has been an important factor in the degree to which volunteers are representative of 'the community' and, therefore, of the victims they support. In the past restrictive recruitment practices (Gill 1986; Mawby and Gill 1987; Gill and Mawby 1990) resulted in volunteers comprising largely a homogenous group (Russell 1994). This is something which

goes against the grain of Victim Support as a 'community response' to crime (Holtom and Raynor 1988) and, arguably, our perceptions of voluntarism in modern times.

Table 8.3 illustrates how volunteers within my sample were recruited. Whilst most volunteers responded to advertising, or felt that the decision to join had been their own idea, there were differences between the Plymouth and Salford samples. Far more volunteers in Plymouth for example were attracted by the media. However, in both areas recruitment by 'word of mouth' can be seen to play only a small part, in contrast to the work of Mawby and Gill (1987).

Means of recruitment	Plymouth N=27		Salford N=11	
	N	%	N	%
Local advertising	15	57	0	0
National advertising	1	4	3	27
Volunteer bureau	2	7	0	0
Volunteers' own idea	3	11	6	55
Word of mouth	3	11	1	9
Other	3	11	1	9

Table 8.3: Victim Support volunteers and recruitment processes

There are however specific case examples of staff recruitment that indicate 'word of mouth' appointments do still operate, such as one scheme where several generations of the same family have worked in one role or another (Victim Support 2002g). At the same time the rate at which retired police officers have joined the organisation, as co-ordinators/branch managers or as part of local management committees, is also of note, particularly in view of the organisation's overall desire

to demonstrate its autonomy from the state and its (criminal justice) agents (Victim Support 2002h).

Plymouth volunteers' perceptions of the impact of crime and the services provided in phase two of the research

Plymouth volunteers were asked to provide their views of the service that they had provided to victims. The current section of this chapter presents the responses given within phase two of the research. Those provided in phase three will be presented later.

Volunteers were asked to describe their initial meeting with victims. The majority (20 out of 22 volunteers: 91%) had visited victims unannounced, in keeping with the original model of Victim Support and the type of cases included within this research. In about half of the cases, the volunteer had a long chat with the victim, whereas in two fifths of cases the meeting was brief. In only two cases the visit had been arranged through the office. Most visits were made at a convenient time for victims and, even if not, they were still happy to talk to volunteers.

The majority of volunteers said that their visits had taken place within four days of the crime being reported to the police²³; in line with the standards of service outlined in the Victims Charter of 1996 (Home Office 1996). The majority also thought that this was the right time for the victim (17 out of 20: 85%).

²³ Whether or not the visit was 'cold'.

Judging on her reactions I would say about right because she'd had enough time to get over the initial shock and she'd got her daughter-in-law there to numb the pain. Any longer... would have thought people didn't care.

(victim visited within two days of crime being reported to the police: 425)

In one of the two cases where the volunteer saw the victim by arrangement, the visit took place five to seven days after the crime had been reported. The volunteer in this case thought that this visit was too late.

It's very difficult isn't it, she'd had people round to talk it through – family and friends – but I do feel that it was a little too late.

(497)

The victim had been assaulted and so, in line with current policy locally, would not have been visited cold. Potentially this may have increased the time delay in a visit being made. In another case, the volunteer commented that the unannounced visit, made within four days, was too late.

It's a bit late in the circumstances as she was so concerned about security. She was tied to the house because she was afraid the burglars would come back, it was a bit late. But as it happens the police were a bit concerned about her and had contacted Homesafe on her behalf. We found this out when we contacted Homesafe about her.

(479)

In the majority of cases (19 out of 22) the victims named on the police crime sheets were seen by volunteers. However other adults living in the household were also seen (in 8 cases) as were children living in the household (in 2 cases) and, finally, 'someone else' such as other family members (in 2 cases).

In terms of crime impact, only nine of the 22 volunteers (41%) considered victims to be affected very much or quite a lot, whilst over half (12 out of 22: 55%) of the sample felt that victims were minimally affected. However in line with responses

from victims themselves, anger was identified as being the predominant emotional reaction (13 out of 22 cases: 59%). This was followed by upset (12 cases: 55%); fear (6 cases: 27%); shock (4 cases: 18%) and difficulty in sleeping (1 case: 5%).

The following case was interesting in that the home of two young men who shared a property had been burgled. The volunteer commented on their somewhat minimal reactions as follows.

Strangely with these youngsters there was no real anger but a certain amount of shock and surprise.
(2/54/55)

He went on to describe their emotional reactions.

It's a common thing for females, where a thief goes through their things, for them to wash everything and even disinfect things ... men tend to be more angry and tend to need help less frequently. I gave them a card and said if you want to get in touch in the future please do so – I think the fact they were moving sort of took their minds off what happened.
(2/54/55)

Volunteers identified 'other reactions' in five of the 22 cases (23%) as the following comments illustrate.

He did go for the old retribution because he had a suspicion as to who it was, but I advised him against it. I told him if he had any information to call the police and let them deal with it.
(489)

The volunteers were also asked to say whether they thought anyone else in the household was affected. Four out of 19 volunteers (21%) thought that other adults were affected, whilst two (11%) thought that their children were affected.

Volunteers were then invited to comment upon the services that they provided to victims. Whilst over half of victims were alone when the volunteer called, only

around one quarter of volunteers said that they offered to return to speak to those not present at the time of this visit. Only one volunteer (out of 22) said that the victim requested further contact (5%), and so a further visit was made. The majority of volunteers however (20 out of 22 cases: 95%), told victims that they could have further contact if they wanted this.

In terms of the services provided, more volunteers (16 out of 22: 73%) felt that they provided personal support than anything else. Around one third said that they provided advice on practical help and just under one third (6 cases: 27%) made suggestions as to other services that could be helpful.

I did mention Homesafe, which is a charity which advises on home security and helps people if they need work done, for example changing locks. (2/54/55)

More volunteers thought 'personal support' had been the most helpful service that they had provided.

She talked to me about moving however in talking to her she realised gradually that the house is perfect for her. I explained that she would think differently after a while. (358)

I just think it helps them when they know someone cares about their predicament, I think it is a positive response after a negative incident. (490)

Helpfulness, the personal support, I think it embraces a lot of the advice that we give. (489)

In one case, the volunteer considered that personal support had been the most helpful service provided, even though the victim had discussed issues that were not related to the burglary at all.

I was there for an hour listening to his personal problems. He wasn't bothered about the burglary... (482)

In this way, my work supports that of Maguire and Corbett (1987) in that Victim Support volunteers do not confine victims to discussing their crime experiences. Consequently the service provided is a holistic one.

In one case the volunteer had given the victim some rather unorthodox advice by way of 'other help'. He had advised the victim to advertise on local radio for the return of a video film that had been stolen in the course of a burglary. The film was of great sentimental value as it was a record of his children growing up. The volunteer believed the victim had found this advice most helpful. This is an example of the way a particular victim had negotiated his needs (Shapland et al 1985; Maguire and Kynch 2000).

It was the personal support that I feel was most helpful but this encompassed the advice that I gave him regarding the video film. (489)

Most volunteers (17: 77%) thought that they had given real help or advice to victims. In line with victims' comments volunteers felt that those who they hadn't helped did not need help anyway. The majority of volunteers (16 out of 20: 76%) felt that they could not have done anything else to help victims.

It was one of those borderline cases...should I do a follow up? She wasn't alone in the world, she'd got contacts, whereas for some elderly victims they are alone in the world if they've got no family and their friends have passed away. In this case I decided against a follow up but left a card so she could get back in touch with us. (358)

No I wouldn't have left him if I thought there was. (181)

Thirteen out of the 22 volunteers (59%) said that they had left written information. This contrasted generally to a much lower figure relayed by victims. Volunteers

said, perhaps unsurprisingly, that they were more likely to leave leaflets on topics such as burglary, crime prevention and Victim Support itself. The majority of volunteers (16 out of 22: 73%) also thought that the personal contact had been necessary.

She obviously wanted to talk and needed to talk to someone who realised how she was feeling. (358)

Because of her distress and her obvious fear of living in a house she couldn't make secure. (361)

I think she did want to see somebody because she was very pleased to see me. In my opinion older people tend to like to see someone in person. (425)

Yes, just to have seen someone, the majority of people say its nice that someone called, even if they don't want any support. (481)

The following quotes illustrate a point made within previous research (Maguire and Kynch 2000), that is that Victim Support has very little real idea of the true impact of crime until a victim is visited.

You don't know until you get there. (502)

Some people don't like talking to a stranger on the phone about feelings, this is why personal contact is important. (181)

Its always helpful to the victim to show a bit of interest. She may have been in a terrible state, you never know. (479)

Sometimes the police do tell them they might get a call from us, but its only by going that you find out if people need help. Personal contact is necessary because its only when you get there that people think of it, other people having an interest in their circumstances. Some people may not have support from friends and family, you (could) be the only person they've got to talk to. (493)

Of the six volunteers who did not think the visit was necessary only one thought that the victim should not have been contacted at all. Four volunteers thought that

the victim should have been contacted by letter whilst the remaining volunteer thought that a telephone call would have sufficed.

