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THE CHANGING FACE OF POLICING:

LOCAL ISSUES IN

NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

P. K. BUNT

Ph. D. 1999

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**THE CHANGING FACE OF POLICING:  
LOCAL ISSUES IN NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE**

by

**PHILIP KESSELL BUNT**

A thesis submitted to the University of Plymouth  
in partial fulfilment for the degree of

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

Department of Social Policy and Social Work  
Faculty of Human Sciences

**JULY 1999**



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# Abstract

Philip Kessell Bunt

## **The Changing Face of Policing: Local Issues in National Perspective**

The thesis reviews the changes which have taken place in policing England and Wales between 1950 and 1998 with particular reference to four key themes: *community policing*, *crime prevention*, *victims of crime* and *quality of service*. It contributes to an understanding of how policing has developed during a period of significant social change and explores the rationale which has underpinned legislative development and policy making at national and force levels whilst identifying the significance of these changes within a local city environment. The development of the key themes at national level is considered within the local policing environment of the south-west of England. This has been undertaken with particular reference to the way in which they have influenced the direction of policing within Devon and Cornwall and, in particular, how aspects of their implementation have been perceived by both police officers and sections of the public within the largest urban area of the two counties, the city of Plymouth. Much of the detailed research within the city has concentrated upon the area of *Stonehouse*, forming part of the *St Peter* ward; an area which has been identified as one of the most socially and economically deprived locations in England. Through personal interviews, telephone and postal questionnaires, and an insider's ethnographic perspective, the study is brought into local focus. This allows critical analysis of the key themes in terms of their local development against the national perspective.

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# Author's Declaration

At no time during the registration for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy has the author been registered for any other University award.

This study was financed with the aid of the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary.

Relevant seminars and conferences were regularly attended at which work was presented; external institutions were visited for consultation purposes and papers prepared for publication.

Publications and other forms of creative work:

*Detected Offences - Satisfied Victims?* (1990), Honours Degree dissertation, Polytechnic South West.

*Policing the Quality of Service* (1993), paper presented to British Criminology Conference, Cardiff, (co-author R. I. Mawby).

*Quality of Policing: The Consumer's Perspective*, Public Policy Review, Winter 1994, pp. 58-60, (co-author R. I. Mawby)

*The Quality of Policing: Consideration of strategies adopted in monitoring and affecting levels of performance in British Police Forces* (1995), Home Office Police Research Group discussion paper.

*The Quality of Service Imperative* (1995), paper presented to British Criminology Conference, Loughborough, (co-authors R. I. Mawby and J. Redshaw).

*Evaluating Core Policing in Britain: the views of police and consumers* (1997) International Journal of the Sociology of Law, Vol.25, pp. 283-301, (co-authors R.I. Mawby & J. Redshaw).

*Selling Police Services: How police forces have reacted to the issue of 'Income Generation'* (1997), Police Research Group Award Paper, London: Home Office, (co-authors A. Boulting & S. Price)

Presentations and Conferences attended:

*Victims Support National Conference*, Warwick University, 9-11 July 1992 (presentation on victim liaison and care from a police perspective).

*British Criminology Conference*, Cardiff University, 1993 (paper as above).

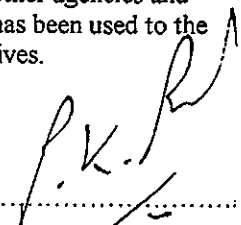
*British Criminology Conference*, Loughborough University, 1995 (paper as above).

*Ensuring Quality of Service in the Public Sector*, IBC Technical Services Conference, London, 2-3 November 1993.

*Fairness, Community and Justice*, Metropolitan Police, Hendon, 26-28 February 1993.

External contacts:

In his work as a police officer the author has made contact with, visited, and conducted research in numerous police forces throughout England and Wales. In addition, contact with other agencies and voluntary groups has been a routine feature of his environment, a situation which has been used to the advantage of academic study as well as the advancement of various policing initiatives.

Signed.....

Date.....19 July 1999.....

## Preface

There is a natural problem for any member of an institution setting out to review structures and processes with which they have been involved for almost a quarter of a century. The pitfalls clearly lie in that person's ability to objectively and critically evaluate circumstances which pertain to the environment in which they have worked. This challenge reaches an even higher dimension when the purpose of the study is to produce an original piece of work which will be the subject of detailed evaluation by members of the academic community, as well as members of the researcher's own organisation. Despite the fact that belonging to an institution such as the police service provides a researcher with relatively unconstrained access to information and situations which outside observers would not have, the level of detail and interaction which is attainable does not alone ensure that such a review will be either objective, or useful. As Emsley (1991) considered in his preface to *The English Police*, 'There is always a problem with writing about institutions in that the text can finish as a celebration of a steady progress to the present' and the necessity to relate evidence in a balanced way is one which must always be at the forefront of a researcher's thinking.

Objectivity in relating some of the evidence in this work has regularly caused the author to consider whether citing certain quotations from many of the interviews undertaken would have the effect of presenting an unbalanced view of the subject in hand. There is always this danger when an interviewee presents an amusing or appealing 'sound-bite' and, therefore, on more than one occasion quotations originally included in the draft texts of the thesis have been removed when it has been clear by the way it reads that the opinion given causes the balance of the debate to be inappropriately weighted in one direction or another.

Similarly, this study is not one which seeks to give credence, other than with due acknowledgement, to some of the clearly subjective and 'romantic' accounts of police officers who served during the early to middle parts of the twentieth century, and were interviewed about their recollections of policing in Plymouth. Nevertheless, a couple of amusing anecdotes remain amongst the quotes which, whilst adding only marginally to overall debate, underline the need to regard memories of times past with caution when trying to make sense of policing several decades later. As the purpose of this study is to try and draw parallels between the development of policing at national and local level during the period 1950-1998, in a way which will identify how some of the key influences on change have been implemented and perceived, police and public opinions are seen as important considerations. Therefore, the extent to which this enterprise might be perceived as a 'celebration of a steady progress to the present' is ultimately for the reader to judge.

However, although an 'insider' in the process, the author has sought to maintain a level of objectivity in his interpretation of the evidence. This will, hopefully, result in an acknowledgement that Weatheritt's (1986) contention that 'most institutions tend to think of their work as important and necessary and (that) they are not given to spending too much time and effort questioning the purpose and the effectiveness of what they do' (p.10) is at least challenged when the research evidence is related by an 'insider' from a less constrained academic perspective.

## Structure of the study

### *Introduction*

This work is about some of the changes which have occurred in the policing of England and Wales since 1950, but in particular, how local police activity in the most south-westerly and largest geographic force in England (Devon and Cornwall) can be explained in the context of national developments during that period. Policing is an ever-evolving process and its existence may be guided by the structures of the law and influenced by political considerations, but its implementation is a far more complex process. However, the importance of how policing is perceived and delivered at local level underpins many of the cherished beliefs about the British policing system. Whereas the embryonic forms of organised order-maintenance in the country can be traced back to the tribal laws and customs of Danish and Anglo-Saxon invaders, it has been the latter half of the twentieth century which has seen the police encounter significantly more diverse challenges than at any time in the past. It would be impossible to attempt to detail every challenge which has helped shape policing as it is today but, for the purposes of this research, a small number of key themes which are particularly pertinent to late twentieth century police development have been selected because of their ability to be related to policing at a local level.

In order to focus upon the policing of a local environment the city of Plymouth has been examined in more detail, with specific reference to the St Peter ward area which is one of the most economically and socially deprived locations in the country. In looking at policing during this period, there are a wide range of issues which could be studied. Four have been chosen for research because of their respective importance in building upon the

unique character of British policing, *community policing, crime prevention, victims of crime and quality of service*. Each has varying levels of difficulty in definition, and there are clear overlaps between them. However each represents a field of policing and wider criminal justice policy which has grown in significance at various points, and at different rates, since 1950. Similarly, each has had an impact on police activity at local level and it is this aspect which will be considered in the chapters which follow.

### *Overview of chapters*

Chapters 2 to 5 will set the scene. They will depict how policing, and certain other aspects of the criminal justice process developed since 1950, with reference to the political, social and economic factors which have played a part in dictating the structure and style of policing today. It is a process which has been developed against a background of notions such as 'policing by consent', autonomy from political influence, and individual and community primacy. Its origins go back to the last century and the basis of its survival, in a form which has remained based on such principles, is one which cannot be divorced from the wider constitutional structures of the country as a whole.

The development, and relevance of *community policing, crime prevention, victims of crime and quality of service* will be considered over four eras: 1950-67, 1967-79, 1979-89 and 1989-98. Whether the reader agrees that the points at which the eras start and end is appropriate is, to a large degree, unimportant. The eras have been chosen to add structure rather than identify anything more significant in the way in which policing has been accomplished since. Each era will be sub-divided into the four theme categories to develop a structured overview of the research topics which are explored within the Devon and Cornwall area in later chapters. The order in which the themes will be discussed within

each era is determined by their evolution since 1950.

*Community policing* is dealt with first because it is considered against a wider definition than that which was to become applied to it from the 1980s onwards when the term became widely used. This wider definition considers the structure and methods employed by officers patrolling in local areas and often being stationed within relatively close proximity to the communities which they policed. Such a process is as old as policing itself and was the basis on which objectives of preventing crime were originally developed. *Crime prevention* follows as a natural progression in the debate and, with the growing attention given it as a national issue from the late 1950s onwards, forms a consolidating position from which to consider later developments in policing when the definitions of *crime prevention* and *community policing* become more intertwined during the 1970s and through to the present day.

Police concern with *victims of crime* did not emerge as a general policy issue until the 1970s with the development of specific victim interest groups outside the arena of policing (even though their position nationally had already received recognition during the 1950s and 1960s). *Victims of crime*, as a section in this work, therefore follows as a chronological progression in widening police involvement with criminal justice processes. *Quality of service* emerged as a specific issue during the late 1980s but was already on the policing agenda through earlier research which had considered the interactions between police and the public (notably victims), and emerging government interest in measuring efficiency and effectiveness. Its importance to policing in regaining public confidence in the 1990s therefore enables the earlier issues of *community policing*, *crime prevention* and *victims of*

*crime* to be considered from a contemporary perspective. A short, scene setting précis of the four eras is given below:

### **1950-1967 From Dixon to dilemma (Chapter 2)**

The 1950s provided the public with its icon of the British 'Bobby' through film and, subsequently television, in the form of Constable George Dixon.<sup>1</sup> His image of relative perfection in working-class London developed against a wider picture of police scandals nationally which led to major structural changes to policing in the mid-1960s. 1967 was the time at which changes brought about by the Police Act 1964 became most obvious - in the amalgamation of forces. It was around this time also that Unit Beat Policing (UBP) became established within police forces and the 'panda car' emerged. Victims had been brought to national attention through the period by Margery Fry and others with the first Act which could provide compensation by the State to victims of violence being introduced. The Crime Prevention College was established and the Cornish Committee recommended the way forward for this aspect of policing.

#### **Key events in policing 1950-67**

1950	Feature film <i>The Blue Lamp</i> portrays PC George Dixon for the first time
1956-58	Margery Fry's campaign for victim compensation
1956-59	Series of scandals and confrontations involving chief officers
1958	Notting Hill and Nottingham race riots
1960	Cornish Committee on crime prevention established
1960-62	Royal Commission on Policing
1962	National Crime Prevention College established
	Appointment of Sir William Johnson as first Chief Inspector of Constabulary
1964	<i>Police Act</i> leading to new tri-partite structure and amalgamations of forces
	<i>Compensation for Victims of Crimes of Violence Act</i>
1966	Amalgamation of provincial forces begins
	Introduction of Unit Beat Policing as experiment

<sup>1</sup> Constable George Dixon began and (temporarily) ended life as a uniform constable in the 1950 film *The Blue Lamp* in which he was shot in the course of his duty. His resurrection five years later by the BBC in the series *Dixon of Dock Green* ensured that the character remained central to fictional characterisation for the next 21 years but, in reality, the image remained in the public psyche for considerably longer, regularly referred to in the press when various changes in policing style became newsworthy.

**1967-1979 Technology to community (Chapter 3)**

1967 had begun with an increased use of technology in the policing role and this was to develop through the 1970s with the widespread use of the Police National Computer (PNC). Associated with the key areas being considered was the emergence of Victim Support Schemes during this period, and the developing role of Crime Prevention Officers. UBP began to lose credibility and the police became increasingly involved in order maintenance during trade disputes such as Saltley in 1972 and Grunwick in 1977. The Police National Co-ordinating Centre was established at New Scotland Yard in 1972 to address responses to such incidents.

**Key events in policing 1967-1979**

1967-70	Amalgamation of forces continues (reduction from 117 to 47) including Devon & Cornwall Constabulary being formed
1970-79	Victim Support Schemes emerge initially in Bristol and develop nationally.
1972	Local Government Act: further provincial amalgamations (to 41 provincial forces) Saltley coke depot closed during miners' picketing National Reporting Centre established at New Scotland Yard to co-ordinate police mutual aid to such issues as industrial disputes
1973	Wider development and use of Police National Computer nationally
1974	Police Support Units (PSU) established by forces
1977	Home Office <i>Review of Criminal Justice Policy</i> and establishment of <i>Working Group on Crime Prevention</i> <i>Royal Commission on Criminal Procedure</i> established
1978	Edmund Davies enquiry into police pay and conditions of service
1979	<i>Community Policing</i> introduced in Devon & Cornwall Margaret Thatcher's Conservative administration takes office

**1979-1989 Community through the riots (Chapter 4)**

1979 signified a change of government which was to remain in office until 1997. It also saw Devon and Cornwall Chief Constable John Alderson's new *Community Policing* philosophy develop through a period where there was widespread public disorder in major cities. Central co-ordination of the police reached a height in the Miners' Dispute of 1984 and the government became more influential in directing 'efficiency and effectiveness' amongst police forces. The Police and Criminal



Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) had a major impact on the activities of the police in the fields of prisoner handling, community consultation and accountability.

Key events in policing 1979-1989	
1981	Riots in Brixton, Toxteth and other areas of the country <i>Royal Commission on Criminal Procedure</i> report published Lord Scarman reports on the riots
1982	<i>Police and Criminal Evidence Bill</i> published First British Crime Survey
1983	Home Office circular 114/1983 issued on effectiveness and efficiency
1984	Miners' Strike <i>Police and Criminal Evidence Act</i> Second British Crime Survey
1988	Third British Crime Survey
1988-89	'Guildford Four' case review and subsequent prisoner release

### 1989-1998 *Quality of service and performance monitoring (Chapter 5)*

Key events in policing 1989-1997	
1990	ACPO and staff associations publish Operational Policing Review ACPO Strategic Policy Document published
1991	HMIC circular heralds requirement of forces to measure performance by new set of indicators
1992	Local Government Act: forces to collect/publish performance indicators
1993	Sheehy report published - Abolition of certain ranks Changes to conditions of service
1994	Police and Magistrates Courts Act - New Police Authority structure, sponsorship and income generation sections
1995	Posen enquiry - core and ancillary tasks
1996	'Zero tolerance' policing debated <i>Police Act</i> consolidating 1964 Act and <i>Police and Magistrates' Courts Act 1994</i>
1997	Labour win General Election
1998	<i>Crime and Disorder Act</i>

The period saw the emergence of *Quality* as an issue, first inspired by the police themselves and swiftly taken ownership of by central instruments of government. Charters for victims, citizens and police developed significance from 1989 onwards. The police became more accountable for their performance through legislation such as the Local Government Act 1992 and the *Police and Magistrates'*

*Courts Act* 1994.<sup>2</sup> The structure of Police Authorities changed, as did the relationship and control within the tri-partite system. With the change in government in 1997, Labour's flagship legislation dealing with crime and community safety, *The Crime and Disorder Act*, redefines the role of local authorities and other agencies in relation to their responsibilities.

Chapter 6 deals with the methodology which has been employed in the work which follows. As will be understood from its reading, this project has been of a relatively wide-ranging and diverse nature with the final product looking considerably different to that which was imagined at its inception. The author's changing role within the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary has had much to do with this and the development of different focuses across a period of almost a decade has meant that careful selection and pruning of data gathered has been necessary. Nevertheless the rationale for its final production in the form which follows is one which has been able to make good use of what, otherwise, could have been selective and individual 'snapshots' of police/public activity and attitudes.

Whereas chapters 2 to 5 deal with the wider national perspective across the themes of *community policing, crime prevention, victims and quality of service*, later chapters make use of the research data which brings things into focus in Devon and Cornwall and Plymouth in particular. Chapter 7 therefore seeks to rationalise the changing focus to local level by developing an understanding of why this particular south-westerly section of England provides both typical and atypical opportunities to develop the debate on policing structures and practices. The Devon and Cornwall Constabulary's position at the forefront

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<sup>2</sup> The Police Act 1996 (Home Office, 1996) went on to consolidate legislation relating to the police which had been developed over the previous decades.

of certain policing developments, such as *community policing* and *quality of service* during the late 1970s through to the 1990s, provide opportunities to contextualise much of the research data in the later chapters. Plymouth's unique position as the largest urban area in the two counties, with relatively high levels of crime and deprivation, is seen to epitomise the type of problems observable elsewhere in major English conurbations, thus providing a relevant focus for the research at local level. In particular the ward of St Peter, and the area of *Stonehouse* within the central city region, provide the opportunity to observe the implementation of policing policy over time and thematically.

Chapters 8 to 11 contain the findings from research within Devon and Cornwall. Drawing on evidence which has been gained across a period of time which, in some cases pre-dates the 1950s, the chapters are divided into the four key themes of the work. Unlike within chapters 2 to 5 (which deal first with the theme of *community policing*), *quality of service* forms the basis of chapter 8. Although this specific area of interest in the police did not emerge as early as *community policing*, *crime prevention* or *victims of crime*, much of the evidence on which later chapters rely has been dependant upon work which was conducted within the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary *Quality of Service Unit*. An understanding of the way in which this structure operated, as well as the political and management rationale and debate for its formulation, is therefore important in developing later chapters. There are obvious overlaps between the themes as policing is certainly not capable of being put into such neat 'containers' without some 'spillage'. Nevertheless the separation of the findings into these subject areas enables a constructive development of the overall policing picture for the region to be achieved.

The continuing development of policing means that the opportunity for further contemporary research has much appeal, particularly in a study such as this which has followed a course often dictated by circumstance rather than original design. However, the need to draw a line at a relevant point was obvious and, therefore, developments which took place post-1997 following the election of the new Labour government have not been referred to in detail within the main body of the text. Nevertheless, the wide-reaching effects of the *Crime and Disorder Act 1998* enables the concluding chapter, *1997-99 and Into The New Century*, to draw into context much of the research which took place during the early/mid 1990s. Consequently, this chapter will review the themes which have already been explored and consider the way in which they may develop in the future. This will take into account the author's current role of having responsibility for crime reduction and community safety in Cornwall within a new force structure which has been altered to underpin the principles implicit in the *Crime and Disorder Act*.

## 1950 - 1967 From Dixon to Dilemma

The 1950s had seen the development of a new public persona in the policing identity through the introduction of the fictional constable George Dixon<sup>1</sup>, initially on the big screen and latterly on television. This bastion of goodness, bravery and integrity drew sharp focus upon policing events through the decades which followed. Reiner's interpretation of the police 'becoming not merely accepted but lionised by the broad spectrum of public opinion' as 'a symbol of national pride' (1985, p.48) was, in no small measure, due to the increasing availability of media services (significantly television). Above all Dixon was portrayed as honest and dependable, and the epitome of what the public wanted to believe was the model to which all officers aspired. Emsley's (1991, p.160) quotation from *The Times* film critic that the Dixon character was the reflection of 'an indulgent tradition' and not of reality nevertheless ensured that a 'benchmark' had been set 'against which the behaviour of the police ... was to be measured'. Even the police service's own weekly magazine acknowledged that 'as police propaganda 'The Blue Lamp' will be difficult to beat' (Police Review: 20 January 1950, p.34).

The decade which had begun with the opportunity of a substantial public relations<sup>2</sup> success in enhancing public confidence in policing ended in much less appealing fashion. A series of scandals involving police officers and confrontations between those in authority began

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<sup>1</sup> See chapter 1, footnote 1.

<sup>2</sup> 'Public relations' is something which 'telescopes two meanings into one', suggests Evans (1975, p.41). It is both the police's approach to the public and 'the creation of an image that portrays to the world a picture that its subject wishes the public to see'.

to draw into question the nature of control and accountability of the police. These included the acquittal of the chief constable of Brighton and conviction of a senior CID officer and detective sergeant on charges of corruption; a dispute between the chief constable of Cardiganshire and the Standing Joint Committee which, whilst eventually resolved through Home Office enquiry and intervention, saw the force merged with Carmarthen a year later; the retirement of the chief constable of Nottingham following an acrimonious dispute with the Watch Committee<sup>3</sup>; and the ruling of the Home Secretary in relation to the non-disciplining of an officer who was alleged to have assaulted a civil servant.<sup>4</sup> The 1950s was also a decade which saw the recorded crime rate begin to rise year on year, prompting Critchley to consider it 'a crime wave unparalleled in modern times' (1978, p.254). 1958 saw riots in Notting Hill and Nottingham flamed by racial tension, and this post-war period was now being 'invaded' by a new generation who were becoming more unconventional in their actions, attitudes and dress. Time was moving quickly but *Dixon* was still the man who was seen to be keeping order on the streets.

The die had been cast, through these events, for the Royal Commission on the Policing which was commenced in 1960 under Sir Henry Willink QC. Central to its brief were the important issues which had now become matters of selective public debate and impinged on the confidence with which the police could be trusted to conduct their work. Far from there being widespread public disquiet over the issues which had been raised, the wider availability of information throughout the country meant that such issues more readily fell into the public arena and became potentially open to much greater scrutiny. Accountability

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<sup>3</sup> Watch committees were first established under the Municipal Corporations Act 1835 which applied to 178 English and Welsh boroughs. Elected town councils were tasked with establishing watch committees which would appoint and supervise the towns' police forces (Emsley, 1991, p.38).

<sup>4</sup> A civil case was brought prior to the decision. The case was settled out of court with a payment to the plaintiff and the police accepting no fault or liability (Emsley, 1991, p.162).

to the public of police officers and, probably more importantly in relation to the events which were to mould policing during the 1960s, politicians, now held a far more central position on the stage of policing.

The formation of a Royal Commission had not been uniquely preserved for the Dixon era in order to address fundamental issues relating to the roles and responsibilities of the police. Previous commissions had been established to consider the duties of the Metropolitan Police (1908)<sup>5</sup> and police powers and procedures (1929)<sup>6</sup> but neither had been required to confront the wider question of where ultimate control and accountability within provincial police forces lay. This question naturally led to consideration of the potential benefits of a police force being centrally controlled and administered (an issue which has remained on the political agenda) and the evidence taken by the Commission weighed it in the light of constitutional objectivity against examples of continental models. Their recommendation to effectively streamline the existing structure accepted the value to be derived from locally administered forces in terms of both public acceptability and political accountability. Although one member, Professor A.L. Goodhart, dissented from the majority view in proposing a regionally administered system, and gained a respectable degree of support for his ideas elsewhere (including some press commentators and politicians), the majority recommendation was eventually accepted by the Government.

The era which had begun with the progression of a post-war institution re-adjusting to 'civilian life' had, in its wake, encountered controversy and change brought about by factors both within and outside the control of the police. The media inspired future was

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<sup>5</sup> *Royal Commission on the Duties of the Metropolitan Police*, (1908), Cmd. 4156.

<sup>6</sup> *Royal Commission on Police Powers and Procedures*, (1929), Cmd. 3297.

upon them and, with it, an emerging culture of more questioning and rebellious youth, increasing affluence, more overt racial tensions and politicians becoming more confident in their ability to use the media to comment and promote ideologies. The police themselves similarly needed to adjust to these new environments, and the painful experiences of the late 1950s had now brought about a potential overturn of the relationships between chief officers and watch committees - a situation in which the latter held substantial establishment power but one in which chief constables exercised more direct influence and control.

The nature of independence from political control now became central and, whilst no voices were ever raised to the heights of wishing to see a return to the autonomy of the pre-1919 era,<sup>7</sup> the question of where primary power should lie was only countered by the overall preoccupation with seeing police forces remain locally accountable and administered. The constitutional issue of where precisely the police stood in relation to their control remained the subject of a degree of questioning, particularly as it related to the notion of true independence against the role of electoral responsibility invested in parliament (Marshall, 1965). Whereas the nature of the proposed changes were perceived by many as likely to strengthen the objectivity of law enforcers, and constructing a model against which local political accountability could reside through newly established police authorities,<sup>8</sup> subsequent events and conflicts were to draw into question the rationale for

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<sup>7</sup> The influence which the First World War had on the police service was substantial. Clashes with a new Metropolitan Commissioner and attempts by organised labour to influence the police saw the establishment of the Desborough Committee which resulted in standardised pay and conditions under Home Office control. The Police Federation became assured and the exchequer now met half the total cost of forces. These matters were included in the Police Act 1919.

<sup>8</sup> Police authorities became established under the Police Act 1964.



believing that the reality bore a true resemblance to that anticipated.<sup>9</sup> 'Although political reality had been moving in this direction for 50 years, 1964 was the first time that the supremacy of the chief constable was enshrined in statute' (Lustgarten, 1986).

The Royal Commission resulted in most of its recommendations forming part of the *Police Act 1964*. In repealing 19th century legislation it now set about defining the responsibilities and functions of key actors in the policing arena - those of the Home Secretary, chief constables and the newly established police authorities. These new authorities bore the hallmarks of the recommendations of the Commission and had as their prime responsibilities the maintenance of 'adequate and efficient' police forces. Their powers included the appointment and dismissal of chief constables which was subject to approval by the Home Secretary and they were obliged by statute to receive annual reports from chief officers on the running of their forces. Chief constables were given the otherwise complete 'direction and control' of their staff, a position which now included the discretion of promotion and appointment as well as discipline (formerly the final preserve of watch committees). The Home Secretary could require reports from chief constables on policing matters in order to satisfy the need to ensure police *efficiency* was being maintained and promoted although this '*eff*' word itself remained undefined and subjected to comment and criticism (Jefferson and Grimshaw, 1984).

The importance of chief constables had far from diminished. On the local scene at least it

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<sup>9</sup> Critics of the nature of accountability, in particular, draw upon the experiences of public involvement with the police which is, for the large part, seen as partial in that certain sections of society have always been more likely to encounter their *services* than others. Both in relation to criminal activity and the routine service role provided, the issue of class and powerlessness amongst many *customers* is perceived as a weakening factor within the model. The notion is one enhanced through more recent criminological work arguing that fear of crime is an essential element affecting those who are most vulnerable in society, either through their status or area of residence (Taylor, 1981; Lea & Young, 1984; Young, 1986).

had formally increased, although the influence from central government in terms of direction, rather than operational action, was becoming apparent. The losers in the power-stakes were perceived as local police authorities whilst the hands of the Home Office and chief constables were strengthened (Reiner, 1985), the inclusion of appointed magistrates on Police Authorities being attempts to 'attenuate political control' (Bayley, 1983). Ideas disseminated from the Home Office now became more easily assimilated than before and an early example of the move in this direction was that of Unit Beat Policing (UBP).<sup>10</sup>

### *Community policing*

The well-used term *community policing* did not emerge as having a significant impact upon policing until the 1980s when Chief Constable John Alderson utilised its positive and emotive appeal to depict a redirected style of policing in Devon and Cornwall (Alderson, 1979, 1983). However, when considered in the wider historical context of how policing developed since the last century, it is no less appropriate to review the extent to which such a term could have been applied much earlier than the Alderson era, albeit in a less distinct form than that which became ascribed to it in the 1980s.<sup>11</sup> The essence of this contention is one which accepts the varying definitions which can be given to each of the words *community* and *policing* (Cohen, 1985). Nevertheless, it had as its basis a form of order-maintenance which was non-militaristic and relied (in orthodox historians' interpretations) on co-operation rather than coercion, having 'had roots in ancient traditions of communal self-policing' (Reiner, 1985, p.15). Opponents of this 'idealist' view of policing argue that the way in which 'the new police' developed was one which had as its motives the maintenance of order needed by the capitalist class, and more centralist social order, with

<sup>10</sup> The development of UBP generally is discussed in the next section of this chapter and its development in Plymouth is described in more detail in Chapter 9: *Community Policing in Devon and Cornwall*.

<sup>11</sup> John Alderson's *community policing* philosophy is described in more detail in the chapter 4 *Community through the Riots* and Chapter 9 *Community Policing in Devon and Cornwall*.

the nature of 'consent' implied in the arrangement being dependant upon an absence of crisis when the coercive element of policing would become paramount (Brogden, 1982; 1983; Cohen, 1979). Despite disagreement over the rationale for developing the police institution in this way, the reality of a civilian force working in close proximity to the public, having their bases of operation within communities themselves, and operating an unarmed 'beat' system of patrolling in similar vein to that of 'watchmen', provided a structure against which the words *community* and *policing* could sit alongside each other with some degree of comfort.

However locational closeness alone is not one on which a sustainable argument that *community policing* became a cornerstone on which the twentieth century police service was to develop can be maintained. The nature of what the police did on a day-to-day basis was one which, at a relatively early stage in their nineteenth century development gained a 'degree of legitimacy, in which they were no longer widely seen as a politically oppressive force, by a combination of specific strategies which did give the British police a unique character, implanting them firmly in national mythology' (Reiner, 1985, p.47). Local policing developed what one of the nineteenth century advocates for police reform, Edwin Chadwick,<sup>12</sup> considered to be their 'collateral services', enabling them to epitomise their 'moral usefulness' by cultivating 'beneficial services ... on occasions of accident or calamity'. Their position as an organised group, able to undertake tasks such as searching for missing persons, began to move police rationale for existence into a far wider realm than that of law-keepers. Some police forces also began to establish charitable funds to

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<sup>12</sup> Edwin Chadwick: 'a (partly successful) advocate of a national, rationalized, preventive policing system (Radzinowicz, 1956), was also the fore of reforms in other areas of public and social policy, most notably with regard to Poor Law and public health innovations' (Mawby, 1990, p.23). He was a member of the Constabulary Force Commission established in the 1830s to make recommendations about possible reforms to policing outside London (Gilling, 1997, p.72).

assist the poor and, by 1893, 'the Bobby was ... firmly established as part of the British Constitution' (Emsley, 1991, pp.76-77; 89).

The nature of the role which the police had during the 1950s in particular was one which was not assigned any specific title. However, the basis on which later generations were to perceive what was important to them was one based on the idealised notion of *good* policing being synonymous with officers patrolling neighbourhoods and thereby enhancing confidence and preventing crime<sup>13</sup>. It was a notion enshrined in the nineteenth century foundations of policing itself with the most overt signs of policework being vested in the sight of uniform patrols rather than covert investigative activity through perceived spying on the populous.<sup>14</sup> The 1950s brought the issue into sharper focus through the character of *Dixon* although there is little evidence to suggest that officers patrolled in the type of way which some later reminiscences from the 1990s would have us believe.<sup>15</sup> Patrol work was, however, questioned in terms of its effectiveness in preventing and detecting crime in several studies. Although research in both the USA and Britain has indicated that crime fell when police patrolling increased these failed to show that there was a relationship between the amount of police resources committed to such an enterprise and the level of success achieved (Reiner, 1985, p.118). The likely difference in effectiveness of foot, as against mobile patrolling, was further questioned in relationship to crime prevention during the 1980s when it was calculated that the likelihood of a police officer on routine patrol coming within 100 yards of a burglary in progress was once in every eight years (Chatterton and Rogers, 1989; Clarke and Hough, 1984). However, such clinical analysis

<sup>13</sup> Chapter 8 provides an indication of this through the reactions of those surveyed in the Devon and Cornwall and Plymouth areas.

<sup>14</sup> The foundations of the Metropolitan Police were based on such a principle with a deliberate minimal use of plain clothes officers because of the perceived fear which the public would have of them spying on them (Miller, 1977, p.33).

<sup>15</sup> The interviews referred to in the later chapter on *community policing* clearly show a rosy recollective theme in some respects, but equally, a system which did not promise police officers walking up and down residential streets on a daily basis.

failed to take account of the qualitative aspects of police patrol such as a sense of personal security, reduced fear, and the opportunity for interaction which might provide valuable information in detecting offences, all of which could be bi-products of an overt police presence.

The increased use of motor vehicles as a mode of patrol was becoming more common and the strategic approach employed in Lancashire during the late 1950s and early 1960s was the technological foundation on which *Unit Beat Policing* (UBP) was advanced in 1966. Lancashire had formed special 'crime patrol cars' in the Kirkby area which became the model for the 'Z' Cars of the popular television series in 1962. The locality had a high crime and disorder problem and was an area where few police officers wished to work, let alone reside. Lancashire's chief constable at that time was one of the future chief inspectors of constabulary, Eric St. Johnston. He attributed a substantial reduction in crime during 1965, together with a corresponding increase in detections over an eight month period, to the effectiveness of the scheme which involved officers being issued with personal radios and the transformation of eleven foot beats into five mobile patrol areas (St. Johnston, 1978, p.169). The nature of this apparent success was never fully researched but the appointment of St. Johnston as Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary in 1966 clearly had much to do with the enthusiasm for UBP which emanated from the Home Office subsequently.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> See chapter 3 *1967-1979: Technology to Community* and chapter 9 *Community policing in Devon and Cornwall* for a more detailed discussion on the development of UBP.

### *Crime prevention*

The post-war period had seen a gradual decline in the, apparently unqualified, support for the rule of law. With the emergence of a new generation of youth and minority groups during the 1950s and 60s, the ability of government to react to rising criminal behaviour did not fit neatly into many of the 'accepted' structural explanations of individual responsibility and character traits of offenders. The ability, therefore, to directly influence politically achievable objectives through conventional and established justice procedures became problematic. The 1950s also saw signs of interest from other institutions in achieving a reduction in crime. The insurance industry, with Home Office involvement, began an education process aimed at achieving greater public awareness of preventative measures through a publicity campaign. This process was seen as most appropriately carried forward by the police and some forces took the steps of introducing departments through which to disseminate crime prevention advice although, at this early stage in developments, the majority did not (Gilling, 1996, p.103).

In 1963, the National Crime Prevention Centre, based at Stafford, was established by the Home Office. This training establishment aimed to provide the police with a resource from which standardised crime prevention techniques could be instilled in selected officers from forces around the country with the intention that their newly acquired knowledge could then be utilised in a productive educational way with the public in their respective regions. The education process was becoming developed in a way which was perceived as practical and, to a degree, targeted. Resources were being committed at local level within policing structures and crime prevention specialists and support departments began to emerge as a norm. The rationale of providing personal advice at local level became a perspective which was to become enshrined in the recommendations of the *Cornish Committee on the*

*Prevention and Detection of Crime* (Home Office, 1965). The idea that *crime prevention* was becoming a specialism, demanding and deserving of resources, was enhanced in the committee's recommendation that specialist officers were required to maintain an appropriate level of expertise in an arena of increasing technological advancement. They were to bring a professionalism to the subject and engender collaboration with 'outside' bodies intended to reinforce the message of *crime prevention* being of wider responsibility than just the police service.

The history of *crime prevention*, is one which shows this particular branch of police specialist support to have developed in a way which has been often divorced from the perceptions of what officers felt was 'real police work'. The *Cornish Committee* were not blind to this possibility in their deliberations and specifically emphasised that they felt it vital 'that any crime prevention organisation should not diminish the responsibilities of other members of the force towards crime prevention'. Moreover, they felt that there was a continual need to reinforce the stimulus 'and maintain an interest amongst all members...' (Weatheritt, 1986, p.45-6). The training of police staff in the role of crime prevention officers (CPOs) was essential and the Stafford centre (established prior to the committee's findings) was well placed to continue its role in providing the type of short courses required.

However, the *Cornish Committee* recommended action which was far more wide reaching than activities within the police service alone, and provided a framework against which many of the *crime prevention* measures developed during the latter part of the century were to be built. The need for a multi-agency response was clear in relation to other groups in the manufacturing, retail, service and welfare sectors. To a large extent the police service

was still perceived as the primary owner of the *crime prevention* problem but the agenda had the potential to be moved away from them through the recommendation of a central advisory body being established. In 1967 the *Home Office Standing Committee on Crime Prevention* was formed and contained representatives from government, industry, commerce and the police. Its early work concentrated on publicity in specific fields of *crime prevention* and forming sub-committees on two areas of particular interest - personal and commercial property crime, and vehicle offences. It was keen to have the notion of responsibility for initiatives moved away from central level and recommended the establishment of crime prevention panels in all towns with a population of more than 150,000 (Weatheritt, 1986, p.47). The panels began to become established during the second half of the 1960s, stimulated by a government circular (Home Office, 1968).

Crime Prevention Departments within the police service had sprung up, relatively quickly, on the back of the *Cornish Committee* report which had recommended that an officer of at least inspector rank should be appointed in each force as its CPO, with officers in each division (preferably sergeants) being identified to liaise with patrolling constables. The work of the standing committee and the ensuing involvement of police forces in developing departments from their existing resources owed much to the committee's recommendations and proved to be the 'genesis of the situational approach'<sup>17</sup> in an era when reaction was still seen as the most effective answer to crime (Bright, 1991, p.65). Whereas the foundations were being firmly laid in the mid 1960s for the pre-emptive activity which set the marker of the collaborative, situational *crime prevention* model,

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<sup>17</sup> See chapter 3 1967-1979: *Technology to Community* for development of the concept of *situational crime prevention*..



much of the prospectively impactful work was not to emerge as the norm in many areas until the 1980s.

### *Victims of crime*

The 1950s evolved as a period of emerging cultural change and disquiet in relation to crime and disorderly behaviour. Relative stability in social acceptance of norms following the War was giving way to a more questioning and experimental generation who were gradually let loose from the remaining constraints of post-war British existence. Public perceptions of anxiety with developments sat alongside the 'folk-devils' of the day, Teddy Boys, to reinforce the notion that much of what was happening lay at the door of liberalisation of punishment options (Cohen, 1972; Pearson, 1983). It was also a decade which saw the subject of *crime victims* begin to emerge as a national issue. However the police position was one not yet entwined in the politics of this particular debate.

Central to the emergence of victims of crime as an issue in its own right during this period was the elderly figure of Margery Fry. Her campaigning for rights for victims, based around principles of compensation by the State, was one which emerged against a more liberalised attitude towards punishment of offenders. The rights of victims was a concept which had been alluded to far earlier, at the International Prison Congress which took place in Brussels in 1900, where the secretary of the Howard Association<sup>18</sup>, William Tallack, had suggested that the issue could be addressed through a carefully regulated and State-administered scheme in which the offender made reparation in money or in service to the victim (Rock, 1990, p.50). The suggestion was not taken up nor pursued by the Howard

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<sup>18</sup> The Howard Association merged with the Penal Reform League in 1921 to form the *Howard League* for Penal Reform. Margery Fry was to be the first Honorary Secretary until 1926.

Association whose primary role was associated with the offender and not the victim. However, the political 'wheels' which turned at the time of Fry's primary involvement in work towards achieving victim compensation were, in no small way, linked to the changes in legislation on the use of corporal punishment. Wide political division between reformers and those in favour of retaining hard labour and whipping as two methods of punishment emerged at the time of the *Criminal Justice Act 1948*.<sup>19</sup> Underlying unrest about the change in legislation continued throughout the decades which followed, with the struggle between equating the position of offender and victim within the criminal justice system regularly being addressed. The abolition of capital punishment in Britain in 1957 served to heighten the debate further and promote the *victim* to greater prominence. Support for legislation giving victims rights to compensation was the opportunity to redress some of the balance which was perceived as having swung too far in favour of the wrong-doer and away from the innocent.

Margery Fry's argument throughout the period was that restitution for the victim from the offender was effectively impractical and problematic in enforcing. The State was seen as the organ through which compensation should be paid. It was the State which should assume this responsibility of repaying citizens for their loss brought about through societal problems rather than merely individual estrangement from legislative compliance.<sup>20</sup> As developments which followed during the 1970s later indicated, the wish of individual victims to be identified within a homogenous group known as *victims* was not without its

<sup>19</sup> Discussion of the Bill involved Sir Thomas More in identifying that there was 'not one mention in the whole Criminal Justice Bill of the word "victim" ..... Indeed it is a cynical commentary on the use of the word "justice"' (Rock, 1990, p.56).

<sup>20</sup> Fry, who died in 1958, was to devote much time during her final years to this campaign for compensation. She did so against a background of victims as an interest group which had not, itself, promoted a cause for which to fight. The challenge was being taken up on behalf of a non-identified section of individuals within society which had no effective position within the criminal justice system, save to provide evidence to the authorities with which to prosecute offenders.

problems. In addition, Fry's own association, the *Howard League*, was far from enthusiastic about taking up the issue whilst campaigns such as the abolition of the death penalty took centre stage (Mawby and Gill, 1987).

Fry's crusade became supported by a number of prominent individuals within the last two years of her life, centrally because of her enthusiastic commitment in speaking engagements and through increased use of the media to raise awareness of the issues. A cementing relationship in 1957, with a newly formed organisation of lawyers from the main political parties, *Justice*, enhanced the progress of the campaign.<sup>21</sup> *Justice* adopted a position on the issue which was supportive and based on the need to enhance the criminal justice system in such a way as to reduce the likelihood of victims taking matters into their own hands when offences had been committed against them. It was *Justice* which forwarded a letter to *The Times* on 5 May 1958, two weeks after Fry's death, entitled *Victims of Violence: How Compensation Could be Paid*. The request within the article, that the ideas be accepted as a memorial to Margery Fry's life, led to a meeting of members of the group with the Home Secretary. A foothold on the political ladder having been established, the emergence of the *Compensation for Victims of Crimes of Violence Act, 1964* was to be a, not easily achieved, but arguably inevitable result.

Although probably inevitable, the political path which had to be taken between 1958 and 1964 was one beset with pitfalls which could have seen history report a situation where the Act did not emerge until much later. As political careers and policies developed however,

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<sup>21</sup> *Justice* did not have the issue of criminal injuries compensation on their agenda prior to its suggestion by Fry and her collaborator, C.H. Rolph. Ideas were being solicited by *Justice* and the relationships which existed between those involved in aspects of criminal justice reform ensured that an avenue was open for Fry's suggestions to get an airing.

the crusade's timing was right and became a complementary issue to other strands of policy of that time. Early 1959 saw a White Paper entitled *Penal Practice in a Changing Society* consider the obligations of society to victims and a working party was appointed to report on the matter. The 1959 Conservative election manifesto had promised to consider a scheme to compensate victims of violent crime and, in 1962, their Party conference clearly voted in favour of bringing such a scheme into existence.<sup>22</sup> The essence of the working party's findings in 1961 were that two potential schemes could be considered: one based on the existing industrial injuries legislation, and the other being furthered by the Home Office paying a lump sum to victims of crime. The underlying tone of the report was not positive in its recommendations however. It questioned, not only how practical it would be to implement such a scheme, but also the general principle of whether to assume responsibility for this was the role of the State in all cases. In 1963, the New Zealand government enacted the Criminal Injuries Compensation Act, having requested the Council of Justice report be forwarded to it. A model had been established and arguments as to the impracticality of administering such a scheme in Britain were less easily defended.

The *Compensation for Victims of Crimes of Violence* White Paper was passed as legislation during 1964. A *Victims of Crimes of Violence Compensation Board* would administer the scheme and monitor its implementation. The group became re-titled the *Criminal Injuries Compensation Board* (CICB) and during its first twenty months of operation received 2,950 applications and paid £436,149 in compensation (Rock, 1990: p.85). The *Board* had perceptibly become 'one of the final bricks of the welfare state'

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<sup>22</sup> Also during 1959, a Labour M.P., Reg Prentice, tabled a private member's bill on the subject in the Commons. The principles sat neatly alongside positions he had taken with other groups in the industrial relations field although, hitherto, he had not noticeably concerned himself with matters of criminal justice. The Bill did not reach debating stage in the chamber and therefore was lost but Prentice's position had been established and a colleague M.P. presented a further Bill, drafted identically, the following year. This also failed although it received a first reading by the House. Pressure was now being applied on the government to take action.

(Mawby and Walklate, 1994, p.76). The late 1960s was a period in which the development of the CICB caused the United Kingdom to be perceived as at the forefront of initiatives for *victims of crime* which other countries followed (Waller, 1988). For example, in 1965, the United States of America introduced a compensation scheme in California which included payment of medical expenses as well as a sum to be paid to families of homicide victims and other States began to follow. The police position in Britain vis-à-vis victims had not developed any specific significance during the period between 1950 and 1967 and was still several years away from doing so in a way which would affect national thinking on this issue. However, the eventual emergence of the police into this arena had a generally positive impact upon the legitimacy and effect upon volunteer organisations concerned with victim welfare which saw the police themselves become more directly concerned with their provision of service to this group of *customers*.