Plymouth volunteers' perceptions of the impact of crime and the services provided in phase three of the research

The questions asked of volunteers in phase two of the research were repeated in phase three²⁴. Volunteers were asked to describe their first meeting with victims. In 25 out of 30 cases (83%) the victim had been visited 'cold' with roughly the same proportions, 40% and 43% respectively, saying that they had had either a brief or a long chat as part of the visit. The majority of volunteers (92%) felt that for those visited unannounced, the visit had been made at 'about the right time', in terms of when the crime had occurred. All five volunteers who visited 'by arrangement' thought that this had taken place at 'about the right time' also.

In terms of the impact of crime, volunteers thought that this sample of victims were more badly affected than those in phase two in that more of them (69% compared to 41%) felt they were affected very much or quite a lot by the crime. The qualitative comments provided by volunteers add depth to this finding.

*X had lived in this bungalow for ten years. Although three years ago she had enquired about moving to sheltered housing, she was quite happy. However after the burglary she was seriously thinking about moving again. Also whilst I was there talking to X a bird flew past her window, which startled her quite a lot. The main thing that affected her I believe is that she woke up and saw a burglar standing over her. Luckily she thought she was dreaming and went back to sleep.
(victim affected very much: 418/25543)*

Because the burglar took the majority of X's jewellery (she said approximately £5000 worth). She was mostly affected because she lost a lot of items of

²⁴ Albeit in phase three a little more detail was requested about referrals to other services and about volunteers' perceptions of victims' personal circumstances. This was a precursor to the final feedback form that was circulated to community and court volunteers in both Plymouth and Salford which delved further again into getting volunteers to talk about how they do the work that they do.

sentimental value which couldn't be replaced. She did feel better however because the burglar emptied her jewellery boxes and left, rather than looking through all her drawers and cupboards etc.

(victim affected quite a lot: 436/25664)

Mr X stated he was very shocked at first – unable to sleep for the first couple of nights, placed a chair in front of the doors – we also talked about his late wife – her loss affecting him more in the aftermath of the burglary.

(victim affected quite a lot:438/25626)

Again in line with the feelings expressed by victims in both phases of the research and by volunteers in phase two, the majority of volunteers (17 out of 30 cases: 57%) thought that victims were predominantly angry. A similar number of volunteers thought that victims were upset (16 cases: 53%), whilst approximately two fifths of volunteers thought victims were shocked, fearful and had difficulty in sleeping. Over half of the sample (15 volunteers: 58%) thought other adults in the household had been emotionally affected. Approximately one third (9 volunteers: 30%) thought that these other adults were angry; a further third that they were upset, whilst one fifth (6 volunteers: 20%) thought they were shocked and that they were unable to sleep. A small minority of the sample (3 volunteers: 10%) thought other adults were fearful. None of the volunteers thought that children in the household had been affected emotionally by the crime.

As well as speaking to each of the victims, nine volunteers (29%) spoke to other adults in the household and three to people who did not live in the household. In two of these three cases the victims' daughters were spoken to; indeed for one of them their property had also been stolen. In the third case the volunteer spoke to the victim's friend. The majority of volunteers (18 out of 30: 60%) thought that they had spoken to everyone who had been affected by the burglary with those who were not seen having been absent at the time of their visit. Whilst five volunteers

offered to return to speak to those who they had not seen, no return visits were made. This supports the low level of further contact that victims had reported.

The majority of volunteers (28 out of 30: 93%) said that they had provided personal support to the victims they saw. More volunteers also said that they provided what may be regarded as more practical help; five (50%) said they gave advice on practical help that was needed, 14 (47%) suggested other services that may be helpful and 17 (57%) offered crime prevention advice. Volunteers identified personal support (73%) and crime prevention advice (47%) as being the most helpful services provided to victims. The majority of volunteers (73%) left leaflets on burglary whilst 53% left leaflets on Victim Support itself. Just over one third of volunteers left low energy light bulbs.

Volunteers were also asked whether they gave particular types of help to victims. Of those answering the question (n=20), nine volunteers said that they did. In four out of these nine cases, volunteers felt they had been particularly helpful in providing further reassurance to victims, either in terms of reiterating to victims that the service was 'there' for them, that their strong feelings of upset were quite 'normal' or that the victim was in no way to 'blame' for what had happened. In five cases the assistance provided by volunteers fell into the category of crime prevention. For example one volunteer was concerned about the future security of an elderly distraction burglary victim, and so he contacted Plymouth Homesafe on her behalf.

During our conversation X told me that on one of their calls either the male or female had taken the key to her patio doors, or at least the key was missing. Because X was so 'switched on' I thought it unlikely that she had misplaced it. I contacted Homesafe and explained the situation. They sent a workman around and he changed the lock on her patio doors. They also arranged for a 'rep' to call on the Monday and carry out a full security assessment on her house.

(432/25650)

Again with crime prevention in mind, another volunteer advised the victim to speak to his neighbours, who had apparently noticed the burglars actually carrying out the crime.

Advice was to get them to challenge anyone who they are unsure about.

(274/24474)

In one case, the volunteer felt that he had particularly helped a victim by suggesting that she contact the local authority, in order to take advantage of the low cost house insurance scheme that is available to tenants. Finally one volunteer suggested that the victims do their own detective work in order to track down their stolen goods.

Because some of the items taken were unique I suggested that X and her husband might take a look around jewellers and second hand shops in case they had been sold on. I also suggested that X photograph her jewellery in the future, so she would have a record of the items if she should be burgled again.

(436/25664)

Volunteers were also asked if there was anything that they had not been able to help with. One volunteer said that she had not been able to help when the victim had asked her about security problems. In reality, she had helped by referring his case to Plymouth Homesafe.

Asked whether they felt they gave real help or advice to victims the majority, 18 out of 30 volunteers (60%) said that they did. Those who said they did not were of the opinion that victims either did not need any help or that they had all the help that they needed from other sources (8 out of 12 cases: 89%). This pattern followed what victims generally had to say when asked about the extent to which they received help from the service.

Volunteers were asked if they re-visited victims. Only two out of the 27 who answered this said that they did, the reason given being specifically to see the victim again rather than anyone else in the household. Eight volunteers (out of 26 responses: 31%) said that they referred victims onto other agencies such as Plymouth Homesafe (7 out of 8: 89%), the National Health Service (1 case), the police (2 cases) and the local authority (1 case). The reasons given for such referrals were largely for security issues (4 out of 6 cases), followed by two cases where the volunteers identified 'obvious need'. In the final case the victim had been referred to the local authority because he was uninsured. The volunteer informed the victim of the local council's house insurance scheme.

Most referrals (6 out of 8 cases) were by way of volunteers giving victims the information needed for them to get in touch themselves with various agencies. Indeed one volunteer noted his preference, where possible, to empower victims; a theme that is fundamental to Victim Support's policy.

I give info about the crime prevention officer so that people don't spend money unnecessarily and it gives people a sense of their own worth to deal with things themselves. It would/could be disrespectful to do too much for victims and make them feel they are incapable. (261)

However, for one volunteer the appropriate action was to make the referral on the victim's behalf.

The lock needed to be changed for X's security and protection. I decided to call Homesafe myself because of X's age, and as it was a Friday I didn't want to risk someone being able to burgle her over the weekend. So I wanted the lock changed that day. I have to say that Homesafe were brilliant. The workman arrived to change the lock about 10 minutes after my call to Homesafe.

(432/25650)

Volunteers were asked to say whether they thought the visit was necessary or whether some other form of contact would, in their opinion, have sufficed. The majority of the volunteers who answered this question (14 out of 24: 58%) thought that the visit was necessary. Indeed one theme that was evident within volunteers' comments was that which formed the basis of the traditional unannounced volunteer visit, namely, that if the service did not reach out to victims in this proactive sense then fewer victims would take the initiative and contact Victim Support themselves (Reeves 1985). This was specifically identified by volunteers, and the following quotes illustrate this.

I felt that X was probably too shy/embarrassed to have made a request visit to Victim Support office. In this case the cold call seemed suitable. I tend to think she would have suffered in silence had I not called in on her.

(236/24285)

I don't feel that the victim would have voluntarily phoned Victim Support for help/advice. Cold calling seemed to be the right solution in this case.

(409/25363)

However one volunteer thought that an arranged visit would have been more appropriate because she was not made to feel particularly welcome. Three volunteers felt that the visit was not necessary at all. Two further volunteers

thought that although the visit wasn't necessary, some form of contact was. Unfortunately four volunteers gave no clear answer and six did not answer at all.

Volunteers were also asked to comment upon their perceptions of the levels of support that victims had at their disposal, on the basis that this could influence a number of decisions about a re-visit or referral on to another agency. In other words volunteers may decide that further resources should be 'spent' on those who have less support readily available to them.

Close family and friends were the most commonly observed form of support by 25 volunteers (83%). Support was also available from friends and neighbours (12 out of 25: 48%) which extended to members of the church that the victim attended.

*Next door neighbour very supportive (victim spent night of burglary in her house).
Member of Mormon Church – congregation very supportive – some giving help
with security measures. (472/25822)*

The data shows that fewer of those victims who volunteers identified as having social networks (one third compared to two thirds) were referred on to other agencies. It is not possible however to comment upon the position of victims without such networks, because apart from the very small numbers involved (4 cases only), volunteers had not supplied enough data. Similarly whether those without networks were re-visited more than those with networks is beyond the scope of this enquiry.