### *Quality of service*

The notion of British policing having as one of its core principles an ethos of *service* is one closely linked with the level of legitimacy which the institution has developed during and since the last century. The extent to which adopting the role of service-providers (as against purely law-enforcers) has contributed to this legitimacy is debatable<sup>23</sup> but the fact that a substantial amount of the routine work which the police embark upon is not directly related to preventing or detecting crime has been a matter of record for some time (Martin & Wilson, 1969; Mayhew et al., 1993). The extent to which the police themselves consider that their work equates to an ethos of public service, rather than law-enforcers and crime

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<sup>23</sup> Critics such as Brogden (1982, pp. 208-19) argue this situation having more to do with the police window-dressing a basically coercive regime than having service to the public as one of their primary concerns.

detectors, is one which appears to have been less in evidence during the 1950-67 period than in subsequent analysis of the position once philosophies of *community policing* and *quality of service* had become more ingrained in policing during the 1980s and 1990s. Interpretations of the individual cultures within policing are similarly recounted in studies both within and outside Britain during the period following the Second World War. The extent to which such positions were institutionalised, not only by interaction between individual officers and their superiors, but within the structures of the forces themselves is noteworthy.<sup>24</sup>

To what extent any analysis of the *quality of work* took place during the 1950-67 period is less obvious. There is little to suggest that matters which were outside the crime aspects of policing, or maintenance of ritualistic patrol work, held any specific interest to the management of the police service in general. The policing institution was conventionally structured against a 'can-do' daily problem solving agenda which directed its efforts towards the maintenance of order and crime detection. There was a grudging acceptance that many of the tasks which fell outside this remit put officers in the role of peace keepers 'by supervising the beat and responding to calls for assistance' (Banton, 1964, p.127). Public acceptance of policing methods, and the police establishment's own perspective that this was a mainstay of their position in society is able to be evidenced in some cases well before the 1950s.<sup>25</sup> Limited survey evidence from the 1950s also showed a high level of satisfaction with the police and good police-public relations (Emsley, 1991, p.167) but,

<sup>24</sup> Brogden's account of how rules on police socialising with the public impacted on the responses given in his study of policing Liverpool between the Wars (Brogden, 1991, pp.31-34) and Reiner's (1985) overview of Skolnick's work (1966, *Justice Without Trial*, New York: Wiley) show examples of aspects of police culture relevant to the pre-enlightened service era.

<sup>25</sup> For *acceptance* it may also be possible to read *popularity*. Early examples (1880-1882) relating to the tasks which the police were required to undertake, including the serving of summonses on parents whose children failed to attend school, were seen to have the potential to make the police 'more unpopular than they were' (Emsley, 1991, p.79). Evidence from Liverpool between the Wars (Brogden, 1991) shows aspects of affinity with some of those policed to the extent that the *respect* expected in the role of constable is arguably close to a wish for *popularity*.



whereas the findings were indicative of a generally healthy environment in which the police could operate, there was little evidence to measure how effective or appropriate their actions actually were.

The primary instrument for measurement was Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), established in 1856 as the mechanism to identify forces which were deemed efficient enough to receive a quarter of their expenses from central government funds.<sup>26</sup> The Inspectorate's position by the 1950s/60s had changed little in terms of its overall effectiveness as a mechanism to discover problems, let alone measure in more useful terms any notions of *quality* in what the police actually did (Whitaker, 1964). The thrust of the inspection process had altered following the *Police (Inspectors of Constabulary) Act 1945* to one which, by the 1950s, concerned itself with a role more familiar to the one which was to continue during the next forty years.<sup>27</sup> Following the recommendations of the *Royal Commission* in 1962, Sir William Johnson was appointed as the first Chief Inspector of Constabulary (HMCIC)<sup>28</sup> in charge of the regional inspectors who were made responsible for eight district areas. These were subsequently reduced to six in 1964 and five in 1969 (Cowley, 1991).

The vast majority of HMIs, since the last century, have been former chief constables (although the first HMI, John Woodford, had no connection with the police). Until 1948 all

<sup>26</sup> In 1919 the national grant was increased to 50% and covered a wider range of expenditure than only pay and clothing as previously (Cowley, 1991).

<sup>27</sup> These aspects included police force organisation; strength and adequacy; allocation of work and responsibilities of the various ranks; police buildings and housing; methods of communication; maintenance of discipline and training; equipment and uniforms; and crime prevention and detection.

<sup>28</sup> The *Police Act 1945* had first allowed the appointment of the position HMCIC but HMI Sir Frank Brook refused to be considered for this position as he felt the appointment had the potential of lowering the status of his colleague HMIs. The position remained unfilled for the next seventeen years until the recommendations of the *Royal Commission*, that the position should be filled, were accepted (St. Johnston, 1978, p.265-6).



were also men and since then only three women have reached HMI status. All of them were appointed, or achieved, Assistant HMI positions between 1948 and 1962, the last finishing service in 1976. Their position in the 1950s and 1960s was one in which they were perceived as having qualities and abilities which enabled them to work well within a male dominated culture. The third Chief Inspector of Constabulary, and former chief constable of Lancashire, Eric St. Johnston spoke highly of the 'enthusiasm, drive ... and popularity' of Miss Barbara Denis de Vitre, the first woman to be appointed to the HMI's office in 1948. However, his comments which followed concerning his support for 'women police' perhaps put a more institutionalised view of women in the profession into perspective: 'I insisted we should recruit feminine girls rather than 'collar and tie' types. What one wants from a woman is the feminine point of view and intuition. The disadvantage of selecting the feminine type is that they usually get married after a short while ... but all is not lost for they usually marry policemen, and make good wives' (St. Johnston, 1978, pp.280-1).

The mechanism for inspections was one which involved officers now inspecting chief constables who were formerly their peers. Whereas there is no obvious evidence to suggest that such inspections were less than formal and reverential to the positions of both HMIs and chief officers, the established autonomy of chief constables meant that persuasion, rather than an ability to instruct that changes should take place, was the method by which the Inspectorate had to operate. Respect and, to a degree, popularity of individual HMIs was seen as instrumental to effective operation. St. Johnston also highlighted the nature of the HMI's role as one of being a 'father confessor' to the chief constables in their regions and, speaking of his predecessor Ted Dodd, he commented on the perceived strengths of his conservatism and popularity which did not incline him to initiate new ideas - 'an

advantage that I did not have, and thus I knew he would not be an easy man to succeed' (St. Johnston, 1978, p.264). The level at which objective criticism was able to be promulgated, how it was received and acted upon, together with the influence which HMIs had in resolving such potential conflicts does not have independent evidence available to exemplify it. What did emerge during the years which followed was an apparent growing influence of the HMCIC to personally inspire and assist in certain policing developments, such as UBP, drug squads and traffic patrols which became established nationwide.<sup>29</sup>

### *1950-1967 - an overview*

This was an era in which the police began with a relatively comfortable and supportive existence, and ended as one where the positive media image of their service had shown the first signs of back-firing. Public and political scrutiny had resulted in significant questions being asked of their structure and procedures, leading to the first major piece of legislation to emerge during the period under study; one which was to result in the dismantling of numerous local institutions. As well as principles of accountability and control, the work which the police did was beginning to receive greater central direction in two of the key areas which are of interest: *community policing* (through UBP) and *crime prevention* (through the Crime Prevention College and the Cornish Report). Victims of crime were also brought onto the agenda and whilst, at this stage the role of the police vis-à-vis victims was not considered, victim related issues would emerge as an additional phenomenon in which the police would play an increasing role. The *quality* of police services was beginning to emerge as an issue, but only in a more diverse sense through greater political and public awareness of their position as an accountable and powerful national institution.

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<sup>29</sup> See chapter 3 *1967-79 Technology to Community* for more detail.

To try and superimpose a relatively modern-day term such as *quality of service* onto a historical map of policing forty to fifty years ago is, therefore, problematic. It is not only problematic because of the nature of the evidence available from that period but, as importantly, there is difficulty in defining the term *quality* itself. There are opportunities to develop interpretations of this in relation to more localised studies, and through subsequent chapters which deal with the emergence of police and public perceptions of *quality* in Devon and Cornwall, this will be considered. However, in terms of the policing environment, the groundwork for much of what was to follow during the next thirty years had been laid.

## 1967 - 1979 Technology to Community

The 1964 Police Act had provided the power to amalgamate forces, an instrument which had been used in May 1966 by the then Home Secretary, Roy Jenkins, to affect the reduction of provincial forces from 117 to 49. The programme was achieved almost totally during the next four years. The effects of reorganisations were perceived to be generally successful at national level in accomplishing the move away from numerous local watch committees to more accountable police authorities and chief officers, but at street-level amalgamations often proved more problematic in terms of organisational management. The resultant changes were substantial in terms of re-ranking senior officers although, in line with the privileged position held by this public service institution, streamlining was achieved without enforced job losses or compulsory retirements of officers over pensionable service age.<sup>1</sup> The changes in boundaries, as these affected the operational capabilities of the new forces, were significantly less problematic than the issues which accompanied the cultures of pride and belonging evident amongst officers in their previous forces. The situation was not unique to any one area, nor unpredicted, but one which affected many constabularies which had undergone (or were to undergo) similar changes to their structure.

The strength which the Trade Unions had developed within the politics of the country

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<sup>1</sup> The issue of enforced retirement, at or after pensionable service, is one which has never been addressed, mainly due to the uncertain legal position and pressure from staff associations. Interestingly in 1963 the Chief Constable of Devon issued an order that officers who had completed pensionable service would be required to resign when that point was reached (Devon General Orders, 5/93). However, the policy was never implemented fully and, since then, a small number of '30+ year officers' have been 'convinced' to retire through more subtle means if their continued service is not required.

during the 1960s had led to industrial disputes and strikes becoming more commonplace. The organised union power-base was able to co-ordinated picketing of premises connected with disputes, both directly, and secondarily, and the role which the police were expected to play in maintaining order became a significant issue in the development of the service in the early 1970s. In 1972, the Saltley coke depot had been closed during a dispute, despite efforts of the police to maintain access to it in the face of violent picketing. The consequences of this event met with varying responses when considered against the role which the police could or should play in such circumstances. The failure of the police to keep the passage free for those who wanted to work was seen by many as a dangerous development in the overall abilities of them to maintain law and order. However, others argued that the increase in the power needed by the police to succeed would have been out of proportion to the loss of support and reduced public confidence which would follow (Clutterbuck, 1980; Jeffery and Hennessy, 1983). The call for wider ranging powers and the possibility of developing a French-style 'CRS' third force, capable of dealing with serious public disorder in the political environment, was a common theme which emerged in discussion on the future of policing. It was one which was not supported by the police. Nevertheless forces began to train and equip officers to enable them to provide mutual aid to other areas in times of need. These *Police Support Units* (PSUs) were used infrequently in most forces during the 1970s but were to be employed to greater effect during the next decade, particularly during the Miners' Strike of 1984. Combined with this, the establishment of the National Co-ordinating Centre based at New Scotland Yard in 1972 was the starting point from which strategic inter-force mutual aid to deal with such incidents began. By the late 1970s riot shields and protective equipment were becoming a more common sight on the streets, particularly in larger forces where their deployment in circumstances of serious public disturbance was a more regular occurrence. Provincial

forces invested in such equipment to varying degrees dependant upon financial ability and the importance which their chief officers placed on the commitment, although their use 'in the field' was far less regular.

Whereas police pay had increased in the second half of the 1960s following co-ordinated pressure from the *Police Federation*, the reality by the mid to late 1970s was that the service was experiencing general disquiet through the perceived inability of police pay to keep pace with ever rising inflation. The *Federation* was also becoming a far more organised pressure group which, whilst not committed to any party-political affiliation or support, became instrumental in the eventual election of the Conservative government in 1979 on a strong 'law and order' ticket (Conservative Central Office, 1979). In 1978, the Edmund-Davies committee enquiry into police pay and conditions had recommended substantial pay increases across the board, together with preservation and enhancement of associated financial factors (notably rent allowance) and, most significantly, an ongoing pay review formula which would ensure future pay negotiations reflected rising costs. The recommendations were accepted by the Labour government but it sought to stage the rises over a period of time and not honour the agreement in full. The 1979 election saw the new Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, summon the representatives of the police staff associations to 10, Downing Street almost immediately upon her appointment to advise them that the formula would be paid in full with immediate effect and the future pay formula be implemented<sup>2</sup> (Reiner, 1985, p.73-5).

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<sup>2</sup> The pay rises were significant and saw the minimum pay of a constable in 1977 (£2,775) rise to £6,189 by 1982 (Benyon, 1984, p.103).

### *Community Policing*

One of the most noticeable changes to policing style which occurred around the time of the amalgamation of forces was that of *Unit Beat Policing* (UBP). By the early to mid-1960s technology was well advanced but most forces had, hitherto, not taken full advantage of such innovations either through lack of funding, encouragement or foresight. UBP was a system which, as well as redefining some of the principles of 'patrol', saw an increased use of technology to assist the police. Motor vehicles were not new to police forces but 1966 saw the Home Office taking positive action to develop their usage still further by funding vehicles (which were to become universally known as 'panda cars') either through loan, hire or increased grant. Radio communication also became more widely available to individual patrolling officers through Pye Pocketphones and again this was supported by the Home Office. These intentions were in line with Home Office circular 142/1967 (Home Office, 1967) issued during August of that year to all forces advocating implementation of the new system with the offer of central financial assistance where appropriate.<sup>3</sup>

There was little about UBP which the public could feel dramatically concerned about at this point and, whereas the publicity afforded the scheme concentrated upon the positive nature of providing everyone with a modern, well-equipped crime fighting organisation, little (if any) attention was directed towards evaluation of what the public actually thought of the service. Whether the negative public attitude towards aspects of policing pre-dated concerns which were felt by the police themselves about the system is dubious. If anything, texts tend to suggest that the enterprise was initially greeted with applause rather than

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<sup>3</sup> The offer related to the provision of vehicles against repayment 'as early as possible in the next financial year' (Home Office, 1967).

concern, arguably because the emphasis which was placed on the advanced nature of technology being made available that would enable the 'bobby' to be recast as 'the tough, dashing, formidable (but still brave and honest) "Crime-Buster"' (Chibnall, 1977, p.71).

Riding upon the back of the moral panics of the 1950s,<sup>4</sup> and emerging during a period of 'flower-power', drugs and promiscuity in the 1960s, UBP still emphasised the 'friendly' face of authority by acknowledging and promoting the role of local responsibility. The individual acts now expected to be performed by officers related to swiftly responding to emergency calls through the increased availability of transport and an improved ability to deal with crime through better communication and streamlined practice. Central to the strategy was the role of the 'collator'; a station-based police officer, normally of constable or sergeant rank, whose role was to collect and disseminate intelligence and local information to his colleagues on patrol. In tune with a mood of public optimism for the new system, the character of *George Dixon* assumed a collator's position at his television *Dock Green* police station in the latter half of the 1960s. This change in role signified not only the perceived importance of the collator's position, but also that *Dixon's* honest, firm, but sympathetic *community* approach to policing had been rewarded by his promotion to the rank of sergeant.

The research that was conducted at the time of UBP development nationally tended to indicate that the system had been effective in achieving its aims of providing a rapid response, collating intelligence, improving morale, saving on manpower and being well received by the public (Gregory and Turner, 1967; Williamson, 1967). However the basis for these conclusions is not clear. Weatheritt, commented on the reported improved

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<sup>4</sup> See Cohen (1972) and Pearson (1983).



performance, high morale and public acceptability by questioning 'what was measured in the first place and how it was measured'. She cited the evidence as being almost entirely on crime figures and 'no direct measures of public attitudes, police-public contact, police morale, police response times or police visibility' all of which 'had been presented as crucial features of the new schemes'. The research 'was instead largely a fiction which was used to dress a policy necessity in the clothes of virtue' (Weatheritt, 1986, pp.94-95). Other studies conducted by 'special course' police officers<sup>5</sup> through visits to a number of forces which had developed UBP models (Coe, et al, 1969; Gospel, et al, 1969; Watson, et al, 1969; Manning, et al, 1972) revealed slightly more searching stances, but ultimately ones which identified that the schemes were working well based on very limited evidence.<sup>6</sup>

The widespread establishment of UBP (by 1968 two-thirds of the population of England and Wales were covered)<sup>7</sup> was not shown by later evaluation to have been as effective as had been anticipated. In none of nine forces which were studied in 1975 were essential elements of the scheme seen to be working effectively, and in some they had not even been put in place (Comrie and Kings, 1975). The *panda car*, heralded as symbolic of a new style of policing, had become 'widely agreed, a disaster' (Manwaring-White, 1983, p.23) and resulted in a 'depersonalised and insensitive' policing system because of the perceived reduction in personal contact which now took place between the police and public (Baldwin and Kinsey, 1982, p.36). However, the temptation to blame a centrally inspired system often ignored the possibility of other failings more closely aligned to local

<sup>5</sup> The 'Special Course' was attended by sergeants who had been successful in gaining places on the police 'accelerated promotion scheme'.

<sup>6</sup> Officers of junior rank being invited into police forces were unlikely to produce reports which would be highly critical of any aspect of the schemes, both for reasons of politics and careers (author's observation).

<sup>7</sup> Emsley (1991, p.166).

personnel and organisational management. Amongst these were the inabilities of individual supervisors to direct and understand the wider strategies upon which UBP had initially been based; lack of direction and leadership from middle and senior managers in forces; a sparsity or absence of meaningful indicators on which to base the effectiveness of the new patrolling strategy; as well as the structural changes which were taking place within forces in a belief that wider centralisation of resources could achieve cost savings without any undesirable effects on policing. An inert unwillingness of some patrol officers to police in the way intended also potentially contributed to the ineffectiveness of the process.<sup>8</sup> These problems, whether personnel, organisational or structural issues, nevertheless existed alongside an increase in demand from the public. The proposed advantage of the constable still effectively being community based and patrolling a beat, was accompanied by increased centralisation of resources and the re-evaluation of the necessity to provide community police bases.<sup>9</sup>

Policing styles within forces were beginning to change in another respect however. The more affluent 1960s had seen an increase in the number of motor vehicles being privately owned and this, together with improving road communication systems over the next ten years made the opportunities for police officers to reside even further away from their local stations appealing. The amount of housing stock owned by police authorities began to diminish as accommodation previously having been used to house officers and their families was sold and the proceeds ploughed into policing development, notably technology. The stringent hold which chief constables had on where officers were

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<sup>8</sup> Evidence from the Plymouth research revealed senior and junior police officers' reflections on the process which questioned individual commitment to UBP and the opportunities available to circumvent potentially sound strategies of policing (see chapter 9 *Community Policing in Devon and Cornwall*).

<sup>9</sup> See Chapter 7 *National Perspectives to Local Implementation*, and the closure of the local police station at *The Octagon* in *Stonehouse*, Plymouth in chapter 9 *Community Policing in Devon and Cornwall*.

permitted to live, and their final say on whether or not they would be permitted to purchase their own properties, became loosened as the opportunities available to place them in authority-owned accommodation diminished because of housing stocks being reduced. Improve radio communication, increased mobility, and the opportunity to realise the capital investment in property (particularly during the early 1970s when property prices across the country boomed) made the rationale for centralising police services obvious. Despite the public's wish for small police bases, particularly those close to residential communities, to be maintained, the 1970s saw widespread closure of local stations. This, together with a UBP system which by the mid 1970s had fallen into disrepute, resulted in emerging concern amongst sections of the public that the community nature of policing (which was still ideally perceived to be *Dixonian*), was being lost and that what was in its place bore a less personal and less reassuring identity.

The end of the 1970s was to see the emergence of *community policing* in Devon and Cornwall Constabulary under its chief constable, John Alderson. Details of its problematic birth in that force are dealt within later chapters but an overview of its early development and rationale through the *Exeter Crime Prevention Support Unit (CPSU)* is included in this section because of the implications which it had on a national level in both influencing and being complementary to other areas of policing, particularly *crime prevention*. It was based on a premise that the influence of society in regulating itself was paramount to the effectiveness of policing and that the best way to keep the peace was to reinforce these informal controls. This, however, implied a fundamental reappraisal of policing methods to bring preventive and reactive policing into balance at local level. The purpose of the Exeter scheme was to activate other agencies concerned with specific localities and problems in a way which would bring about a co-ordinated strategy within which the police would

become more involved in aspects of social crime prevention. The concept was not new but certainly one which had, hitherto, found support in only a few areas. Moore and Brown (1981) highlighted two examples where the police had been instrumental in initiating similar schemes, one going back as far as 1957 when integrated social action in Gibshill, Scotland resulted in a long-running enterprise, and similarly in Kirkby, Lancashire during 1974 (of particular interest because of this area's pilot status in *Unit Beat Policing* some ten years previously). 'Implicit in both these projects was the ... interdependence of statutory and voluntary social agencies in the task of social crime prevention' (Moore and Brown, 1981, pp.6-9).

Alderson's unit had the tasks of examining the level of crime and community problems in specific areas, experimenting with crime prevention initiatives, direct police resources accordingly and 'harness public support including the unemployed in activities to teach good citizenship and thereby prevent crime' (Moore and Brown, 1981, p.10). The centralisation of police resources in Exeter which occurred in the 1960s was reversed and five separate locations from which policing would take place identified as community bases. A *policing consultative group* was established with representatives of social services, probation, local authority, education and others, which became an important centrepiece of the structure. It was the basis on which, three years after the inception of the CPSU, Alderson launched *community policing* as a forcewide initiative, soon to see its relevance to the future structure of policing in the 1980s come into sharper focus.

### *Crime prevention*

The period during the late 1960s and early 1970s was one of significant upheaval and change for the police service coming, as it did, on the back of the 1964 *Police Act*,

recommendations of the *Cornish Committee*, and changing social and economic environment of the time. Amalgamations took time to become established and operate with any degrees of efficiency, partly because of the structural needs of the new organisations, but also because of the need to amalgamate different policing cultures within the areas themselves. *Crime prevention* was becoming established within a minimal framework during this period but the remainder of the 1970s was to see it develop more significant weight and a wider outlook. This was largely because of a realisation that conventionally held beliefs in the abilities of the police and court systems to affect a continuing level of rising crime, low detection rates and costs, were an inappropriate mainstay of a *crime prevention* policy (Gilling, 1997, p.80).

By 1976, there appeared to be a general acknowledgement at government level that the extent to which crime prevention policies were being pursued was insufficient. In particular, the statement from the *Review of Criminal Justice Policy* document that ‘the scope for reducing crime through policies that go beyond the boundaries of the criminal justice system merits particular attention’ gave stimulus to ‘involve other Government Departments, local authorities and agencies outside government [.....] as speedily as possible’ (Home Office, 1977, pp 9-10). This led to the establishment of a *Working Group on Crime Prevention* which included Home Office researchers. The group identified that the whole issue of *crime prevention* needed a much more systematic approach to be adopted. However, the extent to which development and co-ordination was to take place needed to take account of, not only a wide range of potential partners in the process at local-practitioner level, but the fact that a number of government departments were involved in the process. Neither was it clear where a direct lead would come from, despite the main stimulus for the initiative residing at Home Office level in the early stages of

physical security advice which police CPOs were providing on a daily basis.

Weatheritt describes the years since the mid-1960s as being a period 'marked more by a series of obstacles than by a history of achievements', a situation which she contended should not be ignored in its significance for future developments, when professionals committed to providing more effective prevention can 'overlook or play down the difficulties in achieving it' (Weatheritt, 1986, p.44). At the time of her writing the *crime prevention* model in most forces had already fallen into precisely the category which the *Cornish Committee* had warned against - that of a specialist department taking a significantly different course to other officers in forces charged with the conventional reactive policing style. However, the Home Office researchers represented on the *Working Group on Crime Prevention* had begun to consider other pragmatic research evidence as a potential answer to the future direction which *crime prevention* policy should take.

Amongst these theories was that of *defensible space* which considered better architectural design could increase the sense of ownership and reduce opportunities for crime through more natural resident surveillance of localities (Newman, 1972). The *situational* approach comprised of opportunity-reducing measures that were directed at specific forms of crime and involved the 'management, design or manipulation of the immediate environment' so as to increase the effort, risk and perceived rewards to the offenders themselves (Clarke, 1992, p.4). The amount of research available to identify the potential success of the move towards *situational crime prevention* was relatively small during the 1970s, although that which was conducted has questioned the simplicity of Newman's theory as not having taken into account other social factors which determine crime occurrences (Mawby, 1977; 1979; Wilson, 1980). The complexity of an environment in which crime took place had the

potential to be influenced by better design but not by this factor alone, a contention which Newman himself later conceded (Newman and Franck, 1980). A weakness in the theory being that it failed to account for areas which had both poor defensible design and little crime (Mayhew, 1979).<sup>10</sup>

The *situational approach* was ‘the epitome of the rational approach to policy-making, and it offered a great deal of promise’ because its focus was upon establishing an infrastructure to address problems. But to avoid the ‘marginality’ which had beset the *crime prevention* policy of the 1960s it needed to involve and have active support from relevant agencies, as well as overcoming the political ambiguity inherent in post-1979 government policy which was investing heavily in a proclaimed ‘law and order’ strategy but at a superficial level (Gilling, 1997, p.82). The need for agencies other than the police to be directly involved in order to make a *situational* model work was one central to the wider *social* model of crime prevention and community policing being developed by Alderson in Exeter during 1976 and 1979. Whereas co-operation of this nature began to emerge in forces generally, their structures were of various designs and effectiveness. Central direction and guidance was not yet effective in achieving a uniform approach to the issue but the coming decade was to see a more concerted approach emerge to try and derive most benefit from these combined resources.

### *Victims of crime*

The pressure which had been so effectively applied by the group *Justice* began to reduce

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<sup>10</sup> It would be wrong to identify *situational crime prevention* as only encompassing Newman’s *Defensible Space* theory, although it was one of the more influential of the period. Theories of there being ‘natural’ victims through situational interactions; ecological studies which focused on where crimes took place; temporal and spatial distribution of offences, and psychological motivation for offending all provided some inspiration for the Home Office researchers of the 1970s (Hughes, 1998, p.60).

once the initial legislation for compensation had been put into place and the *Criminal Injuries Compensation Board* (CICB) was operating. As with all interest groups, the purpose having been achieved, another cause must be found for which to fight. *Justice* therefore effectively lost touch with issues concerning victims of crime and moved its attention to other matters. The changes accomplished to date had been as a result of outside groups and pressure at political level, not from victims themselves banding together. The situation during the rest of the 1960s was to remain thus, with no specific group devoted exclusively to victim rights reform.

Just as *Justice* and the *Howard League* had not been the most obvious championing groups for victims of crime, given their diverse objectives, the next national group to take an interest was an equally less than obvious candidate. The *National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders* (NACRO) had been formed in 1966 having replaced the previous group entitled the *National Association of Discharged Prisoners Aid Society*. Although, at first glance primarily concerned with the welfare and circumstances of those who had committed offences, the group's objectives were far wider and reflected an open and constructive path which drew other aspects of the justice system into play. In particular, these objectives included 'evaluating existing projects ... with a view to improving their effectiveness and helping develop and diversify them' and 'building on models for and provide other advice on the initiation of experiments and new projects' (Rock, 1990: p.94).

Before the 1960s had ended, the beginnings of what was to develop towards direct victim care provision by organised groups had emerged. Not without considerable early problems in getting individuals to respond to the offer of assistance, a victim-offender group, based



in Bristol appeared to be the first instance of any such facility being concerned with the views of victims rather than only considering their role in terms of compensation. The initiative was one which was to herald significant changes in the tenure of criminal justice throughout the next quarter of a century. There was an agenda within NACRO which did not see the victim as being a stumbling block to the achievement of greater reform in the criminal justice system on behalf of the offender. Rather, the victim was more likely to be an influential factor in favour of change which could improve the situation for offenders. There was a degree of legitimacy which was observed within victims which was not obvious in offenders. The victim-offender project met some sixteen times and remained in existence until May 1970.

In January 1970, Philip Priestly, the regional organiser for NACRO produced a paper under the title 'What about the Victim?' and in April of that year NACRO organised a 'Victim-Offender Group Event' which resulted in little further concrete interest. However, the media had caught the mood of the occasion and articles began to regularly appear in local and national papers alike. Much of the local interest was based around Bristol because of the activity which had been observed in the victim-offender field. The factors resulted in the prominent establishment of the *National Victims Association* (NVA) in 1973, which had as its aims the establishment of a national voice for victims who were seen as 'the forgotten people of crime' by promoting new services, encourage conciliation between victims and offenders and help for individual victims (Rock, 1990: p.113). The NVA had been established for some seven months when it announced that it would be making donations to victims of crime and sending volunteers to offer support and comfort in victims' homes. This was the first example of what, under a different guise, was to become a staple basis on which the organisation, *Victim Support* conducted the majority of

its work. However, the NVA was not a group which encountered long term success, other than in continuing to raise and maintain awareness of the plight of victims. Its objectives, although laudable, were highly ambitious given its small core of committed individuals. Less than two years after making the announcement of its intentions, the NVA conceded that it was not likely to grow further and its future work tended to be based around public relations rather than practical actions in support of victims.

Nevertheless, its achievements were not inconsiderable in their originality and impact. In particular the establishment of an advice centre for victims based at Kingswood in Bristol drew attention to the issues, as did one specific victim-offender encounter which was televised and highly publicised during 1975. Campaigns which were staged at national political level also had some impact. In particular, the establishment of a commission under the chairmanship of Lord Pearson late in 1972, to consider various forms of compensation, was persuaded by the NVA to include compensation to victims of crime within this. The NVA's lack of long term success was partly due to its aims being at a level which were, perceivably, too ambitious given its limited support and resources. But the issue of *victims of crime* was now becoming firmly established on the political agenda, and interest in the subject was growing in the public and academic arenas, as well as amongst the police themselves.

*Victim Support's* success as an organisation was achieved over a relatively short period of time given the voluntary nature of its work. The British version, of what was a support function developed in other countries independently of any specific cross-cultural influence, emerged during the early 1970s. Its purpose was not offence-specific, nor politically inspired on the back of issues such as rape or domestic violence, and was one

which developed a more universal ethos to its clientele. Other activity at the time was, nevertheless, influential in raising the profile of victims. The feminist movement in the early 1970s was influential in bringing some of these victim issues to wider attention. In particular, radical feminists became more concerned with issues of oppression by men and associated crimes such as rape and domestic violence which led to the establishment of women's refuges, the first of which opened in Chiswick in 1972, and rape crisis centres, initially started during 1976 in London.

The location and timing of *Victim Support's* birth in Bristol during 1973 was not coincidental as there were linkages with the work already underway in other aspects of victim assistance. That linkage was more noticeable through the position of NACRO and its Bristol based study group (BACRO) which was established around 1971. But the impact which the NVA had in raising awareness of the issues, and promoting its own levels of activity within the Bristol area, was a significant stimulus which can not be ignored in the way support for victims developed in the Bristol area. However, BACRO's role was the lead and involved the study group in discussing potential developments with the police, magistrates and members of the probation service. This led to the formation of a working party which resulted, during 1973, in the establishment of the first *Victim Support Scheme* project, covering the Bristol area. The main strands to the pilot which were proposed became the operational basis on which the scheme worked. Its evolution was as an independent entity which made use of resources available through the community and other agencies. The administration of the scheme was accomplished through the services of a paid co-ordinator and trained volunteers provided a response in situations of distress as soon as possible after the event (in effect an emergency response). The demand for the service was significantly underestimated in the first instance with some three times as

many referrals being received as had been anticipated (Mawby and Gill, 1987, p.87). The trend which was to develop of the scheme needing to be selective as to the types of crimes which it accepted as referrals became established at this early stage. It was one based on volume and resources as much as on specific victim need, a point which will become more relevant in discussion of the issues later in this section.

The voluntary nature of the project meant that funding was difficult and the scheme withheld its service for some seven months during 1974 and 1975 in order to raise funds and secure its longer-term future. The result was effective and the scheme flourished following the break. As Rock describes it at that stage, 'It was no longer a small and endangered project struggling for life, but the germ of a national institution' (1990, p.158). Interest in the whole aspect of a victim support service began to grow and was stimulated by a community based BBC television programme in 1975 which dealt with the issue as a feature. As a result of interest from elsewhere a conference was held in April 1975 from which other schemes emerged. More fundamentally, however, was the establishment of a need for a central steer for such schemes through a national body. Some of this support was initially forthcoming through NACRO and the guidelines which had been sought from the conference were eventually produced and circulated in 1977. Regional groups were formed and, in 1979, following the formation of a national committee to co-ordinate the initiative, the National Association of Victim Support Schemes (NAVSS) came into existence.

A central tenet of *Victim Support* in the United Kingdom was one of providing a crisis-intervention service as soon as possible after a crime had been committed. The provision of such a service relied heavily on the co-operation of the police and the extent to which this

co-operation has been forthcoming during the twenty five year history of *Victim Support* has varied according to area and circumstance. The original scheme in Bristol was established as a universal, and not offence specific service for selected categories of victims, meaning that early involvement and support of the police was necessary for its effective operation. Although encouragement for the scheme initially came from the probation service and NACRO, the prominence of the police rôle soon became established and a chief superintendent was appointed as a liaison officer. The nature of *Victim Support Scheme* management saw the police role develop to one where the formal committee structures which became established invariably comprised a representative of the local force. Whereas funding of *Victim Support* relied upon (primarily) charitable donations, the police ability to support in other ways became an important aspect in the continued development of schemes. Senior police officers would be regular attendees at management meetings and were often instrumental in encouraging the formation of new schemes as they moved from one area to another on promotion or career development (Maguire and Corbett, 1987). The existence of the police as such prominent members of schemes, and the encouragement and support which was evident in their public portrayal of the scheme's worth, had the effect of raising the status of *Victim Support* as both a social help and (increasingly effective) pressure group at national level. Police involvement was becoming more acknowledged as worthwhile and supportive at both local and national level with forces regarding the *Victim Support* system as partners; a situation which pre-dated the common acceptance of this as a 'buzz-word' by several years. The emerging willingness of the police to see aspects of their role within the system being devolved to others, even though this particular role with victims was one which the police had not previously accepted formal responsibility for, was a significant development in what was to become a more common attitude nationally.

As will be identified later in this study, and shown in work conducted in Devon and Cornwall during the 1980s (Mawby and Gill, 1987), there was, and to a lesser extent still is, a level of scepticism amongst some police officers as to the value and purpose of *Victim Support*. This scepticism, however, was not at the level of forward-thinking senior police officers who were prepared to develop their roles in support of schemes as much as it was amongst constable and sergeant ranks who were the people most commonly having direct dealings with victims themselves. The wider police perspective was able to appreciate the potential advantages in terms of improved public relations in addition to being associated with a service which had as its overall aim a group of people who they relied upon regularly to provide evidence with which to convict offenders. It was a situation acknowledged in the second annual report of the *National Association of Victim Support Schemes* in 1982 on the basis of a survey the previous year which had shown that police/VSS relationships across the country were consistently described as 'good' or 'excellent' (Mawby and Gill, 1987, p.154).

Comparison with similar initiatives elsewhere is also worthy of note. In the United States recognition of victim-exclusion from the criminal justice process occurred during the late 1960s<sup>11</sup> and 1976 saw the emergence of a victims movement and *National Organisation for Victim Assistance* (NOVA) which developed as a 'clearing house of information and as a co-ordinator for hundreds of victim-service programmes which had developed'. These programmes, which were often unconnected with the funding which became available through the *Law Enforcement Assistance Administration* (LEAA) in the early 1970s, included offence-specific services for victims such as rape and child abuse, as well as

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<sup>11</sup> *The President's Commission on Law Enforcement* (1967) resulted in the introduction of the in the 1970s which sponsored projects to improve victim handling within the criminal justice system (Mawby & Gill, 1987, p.118).

court-focused activity (Mawby and Gill, 1987, p.118). What was less obvious in the United States than in the United Kingdom was any overarching victim support service which applied to a wide range of victims. Given the respective geographic sizes of the two countries this is not surprising. However, the US government's early role in raising the profile of the victim in the late 1960s and the structures which followed this through the LEAA, appeared more directed than the UK where the issues had come about through a more piecemeal series of wranglings over issues of compensation.

A number of different models of police involvement with schemes established to assist victims developed in the United States. Police involvement in US schemes varied from area to area and examples of victim services are depicted in Mawby and Gill's (1987) review of some of these. Examples are cited of police-based systems in Clearwater, Orange County and Sanford; a State funded victim/witness programme in Pima County, and the American Association of Retired Persons work within the criminal justice system (pp.126-7). Victim services are seen to place a greater emphasis on individuals' rights in the justice system rather than their needs, a situation distinct from Britain where welfare is key to the *Victim Support* ethos. The US experience appears to have shown more emphasis on the 'presentation of victims problems as part of a law-and-order problem', a situation which led to NOVA 'engaging in political dialogue to a greater extent' than in the UK (p.131). The extent to which police involvement is exemplified relies, to a large extent therefore, on their position as part of the justice system. As in the UK, problems are inherent in the exchange of information and decision making when victims require additional services, but the notion of welfare in the United States is secondary to that of making the justice system work most effectively.

The victim system in the Netherlands emerged in Hoorn during 1975 with the involvement of the probation service. As in the UK, schemes were to focus more on the emotional and material effects of crime on victims and were independent of the justice system. Police stations were to be the bases from which the schemes would operate and the Ministry of Justice paid for three pilot projects to be established. Whereas the UK development of its 'umbrella' organisation (NAVSS) worked towards 'co-ordinating schemes' activities, in the Netherlands their *National Platform for Victims Assistance* (LOS)<sup>12</sup> which became established in the 1980s was explicitly told by the Justice Ministry that they would not attempt to impose a uniform structure on local schemes (Mawby and Walklate, 1994, p.118). The development of relationships with the police varied with some schemes operating completely independently and dependent on the self-referral of victims, whilst others had a police-referral policy (although often restricted in its effectiveness by the caveat that explicit permission of victims was needed before referral could occur).<sup>13</sup>

In terms of compensation for victims of crime, outside the provisions of the 1964 legislation, the principle of offenders recompensing their victims for acts committed against them was in existence as a potential condition of a probation sentence as well as other circumstances.<sup>14</sup> The Wootton Committee (Home Office, 1970) made recommendations which led to compensation orders being introduced in the *Criminal Justice Act 1972* as options available to courts in addition to sentences imposed. This did not acknowledge any State responsibility in cases where the offender had not been apprehended, nor any financial liability if the order did not get paid (issues which were, at

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<sup>12</sup> Later renamed *The National Organisation of Victim Support*.

<sup>13</sup> The 'confidentiality' issue is one exemplified also in the Devon and Cornwall example given in Chapter 10 *Victims of crime in Devon and Cornwall* where the question of explicit victim approval for referral became problematic in the 1990s until resolved by clear policy.

<sup>14</sup> In 1969, compensation of over £570,000 was paid in total as a result of orders made in a selection of indictable offences (Mawby and Gill, 1987, p.51).



least acknowledged by the Wootton Committee). Compensation orders were at the discretion of the courts themselves to apply and, as research during the 1970s illustrated, there appeared to be reluctance and inconsistency in implementing the option (Tarling and Softley, 1976; Softley, 1978). The position of victims in the scheme of compensation was problematic. Not only was there considerable variance in courts' reactions to the legislation, but victims themselves were almost invariably ignorant of their opportunities for compensation. Moreover, the issue was one which was seldom pursued by the prosecution. Payment of compensation was also slow in actually reaching the pockets of the intended recipient and may not have materialised at all where offenders received custodial sentences, either at the time of initial sentencing or as a result of failing to pay fines.

### *Quality of Service*

The growing availability of television during the 1960s, together with a generally supportive but emergingly critical press, ensured that the nature of what the police actually did became subject of much wider debate than previously. The high levels of public satisfaction with policing, which were referred to in the 1962 Royal Commission on the Police,<sup>15</sup> were later to be criticised as having too much reliance placed on them by the Commission as indicators of the true nature of police procedures (Benyon, 1986). Despite adverse press coverage towards the end of the 1950s concerning the corruption scandals which brought about the Royal Commission, by the mid-1960s press treatment of police stories was 'glowing'. Activity in the policing of demonstrations was being viewed in homes across the land and the violent nature of these revealed a police organisation which

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<sup>15</sup> The data referred to was taken from a government social survey conducted in the 1950s.

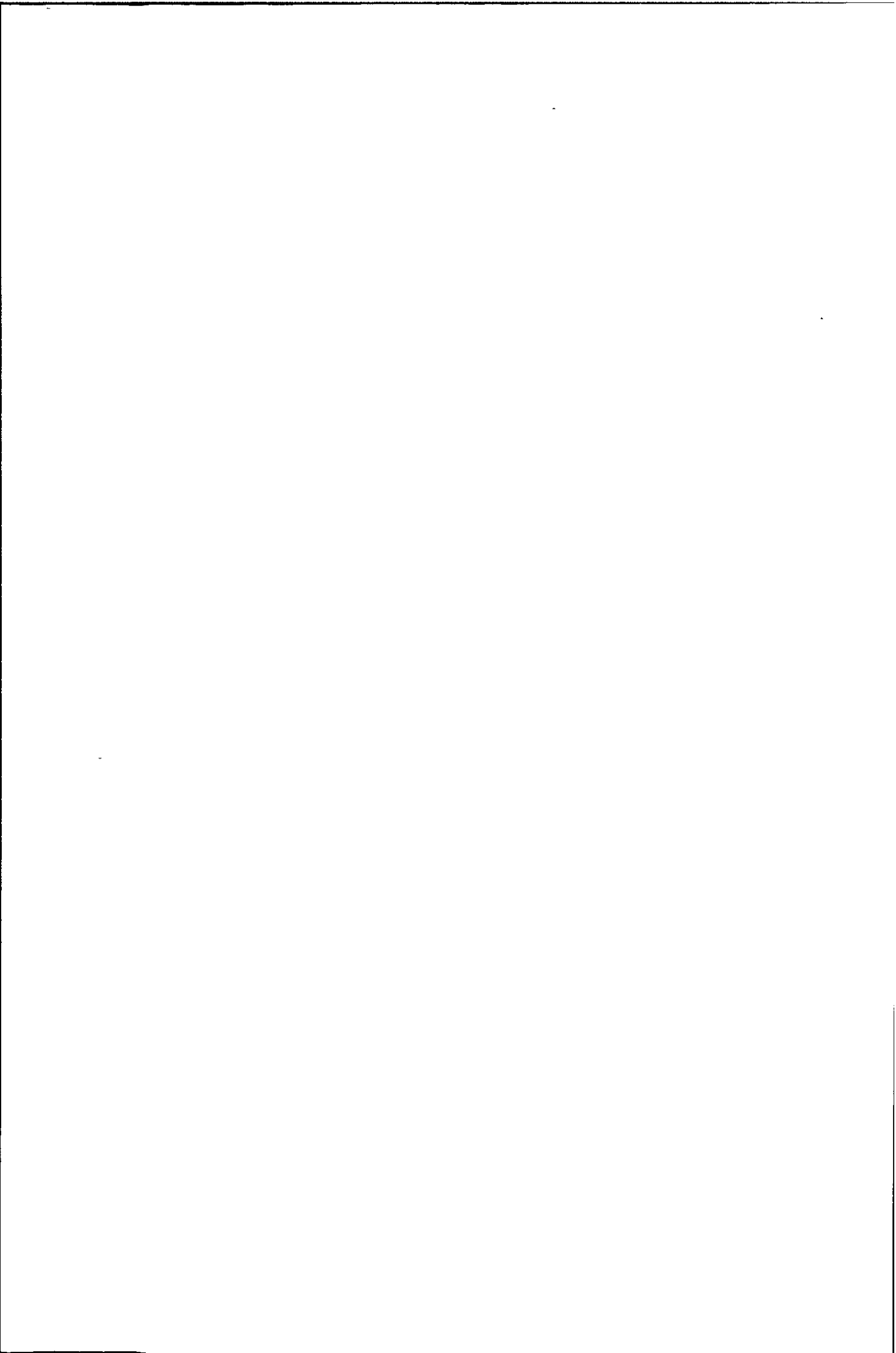
was ill-equipped to deal with such incidents. However press coverage of events such as the anti-American demonstration, and subsequent riot in London's Grosvenor Square, were sympathetic to the police position which was portrayed as a relatively thin blue line standing against those threatening the rule of order, and ultimately, the State (Reiner, 1985, p.143). It was against such a background that general public perceptions of the police were held and, moving into the 1970s against a continually rising crime rate, their effectiveness as well as their public persona became increasingly the subject of press speculation.

Throughout the period between 1967 and 1979, academic research had yet to develop any specifically pragmatic approach towards establishing the quantifiable effectiveness of police activity. There were a large number of surveys on victimisation being conducted in several countries during the 1960s and early 1970s, causing Sparks et.al (1977) to suggest that 'seldom, in the history of social science research, can so much have been done about a single problem by so many in so short a time' (p.3). Surveys commonly epitomised the extent to which there was a 'dark figure' of crime (the unreported incidents which never appeared in any official statistics) underlying society's fears and perceptions of where they lived and official reactions to these situations. Being established from these surveys were the foundations on which more critical evaluation of policework would take place. This was particularly so in relation to how the police interacted with specific victims of crime.

The *quality* of policework was being studied more widely, and from perspectives which debated the rationale for their actions in such areas as politics, working culture, policing environment, relationships with communities, and management structures.<sup>16</sup> The nature of

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<sup>16</sup> For example: Hall et.al, 1978; Holdaway, 1979; 1983; Mawby, 1979; Punch, 1979; Reiner, 1978; 1979.



many such works emphasised the wider dimension of policing which was often debated from radical criminological perspectives. However the emergence of this wealth of interest in an institution previously subject to less rigorous academic scrutiny, widened the subsequent evaluation of police effectiveness which was to take place.

The role which the 'watchdogs' of the police service, HMIC, played during the period between 1967 and 1979 was one which changed little from the somewhat revitalised structure which developed under the Chief Inspector of Constabulary's role in the early 1960s. HMIC did develop a somewhat broader approach to dealing with matters of public concern during the late 1960s and St. Johnston's role as HMCIC and, therefore, senior police advisor to the Home Secretary, was clearly instrumental in encouraging forces to develop certain aspects of their work which are today considered commonplace. Against general resistance from chief constables, drug squads became formed despite the argument put forward from many areas that there was no evidence of a problem. In addition, HMIC's position in being able to negotiate additional funding from the Home Office was exemplified in the success of achieving an additional two million pounds to purchase motor vehicles for main road patrols in 1968 (St. Johnston, 1978, pp.268-9). However, monitoring the effectiveness of such changes remained superficial and unmeasured outside the general figures available to indicate the level of crime which occurred in force areas. No meaningful consideration had yet been given to details of the work which officers actually did, or the effects which these had upon the communities which they served; a situation which was not to develop for some twenty years.