Matched perceptions of volunteers and victims: phase three of the research

Further analysis was undertaken to examine the extent to which victims' and volunteers' perceptions of crime impact and service provision were congruent, as in an ideal world one may expect some degree of matching (Simmonds 2002). The feedback from 13 volunteers from phase three, who between them saw 30 burglary victims, formed the basis of this analysis²⁵. The responses of victims on issues such as the impact of crime and the extent to which they felt their needs were met, largely mirrored the responses from the sample as a whole (ibid).

In quantitative terms, the views of victims and volunteers were closely matched, as whilst the majority of victims (22 out of 30: 73%) said that they were affected very much or quite a lot by the crime, and under one third (8 out of 30: 27%) said that they felt little or no effects, approximately the same proportions of volunteers reported these levels of impact (20 out of 30: 67% and 9 out of 30: 30% respectively). However where emotional impacts were concerned there were greater distances between the two sets of views, particularly concerning anger, shock and upset, as table 8.4 overleaf indicates.

²⁵ As stated earlier volunteers were asked to provide a maximum of four feedbacks within phase three of the research for the last sixty out of one hundred victims of burglary who were visited and seen by them.

Victims who were...	Victims' perceptions		Volunteers' perceptions	
	N=30		N=30	
	N	%	N	%
Affected very much	9	30	6	21
Affected quite a lot	13	43	14	48
Affected a little or not at all	8	27	9	31
Angry	26	87	17	57
Shocked	24	80	12	40
Fearful	15	50	13	43
Unable to sleep	15	50	12	40
Upset	23	77	16	53
Experiencing other reactions	16	53	6	20

Table 8.4: The impact of crime according to victims and Victim Support volunteers

The responses from victims and volunteers were also compared to explore the extent to which they agreed that particular services had been provided. These findings are presented in table 8.5. As table 8.5 overleaf indicates, a higher proportion of volunteers said they had provided services to victims. In addition a higher proportion of volunteers felt that victims found particular services most useful²⁶. Whereas volunteers tended to underestimate the emotional impact of crime they tended to overestimate the extent to which they had provided services²⁷. Thus volunteers were more positive about their work than were victims.

²⁶ Again volunteers did not overestimate 'links with the police'.

²⁷ With the exception of providing 'links with the police'.

Services received....	Victims' perceptions		Volunteers' perceptions		Services most helpful to victims...	Victims' perceptions		Volunteers' perceptions	
	N=30		N=30			N=30		N=30	
	N	%	N	%		N	%	N	%
Real help or advice	16	53	18	60					
Personal support	22	73	28	93	Personal support	12	40	22	73
Advice about practical help	12	40	15	50	Advice about practical help	1	3	5	17
Information re compensation and insurance	8	27	9	30	Information re insurance and compensation	1	3	5	17
A link with the police	5	17	1	3	A link with the police	2	7	0	0
Crime prevention advice	14	47	17	57	Crime prevention advice	4	13	14	47
Suggestions as to other services	12	40	14	47	Suggestions as to other services	3	10	9	30

Table 8.5: Volunteers' and victims' perceptions of service provision (phase 3)

This analysis was fine tuned still further. Using data from phase two of the study, victims and volunteers were matched in terms of the level of help each thought had been provided. The raw figures showed that the majority of volunteers (16 out of 22: 73%) thought that they had provided personal support, although a smaller majority of victims (13 out of 22: 59%) thought this was the case. However when the views of individual victims and volunteers were matched the level of agreement was somewhat lower, with victims and their respective volunteers in only ten of the 22 cases (45%) saying that personal support was provided and received. The following case study illustrates how one victim had agreed with the volunteer about the sort of help provided.

The victim (case number 489) who I interviewed was a married man with young children whose home had been burgled; when I saw him his wife was also present. Jewellery belonging to his wife and a video camera containing film of the children were amongst the items stolen. While the victim said that he was affected only 'a little' by the crime, he felt that his wife was more affected.

...my wife was more affected because they took jewellery that her father had given her before he died. The other really annoying thing was they took the camcorder containing pictures of the children growing up. My wife found it quite hard initially.

Both the volunteer and the victim agreed that 'personal support' had been provided, although in hindsight this may not be as clear cut as it sounds. The fact that the window had not been fully secured prior to the burglary was significant as was the fact that for slightly different reasons both the victim and his wife felt that the volunteer had given them personal support. The victim's wife had forgotten to

secure the window, hence her comments reflected the extent to which the volunteer helped her come to terms with the self blame that she felt.

You feel you're the only one its happened to, but he explained other people have done it, so you don't feel such a plonker.

Thus whilst the volunteer said that he had given personal support, this had been more focused towards the victim's wife. Whereas for the named victim, the volunteer had given practical advice about trying to secure the return of the video films back and about chasing up the insurance company.

It was the personal support that I feel was most helpful, but this encompassed the advice that I gave him regarding the video film. Also the insurance were dragging their heels, so I advised him to get onto the insurance to get the window sorted out. Until the assessor had been it couldn't be sorted, and so his wife was afraid to leave the house.

The victim noted the way in which the volunteer's advice had made him feel better about the stolen video films.

I felt it was a total lost cause for the videos, after he said other people had advertised to get their stuff back it made me feel more positive. Up until then there was no chance.

The figures from phases two and three show that there are differences in the perceptions of victims and volunteers on a range of measures, although these are not always that great. However volunteers did tend to underestimate the impact of crime which, clearly, may have implications for the sorts of services offered. The case study noted above however, is a good illustration of the sort of emotional and practical help that Victim Support can provide to victims. It illustrates well points that have been discussed earlier, and that have been examined by other researchers (Maguire and Corbett 1987) in previous studies of Victim Support that

have investigated how support is given, not just to the victim whose name appears on the police crime sheets but to the household unit as a whole.

Summary

Chapter eight has looked specifically at who Victim Support volunteers are and at their perceptions of the work that they do. Within these discussions, some cross matching of volunteers' and victims' views regarding their experiences was undertaken.

In terms of the volunteers themselves my findings have indicated that Victim Support volunteers tend to be a homogenous group, notwithstanding the small part in recruitment that 'word of mouth' plays today. Biases relating to age, gender and social class continue, as does the tendency for volunteers to be married and either employed or retired. My findings regarding the ethnicity of volunteers however cannot be reported with such rigour.

The volunteers within my sample were more likely to give self directed reasons than agency led ones in choosing to work for Victim Support, in contrast to findings from earlier work (Gill 1986; Mawby and Gill 1987; Gill and Mawby 1990). Why this should be is perhaps something that future research could uncover. However a comparison of responses from community and court witness scheme volunteers revealed that the latter were more likely to say they had an interest specifically in victims and to show more 'legalistic' tendencies in their reasons for volunteering. The way in which Victim Support has diversified its service by offering the court witness service clearly may then attract people who are motivationally quite different from those who wish to perform the role of community volunteering.

In terms of 'doing the job' volunteers could be seen to perform in the way intended originally, albeit their training and supervision is now more formalised. Thus the original 'crisis intervention' model persists with volunteers tending to undertake 'one off' visits and referring victims on to other community agencies where appropriate. In this way, Victim Support, whilst being the mainstream advocate for victims in the UK, continues to perform a generalist function. The research has shown that volunteers are fairly adept at judging the impact of crime upon victims. They had a good sense of when victims did not need help, but nevertheless spoke highly of the volunteer visit as the best way of being able to find out the extent to which the service was required, pointing to the more relativist view of victims' needs which I discussed in chapter six.

Surprisingly a significant minority of volunteers in the Plymouth sample noted that they had been subjected to rudeness and hostility; with one volunteer feeling that this was potentially based upon his ethnicity. This is something that further research should address. Chapter nine will now review and discuss the implications arising from my research.

Chapter Nine: Research review and implications

At this stage of my work I intend to look back over the previous eight chapters that comprise this thesis. Whilst it is not my aim to discuss once more in any detail the topics raised within each chapter, I will engage with issues that the research has highlighted. The ongoing implications of my work will therefore be considered.

This research was undertaken at a later stage in the development of Victim Support and, indeed, at a later stage in the recognition awarded to victims of crime generally from the second half of the twentieth century onwards. In these ways my work has extended previous studies (Maguire and Corbett 1987; Russell 1990; Wilkinson and Maguire 1993 and Maguire and Kynch 2000) which have also evaluated the work that Victim Support undertakes. Furthermore, as chapters one and three indicate, Victim Support now performs a greater role in the governance of crime within the UK (Crawford 1997; Crawford 2003); by way of, for example, increased levels of partnership working. This governance role is further extended by the potential involvement of Victim Support in restorative justice and other mechanisms that are intended to secure the greater inclusion of victims within the criminal justice system. Furthermore, Victim Support has become 'the voice' of victims in the UK and beyond, by way of its contributions to the policy making process.

In chapter one, I sought to give some background to my study by considering 'victims of crime' generally. This was important because, as noted, victims of crime have comprised the main vehicle for conducting my research. The purpose of this background was to locate victims within society and criminal justice today.