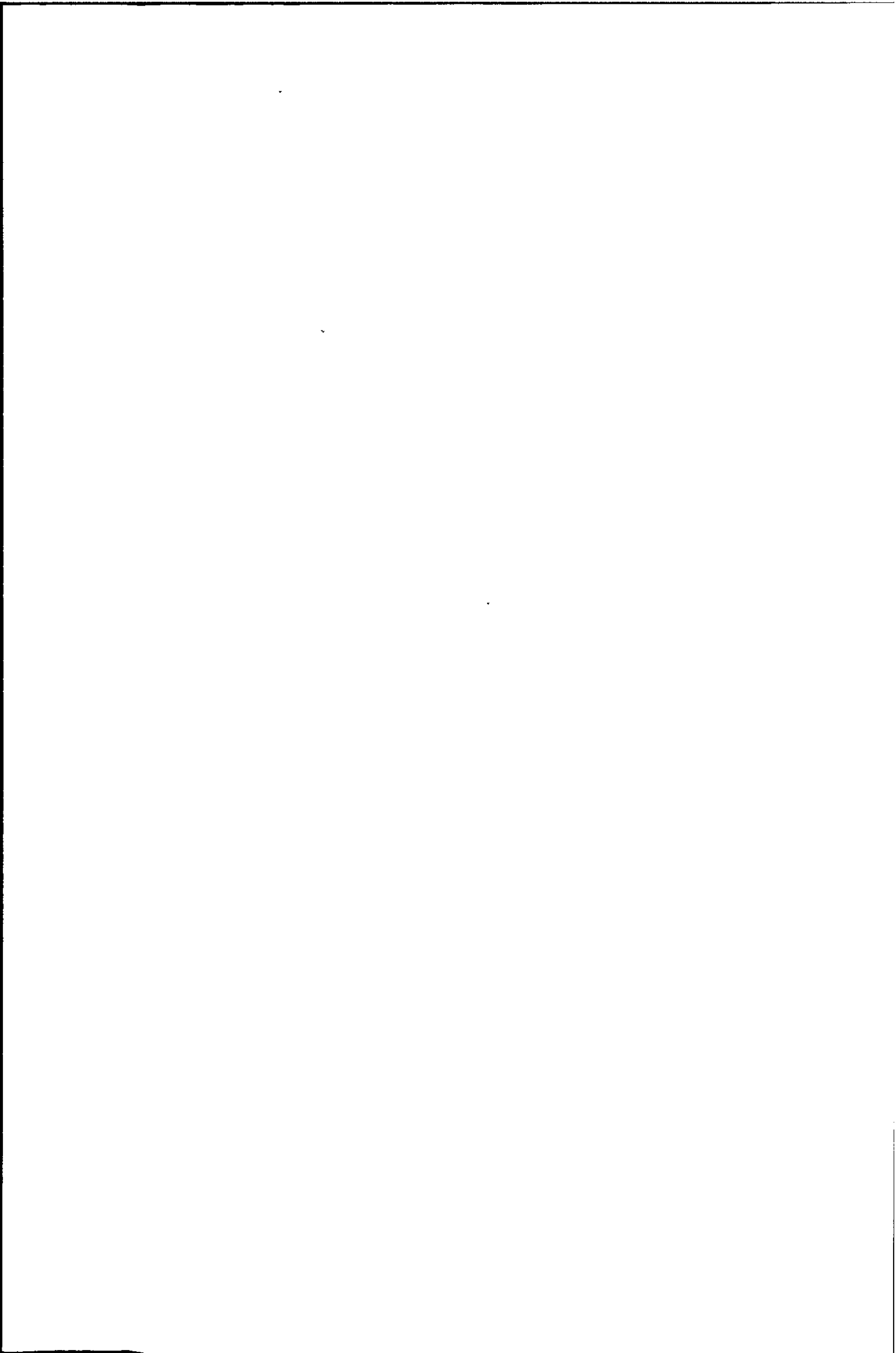
*1967 - 1979 - an overview*

Much of what occurred in policing during the period following the mid 1960s had hallmarks of the changes and proposals which had emerged from legislation and alterations to structures of that period. This was an era when technology was becoming more advanced and police forces were being seen to be brought into the twentieth century. The mechanics of the changes were only the most visible signs, with UBP and developing styles of patrolling and police activity accentuating the perceived changing culture of the police organisation. *Crime prevention* and *community* became even more central to the type of debates which were being held. Whilst the former had always had official recognition as a police role, it had become more firmly established in the overall strategy of policing as a result of Home Office interest and the Cornish Committee's report of 1965. The link with the more problematic concept of *community* was one which was beginning to form the basis of mainstream consideration in policing terms. There were certainly foundations being established on which the debate could be taken further, but the association between sociologists' attempts to define *community*<sup>17</sup> and a pragmatic linkage with police activity was only now beginning to emerge.<sup>18</sup>

But it was drawing together the two strands of *crime prevention* and *community* which became one of the more influential and significant factors to emerge from the era. Alderson's work with the Exeter CPSU is probably the most often cited example of where the merger was formally given credence in England, but the significance of the interaction between crime and communities had long been established, initially through *the Chicago*

<sup>17</sup> Social cohesion and conflict provided classical theorists such as Marx, Durkheim, Weber, Comte and Tonnies with the basis on which to identify aspects of *community* and *society*. But 'a satisfactory definition of it in sociological terms appears as remote as ever' (Bell & Newby, 1974, p.21) whilst attempts at definitions during the 1950s, such as Hillery's 94 characteristics of a *community* (1955) appeared to add little to the practical debate.

<sup>18</sup> See, for example, Brown and Howes (1975) which grew out of a weekend conference organised by Cranfield Institute of Technology in September 1974.



*school* of sociologists earlier in the century.<sup>19</sup> The significance of developing the issues further was far from a mere academic exercise. Attention was beginning to focus on the role which agencies other than the police had in the administration of justice and, in particular, preventing crime by one means or another.<sup>20</sup> However, against this background was the structured, but relatively unaffected (and partially effective) system of crime prevention officers and their departments which had been established within police forces around the country.

The issues drawing two central and important strands of policing activity closer together were beginning to form a more central platform for the future, but the structural reality of how forces specifically addressed the issues was some way away from becoming a dynamic factor. What was happening in the voluntary sector, with *Victim Support* in particular, was to develop increased significance into the 1980s. However, the foundations on which another arm of support within the criminal justice process was beginning to emerge was one which signified a more formal acknowledgement of acceptance that certain aspects were not within the direct remit of the police.

*Quality of service* remained a background issue, alluded to most obviously through criticisms of what was wrong rather than attempts to put them right within the police system itself. This was beginning to emerge most obviously within the police organisation

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<sup>19</sup> For example, see, Reiss and Tonry (1986).

<sup>20</sup> See Walklate (1991) for a succinct discussion on three aspects of crime prevention linked to victim, offender and community based reactions, as well as Brown and Howes (1975) for examples of relationships emerging in the 1970s between police, social workers and probation.

where the culture of the profession began to figure more obviously in critical evaluation of who the people in this institution were and what they did and thought.



## 1979 - 1989

### Community through the riots

The 1980s will be remembered as the decade which saw fundamental reform to the way in which police actions and procedures in dealing with the public took place. The changes were not superficial 'window-dressing' of a type which could be argued as the case with some attempts at changing culture and attitude. This was a legislative upheaval to operational procedures which affected the overall accountability of the service to the public at large. The move through the late 1970s into the 1980s had seen political reform at a wide ideological level with the election of Margaret Thatcher's Conservative government in 1979. The period which had been left, of widespread strikes and Union power, was transformed to one where the disorder conducted by the organised became the riots of the oppressed and politically disenfranchised.

The role of the police in the first few years of the decade was one which came under particular scrutiny through the widespread and serious public disorder of the period.<sup>1</sup> The 1970s had been, to all intents and purposes, a relatively stable time in terms of development for the police themselves. The underlying causes of what was to follow in 1981 were, however, telegraphed and, arguably, predictable outcomes of what was happening in certain aspects of policing during the years which preceded them.<sup>2</sup> Concentration on the types of issues which were later to be recommended by Lord

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<sup>1</sup> Whereas Scarman's brief developed to be much wider than the issues concerning the disorders in one region, other studies were commissioned locally to review the circumstances, e.g. on Broadwater Farm, London, and Handsworth, Birmingham (Southgate (1982).

<sup>2</sup> A situation which Scarman had identified as one of 'tale of failure' that both the police and the local leaders 'must accept a share of the blame' for (Benyon, 1984, p.100).

Scarman (Scarman, 1981) was already acknowledged as important in a number of forces, some of which did not have the level of potential for disorder which existed in others with more diverse and problematic inner-city regions. The policing of inner-city, multi-cultural communities was seen as yet to develop appropriate notions of community involvement and consultation. In addition, the actions of officers in certain areas were already being drawn to attention because of their perceived bias in interpreting legislation such as the Vagrancy Act 1824 and, in London, the Metropolitan Police Act 1839, both of which empowered searches and arrests based on the slimmest of evidence.<sup>3</sup>

The mid to late-1980s was a period which saw government interest in what police forces were actually doing become established as a basis for determining resource allocation and policy. Whereas still not developed to the extent of what was to become the *performance indicators* of the 1990s, Home Office Circular 114/1983 was a more searching and prescriptive document in relation to the organisation of forces generally than the vast majority of previous papers. Its contribution to a government philosophy of 'rolling back the State', efficiency and effectiveness, and value for money was a significant milestone in policing terms. Whereas the management of these changes still resided squarely with chief officers, agencies such as the *Audit Commission*<sup>4</sup> and HMIC became increasingly instrumental in overseeing the process.

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<sup>3</sup> The legislation was believed to be a necessary weapon in the armoury of the police to combat crime. The enabling nature of the Vagrancy Act 1824, was commonly referred to as 'Sus' (arrests being made on SUSpicion only).

<sup>4</sup> *The Audit Commission for Local Authorities and the National Health Service in England and Wales*. An independent body at the centre of the local audit offices for local authorities and health authorities in England and Wales. It provides district audit offices with subjects for audit, training, and assistance through materials to complete their auditing work competently (Love, 1991). Its aim is to promote proper stewardship of public finances and help those responsible for public services to achieve economy, efficiency and effectiveness (Audit Commission, 1996a, p.2).

### *Community Policing*

John Alderson, the chief constable of Devon and Cornwall from 1973 to 1982, was perceived to be the architect of the term *community policing*, although he rejected the notion that the concept was in any way unique and that the term was merely a post 1970s expression of ‘communal responsibility’ and ‘probably as old as that of society itself’. The fact that the ideal of ‘prevention of crime and disorder through co-operative effort’ (Alderson, 1983, p.3) emerged as a phenomena within British policing owed much to circumstance and timing as it did to Alderson’s changes to policing style in his own force in 1979.

The riots in Brixton, Toxteth and other parts of the country in 1981 inevitably drew the question of the effectiveness of this *new order* policing into the limelight. The concept was effectively far more multi-faceted than observers both inside and outside the police service perceived at the time (Weatheritt, 1983). It straddled the divide between reactive-response styles of policing, with the more socially engineered model of pro-activity, which engendered both confusion and derision from some quarters within Alderson’s own force. Confusion primarily existed in relation to Alderson’s vision of the *pro-active* elements necessary to achieve the ‘concept and understanding of the common good’ (Alderson, 1983, p.2). It was this type of linguistic detail, together with the perceived need to influence societal change through ‘non-conventional’ policing methods, which dictated the early pace of scepticism accompanying the development in Devon and Cornwall.

The concept was not one which merely appeared on the streets unheralded and

unresearched. The Exeter Crime Prevention Support Unit (CPSU)<sup>5</sup> had been based upon a practical rationale relating to 'identifying alternative ways for the police to deal with problems and to make choices between them' (Moore and Brown, 1981, p.121). Its establishment had been based around the identification of 'crime and relevant community problems'. In addition to producing and experimenting with 'new ideas in crime prevention initiatives', it was 'to encourage and direct available local police measures to prevention of crime' through harnessing and activating 'public participation and support towards the creation of good citizenship and community awareness, thereby help(ing) to control crime' (Alderson, 1983, p.3). Most influential to the national development of *community policing* however was the evidence which Alderson presented to Scarman's enquiry into the riots (Alderson, 1981). This resulted in a number of recommendations specifically concerned with closer community involvement with the police, police authorities and chief officers, particularly as this related to the issue of consultation.

The evidence which was presented drew much press comment of Alderson's 'hearts and minds' philosophy of policing, but it was his subsequent comments which drew most attention. In them he laid charges that the government and police leaders were 'misunderstanding the challenge' which confronted them and that some seemed 'hell-bent on sacrificing a policing style which is the envy of the world just because of a few hours of madness on the streets.' On 3 September 1981, under headlines such as '*150 years of Britain's police heritage 'down the drain'*' (The Times), '*Alderson attacks 'over-reaction' to riots*' (The Guardian), and '*Police chief blasts crackdown on riots*' (Daily Express), the perspective of both '*the softer option*' (Daily Mirror) and the '*hard facts of mugging and*

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<sup>5</sup> See chapter 3 *1967-79: From Technology to Community* and chapter 10 *Crime prevention in Devon and Cornwall* for further information on CPSU.

*robbery in Lambeth*' (Daily Telegraph), were succinctly (although rarely impartially) debated.

Alderson had become no stranger to alienation by his chief officer colleagues around the country because of his views, but the riots and subsequent evidence and comments which he gave had developed a fault in the landscape into a chasm which was obvious to all. Media comment tended to be understanding of his views but much, ultimately, came down on the side of the need to control the crime which currently existed in cities through direct offensive responses. Some comment was scathing of Alderson's perceived audacity in entering such a debate.

'We hear interminable mumping language about "Community policing", "Exposure to community groups in non-conflict form" from a Chief Constable burdened with the horrors of St Austell and Paignton. Other policemen know that we already have a South Bronx in the hands of a certain category of West Indian criminal. The gap between the police and the streets appears to be total.' (Daily Telegraph editorial, 3 September 1981)

Alderson's police officer critics did not remain silent either. His ideological opposite, Manchester's chief constable, James Anderton, launched a stinging condemnation of the *community policing* concept in the Police Review some months later.<sup>6</sup> Whilst not mentioning Devon and Cornwall's chief by name, the text was unmistakably referring to Alderson.

'Until a chief constable, no matter how distinguished and respected, has been required personally to attend the tougher operational demands of policing a densely populated, multi-racial conurbation, and accepted direct responsibility for them, he is unqualified to challenge or criticise those of his fellows carrying a much greater daily burden than himself. Furthermore, if any chief constable in recent years has enjoyed a comparatively cosseted life free from irrational political activity and the continuous operational pressures felt routinely by colleagues elsewhere,

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<sup>6</sup> The topicality of the conflict even resulted in the Police Review running a weekly cartoon comic strip entitled 'Aldy and Andy' involving two chief police characters with singularly differing views on policing.

especially in the Metropolitan areas, he has been singularly fortunate.' (Police Review, 26 March 1982, pp.582-583)

Despite such attacks, Scarman's report accepted much of what Alderson had suggested was necessary to direct the way in which community/police consultation should take place. Section 106 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 subsequently placed a legal responsibility on Police Authorities to establish groups involving the police and community representatives. It could be said that *community policing* was 'officially' born (or reborn) during the 1980s as a result of many of the issues surrounding the riots. Attention has been paid to its perceived success and failure during the past two decades including examinations of police forces' internal mechanisms for influencing change and officers' abilities to re-interpret messages, either deliberately or ignorantly, which undermine the potential advantages of initiatives (Manning, 1977).<sup>7</sup> How such issues relate to the competence of officers, and the service generally, requires understanding of how officers 'assess their practice ... to achieve a realistic appreciation of their response to any initiative that is meant to affect front-line policing' (Fielding et al., 1989 p.50). Research completed in Hampshire (Horton and Smith, 1988), for example, revealed substantial hostility by area beat officers (ABOs) being questioned on their roles against areas of criticism implied by the researchers. The mystification of the *community constable* identity appeared to be intrinsically related to elements of autonomy felt to be challenged through deeper interpretations of the roles performed.

At a relatively early stage, in the formal development of community police officers, Irving et al. (1986) identified the derisory terms which were being assigned to such officers

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<sup>7</sup> A number of examples of this nature are recounted in the *Stonehouse* example used later in this work and the opportunity for confusion to arise, and systematic alienation of types of policing culture within the organisation itself, become reinforced by the misinterpretations of policy.

('hobby bobbies', 'dummy policemen' and 'uniform carriers') and the independent nature of patrol which such officers were permitted to perform. The degree to which this independence was assigned, however, was often determined by direct line supervisors and commanders but, often more formally, through the enthusiasm or otherwise of police commanders (Fielding, 1994). In particular, Fielding cited the nature of performance measures being used (informally) to equate that of the community officer with colleagues on 'relief' shifts (Irving et al., 1986) through quantitative analysis of arrests and the nature of their duty tended to predispose those in non-community roles as being able to 'do as they please'. As Fielding relates, and unsurprisingly since the more forthright approach adopted by Sheehy on behalf of the government (Home Office, 1993a), to appraisal related pay (ARP) during the mid 1990s, this is 'a problem which official initiatives ... have failed to address' (Fielding, 1994, p.305).

The nature of community policing should not, however, be evaluated only through the eyes of other police officers. Surely, the diverse nature of fellow officers' prejudices towards more *standard* levels of police activity, measured against simplistic 'arrest' criteria, cannot be ignored. But, as surely, the less quantitative nature of the work embarked upon by officers within the *community* arena, more specifically those of crime prevention and public reassurance, has now become more central to a number of the measures by which the government has chosen to assess performance. The nature of policing which was seen as 'fire brigade' by community officers ignored the intricacies of the more personal *community* role aimed at achieving the same ultimate goal as those on the 'relief' (Fielding, 1994).

### *Crime prevention*

The crime prevention role is probably one of the areas into which community police officers most naturally placed themselves, alongside that of public reassurance. This role was often more ascribed than natural to the philosophy through the dependence which forces placed upon their employees to signify the importance of pro-active public commitment necessary to address rising crime. Paramount to the success was seen as that of the officer prepared to stand out from the crowd and identify themselves as being devoted to a geographic area rather than being more anonymous within a large organisation. But, the significance of the crime prevention model was one based on a variety of structures far less local in their nature than the average community 'bobby' would aspire to. At national level, the government commitment to prevention, as a specific means to address the problem of increasing crime, manifested itself in a series of formal initiatives such as Neighbourhood Watch and subsequent publication of the *glossy* Home Office magazine *Crime Prevention News*, both of which had varying degrees of importance in raising the subject's profile.

The way in which *crime prevention* developed during the 1979-1989 era was one driven by a number of factors. The 1970s had not seen constructive moves towards developing the partnership approach to policing<sup>8</sup> which might have been expected to be the natural evolution of such issues following *Cornish* in 1966, and the 1980s had seen the notion reside in a relatively low position on the police's order of priorities. This may be considered surprising given the nature of the increased media interest in policing methods and other sources debating the effectiveness of policing on the back of research findings

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<sup>8</sup> With the notable exception of examples such as Alderson's Crime Prevention Support Unit in Exeter between 1976 and 1979.



(Clarke and Hough, 1980). However, the work which had begun by the Home Office Working Group on Crime Prevention identified that the issue needed to be tackled in a more systematic fashion and feasibility studies looked at a new approach to organising crime prevention within opportunity, social and legislative environments (Gladstone, 1980).

The problem which the Conservative Government of the 1980s had to confront was one which had not been addressed during the previous decade and a half. That was one of where responsibility for *crime prevention* lay in terms of funding. Clearly, there was the likelihood of successful policies and inter-agency strategies being developed at local level more easily than through national strategies. However, the evidence of the 1980s indicated that 'central government had sought to by-pass local government with its crime prevention strategies' and that 'it was apparent early on that ideology informed the government strategy with its clearly defined objective of encouraging private sector involvement while marginalising local government' (Loveday, 1994, p.182). Alongside major initiatives such as *Safer Cities*<sup>9</sup> and *Crime Concern*<sup>10</sup> were numerous associated programmes such as city action teams (CATS), inner city task forces, the Urban Programme, Enterprise Zones, and Estate Action Teams. There appeared to be much to indicate that the issue of *crime prevention* was being given a high degree of attention. Between November 1982 and December 1989, no fewer than twenty eight 'key Home Office initiatives' were embarked upon, which included a number of seminars, one of which was chaired by the Prime

<sup>9</sup> See also chapter 10 *Crime prevention in Devon and Cornwall*.

<sup>10</sup> *Crime Concern*, a voluntary organisation, was established by central government with an advisory board comprising representatives from the police, Home Office, business and voluntary sectors. By the mid 1990s, *Crime Concern* had 'undoubtedly become a major force in crime prevention (although) its lack of full independence makes it unwilling to question the brief it has been set, which leads to the proliferation of piecemeal local schemes and projects, rather than a clear national crime prevention infrastructure and programme' (Gilling, 1997, pp. 139-142).

Minister in 1986.<sup>11</sup> Within these were the establishment of *The Five Towns Initiative* (1987/88) which saw resources aimed at crime prevention strategies in major locations across the country; the launching of the *Safer Cities* programme with government aid and guidance (1988), and the introduction of overseeing guidance on good practice and research through *Crime Concern* (1988).

The situation was one which was to gain momentum within the next few years. Alderson's work within Devon and Cornwall, and his evidence to Scarman (Alderson, 1981), had highlighted all aspects of police involvement in supporting communities against crime. The nature of the approach was one of *pro-active* policing, encompassing wider dimensions of community involvement than might have been *conventional* to the methods of policework previously. *Crime prevention* and *community policing* became more naturally acknowledged as having similar roots and, with the report of Lord Scarman acknowledging the potential solutions of a model such as Alderson's (Scarman, 1981), the nature of community and other agency involvement in the prevention of crime reached a higher place on both government and police agendas. It also fitted well within the concept of 'management by objectives' which formed the basis of addressing issues in the effectiveness and efficiency field, as promoted through Home Office Circular 114/1983.<sup>12</sup>

The development of coherent strategies, based along the lines proposed in the government circulars, were far less easily brought into being than might have been assumed. Crime Prevention Officers and their departments had become established parts of police

<sup>11</sup> For a list of the initiatives see Home Office (1991a), pp.38-39.

<sup>12</sup> By 1984, Home Office circular 8/1984 had built and substantiated the initiative still further, making it clear that the police were to make changes in their strategies for controlling crime along multi-agency lines. Some fourteen years later, the introduction of the *Crime and Disorder Act 1998*, legislated for this making local authorities and other statutory groups responsible, as partners with the police for strategies to combat crime and promote community safety (see chapters 7 and 12).

organisations and the development, although having been long-established in most cases, continued to remain, within most forces, an add-on feature to what was perceived to be 'real' policework. Weatheritt (1986) and Harvey et al. (1989) had concerns that the non-dynamic nature of these internal structures, and the marginalisation of those within them, did not become issues which were immediately seized upon by managers of police forces. Neither, as *crime prevention* remained, in the words of Home Office Circular 8/1984, 'a primary objective of the police', were other agencies rushing to accept any lead in taking responsibility for the problem where it was perceived that the police themselves had not placed the notion at the 'hub of the wheel' (Gilling, 1996).