It is evident that victims of crime may still be judged as 'deserving' or not (Christie 1986); despite the fact that this sort of approach dates from the 1940s. Diminished notions of 'deservingness' negate victim status, whether this is at the point of reporting crime to the police, of providing evidence in court or in terms of requesting support¹. This issue has at last been raised publicly by Victim Support (Victim Support 2002a), at least as far as criminal injuries compensation is concerned; however exactly how this will be addressed remains to be seen. The Home Office (2004) review of compensation and support for victims, while considering how financial compensation could be organised in the future, makes no mention of this issue. Rather, the term 'blameless victims' is used throughout the report without any qualification being provided. The extent to which notions of 'deservingness' will continue to operate within Victim Support itself is also hard to predict, as this is something that has so far attracted little attention. It is therefore an area worthy of further enquiry².

Whilst chapter one reviewed recent trends to include victims in the criminal justice process and to provide support services for them, the way in which such mechanisms are flawed was also discussed. Just as Rock (1990) viewed criminal injuries compensation as a useful political tool, the same may be said for the host of services now available to victims. As discussed these inclusive mechanisms and support services do not, for one reason or another, always fulfil their intended aims save for showing that government is doing something about crime by 'supporting' victims.

¹ Indeed as noted within the current study I became aware that Victim Support itself may undertake such judgements about those who, potentially, may attract service provision.

² I am aware that in my own work I have only briefly touched upon this issue.

With this in mind, chapter three discussed how Victim Support promotes an image of being much more 'inclusive' of the victim population. However the continued reliance upon the police for its client base must surely undermine this claim. Substantial numbers are aware of Victim Support (Maguire and Kynch 2000) and the introduction of the telephone supportline may, over time, encourage more victims to self refer to the service. However a 'substantial minority' (ibid) are not sure that Victim Support will maintain confidentiality, particularly in relation to agencies such as the police and social services. Thus one approach to increasing victim coverage may rest upon the service making clear how it will manage such issues for those who do not wish to report their victimisation to the police. This is an area of possible tension for Victim Support, given that the Home Office is calling for the service to encourage crime reporting (National Audit Office 2002).

Chapter three raised the issue of funding and linked to this the way in which Victim Support has responded to the managerialism that has become established within the public sector and criminal justice agencies. The government has more recently announced that Victim Support should provide 'value for money', after years of placing little by way of expectations directly upon the service (National Audit Office 2002). Clearly whilst Victim Support has always guarded its independence (Russell 1990), even though the Home Office has been its main source of funding, this may signal a change in the relationship between the two. The fact that the government is calling for Victim Support to contribute to increased levels of crime reporting (National Audit Office 2002) reinforces the view that Victim Support's closely guarded independence may be under attack.

The funding upon which Victim Support has so far relied is now at risk, as the government is intent upon introducing competition amongst providers of victim

services at the local level (ibid). Funding is to be devolved onto Local Criminal Justice Boards, to whom local victim service providers could then submit bids. Victim Support has not welcomed this news (Reeves (2003), nor have some sections of the press³. These changes pose several questions, the answers to which are wholly speculative. Where will 'national office' fit into the new scheme of things, particularly regarding its ability to protect the independence discussed? Secondly, 'national office' has increasingly steered and developed local member schemes; and so to what extent will this continue?

The current plans may undermine the position of 'national office' in relation to its contribution to planning and regulating the work of local member schemes, particularly as funding is to be devolved onto Local Criminal Justice Boards. Indeed this may return a certain level of autonomy to Victim Support at the local level, although this may be subject to further trade off within the competition for funding. All in all Victim Support may come to occupy a more background position, particularly if it becomes one of a number of competing criminal justice service providers. As noted however, these discussions are purely speculative.

A number of issues were raised within the methodology underpinning this research. One issue noted was the low level of information that is generally made available to Victim Support by the police. Clearly with contact policy in mind, this can present problems. Victim Support needs to be clear as to the nature of incidents referred, in order that the appropriate responses can be made.

I discussed a case in chapter five that should have been excluded from my study because it was 'domestic' in nature. However the case notes provided by the

³ See 'Those who make victims feel safe are now at risk', in *The Times* 18. 11. 03.

police gave no indication that it was anything other than a 'typical' burglary. While the police may have been unaware of the complex nature of this case, the need for fuller information is, nevertheless, highlighted. However persuading the police to provide fuller information can be difficult particularly, as discussed, with the complexities of data protection in mind, and where officers on the ground may have little knowledge of what the implications may be for victims and Victim Support. Whilst this may point to the need for the police to be made aware of such problems, the outlook is somewhat negative, as the electronic referral systems that are soon to be introduced may effectively reduce the level of information available to Victim Support still further.

A further issue raised in chapter five was the difficulty that volunteers sometimes experience in locating victims who they wish to visit. Whilst this clearly is an occupational hazard it is important that volunteers ensure that the person they are speaking to is the victim or is a member of the victim's household, before proceeding with the visit. This can be difficult, especially when volunteers are required to visit certain types of households, for example multi-occupancy buildings, where residents can often be transitory and/or lead less conventionally organised lives⁴. Whilst this may be a matter for training and supervision, Victim Support itself can assist by, for example, using arranged visits for victims living in such circumstances⁵.

By the same token, victims are not always sure that they have actually been visited by Victim Support. Whilst this may be a question of their powers of recall it

⁴ For example students.

⁵ An example of this involved a victim whose address was a multi-occupancy building. Indeed as a result of this research Victim Support Plymouth adopted a policy of 'arranged visits' only for those living in such circumstances. One rationale for this was the number of unsuccessful visits (in terms of contact) that the research had highlighted, which represent, to some extent, a 'waste' of resources.

may also point to the fact that following a burglary in particular, it is quite likely that victims will be visited by a number of agencies. This was something that a previous co-ordinator of Victim Support Plymouth noted. The services that Victim Support provide are often less tangible. Victim Support volunteers do not fit security measures themselves, but refer victims on to other agencies who perform these more physical tasks. In this way Victim Support is perhaps less visible than other community and state agencies who victims come into contact with.

It also became clear to me that the use of a CATI (computer assisted telephone interview) approach to data collection could result in certain respondents being excluded from the research process. The particular group to whom I refer are older respondents, some of whom were resistant to being interviewed by telephone because of the relatively prolonged interaction that this may entail. Whilst Frey (1989) saw this as something which additional technology could overcome, assuming the problem to be one of limited hearing, the problems facing elderly respondents can extend beyond physical difficulties. In my research some elderly respondents expressed concern when asked if they would participate in a telephone interview. I therefore conducted a small number of interviews face to face within phase three of the research, in order to circumnavigate this problem⁶. Whilst this deviated from my research design, I was able to ensure greater representation within my sample.

Turning to the survey data collected from victims and volunteers I will now consider some of the issues arising from this in chapters six, seven and eight. The findings from my work in chapter six have followed patterns established within the

⁶ One or two older respondents were not physically capable of standing for long periods of time in order to use their telephones and so again a face to face interview allowed them to participate in greater comfort.

literature, which I outlined in chapter two. Thus victims of burglary and violence, whilst angry, were more likely to experience the more debilitating impacts of crime than those experiencing car crime. Indeed in my work, those experiencing car crime were more angry but understandably much less likely to be fearful, upset or unable to sleep. Interestingly however, car theft affected victims more than theft of property from car. This was a pattern that others before me had reported (Kershaw et al 2001). Victims of car theft were affected very much or quite a lot by the crime, but also experienced shock in proportions that could be compared to those felt by burglary and violence victims. This may point to a flaw within Victim Support's policy on two counts. Firstly victims whose cars are stolen are clearly more seriously affected than may be presumed. Secondly, as Ditton et al (1999a) discuss, car crime victims may form a pool of people who with a little support may be willing to participate in restorative justice. In this way the tendency to employ an objective level of need, using offence type for example as a means of deciding which victims should be supported, limits the role that Victim Support can perform.

My research concurred with others (ibid) in finding that anger was the most common emotional reaction to crime, particularly amongst men. On the other hand women were more likely to feel the more debilitating effects of crime, or at least to be prepared to admit to this (Kury and Wurger 1993). My work supported the literature where older victims were concerned; they were not, as might be expected, more affected by crime than younger people. However material wealth did influence the extent to which individuals said that they were affected. Those who were more wealthy reported lesser impacts than their less wealthy peers. When wealth was introduced into the analysis by age, differences were indicated with older, less wealthy respondents being more affected by crime than their younger, less wealthy counterparts.

In some ways, by focusing its services towards women and older people more than other groups, Victim Support has, to some extent, got it right. The difficulty is however, that by working upon assumptions about the impact of crime, or broad social characteristics such as age, Victim Support may be directing their services towards those who do not necessarily need them. Older people are not, as this and other research shows (Maguire and Kynch 2000), necessarily affected more by crime but they are more likely to be contacted by Victim Support (Mawby and Gill 1987; Maguire and Kynch 2000). Furthermore, assumptions as to the impact (or not) of certain crimes may also result in victims' needs not being met. Thus whilst almost all burglary victims who were fearful and/or upset were contacted by Victim Support, only a minority of car crime victims (theft of motor vehicle) experiencing these reactions were contacted. None of those whose property was stolen from their vehicle, and who felt fearful and/or upset, were contacted.