On the outskirts of what is perhaps best thought of as an inter-organisational structured approach to *crime prevention* was the development of Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) as an initiative during the 1980s. The concept of NHW was, to a large extent, seen as another initiative of the police and, to a degree, this was correct in relation to its modelling on similar schemes working in the United States<sup>13</sup> in the early 1980s. The emphasis of schemes in England and Wales was targeted specifically on the concept of residents taking the initiative themselves guided by the enabling structure supported by the police. This notion of formalising and legitimising specific personal activity under an accepted police umbrella significantly reduced the scope for interpreting their formulation as linked to vigilante type groups such as 'Guardian Angels' which dominated attention in certain parts of the United States. The potential for 'citizen patrol' aspects of schemes was reacted to negatively by the police service in general and by its leaders in particular (Boothroyd, 1989; Pennell et al., 1986). There were also clear distinctions drawn between its use of

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<sup>13</sup> See Bennett (1987) in relation to NHW USA initiatives such as 'Block-Watch'.

volunteers in the pre-justice process when compared to the formally structured and legally accountable *special constabulary* police reserve (Gill and Mawby, 1990).

The basis of Neighbourhood Watch existence was one of protection of local communities, and therefore a mechanism for deterring and detecting crime. It could, therefore be as appropriately grouped under the generic heading of *community policing* as that of *crime prevention*.<sup>14</sup> However for the purposes of this study it has been considered appropriate to contrast its characteristics with those which form the basis of the *crime prevention* subjects. Whilst many of the characteristics of NHW complement much of the rationale which underpinned a broad *community policing* philosophy, such as voluntary and structured mechanisms for local residents to assist the police, it was also an initiative which became shrouded in the general Government preoccupation with reducing and detecting crime. Its development within police forces was one which became more associated with the work of *crime prevention departments* where its encouragement and servicing often became owned.

By the end of the decade it had become by far the most popular voluntary crime prevention activity with over 81,000 schemes in England and Wales. These covered 4 million households with an annual increase in schemes approaching 20,000 per year (Husain and Bright, 1990). By 1994 the figure was reported to be 130,000 schemes covering some five million households (Home Office, 1994). Similarly the third British Crime Survey (Mayhew et al., 1989) had revealed a large rise in the number of schemes between 1984 and 1988 with almost one fifth of those interviewed saying that there was a scheme operating in the area in which they lived. The Home Office statistics for the period

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<sup>14</sup> See Mawby (1991, chapter 11) for discussion on the problems of defining 'community involvement' in policing.

between 1985 and 1991 signified the apparent enthusiasm and importance which was being displayed towards this new measure available to the public to play an active role in *crime prevention* (table 4.1).

January 1985	3,669
December 1985	8,106
June 1986	14,523
October 1986	17,422
March 1987	28,515
October 1987	43,375
March 1988	51,887
July 1988	55,836
October 1988	59,476
December 1988	63,907
March 1989	66,523
September 1989	75,354
March 1990	81,302
March 1991	90,000

(H.O. statistics, quoted in McConville and Shepherd 1992, p.9)

Table 4.1: Number of Neighbourhood Watch Schemes in England and Wales, 1985 - 1991

The popularity of NHW had apparently grown considerably during the late 1980s, judged against the number of schemes which were recorded as being in operation. The success of the schemes was not, and still is not, used as the measurement of whether or not they are working to the benefit of crime reduction. The existence of them remains of paramount importance, or so it seems, to the philosophy at government level of whether individuals are prepared to commit themselves to a system supported by the police.

### *Victims of crime*

The 1980s was the period during which the victims issue 'came of age'. The Home Office position was beginning to emerge from its 'gloomy cycle' of defensive policies to one which had begun to perceive the need (as David Mellor, a Minister in the Home Office at the time said) for 'increased public confidence in the system' which would lead to people

believing that they 'don't need capital punishment' (Reck, 1990: pp. 256-8). The agenda of the new Conservative administration was primarily aimed at a restoration of confidence in the criminal justice system through strong policies of law and order, a position which was given added impetus through the sporadic, but serious, incidents of public disorder which occurred during the 1981 to 1985 period. But the need to address what was being reported as a growing tide of lawlessness and disorder, through measures directed at detection and punishment, had cost as well as policy implications. Whereas spending on strengthening of the criminal justice system increased, it was not perceived to be effective as a lone strategy. There was a need to consider more lateral approaches to the problem, and one of these was the necessity to address the nature of public confidence in the system.

What was emerging as a separate policy issue during the same period, was the level of fear amongst individuals that they would become victims of crime. It was an issue in which the likelihood of becoming a victim was seen as being 'out of all proportion to the risks' (Maxfield, 1987). Whereas the first British Crime Survey (Hough and Mayhew, 1983; 1985) had drawn attention to this and identified the large number of 'comparatively trivial' offences to be significantly greater in number than those of a more serious nature, other work had drawn, and was to continue to draw, attention to the disproportionate effects which these 'trivial' matters appeared to have upon victims' fears (Maguire, 1980, 1982; Maguire and Corbett, 1987; Mawby and Gill, 1987). The effect which these crimes were having upon peoples lives was one which required addressing and the opportunity to alter public opinion and redress what was seen as a misinterpretation of the figures as popularly portrayed in their starkest form by the media, was a potential way forward.

The need to address the problem through a wider 'community' approach was one which encouraged a greater involvement by the police with other groups and agencies (Home Office, 1984). *Community policing* initiatives were determined as 'shells' which could effectively house a new, wider philosophy of social order involvement by the police with others more closely linked to the public in other areas of service provision. Victim strategies were becoming more closely associated with other aspects of the police role in crime prevention than had previously been institutionally accepted. The emergence of initiatives such as Neighbourhood Watch and Crime Prevention Panels provided tangible examples of where the police could become involved and have some direct bearing on the issue of public confidence.

*Victim Support Schemes* had a less direct entry into the official arena of crime prevention. The voluntary nature of its origins, political ambiguity with its national history involving bodies not specifically identified as having an interest in the victim, and problems in establishing a co-ordinated strategic role within Home Office thinking, meant that funding of the NAVSS was slow to emerge in a workable form. Initial local schemes were seen to be more the preserve of local authorities on questions of finance and grants. Government provision of the first grant was reliant on a proportion of funds coming from other patrons and the Cadbury Trust. The Trust played a supportive role in this respect, leading to a reassurance being developed within the Home Office that wider political opportunism for the group to develop in a way which could be linked to a ideologically inappropriate stance was unlikely.<sup>15</sup> Eventually, in July 1979, an offer of £10,000 a year, for the next three years, was made to the NAVSS to assist in its initial administrative costs. £5,000 a year

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<sup>15</sup> Rock (1990, p.169-170) explains how the media attention and development of NAVSS from the background of NACRO had caused central support to be critically considered before funding was eventually given. Key to the concerns were the emergence of other offence-specific victim interest groups as well as the well-trodden debate over the possibility of such schemes leading to vigilantism.

was to be provided by the Department of Social Security during this period and the gesture implied the Government's sympathy to the concept of what 'could be the beginnings of something very much bigger'.<sup>16</sup> It was a gesture which signified a possible longer term commitment and a major breakthrough in the institutionalisation of the NAVSS as an organisation and the local schemes which existed.

The importance of developing specific services for victims of crime was one which, despite the recognition of Government through the initial funding, was far from straightforward in the early stages of VSS. The position of the NAVSS as a key player in policy making and debate was tenuous at the best. Central to its concerns though was money. It had become financially independent of NACRO by February 1981 and its attempts at achieving funding from other organisations had met with indifferent responses. Despite the growth in the number of local schemes, and a fifty per cent rise in the number of victims which had been seen since its previous years award of £21,000, the issue of how practical support was being funded in the localities had not been agreed with the Home Office. Government 'treated its financial applications as an administrative matter that raised no new questions of policy or politics' (Rock, 1990, pp.335-9). The voluntary, and independent nature of local schemes made the recruiting of co-ordinators problematic, both in areas of relatively low crime (primarily rural), and in urban districts where the workload was higher and required daily, unpaid, commitment.<sup>17</sup>

By the 1985 Annual General Meeting of the NAVSS the danger of several local schemes folding was real. A resolution to approach Government for direct local funding was passed.

<sup>16</sup> Letter of Home Secretary, Leon Brittan, 20 July 1979, quoted in Rock (1990, p. 171).

<sup>17</sup> This issue is discussed in relation to its impact within Devon and Cornwall (see chapter 10: *Crime Prevention in Devon and Cornwall*).



The idea of establishing regional co-ordinators, also on the agenda for presentation to the Home Office, was met with a response which underlined a Government feeling that little would be accomplished other than increased bureaucratic administration of an initiative which was viewed as primarily voluntary and community based (Rock, 1990, pp. 341-2). Central political messages were ambiguous as related to the way in which the Government saw the development of VSS, and had been so since the early 1980s. The likelihood of the centre doing more was a continual possibility but one which evolved in slow and uneven stages. Understanding of what support for victims actually meant was not clear in political terms and the tight fiscal policy of the Conservatives dictated less than enthusiastic support for becoming more involved in a voluntary structure whilst the philosophy of 'rolling back the state' remained a central political platform of policy and decision making.

In terms of Compensation to Victims the issue of reparation remained a key strand of Government rationale and the apparent willingness to invest resources in support of financial recompense to victims of crime was given increased significance through the 1982 Criminal Justice Act which permitted courts to make compensation orders as sentences. Where offenders were unable to pay fines and compensation orders simultaneously, priority was to be given to compensation before fine payments.

### *Quality of Service*

Although the formal beginnings of the police *Quality of Service* initiative (QOS) cannot be identified as having emerged until the era 1989-1990, there were, nevertheless, important developments during the period between 1979 and 1989 which can be seen as partial foundations on which the later strategy was to be developed. It is against this background that the decade leading up to the formal beginnings of QOS must be judged. The idea of

developing a policing model to focus more direct attention on the core nature of policing tasks, set against a philosophy of service and *quality*, did not occur by chance. There were both influential internal and external factors at play during the late 1970s, and through the 1980s, which were to ensure that changes would occur. With a perceived 'crisis of confidence' banner being regularly unfurled in both political and media rhetoric on a regular basis, the inevitability of a legislative and organisationally concerted response to the type of issues being addressed occurred.

Government interest in the performance of the police was not out of line with that which was to emerge during the 1980s and 90s in other public services. *Value for Money* was the bi-word which exemplified central government's commitment to the slimming down of State services and, whereas policing continued to attract regularly increasing finance, the move towards justifying how increases were being used grew in significance. If there was a linkage to be perceived between a government initiative during the 1980s and the *quality of service* developments in the 1990s, it most probably had, as its starting point, the publication of Home Office Circular 114/1983. The instruction to forces was not overtly a call to review the quality of the service which was provided to the public. However, its requirement for chief officers to review the functions of their force structures, against which bids for increases in staff could be considered by the Home Secretary, drew into the arena issues of performance measurements which were to emerge more strongly in the next ten years. The circular was primarily concerned with what was labelled 'efficiency and effectiveness' and passed a clear message that forces were to be judged against such criteria for successful increases in funding in future years. However, it went further than being merely a circular expounding the need for chief officers to justify requested increases in their establishments. It emphasised the need to set 'objectives and priorities' in

'activities, management and manpower' against a background of reduced government spending on policing. The need was explicitly stated that 'resources should be applied on the basis of what they are likely to achieve' (para. 10) in 'secur(ing) objectives and priorities' (para. 5).

The historic development of the notion that policing is far more than a form of public order maintenance on behalf of the State is necessarily central to a more detailed consideration of how the *quality of service* initiative became part of the household language of police forces throughout Britain. Within this, literature pre-1989 is relatively short in supply when sought against a 'QOS' search. Terms such as 'effectiveness and efficiency' clearly emerged during the 1980s as driving criteria but the term *quality* failed to make any significant impact on the terminology of writers. Even Reiner's celebrated first edition of *The Politics of the Police*, (1985), a significant re-evaluation of the police both pre- and post-Scarman, contains no index entry under *Q* at all. But, to a large degree, this is no indication that *true* quality has in any way been ignored by either this writer or the numerous others who have considered police behaviour and policy. Academic writings on policework have been filled with indications of the degree of success which the police have had in providing a quality service from numerous perspectives but it took until the 1990s for the term *quality of service* to become an established rationale and measurement against which the police themselves initially volunteered to be judged.

Where initiatives more akin to the, later to be developed, *QOS* phenomenon were obvious was within forces which had begun programmes of reform. Key to much of the basis for these changes was seen the need to address the culture of policing which was perceived to not be commensurate with a 'service' ethos. During the course of the research for this

thesis visits were made to Thames Valley Police on two separate occasions as part of work conducted for the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary and Police Research Group. As a result of the type of excellent co-operation commonly shown between police forces, the ability to research through a combination of personal interviews and participant observation, was significantly easier and more open than might otherwise be achieved by non-police researchers. In addition, visits were made to other forces which had embarked on the *quality* road through a *cultural* approach to the issue. These included Kent Police whose 'Way Ahead' programme had commenced in 1989 under Chief Constable Paul Condon (later to be knighted in his new role as Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police), and the Bedfordshire force which, in the early 1990s, had employed the services of a full-time consultant who had previously worked for a major car company in the field of cultural change.

Probably the first genuine approach towards a change in culture appeared in 1986 when the chief constable of Thames Valley, Charles Pollard, committed his force to a programme entitled 'Make Contact'. It was an initiative led from, and well supported by, the very top of the organisation with a chief superintendent and superintendent being charged with its implementation. A series of seminars which were used to sell the message of *quality*, with an underlying belief that officers were basically high performing individuals who needed a more directed steer on their activities in all ranks, formed the cornerstone of the initiative. The seminars were structured and practical affairs, led by senior officers, and targeted at groups within the force who were seen to be influential opinion-formers. Central messages were sent regarding important issues such as the nature of communication and empowerment within the force. It was a commendable attempt at moving the *quality* issue forward whilst not doing so under a performance measurement

*quality of service* title. The officers charged with its implementation did not do so in a blinkered way and were well aware of the perceived hurdles which would require vaulting to ensure correct messages were not only sent, but received. An evaluation of their success took place some twelve months later within the force and this revealed that, whereas there had been a generally favourable response to the tone of the messages being delivered, there was still a substantial degree of scepticism amongst officers as to how the work had, and could, result in change for their benefit.

Further work on 'Make Contact' followed with sergeants being a group within the force which was seen as particularly influential in selling the message. The reality that individual and group change did not occur easily, either through a cascade system of information or seminar 'instruction', had been adjoined with a stark understanding of where the communication process was most influential: that of the middle and direct supervisory ranks of the service. The cultural initiative continued through further work with sergeants and inspectors who were seen to be two of the most influential ranks in making change in the organisation happen. To a large extent the initiative, whilst eminently laudable, lacked a tangible theme which was shortly to emerge through activities which were more centrally driven. Charles Pollard was to become the chairman of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) *Quality of Service* committee during the early 1990s, and his staff officer, Superintendent Peter Cusworth, had worked directly on the 'Make Contact' initiative. The combination of a centrally inspired police service focus in the work completed by ACPO and the staff associations in 1989, together with the specific influence which Pollard and Cusworth had in already promoting a formula for change, resulted in a re-evaluation of the 'Make Contact' theme. The initiative became reborn in 1989 under the title 'Make Quality Contact'; partly a realisation of the *quality of*

*service* structure which was just around the corner and a genuine wish to move forward with a piece of work which had begun some three years earlier.

'Make Quality Contact' did not seek to revisit in the same depth much of the former seminar work which was seen as a building-block on which the *quality* initiative could be formulated against, what was fast becoming, a strategic focus of forces around the country. The re-born philosophy still concentrated on communication between individuals and ranks within the force as being critical to its success, but it now became obvious that the notion of standards of service were becoming even more influential to the measurement of the success of the project. The singular focus which had begun as one of needing to tinker with the culture of the organisation became one which accepted more directly the notions implicit in a more *pragmatic* approach to *quality*. There was still a central, and essential, groundswell approach to the whole concept which saw the way forward as being one directly influenced by the attitude of its officers, but the focus was to be swiftly re-drawn through the direct influence which the ACPO initiative was to have on the early 1990s approach to policing. The Thames Valley experience was not unique and, dependent upon the viewpoint adopted, not necessarily the most dynamic of its type. It was however a very early-starter in the cultural imperative seen to be key to influencing future policing strategy and continues to be an example of a force whose chief officer believes change is capable of being achieved through a variety of means.

Other examples of attempts to change the culture of policing were to emerge towards the end of the 1980s. One of the most publicised was that of the Metropolitan Police which launched a programme entitled *Plus* in 1989. The purpose of the initiative was to enhance the corporate image of the organisation and alter the culture to one of 'service' rather than

'force'. By the admission of officers of that force spoken to during the course of this research, and representing a range of ranks and positions, the success of *Plus* was highly debatable in achieving what were perceived to be its objectives. One senior officer proffered that the main reason for the scepticism which had greeted the initiative was that it had portrayed the force as being intrinsically flawed and in need of drastic change, a view which he identified as widely disputed within the organisation at lower ranks in particular. *Plus* was not a one-off attempt at reform and developed revised initiatives on the basis of the messages being received from its staff during the 1990s. There were clear messages beginning to emerge from police initiatives aimed at changing the culture that, from within the service, many of its members disputing that they were in need of as much change as was being suggested. However, as a mission statement, *Plus* could be seen as prototypical of policing for the 1990s (McLaughlin, 1992).

#### *Leading into the 1990s at National Level*

To a large extent the cultural work which had already been embarked upon by some forces was given increased legitimacy with the results from the 1988 British Crime Survey (Mayhew et al., 1989) which showed a reduction in public satisfaction with policing services during the 1980s. Albeit, satisfaction was still rated as 'very good' or 'good' by 85% of respondents, but the reduction was seen as significant to leaders within the police service in particular. This relatively small statistical reduction was observed against a recent history of conflict and trauma within society at large; a situation which had seen the police playing key roles in preserving order in riot-torn inner cities and in the miners' strike of 1984. Publicity from these events had produced vivid images available to all, through widespread media coverage, of police officers dressed and acting in significantly

different ways from that which was perceived as the conventional norm by the uninvolved sections of the British public.

The archetypal 'Bobby' had been replaced by the para-military State police officer and efforts to redress the balance between what was perceived, and what was reality in the vast majority of encounters which the public would have with the police, was seen as essential. Less easily addressed were the series of corruption and evidence-rigging issues which were gradually beginning to emerge from a time, pre-PACE, when the professional standards of the police in gathering evidence and prosecuting wrong-doers was less stringent than those which accompanied cases in the latter part of the 1980s. The ambiguity of the messages which were now being received by the public, of a position where the 'good old days' of the British 'Bobby' were, in fact, far less clearly exemplified against the wrong-doings in a number of *cause celebre* cases, needed redressing.

It was this juncture in policing history which is most commonly seen as most significant to the development of the service's *Quality of Service* programme. The need for a springboard from which a cultural and service based change to policing could be launched was to be achieved through an initiative of ACPO which was formulated and researched during 1988/1989. The Operational Policing Review (ACPO, 1990a) was supported by the other staff associations: the Police Federation and NALGO (latterly to be named UNISON), and involved a number of forces studying a variety of aspects of policing, amongst which was *quality of service*. It indicated the division between what the public and police expected of policing and what was most likely to be the future style of policing (Stephens and Becker, 1994).



1989 - 1997  
**Quality of Service and  
Performance Monitoring**

As has been alluded to earlier in this work, there is a natural degree of overlap between aspects of *community policing* and *crime prevention*. Alderson's model had seen the latter as being the result of the former, with emphasis being placed on the role which the police could play in activating communities to work effectively towards providing themselves with a level of natural order maintenance. However, the relative 'simplicity' of this position was one which, by the 1990s had become more detailed in its interpretation, given the wide range of changes which had taken place during the previous ten to fifteen years. Policing activity had become legislatively widened in terms of accountability and procedures through the *Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984*, and this combined with indications emanating from the Home Office that *crime prevention* needed to take on a wider multi-agency approach, should perceivably have brought the Alderson model of *community policing* into sharper focus. The reality of the evidence from the early 1990s was, however, not this clear.

Whereas *PACE* had been born out of the disorders of the early 1980s, and dealt primarily with police procedures, the Government's intentions in relation to encouraging *active citizenship* alongside attaining effectiveness and efficiency in policing became just as important in directing the way in which policing moved forward into the 1990s. If *active citizenship* was legitimised by encouraging *citizenship* of a 'responsible' rather than

'autonomous' style<sup>1</sup> in voluntary activities such as Neighbourhood Watch or Special Constabulary involvement, there was the potential for enlarging 'the public's responsibility for personal and community safety without, apparently, undermining police 'ownership' of these functions' (Johnston, 1996, p.63). The move was towards one of encouraging public contribution to what had, historically, been the cornerstone of policing. However, unlike Alderson's vision of *community policing*, this *active citizenship* was of a distinctly less structured nature with the focus and rationale for individual activity being enshrined in the debate of what could make policing itself more effective, efficient and therefore, less costly. Taken alongside the increased availability of private security firms to provide services conventionally supplied by the police, and akin to those which the public perceived as important to increasing their safety (a regular visible presence and foot patrols), the 'activated' neighbourhood could as appropriately choose to pay for their safety as they could contribute voluntarily to NHW or the special constabulary (Dale, 1994; Dale and Mawby, 1994).

The extent to which police services became challenged during the 1990s, and the way in which legislation was drafted to signify that policing was viewed centrally as no longer the preserve of the forces themselves, was exemplified in the enquiry team led by Ingrid Posen at the Home Office, and the *Police and Magistrates' Courts Act 1994* (Home Office, 1995a). In 1993, Posen's team was set up to consider and recommend ways in which the delivery of core police services could be accomplished most efficiently and identify which services provided by the police could be regarded as 'ancillary' to their primary objective

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<sup>1</sup> "Responsible' citizenship is officially sanctioned and sponsored by the State (whilst) 'autonomous citizenship' occurs when individuals or groups engage in vigilantist modes of 'self policing' without the recognition or support of the State' (Johnston, 1996, p.62).

as law enforcers and preventers of crime (Home Office, 1994b; 1995b). Alongside Posen's work emerged a separate independent enquiry conducted by the Police Foundation and Policy Studies Institute (Cassels Enquiry) which, whilst drawing a wider remit, nevertheless also sought to establish which policing tasks were 'core' and which could be undertaken by others (Police Foundation/PSI, 1994). Posen's work was criticised by ACPO and the police staff associations because of its apparent Treasury-driven and non-consultatory structure whilst the Cassels enquiry was perceived as less threatening in its construction because of its independent nature (Howe, 1994; Judge, 1994). Although neither document was officially acted upon to any extent which significantly changed the nature of policing core tasks, the work which was being undertaken by the respective committees was considered serious enough to cause the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary to commission its own research amongst the public to put the debate into a more informed perspective (Redshaw and Sanders, 1995).<sup>2</sup>

The *Police and Magistrates' Courts Act 1994*, however, represented a far wider-reaching change to policing than that which either of the two enquiries into core and ancillary tasks succeeded in doing. Although relatively unconcerned with the 'nuts and bolts' of policing activity which Posen and Cassels had reviewed, the *Police and Magistrates' Courts Act* struck at the heart of policing accountability and devolved authority in a way which had not been attempted since the *Police Act* of 1964. Police authorities were to become free-standing corporate bodies able to precept on local authorities for a proportion of their funding, with the lion's share of cash being provided by central government. The duty of police authorities was to secure the maintenance of efficient and effective forces for its

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<sup>2</sup> To a large extent the more treasury driven model could have been seen on the drawing board several years earlier with the encouragement of forces to embark on activity sampling, a statistical process aimed at identifying the work which officers actually undertook down to a period of minutes (Home Office, 1989; Home Office and HMIC, 1992).

area having regard to the Home Secretary's *key objectives*, the police authorities own plans and objectives, and performance targets set by the police authority itself. Chief constables were to be responsible for the direction and control of their respective forces having regard to the local policing plans issued by the police authorities. The intention was set out to place ownership of strategic management and policy making in the arena of the police authorities whilst chief constables were tasked with managing their forces in accordance with the strategic plans.