A point that was raised early in chapter six considered how the impact of crime was measured in the current study. Whilst interviewing just one named victim may be a pragmatic approach that seeks to undertake research as economically as possible, it may not address fully the impact of crime upon whole households. Notwithstanding these reservations my research showed, as have others before me, that crime impacts upon other members of a victim's household (Maguire and Corbett 1987; Mawby and Walklate 1997) to varying degrees. As with the victims interviewed, other adults were more angry than anything else, and in the main experienced other emotional reactions fairly substantially in comparison to those interviewed.

I also considered the impact of crime upon children within households as 'indirect victims' of crime (Morgan and Zedner 1992). My research supports Mawby and

Walklate (1997) who found that children were less likely to be angry but quite likely, particularly where the home has been burgled, to experience more serious emotional reactions. Indeed, my sample of burglary victims (phase three) reported their children as experiencing these debilitating responses more than they did themselves. Parents and carers were not however, generally supportive of Victim Support having contact with their children. While a new training programme for supporting children has been introduced, Victim Support may need to 'sell' this idea to the public.

My work also supported findings from the literature regarding the way in which victimisation can impact upon the wider fear of crime. As Mawby (2004a) and as Fletcher and Allen (2003) noted, respondents in my sample were generally more worried about being a victim of the same crime again than being a victim of any other crime. My findings showed women to be more fearful than men, again supporting patterns within the literature (Kershaw et al 2000). Older people were also reported as being generally more worried about crime (burglary) although interestingly, when burglary victims were isolated, age became less influential.

Chapter seven looked at the way in which Victim Support intervenes in the aftermath of crime. Following the lead of others (Maguire and Corbett 1987; Maguire and Kynch 2000) the extent to which Victim Support could be said to be meeting victims' needs was measured by looking at the services provided to them. In this way one could comment upon the extent to which victims' assessed needs were being met. In addition, the extent to which victims valued the services provided was also examined (ibid); and so again the extent to which their assessed needs were satisfied was reported. My work also looked at victims' expressed needs (Davis et al 1999; Maguire and Kynch 2000). Respondents

identified the services they felt they had needed following the crime and those that Victim Support provided.

Looking firstly at the assessed needs of victims, that is at the services that Victim Support provided to victims, personal support was clearly the type of assistance most often received. It was also the service that victims felt was most useful. These findings held for victims across each offence and contact type and across age and gender divisions. Whereas Maguire and Kynch (2000) found face to face contact with volunteers more successful in providing personal support, those who were contacted in writing in my study felt equally personally supported. A smaller proportion of those who were visited unsuccessfully however, that is where volunteers did not actually make personal contact, were less convinced that personal support had been provided.

Two points may be raised here. Firstly, it is heartening for Victim Support to know that victims feel personally supported no matter which form of contact is used. This could allow the service to pursue the greater cost effectiveness that is currently being called for (National Audit Office 2002) with some confidence that the service could still transmit its message to victims of crime.

Secondly, where unannounced volunteer visiting is used, even where contact was not made with victims, there was still a fairly substantial feeling that personal support had been received; although not to the same degree as for those written to or visited and seen by volunteers. Unsuccessful (unannounced) visits were therefore less likely to make victims feel personally supported⁷. This may point to

⁷ This discussion is now somewhat academic as Victim Support Plymouth will be dispensing with the use of the unannounced volunteer visit in the near future.

the need for Victim Support to employ a more robust means of informing victims that volunteers had called. Indeed this may still apply even when visiting takes place by arrangement. Thus volunteers could perhaps leave a personalised letter rather than simply a business card, or follow-up contact by letter or telephone call could be made.

My research looked at other services that victims said that they received, finding that it was really only in situations where face to face contact took place that respondents said they received other things such as advice about the practical steps they needed to take after the crime. This came as no real surprise given that, particularly for burglary victims, such advice could only really come as part of a dialogue with a volunteer. In this respect cheaper forms of service provision, such as written contact, may not be as effective as personal contact with volunteers as a means of delivering support.

It was also clear that it was those victims who felt that they had received some sort of help, such as personal support or advice about practical steps to be taken, who felt better for having been contacted by Victim Support or who felt they had received real help or advice. These findings supported Maguire and Kynch's (2000) assertion that the community response model of Victim Support was alive and well. My work also showed that victims were supportive of the traditional unannounced volunteer visit, appreciating the spontaneity of the 'good neighbour' approach⁸.

⁸ In retrospect it would have been useful to have included matched samples of victims visited unannounced or by arrangement within my research, in order to compare how each group rated this form of service delivery.

Again, returning to the notion of cost effectiveness, one may speculate that this will entail in future even fewer volunteer visits being made, particularly as we know that victims are less likely to take up services when they are contacted initially by other means. In this way the very nature of Victim Support may change. Such changes may also have implications for future evaluations of the service, unless research design is specifically aimed at the support provided to particular groups, such as burglary victims. It is this group that, according to my research, are more likely to have their needs met when contact with Victim Support comprises personal contact with volunteers. Establishing the worth of service delivery by other means may therefore be more difficult.

Less direct contact with victims may also have implications for Victim Support volunteers. There may be fewer volunteering opportunities for those who see themselves as the equivalent of a 'good neighbour', calling in on someone who has been burgled without prior arrangement in order to offer a listening ear and practical advice. Volunteers will require a greater understanding of the wider picture of Victim Support and how it has changed over the years, in order to change with it. The service may also attract a new breed of volunteers, particularly if the face to face contact that does take place is more likely to occur with victims of more serious (violent) crime, and therefore over a longer period. Clearly this will require a commitment to more specialist training. It is ironic that the drive for greater value for money, may change the nature of the service altogether and, therefore, the function that Victim Support has performed thus far.

Chapter eight looked at the volunteers who work for Victim Support with a view to considering the extent to which this group may have changed over the past decade or so. My research showed that in terms of age, gender and social class

the biases existing previously have continued, notwithstanding more varied recruitment processes today. The reasons given for joining Victim Support have changed however, with more volunteers identifying 'self-directed' reasons than expressing an interest in the service itself. However, when court and community volunteers were asked to say why they joined Victim Support, the former group could be seen to have a greater interest in working for Victim Support and to be more legalistic in their outlook. This is an interesting but perhaps not unexpected set of findings given perhaps the increasing emphasis upon individualism following the 'Thatcher' years and the more strictly bounded nature of the court witness support service.

My work extended that of Gill (1986; Mawby and Gill 1987; Gill and Mawby 1990) in investigating how Victim Support volunteers coped with certain parts of their role. The ways in which volunteers viewed victims in terms of the support networks they may or may not have, and how they may encounter hostility in their work, was also considered. This latter point may be of particular concern where certain sections of the population may be less likely to volunteer. In addition the risks volunteers face are also an area of interest, given that these individuals are not paid employees. Their position in the face of this is then worthy of further enquiry.

When volunteers were asked to comment upon a number of measures of 'service satisfaction' their answers corresponded with victims. Volunteers identified anger as the predominant reaction to crime, and how they might deal with this. They also identified personal support as the service that they mostly provided and which was, in their view, the most useful part of the support offered. They also identified the place that advice and practical help played in supporting victims. In these

ways volunteers, as had victims also, identified the continuing relevance of the early model of Victim Support. On other issues however there was less agreement. For example, volunteers were more likely to say that they had left leaflets or that they had referred victims to other services. This may be a problem of recall, particularly one imagines for victims. One point that did emerge however, was the sense that Victim Support does not really know who needs help until a volunteer arrives on the doorstep, offering support for the traditional volunteer visit. Again, the danger of employing an objective level of 'need' based upon crime and victim type is highlighted.

When a sample of victims and volunteers were more closely matched, their assessments of the level to which victims were affected by crime were fairly accurate; however there was less agreement concerning the emotional reactions to crime. Volunteers were also more likely to think that they had provided a number of services than were victims.

Overall the current research has showed that on a range of levels victim respondents gave positive feedback about the contact that they had with Victim Support. The responses from volunteers also largely offered support to the positive views expressed by victims. A major aim of this research however has been to measure the extent to which Victim Support meets victims' needs. In order to draw more focused conclusions on this, a number of questions relating to the efficiency and effectiveness of Victim Support should, therefore, be considered.

One may ask whether Victim Support was more likely to contact those who could be adjudged most 'in need', by virtue of being more seriously affected by crime.

Table 4.1 in chapter four indicated that Victim Support tended to contact victims of burglary and violence, rather than those who experienced car crime. My research also indicated that those experiencing burglary and violence were more likely to feel fearful, upset and unable to sleep. On the basis of 'contact' therefore, Victim Support may be seen to be meeting victims' needs. However further consideration of contact, by impacts such as fearfulness and/or upset, may detract from this assertion. Whilst table 7.1 in chapter seven shows that the majority of victims who were fearful and/or upset were approached by Victim Support, almost one third were offered no support at all.

As discussed, Victim Support contacts victims in a number of ways, with the 'volunteer visit' comprising what may be considered the 'gold standard' means of support. Indeed this was the original model of support which, over time, has given way to less direct forms of contact with victims, either as a means of rationing services or as a means of appropriately supporting victims of certain crimes. One aim of the current research has been to discover whether other types of contact, for example by means of telephone calls⁹ or letters, are an adequate substitute for the 'volunteer visit'. This is particularly pertinent given the demands now being placed upon the service to provide 'value for money'. It is also pertinent, given that few victims contacted by means other than the volunteer visit will have further contact with the service. Victim Support is therefore being assessed on a number of levels in terms of meeting victims' needs, including not only whether victims were contacted but also the ways in which they were contacted.

⁹ Although the current study did not include any cases where telephone contact comprised the only assistance offered.

The issue as to whether less direct forms of contact were an adequate substitute for face to face contact with volunteers was not explicitly pursued with the paid staff within the current research. The impression gained was however, certainly from conversations with staff and interview material obtained at co-ordinator/branch manager level, that face to face visits, particularly in their unannounced form, were the best way of contacting burglary victims. The fact that Victim Support Plymouth continued to use unannounced visits adds weight to this view. The volunteers were largely of the opinion that personal contact had been necessary, in that it was this approach particularly that would enable them to assess the types of help that victims required. In this way volunteers appeared to prefer the (unannounced) visit in contrast to less direct forms of contact.

Victims, as discussed earlier, clearly felt that they had benefited from being approached by letter, particularly from the point of view of receiving personal support. A small number of respondents also felt that they received some advice when contacted in this way. However the extent to which a letter can signify very much more than the fact that Victim Support is there if needed is questionable. The volunteer visit however provides more tangible evidence of the support that is on offer, plus it provides the opportunity for victims to express and negotiate further needs as appropriate. Finally victims in need who are contacted by letter rarely request further assistance from Victim Support, even though the majority acknowledge that further help is available to them if they so wish. The utilisation of less direct forms of contact, which in the interests of economy may in the future escalate, may then conceal some degree of unmet needs.

The final question, one may ask, is whether when volunteers do visit, they make accurate assessments as to the sort of help victims need. Certainly in phase two

of this research, there was little indication that victims had asked for the services they received, and so assessing whether their needs were under or overly provided for is difficult. Victims were, overall, satisfied with the assistance supplied to them, however this does not necessarily mean that they required such intervention, as Mawby et al (1999) also discovered.

In phase three of my research respondents were asked to identify whether the services received from Victim Support volunteers had been needed, following the lead of Davis et al (1999). Whilst most of those who wanted 'personal support' said they received this, other services were not always supplied. In addition some services that were not needed were, nevertheless, supplied; this was particularly the case where 'personal support' was concerned.

Volunteers had also been asked to identify the services they provided to victims. When their responses were compared it appeared that volunteers had not always correctly identified what victims' needs were, or the extent to which they had provided different types of assistance. In this way volunteers' abilities with regard to assessing victims' needs may be brought into question.

Victim Support's assessments of 'need' may not then always accurately reflect what victims actually require. Within the current research whilst the majority of victims responded positively about the support they received from volunteers or from Victim Support more widely, those giving negative responses did so because they generally did not need help or they could rely on other sources of support. More specifically some victims were not receiving the services they felt they needed (Davis et al 1999) whilst others received services that they did not need (Mawby et al 1999). The current research has therefore highlighted a mismatch

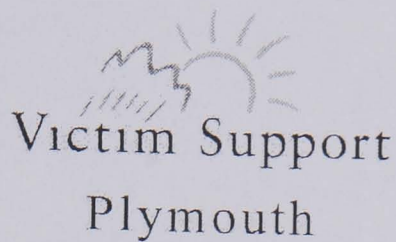
between provision and need, something which has been a perennial problem within post war social policy.

The goal of achieving greater value for money by, for example, matching service provision to need is a difficult balance to achieve. Indeed it has become clear from this research that until Victim Support has expended resources in contacting victims, that their needs cannot be known. Whilst a number of imperatives govern decisions as to the type of service that will be made available in the first instance, it is the one of economy that perhaps causes most concern as this results in certain victims having no support offered at all or being contacted in such a way that their needs remain unmet. As noted, the latter approach may be extended due to concerns over costs.

Whilst one may consider it more appropriate for Victim Support to try and find out who needs their help before using scarce resources in the form of volunteer visits, this again brings us back to the same dilemma. This is that those who are contacted by less direct means are unlikely to request further assistance and are therefore less likely to have their needs met.

The research that I have undertaken has not resulted in clear judgements as to the extent to which Victim Support does meet victims' needs, this topic is too complex for that. The main certainty is however that whatever action may be taken in the name of greater efficiency or economy will potentially change the very nature of Victim Support and the services it provides.

Letter of thanks from co-ordinator of Victim Support, Plymouth.



Ms Lesley Simmonds
University of Plymouth
Money Centre Building
Mayflower Street
PLYMOUTH
Devon

14 September 2001

Dear Lesley,

On behalf of Victim Support Plymouth may I say thank you for coming to speak at our Annual General Meeting on Thursday 13 September 2001.

It was interesting to hear how your research is progressing and the anecdote about fixing the television by the volunteer (Mark) The volunteers present will also have appreciated that all the form filling can be converted into human interest information.

Many thanks once again.

Yours sincerely,

Pat Harvey

Pat Harvey
Co-ordinator.

Helping people cope with crime

Victim Support Plymouth

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Patron : Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal Chief Executive : Dame Helen Reeves DBE Chair : Robert Latham

Appendix 2: Breakdown of research outcome for victims contacted and asked to participate in phase two 1998 - 1999 (n=297: mini-samples A – K)

Research outcome	A		B		C		D		E		F		G		H		I		J		K		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Interviewed	11	46	16	46	12	60	11	55	20	57	25	63	10	55	29	55	13	50	12	86	9	75	168	57
Refusal to Victim Support	4	17	3	9	4	20	3	15	5	14	7	17	4	22	11	20	5	19	2	14	1	8	49	16
Respondent 'gone away'	0	0	2	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1
Refusal when contacted by telephone for interview	3	12	1	3	1	5	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	8	0	0	0	0	9	3
Refusal on doorstep	0	0	4	11	2	10	0	0	4	11	0	0	0	0	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	4
Occupant denied being/knowing the victim	0	0	1	3	0	0	1	5	0	0	3	7	1	6	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	2
Unable to contact victim	4	17	8	22	1	5	2	10	4	11	4	10	2	11	6	11	6	23	0	0	1	8	38	13
Premises empty	2	8	0	0	0	0	3	15	0	0	1	3	1	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	2
Victim not contacted	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Victim contacted university to decline	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	0	0	0	0	1	8	3	1
Total	24	100	35	100	20	100	20	100	35	100	40	100	18	100	53	100	26	100	14	100	12	100	297	100

The advantages and disadvantages of a CATI (computer assisted telephone interview) approach

Economy

The cost saving aspect of telephone/CATI approaches have been well documented (Killias 1990; Killias 1993; van Dijk et al 1990; Thomas et al 1998; Thomas and Purdon 1999; Ashworth et al 2000). Killias (1990) for example estimated that CATI interviews were 25% of the cost of those conducted by face to face methods. Whilst Ashworth et al (2000) claimed a more conservative figure of 33% they additionally argued the advantages to be gained in levels of data quality, particularly in comparison with cheaper (postal) methods. Indeed in comparing the range of survey methods; face to face interviews, CATI and postal questionnaires, CATI was said to represent 'a good middle ground' (ibid).

The economies of the telephone/CATI approach may also be said to lie in the real and potential savings to be made in time and effort. For example, although discussing large-scale projects, Killias (1993) made the point that data collection could be centrally organised. This was equally relevant in my research where I was responsible for all aspects of the project, unlike larger projects where interviewers are separate from and managed by a research team. In conducting face to face interviews in phase one for example I had to physically visit respondents, not knowing whether they would be willing to take part, or even if they were available, until I had travelled to see them. This was time consuming and required some degree of effort, especially during the typical 'Plymouth' winter and bearing in mind that I generally had to make at least two visits in order to secure contact. Indeed in one extreme example I made, and kept, at least four successive appointments whilst the respondent unfortunately kept none. The possibility in phase three of the research to simply pick up the telephone was, clearly, much less time consuming, much less effort intensive and so, in real terms, was a cheaper option all round.

Administration

Using a CATI approach eliminates the need for further re-coding of the data (Killias 1993) and, as such, is viewed as advantageous. In addition the interview is controlled by the computer, thus reducing the possibility of interviewer error (Killias 1993; Ashworth et al 2000) whilst allowing for a more complex questionnaire design (Killias 1993). An extreme example of this last point is that of the Swiss Crime Survey (ibid) which although containing more than 600 variables, the interviews, in many cases, lasted only five minutes. The literature suggests that interviewer error becomes more likely when a paper questionnaire is more complex; indeed this is something that I have noticed in comparing my own performance when using paper interviewing techniques compared to CATI. It may then be said that the latter approaches, potentially, provide more reliable and valid data than their paper predecessor.