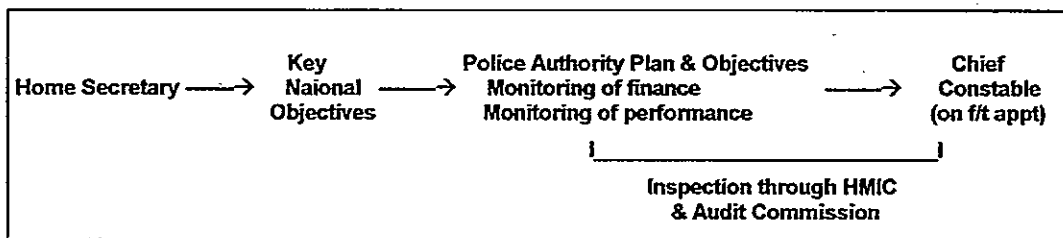


Figure 5.1: The new 'linear' model of police accountability

Herein lay a fundamental change to the long-established tri-partite mechanism of policing with particular concern being voiced from within the higher echelons of the police service that the position of the chief constable would now be more directly controllable through the political structure, notably the central political administration. The position was perceived as one which had changed the tri-partite structure into one which was more linear in its working (figure 5.1). A direct line of control from the Home Secretary was seen as possible by virtue of several factors including his ability to set and measure success or failure against his own performance indicators. Police authorities were obliged to follow these in the setting of their strategic objectives and plans. Furthermore, they were required (under penalty of sanction) to monitor financial and other performance indicators of local objectives and targets which were, in turn, to be submitted to HMIC and the Audit

Commission for auditing. Chief constables were to be employed on fixed-term contracts approved by the Home Secretary.

Notwithstanding the extent to which chief constables now formed the politically lower (and therefore prospectively less influential) position in the linear formation, a key observation against the form which this legislation took was that it had been drafted without proper consultation and the possibility for the influence to be placed on chief constables through the structure could compromise their operational independence, notably through a fixed-term appointment system (Oliver, 1996). Oliver's arguments, whilst having a rationale underpinning his call for a Royal Commission to recommend on such matters, appears to have underestimated the political frustration amongst key governmental players of a system which had seen expenditure on the police rise dramatically over the previous decade, a situation which was significant enough for one ex-Home Secretary to comment in his memoirs 'We have thrown money at them and we have the highest level of crime in our history' (Baker, 1991, p.450). Similarly underestimated was the extent to which simple management rationale in having police authorities of sizes which were commensurate with effective debate (17 to 19 members dependant upon area as opposed to the common 30 to 40 who previously sat) could have an impact upon the newly constituted corporate bodies. Alongside these considerations was the reality of a substantial period in the late 1900s when policing became a more political entity often being seen to fail in its objectives of reducing and detecting crime, with blame for this falling most commonly on the shoulders of chief constables, despite an alleged structure of tri-partite accountability.

The system of bidding to the Home Secretary for increases in the personnel establishments of forces was removed and police authorities and their chief constables therefore had more

influence over the structure and deployment of resources.<sup>3</sup> The *Police and Magistrates' Courts Act* also included sections which gave greater flexibility for police forces to sell their services and generate income through sponsorship or other means (Bunt et al., 1997, pp.4-10). A movement towards levels of contractual arrangements between the police and the market society echoed certain sentiments within Bayley's *Police for the Future* (1994) which debated the role of the private security sector as being utilised on the State's behalf, a position which has been criticised because of the likelihood of 'alternative legitimate institutions' being 'likely to generate both inequality and authoritarianism' (Johnston, 1996, p.67).

However, within the *Police and Magistrates' Courts Act* was the potential for the police themselves to become providers of paid-for services and compete with private security providers. Although examples of where forces chose to do so in a large-scale commercial way have not to date been evident, the provision of officers to patrol local estates at cost to local authorities, and to establishments such as hospitals<sup>4</sup> and shopping centres was becoming a more common phenomenon. Of importance to those choosing to take up the police option was not, it appeared, the per-officer cost as at an individual level far more private employees would be available for the same money. Policing offered a wider package of both expertise and secondary (free) resources based around experience in community and crime prevention issues. The opportunity of a *community policing* and problem-solving style of private security was one which the police were ideally placed to provide and brought the notions of inter-agency work and active citizenship into focus

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<sup>3</sup> The extent to which HMIC and the Audit Commission played a part in monitoring the new arrangements is discussed later in this chapter.

<sup>4</sup> In Devon and Cornwall, the position in both Exeter and Truro between 1995 and 1999 was one which saw the police take over the responsibility for security services at two local hospitals when private security firms contracts were not renewed.

within a commercial environment - a situation which effectively amalgamated differing options within Bayley's 'future' vision of policing.

### *Community Policing*

Typically, programmes which forces put in place emphasised a mixture of increased levels of local accountability, community based crime prevention initiatives, elements of routine work which were divorced from the established nature of policework, and those which were based on emergency response to incidents (Skolnick and Bayley, 1986). More recently, some police officers themselves considered *community policing* to embrace concepts of 'social welfare' (O'Dowd, 1993, p.58), whilst the need to set police work in a context which the public accepted as conforming to their views of what the police should be, and the roles which they should perform, was not universally evident. The symbols of greater police accountability, through consultative committees, and personally identifiable police officers, still provided a level of knowledge about what the public wanted which was far from unambiguous. The *Operational Policing Review* (ACPO, 1990a) survey of the public had suggested that a *community policing* style was preferred to one which was based on more obvious law enforcement methods, but the indications that the police role was expected to be 'all things to all people' was exemplified by studies showing these expectations included dog-fouling of pavements (Morgan, 1989; Shapland and Vagg, 1989). The efforts which had been made to raise the positive public profile of the police towards the end of the 1980s had not appeared to have been able to clarify the precise nature of the policing role which was expected to be undertaken.

Central to the public's notion of policing was still the nineteenth century concept of Peel's preventative patrol by uniform constables, whilst the wider challenge inherent in multi-

agency work, which formed the new 'backbone' of emerging crime prevention strategies, was less evident as a symbol of effective deterrence. The Audit Commission identified the public attaching great value to police patrol as reassurance, local knowledge of individual officers, and the notion that this underpinned 'policing by consent'. But it acknowledged that the police were unable to meet public expectations with some eighty percent of residents being dissatisfied with levels of foot patrol in their area (Audit Commission, 1996b). The ability to provide a comprehensive service was not one which the police themselves pretended to be a reality. However, efforts to maintain a balance, which included notions of 'high visibility' patrolling, were still at the cornerstone of the public face which forces attempted to portray. This was one which did not necessarily reflect a common theme of placing little value upon routine patrolling, but it was one which was increasingly difficult to provide when prioritising of tasks was a reality.

One of the key issues which related to the continuing debate on the role of *community policing* was that of its close and inevitable connection with the police role as detectors of crime. In times of limited resources the extent to which this particular aspect of policework should form the dominant feature of daily activity underpinned much of the basis of Posen's enquiry. The way in which policing had developed to encompass a more concentrated emphasis on the core issues relating to detection had, to a large extent, sidelined notions of *community policing*. Whereas the concept was still regularly referred to within police forces, its emphasis was reduced in management terms and often given little more than lip service. Chief police officers, regardless of their perspective on the value of a preventative community based model, were generally reluctant to publicly declare a move away from a concept of which the public approved.



The British position in this respect could be interestingly compared to that of the United States of America which had seen a continuing level of widespread endorsement of a *community policing* ethos dating back to the 1960s. Although not uniform in its development since this period, the notion of closer ties with local communities, foot patrolling of areas and a general acknowledgement of problem solving being predominant over simplified crime-control methods, was one which found favour in the philosophy of US policing. The recent position in the 1990s has similarly seen an acknowledgement of this perspective, although the notion that *community policing* was dominant in reality was questionable against research showing that, whilst concentration on non-crime community issues enhanced job satisfaction, there was nevertheless a level of scepticism evident amongst police officers as to the measurable value of the initiative with crime-control continuing to be a function prioritised over a service role (Lurigio and Skogan, 1994; McElroy et al., 1993).

The public perspective of *community policing* also related to environmental factors impinging on the lives of residents. This saw a mid-1990s strategy of *zero-tolerance* find some favour within both the US and UK. Although based on a problem-solving philosophy, its tactics of strict law-enforcement of minor crime, enabling the rebuttal of perspectives that the police had 'lost control' in certain areas of large cities, appeared to re-emphasise order-maintenance over the wider social and community based approach which *community policing* engendered (Mawby, 1999, pp. 47-48). Whilst finding favour in certain places within the United States, and being highly publicised as being the strategy which had brought New York's chronic crime problem under a degree of control in the mid 1990s, William Bratton, New York's Police Commissioner from 1994 to 1996, denied that he had given it the name 'zero tolerance' or that it was an enterprise which 'ran

roughshod over neighbourhoods and civil liberties'. Therefore it was believed by him to be contradictory to the ethos of *community policing* (Daily Telegraph, 14 June 1997).

The acceptance of *zero-tolerance* in Britain met with a varying response at political, police and community levels. Whereas Prime Minister Tony Blair went on record in 1997 as being 'passionate' about the *zero tolerance* concept, Charles Pollard, chief constable of Thames Valley felt that it was being seen simplistically 'as a panacea' with the potential of short-term gains being at the expense of long-term community relations building (Daily Telegraph, 11 April 1997). Despite this, residents of neighbourhoods suffering disproportionately from crime and disorder welcomed a system which concentrated resources deployed to their problems, although, in line with the strategy which Bratton himself had developed in New York, such initiatives commonly had a wider approach than one which was merely enforcing the law when minor misdemeanours occurred. The term *zero tolerance* itself had too narrow a meaning for many and, whilst publicly acknowledging the benefits of planned operations to address local problems, chief police officers such as Devon and Cornwall's John Evans chose to entitle such strategies as *Quality of Life*.

The 1990s epitomised a growing influence within central government to move the policing agenda to one which was far more measurable than in the past. The effect which this had upon aspects of policing, developed a greater degree of professionalism in a number of areas. However, it was one which required forces to reconsider their commitments and priorities to the extent of revisiting the general concept of *community policing* and whatever form this had taken in their particular locality.

The fears which had been expressed in the Cornish Committee's report of the 1960s (Home Office, 1965) about the way in which the role of the crime prevention departments within forces might develop was one which had come to be true (Harvey et al., 1989). The lack of any real integration of *crime prevention* into the strategies of policing was one which reflected a part of the organisation which was demand-led, in the same way as much of the bulk of policework was, and, therefore, lacking the elements of 'pro-activity' which the Home Office and John Alderson had envisaged. It is suggested that 'the theory and practice emanating from the Home Office and others, are very different animals. The latter seeks a rationally planned, disciplined approach, whilst the former is much looser'. The suggestion made is that for 'the police to play a leading role in crime prevention, they need to first get their own house in order' (Gilling, 1996, pp.107-8). Gilling's comments are a realistic critique of the way in which the situation within police forces had developed. His rationale for prophesying that the future structures were now more integral, but only likely to be achieved once underlying issues of conflict, professional job role ambiguities and organisational purpose were better defined, is pragmatic.<sup>5</sup>

The history of *crime prevention* into the 1990s consists of a number of elements from within the police service, outside agencies and Government. A major problem in commenting on the British Government's *crime prevention* policy was identifying those theories of criminal causality on which the Home Office based its strategy (King, 1991, p.93). The crux of the nationally formulated literature circulated by the Home Office was

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<sup>5</sup> The police service was not blind to the problems, as an internal ACPO circular (1991c) on the role of the crime prevention officer showed.

primarily concerned with the reduction of opportunities to commit crime, as witnessed through some of the late 1980s literature entitled *Practical Ways to Crack Crime* (Home Office, 1988). Publicity material into the 1990s had taken on more of the *partnership* ethos with the *Partnership in Crime Prevention* booklet (Home Office, 1991b) and *Partners against Crime: manual for action* (Home Office, 1993b) but its underlying message was reinforced in the press pack which was circulated as part of the launch: that preventing crime was still seen as directly related to *primary* prevention by direct action at the potential scene of crime. As the Home Secretary reiterated, the campaign was based on a three-tier approach: Neighbourhood Watch, Street Watch and Neighbourhood Constables (Home Office, 1994a), all of which were initiatives able to sit comfortably in the predominant *situational* prevention model, with an influential degree of law enforcement being incorporated at the periphery through the special constabulary.

To a large degree, the 'new powerful partnership' suggested by the Home Secretary, was little more than a reaffirmation of earlier calls for the public to become more directly involved in working alongside the police in preventing crime and passing information. The 'new' *partnership* was, in reality, a rekindling of one which was subject to considerable effort in many parts of the country to maintain it in a tangible and workable form. The initiative was overtly political in its tone and intentions to raise the profile of the Conservative government still further in the law and order stakes. The timing of the news release, 28 September 1994, fell most neatly into a convenient spot on the annual party conference timetable. However, the *partnership* of this particular scheme was not one which brought home the thrust of the *Morgan Committee Report* (Home Office, 1991a). The *Morgan Committee* had been established under the *Standing Conference on Crime Prevention* to monitor the extent to which partnership was developing at a multi-agency

level in line with Home Office Circular 44/1990 which had emphasised the importance of producing local strategies and structures from within existing resources (Home Office, 1990a; 1991b). Whereas the *committee* made recommendations relating to issues such as resource availability and training, it went further than the government anticipated in that it 'refused to neglect the wider context, and thus produced a critical report' (Gilling, 1997, p.98). It recommended that local authorities should have a duty in respect of *crime prevention* alongside that of the police and that a much greater focus should be given to youth issues and *community safety*, the latter being a term which was perceived as more appropriate than *crime prevention*.

The *Morgan Report*, although 'not warmly received as a solution by the government' was responded to by the establishment of a *National Board for Crime Prevention* in 1993, the purpose of which was to identify new ways in which all sections of communities could combine to reduce crime and fear of crime (Gilling, 1997, pp.99-100). The thrust of a continuing centralist approach to the issue, rather than that which had been implicit in the recommendations of Morgan of devolved responsibility to local authority level, was epitomised in the production of *Crime Concern's Practical Guide to Crime Prevention for Local Partnerships* (Crime Concern, 1993). To a large extent this reaffirmed the notion that responsibility for preventing crime was not solely a matter for the police but was able to provide little more than advice as to what the role of others should be and share good practice. In fact, most police forces had already developed good working relationships with other agencies which supported the concept of group problem-solving. However it was to take a change of government in 1997 to bring the thrust of the Morgan Committee's

recommendations to the central stage of crime prevention policy through the *Crime and Disorder Act 1998*.<sup>6</sup>

### *Victims of crime*

The 1990s was the beginning of a decade marked by central direction and commitment to a number of the aspects of criminal justice through 'charters'. Victims were one part of this. The effort by the government to publicly declare levels of service which victims could expect to receive from the police and other agencies in the justice system through its *Victim's Charter* (Home Office, 1990b) saw the commitment, at least at a superficial level, become more formalised. However, the document provided assurances rather than any specific rights for victims of crime and was little more than guidance for those who may have to provide services for victims, despite very explicit recommendations being made within the publication (Mawby and Walklate, 1994, p.188).<sup>7</sup> The emphasis upon victims' 'rights' became more focused in the second version of the *Victim's Charter* which was produced several years later (Home Office, 1997). Whilst not enshrined in law, there was an emerging emphasis on charter commitments within the work conducted by the Audit Commission and HMIC during the 1990s; a factor which served to provide a more coherent focus than had previously been observed in the field of victim care. In addition to this, the more widespread use of surveys by police forces to establish the level of service which they were providing also raised the profile of victims within police management structures.

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<sup>6</sup> See Chapter 12: 1997-1999 and into a new century.

<sup>7</sup> Evidence to support contentions that the *Victim's Charter* did not initially provide the standards of service, and thereby, any dramatically noticeable alteration to the tangible position of victims within the justice system, is available through the research conducted within Devon and Cornwall (see chapter 11: Victims of Crime in Devon and Cornwall).

It is highly improbable whether, at any time prior to the 1990s, victims of crime were surveyed more about their opinions of the service which they had received from the police.<sup>8</sup> At a national level there were four further British Crime Surveys and, across the country, police forces were formulating and administering questionnaires as one of the required indicators of performance from the Association of Chief Police Officers.<sup>9</sup> There were also incalculable numbers of smaller scale surveys being conducted to varying levels of competence by graduate and under graduate researchers, as well as there being a steady flow of interest in victims from established academics.

The victim had been at the forefront of much attention during the 1980s but, if that was a period where there was still seen to be a relatively steep uphill struggle to co-ordinate the activities and initiatives which abounded between agencies for victims' benefits, the 1990s was the era which saw the position somewhat 'sanitised' in the way in which they became approached by the police. The way in which this *sanitation* took place was quite accidental but arguably, predictable. The requirement to measure performance (outlined in the next section) had dictated the way in which police forces were to go in establishing whether or not victims were satisfied with the service which they had received. That way was surveys. There were a far wider range of potential sources of victims to survey than those which did eventually appear as the formal two which forces were expected to collect (victims of burglary and violence). Ambitious early drafts from ACPO had suggested forces should also survey victims of domestic violence, for example, a proposition which was dropped

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<sup>8</sup> A telephone survey conducted by the author in 1992 revealed that twenty of the forty three forces in England and Wales had already embarked upon routine surveying of victims of crime.

<sup>9</sup> ACPO had proposed measuring levels of satisfaction with a variety of police services in response to HMIC and Audit Commission requirements to measure a wide range of police activity which it was felt did not alone reflect 'quality' of work, merely 'quantity' (see next section).

following a period of consultation. There were forces who were prepared to recommend potential ways of conducting such sensitive research (including Devon and Cornwall)<sup>10</sup> but, in cases where a structured methodology was likely to produce valid results, issues of time, commitment and financial resources played a big part in determining that such research would not be practical on an on-going basis.

But 'sanitation' was also inadvertently achieved through the development of technology, in particular computerised crime recording which allowed a facility to keep victims updated on the results of cases through standard letters. The Victim's Charter (Home Office, 1990b) had guided forces that updating of victims was an important aspect of overall service standards. The Devon and Cornwall computerised system, which was developed from American software in the first instance provided standard letters advising of the result of court cases. The letter included fields in which details of fines and compensation/costs could be inserted prior to sending and this was completed and sent to appropriate victims. However, the software had not been customised for British use and the fields were prefixed by a '\$' rather than a '£' symbol which epitomised the routine and impersonal nature of the letter. Large gaps on the page also re-emphasised the fact that a machine had produced the letter rather than an individual, all of which appeared to increase the 'sanitising' effect of how matters of importance to victims were merely routine in the police environment.

Certain aspects of improvement did become evident during the years which followed the

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<sup>10</sup> Suggestions fell into two broad categories: simply handing out cards with information thereon and giving the victim the opportunity to answer some basic questions, or, a more scientific methodology which was based on personal interviews using non-police personnel. The former was, and still is, used in certain forms but the purpose is not linked with any dictated performance indicators. The latter has not, as far as can be ascertained, embarked upon by any force as a matter of routine. There are examples of specific individual studies into this area which have guided future police action in some cases, but the institutionalisation of this method of research by the police has not developed in this particular subject area.



charter's publication in the area of assistance given through the courts system. Government finance became available for the establishment of civilian *liaison officers*, initially in Crown Courts, and latterly beginning to spread to Magistrates Courts (Mawby and Walklate, 1994; Rock, 1991). *Victim Support* was utilised as the structure within which the local schemes could be administered. Financing of the schemes was therefore routed through this organisation, to local level for administration. However, relatively little evidence of any structural alterations to practice were found to have developed through the work of courts themselves and the Crown Prosecution Service continued to see liaison with the victim as primarily the responsibility of the police and other agencies.

### *The emergence of the police QOS initiative*

1990 saw the launch of the *Quality of Service* initiative on a national level. The Police Federation and Superintendents' Association, with ACPO as the prime leaders in this tripartite collaboration, had already worked together, with the assistance of a number of police forces to complete the Operational Policing Review (ACPO, 1990a), a piece of work which had researched a number of key aspects of policing, amongst which was the quality of the standards of policing experienced by members of the public. This document led to the formulation of the publication which was to become the lead structure in the development of QOS. The *Strategic Policy Document: Setting the Standards for Policing: Meeting Community Expectations* (ACPO, 1990b) had as its stated aims the needs of the service to develop and portray a corporate identity which it commenced through its *statement of common purpose*.

The purpose of the Police Service is to uphold the law fairly and firmly; to prevent crime; to pursue and bring to justice those who break the law; to keep the Queen's Peace; to protect, help and reassure the community; and to be seen to do all this with integrity, common sense and sound judgement. We must be compassionate, courteous and patient, acting without fear or favour or prejudice to the rights of

others. We need to be professional, calm and restrained in the face of violence and apply only that force which is necessary to accomplish our lawful duty. We must strive to reduce the fears of the public and, so far as we can, to reflect their priorities in the action we take. We must respond to well-founded criticism with a willingness to change. (ACPO, 1990b)

The *statement* was one which reflected the three key areas which those responsible for developing the initiative considered requiring of attention: (i) the setting of standards in relation to the delivery of police services and the effectiveness of these; (ii) the nature of 'customer' expectations and the question of whether or not these expectations were being met by the police; and (iii) the issue of consistency in standards of courtesy, fairness and sensitivity (p.6). The *statement* was a set of principles which underpinned the ethos of the service and which all chief constables signed up to during the following twelve months, normally through public proclamation at local level, together with a varying degree of aplomb in producing literature to accompany the words. The words of the *statement* echoed much of the sentiment of the origins of formal policing in Britain during the nineteenth-hundreds and the oath of allegiance given by all officers on joining the service. It was, by its very nature, central to the QOS ethos and effectively the mission statement of the organisation.

Here stood the model for the 1990s, but how far removed was it from the concepts of policing prior to the ACPO initiative? At first reading few impartial observers would identify in it any aspect of policing which was especially radical or new, given the relatively high esteem in which the police continued to be held despite the public disorders and scandals or corruption during the 1980s. There had, however, been a noticeable falling-off in positive public reaction to the police as reported in the 1988 British Crime Survey (Mayhew et al., 1989), a trend which caused concern when taken against the findings of the earlier surveys conducted by the same means in British Crime Surveys,

four and six years earlier. The perceived gap between police activity and public expectations was one which did not escape comment in the *Strategic Policy Document*. This factor, taken alongside a series of adverse press reports of police malpractice and inability to perform effectively many of the roles which the public had come to expect from their 'bobbies', appeared to be a factor of considerable influence in directing the activities of ACPO and the staff associations.