However the gains of computer control are countered by losses suffered in terms of interviewer flexibility; always supposing that this is important to the researcher. Whereas in using a paper questionnaire the interviewer can write down any aside comments that respondents make, this is not so easy where CATI is used. In my

own experience as a paper and pen interviewer I had been used to scribbling down such comments, and so challenging to some extent the criticisms made of quantitative survey work (Mayhew 1993). When I came to conduct my telephone survey I began to worry about the potential austerity of my findings; indeed because of the limitations of the software available to me¹, I had included only one open-ended question. It was important for me to be able to record verbatim the responses to this and the aside comments that would add depth to the closed questions asked.

However wielding a pen and paper whilst coding responses directly into the computer, and talking on the telephone, was somewhat trying. I also wanted to maintain the 'flow' of the interview which, if constantly broken, would defeat the object of using a CATI approach. Furthermore, I had led respondents to believe that the interviews would take roughly 20 minutes; an optimum length of time for a structured telephone interview (Thomas and Purdon 1999), and so needed to ensure that I did this. The best way to resolve these issues was, I believed, to tape record each interview for later transcription. I therefore asked permission to do this within the introductory part of my interview schedule. In this way I met a number of the criteria outlined above and thus ensured that I retained the 'qualitative' dimension (Williams 2000) mentioned earlier.

Unfortunately I did not have the sort of equipment that was specifically designed for this task and therefore had to rig up a system for myself, which I am reliably informed, is the 'lot' of the academic researcher². In true 'Blue Peter' fashion I used sellotape to secure a microphone to my headset which was then linked to a tape recorder³. Whilst this allowed me to record each interview there were problems in that in playing back the tapes I had to endure, for the most part, a background buzzing noise. In a couple of cases I could not hear the respondents at all because of this. However, notwithstanding such difficulties I was able to gather this additional body of qualitative information.

Data quality.

A real benefit of the telephone/CATI approach is that fuller coverage of those in the sample is more easily met (Thomas and Purdon 1999). The bias of non-response is reduced as hard to reach people, which may include those living in unsafe locations, become more accessible. In one case, for example, I telephoned one respondent on four occasions on the same day without success. I again telephoned two days later and spoke to the respondent although it was not convenient for me to interview her at the time. I eventually interviewed her almost three weeks from the date of my first approach. In addition to this the need to cluster geographically close respondents together (ibid), a technique that may be adopted as a cost saving device within face to face interviewing is eliminated, as is the accompanying bias.

¹ The University of Plymouth were able to supply 'Data Entry 2'; a package that I came to believe was more suited to market research because of the limitations placed upon entering reasonably lengthy open responses into the computer.

² Simon Paice (Technical Manager, School of Psychology, University of Plymouth) informed me that researchers from at least three universities, Sheffield Hallam being one of them, who he contacted confirmed this. His interest had been aroused by my requests for the loan of recording equipment and my plight in terms of needing to set up some system for recording the interviews.

³ I am very grateful to Gary Smith (Department of Social Policy and Social Work (as was) and Simon Paice (above) from the University of Plymouth for their perseverance and help in this matter.

Telephone/CATI approaches are seen to be good way of obtaining a particular type of information. Killias (1993 p202) for example is of the opinion that CATI is particularly suited to short answers and is very good for gathering the sort of information that survey work demands. Frey (1983) on the other hand offers a mixed view of the possibilities for asking loosely structured questions over the telephone. In 1983 for example his view was that the approach was less useful in this respect. However by 1989, by the time of his second edition, he was more positive about asking open-ended questions over the telephone (Frey 1989). Earlier writers had also criticised the use of telephone interviews, noting for examples that the responses obtained may be shorter and truncated (Groves and Kahn 1979; Sykes and Hoinville 1985).

Thomas and Purdon (1999) have asked if the telephone is a good way of collecting sensitive information, questioning whether respondents would provide truthful answers. Sykes and Collins (1988) and McQueen (1989) reported very positively in this respect, whilst further identifying that respondents provided more 'socially desirable' answers when using a face to face, compared with the telephone method. Kury and Wurger (1993) more recently have also added to this debate, commenting upon the reduced likelihood of socially desirable answers from postal questionnaires and telephone interviews in comparison with face to face methods.

The telephone approach could then elicit more honest responses (Sykes and Collins 1988), subject again to earlier writers' criticisms concerning quality of data and speed of delivery (Groves and Kahn 1979); although questions involving response scales seem to attract more extreme choices (ibid). This last point has been qualified more recently however such that whilst comparisons can be drawn between results gained by face to face and telephone interviews, the differences are not so pronounced as to lead to different interpretations of the data (Thomas and Purdon 1999 p4). Certainly within my own work I found that the face to face results were largely replicated by those collected by telephone.

A number of other difficulties arise from the use of a telephone/CATI approach. Such approaches exclude the possibility of the interviewer picking up non-verbal clues from respondents (Killias 1993 p207) and, by the same token, interviewers cannot use visual aids such as cue cards (Frey 1989). In considering the first point the interviewer should also be aware that his/her physical absence may well influence the ability that one has to create the rapport necessary for securing and completing interviews. The interviewer will therefore need to create this very quickly (Killias 1990) in order to be successful.

With regard to the second point the inclusion of multiple response questions within a telephone survey needs to be considered as the interviewer will have to read the list of possible responses out to the interviewee. Clearly a shorter list of responses will be preferable; not only from the interviewee's point of view but also from a practical standpoint. If a question begins on one screen and continues to a second the flow of the interview may be broken and this may lead to interviewer error. Within my own telephone survey I did try to restrict the number of responses within multiple response questions and ensured that they did not run over from one screen to another.

Killias (1993) also comments that telephone interviews can be psychologically harder for the interviewer; motivation may flag if calls are unanswered or refusals made. I would acknowledge this problem, certainly where a large scale project

employs a number of interviewers who perform only this task. Certainly the prospect of continually interviewing, being observed and monitored (ibid) is not appealing. My experience was, however, completely different in these respects in that I was responsible for all aspects of the survey.

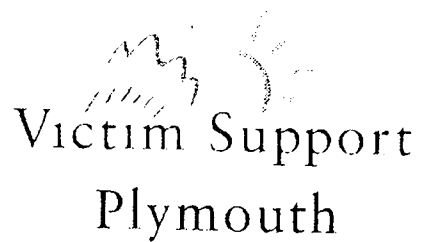
Response/non response rates.

There are mixed views within the work of earlier writers concerning the possible response rates that may result from the use of telephone/CATI methods. Some have argued that they are just as high as for face to face approaches (Frey 1983). Others, on the basis of research in the USA have made claims for even higher response rates (Ibsen and Ballweg 1974) especially where, as in my work, respondents are contacted prior to the interview call itself (Sykes and Hoinville 1985). The work of Groves and Kahn (1979) however dissented, holding that response rates in national telephone surveys would generally lie at least five percentage points below those expected from personal interview techniques.

Sykes and Hoinville (1985), writing at a time before the onslaught of telesales operatives on the scale that exists in the UK today, focused part of their discussion upon the status enjoyed by the telephone as a 'social tool'. On the one hand an unanticipated call from a stranger may represent an unwarranted intrusion, compared to the longer tradition of face to face interviews. On the other hand continued concern about crime, as indicated by various sweeps of the British Crime Survey (Kershaw et al 2001), may have contributed to the greater suspicion that has been said to confront doorstep interviewers more recently (Sykes and Hoinville 1985); a view that may be supported by the current prevalence of home security mechanisms that, in themselves, effectively create further obstacles for researchers wishing to adopt a face to face approach.

The literature has also identified the problem of partial interviews (Groves and Kahn 1979) as a particular issue for telephone interviewers. One hypothesis is that the norms of politeness operate less strongly when the interviewer is not present in person; it may be easier for someone to withdraw part way or to refuse in the first place when the interview is to be conducted over the telephone. In my experience there was little to choose in these respects between face to face and telephone interviewing, although my response rate for the latter at 74% was much higher than that achieved using the former.

General letter for victims of crime.



Printing sponsored by Devon & Cornwall Security Association

Our Ref: :
Date :

Dear

We have been informed in confidence by the local Police that you have recently become a victim of crime.

The Plymouth Victim Support Scheme has been set up to offer support in such circumstances. We have trained Volunteers who can call on you and give care and support, or advice on practical matters.

If you would like to talk to someone on the telephone then please call Plymouth 777118 (24 hour answerphone), or you may prefer to visit the office. On Thursdays we have an open door between 9.30am and 3.00pm when no appointment is necessary. At other times it is advisable to phone first for an appointment. We shall be pleased to help in any way we can.

Yours sincerely

Pat Harvey
Co-ordinator.

Helping people cope with crime

Victim Support Plymouth

Pounds House, 162 Outland Road, Peverell, Plymouth, Devon PL2 3PX

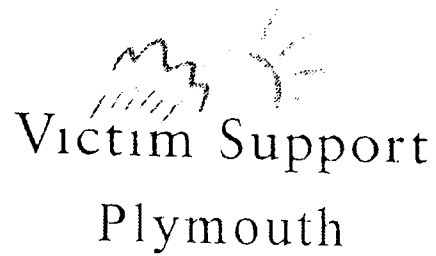
Telephone : 01752 777118 Facsimile : 01752 780356

Scheme Charity Registration : 280148

Member of the National Association of Victims Support Schemes and authorised user of the trademarks National Office : Cranmer House, 39 Brixton Road, London SW9 6DZ Tel: 020 7735 9106

Patron : Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal Chief Executive : Dame Helen Reeves DBE Chair : Robert Latham

Letter for victims of violence.



Our Ref:
Date :

Dear

We have been informed in confidence by the local Police that you have recently become a victim of crime.

The Plymouth Victim Support Scheme has been set up to offer support in such circumstances. We have trained Volunteers who can call on you and give care and support, or advice on practical matters.

You may be eligible for Criminal Injuries Compensation. If you wish to know more about the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority please contact us and we will advise you. Our services are free.

If you would like to talk to someone on the telephone or would like a home visit please telephone Plymouth 777118 (24 hour answerphone) and we shall be pleased to help in any way we can.

Yours sincerely

Pat Harvey
Co-ordinator.

Helping people cope with crime

Victim Support Plymouth

Pounds House, 162 Outland Road, Peverell, Plymouth, Devon PL2 3PX

Telephone : 01752 777118 Facsimile : 01752 780356

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Both views of card which volunteers leave for victims who are visited but not seen.

Ref No:

**Plymouth
Victim
Support**

1st Floor
Pounds House
162 Outland Road
Peeverell
PLYMOUTH PL2 3PX

(01752) 777118
(24 Hour Answer Phone)

If you would like one of our volunteers to visit you at home, or if you would like to talk to someone on the telephone, please ring Plymouth (01752) 777118.

If you prefer to visit the office it is normally advisable to phone first for an appointment.

However, you may visit without an appointment on Thursdays between 9.30 am and 3.00 pm, except that if you need advice about Criminal Injury Compensation you should always make an appointment.

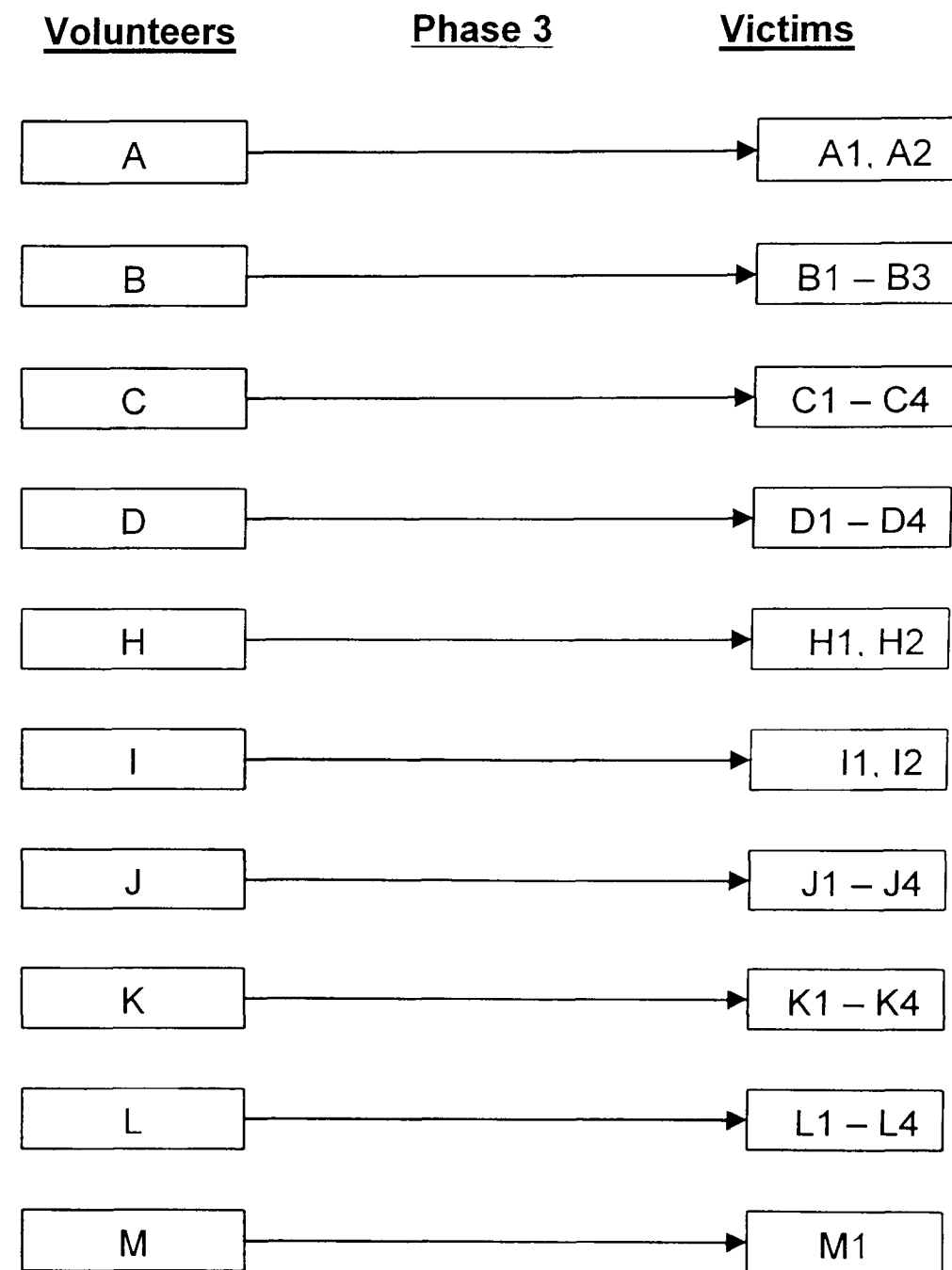
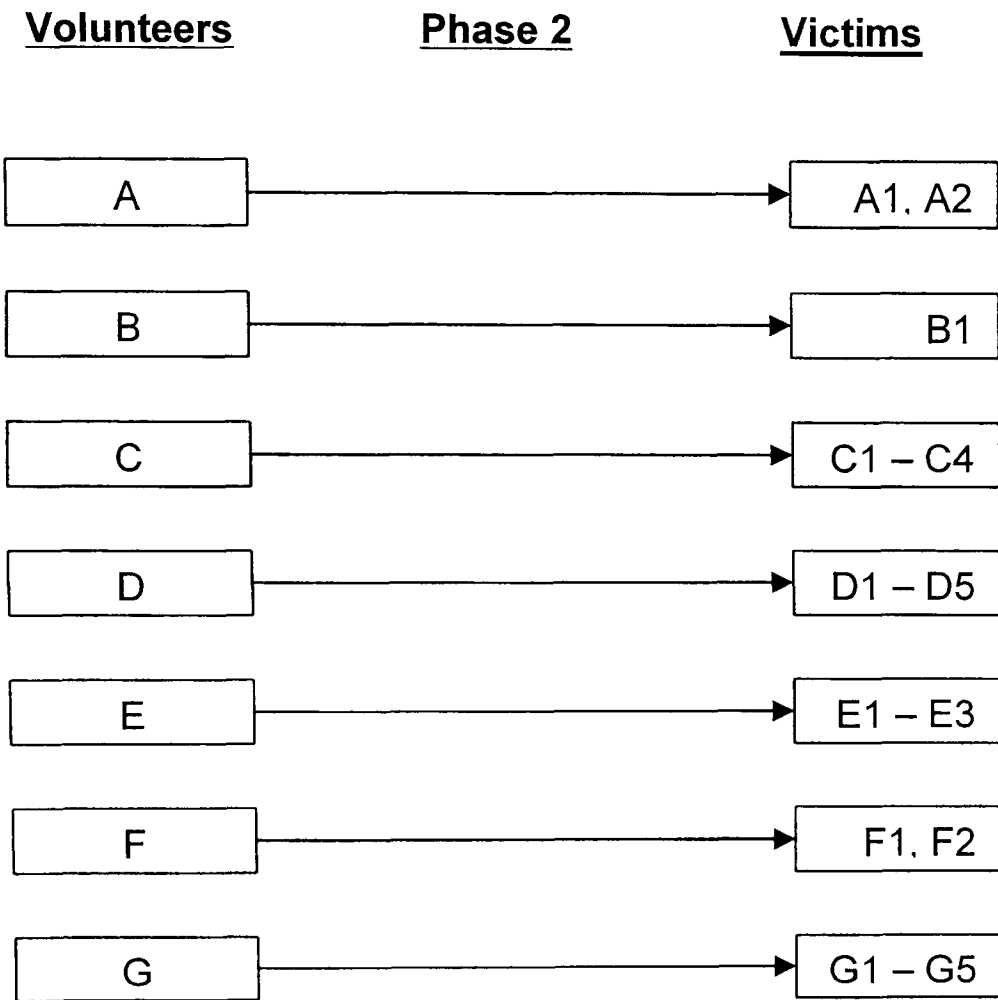
Plymouth Victim Support Scheme is part of a nationwide network of local schemes. It has a team of trained volunteers who provide a free confidential service to victims of crime

We offer care, support and time to talk.

We also offer advice about home security and help with insurance claims, criminal injury compensation and other matters

Sponsored by BAE SYSTEMS

Appendix 7: Volunteer feedbacks for victims visited and seen



Key:

Phase 2: N = 22 victim feedbacks
 Phase 3: N = 30 victim feedbacks. Volunteers E, F, G were not/did not wish to be included at this stage.

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