Having established a partial<sup>11</sup> basis on which the *Strategic Policy Document* and subsequent QOS initiative was developed, an understanding of the intertwined factors which accompanied the 1989 work has to be taken into account. Much of this is described elsewhere in the thesis in relation to the emergence of community orientated policing strategies, closer focus on the services available to victims and the fundamental nature of the police role as *owners* of the *crime prevention* mantle. Accompanying this are the views of practitioners and observers to the process from both national and local level. But the pre-initiative attitudes of individuals and forces to the notion of the *quality* issue per-se is less easily, but potentially well exemplified.

By 1991, interest in the *Quality of Service* initiative was growing in strength, as was the staff associations' involvement in various aspects of its implementation. But that interest was spreading roots at a rapid rate and had begun to develop a life of its own in a more overt political arena. This was the year in which forces received their first major 'broadside' from the agents of the centre: Her Majesty's Inspectorate and the Audit

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<sup>11</sup> *Partial* because it depicts the initiative as solely driven by political expediency and the need for public acceptance whilst ignoring what optimistic observers would consider the natural desire of those individuals within the police to provide a service of the highest standards for the benefit of the community at large.

Commission. There was no doubt from the tone and content of what was received by way of letter that the centre intended to make it their business to co-ordinate at least the quantitative nature of the initiative. On 10 September 1991 Sir John Woodcock, the then Chief Inspector of Constabulary, wrote to all chief officers concerning the development of a framework of performance indicators to be introduced into the inspections process from 1992. This letter was accompanied by a list of indicators which, it was suggested, would 'assist forces and HMIC in assessing the *quality of service* provided at the point of contact with consumer-caller, victim, suspect, etc.'

Woodcock's own position as it related to the *Quality of service* initiative had been laid out in an article relating to the culture of the police during the same period in which the quantitative wrangling was commencing. The article questioned the 'we know best' philosophy adopted by the police and argued that the public deserved, and the police should expect and encourage, greater involvement in decision making on setting priorities. He saw the *service culture* as one which valued systems higher than individuals and worked to the detriment of public satisfaction - that even when the police considered they had dealt with a job 'by the book' this was not an indication that it had been done in a way which would be appreciated by the member of public involved. It was a view which struck the heart of much of the conventional wisdom surrounding quality management issues. The call from Woodcock was for a de-professionalisation of the service, to make it more responsive and less steeped in a police service culture (Woodcock, 1991).

But this position was one which had to be considered against a service which did not bear the hallmarks of private enterprise in a marketplace of singular commodities and services easily controlled and led by supply, demand and profit factors. There was a need for the

resources available to the police to be rationed at an appropriate rate to operate in the daily reality of unpredictability. The views did not meet with universal approval, and whilst it is not possible to indicate how large or small a proportion of influential police individuals agreed with these principles, there was a clear indication from some senior and chief police officers spoken to in a variety of forces during the course of this research that they took issue with Woodcock's sentiments. Without reference to HMCIC's views, one senior officer, in presenting initial findings on his force's *quality of service* initiative to chief officers summed up his observations thus:

'We have to be mindful of providing not only what the public want, but what they can afford to pay for - because only so much of their money is put towards policing. We have to make those decisions. For example, a car analogy: there's the Rolls Royce, got everything, costs fifty thousand pounds but is top of the range - cigar lighter, fridge in the back, leather seats - but it's expensive and not many people can afford it. The ones who can like it but that's not many. Then there's the Ford Sierra - £12,000 - not so plush as the Rolls, doesn't have the cigar lighter or the fridge, or the leather seats, but it goes well - it's reliable, it's affordable and people like it. Then there's the Skoda<sup>12</sup> - its cheap - £5,000 - and it's got a lot of optional extras like windscreen wipers and tyres. It gets you from A to B sometimes and the public aren't really too keen on it. It might be cheap but not too many people want it because it's not reliable. I suggest to you, gentlemen, that in terms of the service we give we can't afford to provide the public with the Rolls and neither should we be content with giving them the Skoda model. We need to aim towards the Ford because it's good value, it works well and its liked by the public. Sir, at present, I submit that the model this force most resembles is the Skoda Gti with a sunshine roof.' (LV)

Within a short period of time, the letter from HMCIC was joined on the desks of chief officers by a consultation letter and appendix from the Audit Commission which outlined the measures which they were proposing be collected by police forces as indicators of performance, which would form part of the forthcoming *Local Government Act 1992*. In all, with the indicators from both organisations taken into account, there were over sixty proposed indicators of police performance by the end of 1991. Some were effectively

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<sup>12</sup> Author's note: apologies to VW who now own Skoda - 'I am aware that your excellent product is no longer deserving of such 'carriist' jokes as the one above!' Potential lawsuits to philip.bunt@virgin.net

duplications, others were requesting answers to the same type of question but through different measurements and some appeared to have totally different agendas. The situation was one which dismayed many police officers of senior rank. The multitude of requests for information and the sudden apparent interest in a system masquerading as *quality of service* appeared to have little to do with *quality* and more with quantity.<sup>13</sup> It was however clear that the situation required a co-ordinated approach and, it could be argued by default, that the role fell to the fledgling QOS sub-committee of the ACPO General Purposes Committee.<sup>14</sup> The suggestion that this happened by default was certainly a view held by a number of individuals who were involved in the *Quality of Service* initiative in their respective forces.

'I'm afraid they have stuffed us with the job of collecting numbers when we started off trying to do something positive to promote a change and provide better quality. I've gone from being a champion for TQM (*Total Quality Management*) to a statistician.' (Inspector on a force's QOS department, 1993, ref: EA)

'ACPO seem to be pushing us down the road to support all these pieces of number-crunching and have even added to it by including their own indicators. They seem to have lost the thread here somewhere.' (Inspector on a force's Performance Review department, 1993, ref: EP)

'No point in it whatever - no point in us doing it. It won't benefit us a bit.' (Chief police officer, August, 1993 ref: ED)

Co-ordination did very much centre around the QOS sub-committee which began taking the issue forward during the early part of 1992. In a letter to chief officers on 20 February 1992 from Michael Hirst,<sup>15</sup> chairman of the sub-committee, it was clear that the development of the performance indicator strategy was being drawn into the *quality of*

<sup>13</sup> Subsequent negotiation and discussion reduced the number of indicators to a more manageable size, although the cooperation of ACPO in doing this served to institutionalise the process far quicker than it might have been in some other circumstances. By 1993, a Home Office Circular (17/1993) outlined the indicators for that particular year (Home Office, 1993d).

<sup>14</sup> The QOS sub-committee achieved full committee status in ACPO in 1993 rather than remaining as an arm of the General Purposes Committee, underlying the increasing importance given the subject by chief officers. The sub-committee's work had included reviewing key operational service areas of policework (ACPO, 1991a), which underlined the practical side of performance review.

<sup>15</sup> Michael Hirst was, at that time, chief constable of Leicestershire.

service arena under the banner of the five key service areas which had been identified in the ACPO *Quality of Service Management Guide* (ACPO, 1991b) which had been ratified by the ACPO Council on 16 January 1992. The letter bore none of the underlying tones of resentment at the diversion of the initiative away from a qualitative path which was being perceived as being achieved by many, and the letter was almost upbeat in its appreciation of the opportunity being given to the service: 'Although the Audit Commission will be required to formally consult with a variety of organisations and agencies at a later stage, the Quality of Service Sub-Committee is being given an early opportunity to influence the thinking of the Audit Commission on this subject.' A.J.P. Butler's<sup>16</sup> interpretation of the Audit Commission's stance was that they were being both fair and clever in their approach to the service. Fair because the opportunity to have an influence on what was in or out of the indicator table was being offered, but clever in that the police would have difficulty in complaining in the future if their own measures did not relate to quality of service (Butler, 1992, p. 41).

The scepticism within the police service that the quantitative measures being proposed would form league tables of forces' performance was becoming a relatively dark cloud on the *quality* horizon, and one which could potentially undermine the rationale and enterprise which a number of forces had already begun to put into making cultural change a priority. The acknowledgement that QOS did not sit comfortably alongside some of the Audit Commission imperatives was again observed by Butler who feared that 'it would be a tragedy if history repeated itself in the 1990s' referring to the commitment which the

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<sup>16</sup> A.J.P. Butler was deputy chief constable of Leicestershire and went on to become chief constable of Gloucestershire later in the 1990s.

police service had given to Home Office circular 114/1983 which had resulted in 'the over-emphasis of those outside the service on the issue of costs and efficiency.' (1992, p. 49) His reaction was based on an early, well founded fear, that sufficient consideration had not been given to establishing a clear link between the performance indicators to be used to measure such issues as cost and effectiveness, and the level of public satisfaction with police services and the quality of their delivery. In the realisation that there was much qualitative information about the police service which would, in normal circumstance not reach the media, in 1993, and subsequently over the next few years, the service produced a series of 'fact sheets' which were intended to redress the balance (ACPO, 1993b; 1994b; 1995; 1996). These were designed as a 'hymn book' from which officers from each force could 'sing', and positive messages such as the police service costing each individual less than the price of a pint of milk each day became regularly quoted in police/public liaison forums across the country. A more detailed consideration of the role which HMIC and the Audit Commission have played in the development of the *Quality of Service* initiative and the influence they have had in their inspection and monitoring roles helps to understand the position in which both national policy and local interpretation reside in the policing debate.

Under the Local Government Act 1992, the Audit Commission is required to determine a set of indicators for local authority services. Every authority in England and Wales will have to measure its performance against these indicators and publish details in a local newspaper. The Commission will then compare the different levels of performance achieved by different authorities, the first national report being due for publication in 1995. (...) Before deciding on the first list, the *Commission* consulted widely. In December 1991, it published a short paper on how it intended to proceed once the Act had received Royal Assent, which it did in March 1992. In September 1992, the *Commission* issued a consultation document which set out the background to the Citizen's Charter and proposed a range of possible indicators. (*Charting a Course*; Audit Commission, 1993, p.2)<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> *Charting a Course* summarised the results of the consultation, the way in which the *Commission* had modified the proposals it published in September 1992, and how it intended to proceed during the following year (p.4).



The *Commission* honestly summarised the views expressed by the police and other local authorities in the first line of *Charting a Course* in that they had all 'expressed reservations about the ... proposals' and that 'even on the issues which the *Commission* has influence, there was no consensus' (p.5). This comment exemplified the concerns across all the public agencies about the number of indicators proposed as well as the interpretation which would be given to them and the cost involved in their collection. It was an open and informative piece of work from the *Commission* which set a positive tone for what was to follow during the subsequent years, given the severe uphill nature of the task presented to the audit group in gaining acceptance for its existence.

Previous publications<sup>18</sup> of that body had proved influential in the direction which forces had taken in terms of, for example, the civilianisation and rationalising of tasks in the development of administrative support units (Audit Commission, 1988) and its future papers on the criminal investigative process from an audit perspective, as well as others, led contemporary academics to suggest that 'the work of the Audit Commission is highly regarded by many (if not most) senior police officers' (Savage and Charman, 1996). This presents a potential irony for, if the Audit Commission's work 'points the way to many of the elements of the social market approach to the police and policing, then managers sympathetic to the approach (...) may be in danger of facilitating the very sorts of developments many senior officers have opposed when advocated by central government' (p.51). Their status amongst the higher ranks of the police has been enhanced by the level of professionalism and openness with which they operated and the attention which was

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<sup>18</sup> The Audit Commission produced ten papers between May 1988 and March 1991 relating to the police covering, in addition to the Administrative Support document referred to above, fingerprint services, vehicle fleet management, police training, communications rooms, financing provincial forces, income generation, performance review, organisational review of provincial forces and financial delegation.

paid to the consultative process and high quality informative and instructional written material.

Probably one of the most influential factors in their sustained respectability has been a focused position on the agendas which they have set against the legal duty they had to specify indicators of performance. Paul Vevers of the Audit Commission was keen to point to the future when addressing the Cheltenham Police Management conference in 1994 (ACPO, 1994a, pp.16-19) in which he indicated to the audience of leaders in the police service his belief that, handled sensitively, the *Commission* had a useful part to play in the accountability and management of police services. He acknowledged the concern of the service that most of the indicators were perceived as measuring only quantity and not quality of work done but disputed that their existence said nothing about quality as many of them touched on such issues. The *Commission's* duty was to look at indicators which would sustain comparisons between forces and he acknowledged that the survey work being promoted within forces as an ACPO indicator had potential for standardisation in relation to certain questions which would be of use to the Audit Commission.

Vevers points concerning measures not being solely quantitative in nature was convincingly argued and accurate in that, whereas the results may be produced in terms of numbers, that was not to say that they were merely 'bean counting' as had been argued by a senior officer at the first ACPO Quality of Service seminar, held at Bramshill in December 1992 (Waters, 1996, p.210). Numbers could reflect upon the quality of work done; they could similarly be just counters of an item. Clearly statistics showing how many officers were available for duty within a force was a simple 'bean-counting' exercise, but figures showing how many victims had been advised of the results of a

burglary, for example, had an underlying measure of quality as it related to police activity which was qualitatively based. The argument about not counting things, because they did not reflect the quality of work which was done, did not stand much scrutiny.

One of the primary concerns of police forces around the country was the potentially destructive and misleading effect which the proposal to publish comparative data of performance by the *Commission* might have. There was firstly a large amount of information, and secondly, much of it was of such a nature as to be relatively meaningless in producing a relevant comparator. The demographic nature of the respective forces, particularly the dissimilarity which were to be found between forces in relation to racial and social mixes, was one such issue which was used to underline the potential invalidity of any such data produced at national level.

There was also a practical level of concern as to the impact of such publication when a wide and diverse range of indicators were portrayed across, what was believed would have to be at least a double-spread broadsheet newspaper format. Would the public make any sense of it? Having taken the concerns of the various interested parties into account the *Commission* decided to use only a small number of the indicators in its initial publication, this list being comprised of those which it felt to be of most interest to the public. The list developed relatively little during the first two years of publication and the paper produced on 18 April 1996 included forces' speed of answering 999 calls and time taken to respond to emergencies, the amount of crime and specifically the amount of violent crime and burglary, and the crime detection rate (Audit Commission, 1996). The concern of the police as to the use and accuracy of such data in comparative terms continued and remains a source of concern to senior officers, a fact not misunderstood by the *Commission* itself.

The national publication of police PIs received extensive coverage in the national press and television. Locally, over 1,000 newspapers and over 60 radio and television stations covered the story. The national coverage was generally reasonable and well balanced, but local coverage was more variable. The response of the police service to national publication continues to give cause for concern, with a number of chief constables expressing their lack of confidence in the value of the PIs as a comparative measure of performance (Audit Commission, 1996a).

Forces adopted different attitudes to their responsibilities in relation to the Local Government Act 1992. The amount of information required was clearly substantial but the willingness of forces to fulfil the first set of obligations which were placed on them, to publish their indicators of performance in at least one local newspaper before the end of 1994, was however less to do with concern over the philosophical debate as to its rights and wrongs, or even how the public were likely to interpret the data. It was primarily related to the technology which forces already had in place for the collection and analysing of the information, as well as the identification of individuals, or departments, within their organisations which would 'own' the task. A further factor was the decision as to how the publication would actually look and the possible cost of this to the policing budget. The legal requirement did not specify how precisely this should be done except that the circulation should be in a 'paid for' newspaper and not a free-sheet or publicity material merely made available by the force. The situation caused somewhat of an anomaly in terms of the rationale applied as there was clearly an opportunity for forces to provide a much greater circulation of the information through a 'mail-drop' to all homes in their area.

As has already been mentioned, this responsibility often fell within the remit of units originally constructed under the *quality* initiative with a natural degree of misgiving being expressed as to how relevant this particular job was to furthering the effectiveness of the

service. Devon and Cornwall Constabulary produced the publication of its performance indicators in July 1994, having had the figures audited by the District Audit Service during the previous month. It was the first force in the country to publish and this occurred on the same day as the first local authority to complete the task, Brent (London) on 13 July. The police publication took the form of an eight page, part colour, supplement in a local newspaper, *The Western Morning News*, (Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, 1994b) and a one page monochrome summary published in eight other, more local, weekly publications. The cost of this had been supplemented by selling advertising space in the supplement which covered approximately half the overall cost. It was done in such a way that, whereas all the required indicators were included, they were seen as secondary to the potential to portray the force in a positive light and 'sell' images and messages relating to crime prevention, victim support and traffic safety.

A number of forces followed the lead set by Devon and Cornwall and arranged for similar supplements to be produced in local newspapers. Others adopted a legislatively acceptable, but less impactful approach by providing just the figures required in a tabular or list form, although these forces commonly accompanied their enterprise with a press release and coordinated P.R. strategy. Some chose to produce their own literature for circulation whilst still complying with the terms of Act in as cost efficient way as possible.<sup>19</sup>

Since the dynamic emergence of the Audit Commission into the *quality of service* structure they have become regular contributors to the debate on the way in which the

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<sup>19</sup> See chapter 8: *Quality of Service in Devon and Cornwall* for further information on how the Audit Commission arranged for the impact of these publications to be assessed.

service is proceeding. Each year since 1994 legislative directions have been issued relating to the performance indicators which authorities will be expected to collect and publish during the following year and these have invariably been preceded with a commendable degree of consultation. The list of indicators has now grown to encompass those which ACPO formulated in the early stages to measure the quality of work performed by use of surveys of 999 callers, victims, road accident drivers and casualties, police station visitors and the general public in relation to their perceptions of the level of foot and mobile patrol. Although, in the 1995 directive (Audit Commission, 1995) referring to these, it is incumbent on only those forces 'in which monitoring was carried out' (p.17) to provide this information, the likelihood of a more concerted approach to bringing all forces into line with a common survey policy in the future is unlikely to be ruled out.

It is difficult to fail to acknowledge the significant effect which the Audit Commission has had on the police service during the 1990s. What began as an almost advisory tinkering with the outskirts of policing, had now moved far more centrally into the arena of tasks considered core to the effective and efficient running of these organisations, a situation which caused the term 'Auditshire Constabulary' to be coined during the early stages of this movement, a situation in which Love (1991, p.96) indicated the *Commission* were not setting out to describe what this mythical constabulary looks like 'but they are quite clear about how it works.' The position of the *Commission* needs to be considered against that of the second main players in the *quality* initiative, HMIC.

There is much evidence to support the view that Her Majesty's Inspectorate had become substantially more influential in their role amongst police forces than they were prior to 1990. Its structure, with a chief HMI based in the Home Office responsible for five

regionally based inspectors and further 'lay' inspectors,<sup>20</sup> has a primary responsibility of inspecting forces on behalf of the Home Secretary and issuing 'certificates of efficiency' as to their overall running. Forces are subject to inspection at regular, normally annual, intervals with the form which the inspection takes varying according to the discretion of, and needs perceived, by individual HMIs. Conventionally these will take one of three forms: *primary* inspections during which a force will normally receive an extended inspection covering a period of some two weeks, these taking place every three years; *performance reviews*, which take a less detailed form and occur annually, and *thematic* inspections which concentrate on specific themes of interest or concern at a particular point in time, e.g. quality of service, equal opportunities, complaints procedures etc.

The nature of the increased level of influence which can be observed owes much to the position of the structure close to the centre of government where there is a naturally significant degree of interest in seeing the nature of policing activity develop in line with wider government policy. Chief constables remain autonomous in their operational decision making capability although legislative changes during the 1990s, specifically the 1994 *Police and Magistrates' Courts Act* (Home Office, 1995) have defined the responsibilities of these individuals more precisely and in line with the position of the newly established police authorities, which hold a more collaborative and legal responsibility for the efficiency of policing than previously. The profile of HMIs themselves has changed from being primarily chief officers in the twilight of their careers moving from forces to perform an inspection role based on, what was mainly, their own

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<sup>20</sup> 'Lay inspectors' are non-police and normally selected for their specific expertise in a subject area of specific relevance to an aspect of study, including management and financial matters.

experiences, to one which now sees younger officers accepting the mantle with qualities more akin to the lateral thinking 'trouble-shooters' of the private sector.

There is a less clear distinction to be drawn between the activities of HMI and the Audit Commission than there may have been prior to the Local Government Act 1992. Regular statistical returns on police performance have been a staple diet of HMI for many years and whilst providing much of the 'number-crunching' characteristics so maligned by forces in the early period, now encapsulate a wider degree of, potentially at least, quality in their collection and analysis. Indicators of performance adopted by ACPO relating to surveys, for example, have formed part of the HMI (form 7) returns since 1993 and are provided as internal information in a similar format to those of all other indicators (although HMI have not sought to publish these more widely). Clearly the potential for duplication of effort and conflicting agendas between the HMI and Audit Commission existed in the early stages of development, but the experience of the enterprise has not transformed itself into anything more problematic than an administrative burden.

The highly centralised role which the Inspectorate play has heightened the degree of concern about the influence which such a structure has on directing future policing policy at a local level (Reiner, 1992). The evidence to support this conjecture is far from clear, although there are certain examples of HMIs having a considerable degree of influence in persuading chief officers to adopt strategic management initiatives within their areas. One such force in which interviews took place revealed that they had received little more than friendly advice from a now-retired HMI but subsequently made a number of changes to their policies on community involvement, complaints procedures and strategic planning following inspection by a new-order inspector. The interviewee, who worked closely with



others involved in policy making within the force indicated that such changes were probably overdue and would more than likely have been arrived at eventually through the changes which were then taking place with the forthcoming new police authorities. The existence of the HMI in its more political management role had, he agreed however, moved things on faster than would have been otherwise achieved.

'I have no doubt about it, the HMI made a difference. I'm not too sure the top corridor were overly impressed with the new style, but what we had before wasn't very testing and I think, in reality, some hard questions had to be answered.' .... 'I don't think there is anything too threatening in it - politically I mean - the legislation which is coming means that things are going to change and we're all going to become a lot more accountable, whichever way you look at it.' (GD)

The example may not be one which can yet be considered a universal phenomenon across forces but serves as an indication of the way that HMI has developed in terms of its influence on policy making (Jones et al, 1994). The direct influence which HMI has had on the *Quality of Service* programme is no less tangible and, to some degree, where it was implied that change to local policy was necessary, directly against a structured executive decision which had already been taken. The Devon and Cornwall position during the early stages of public surveying, for example, which had taken a pragmatic approach to questioning only those who had been users of the service and not the general public, was questioned in forthright terms during a pre-inspection visit by an HMI staff officer. The rationale for the policy decision which had been made had little or no effect on persuading the inspecting staff officer that the decision was logical and based on the best use of data and cost effectiveness. Clearly there were arguments to be made in favour of the 'general public' approach to surveys, not least of which was the forthcoming requirement for new police authorities to consult in relation to their annual plans. This required a structured approach which Devon and Cornwall adopted through a programme of focus groups and personal interviews at local agricultural county shows over the next three years and which

was done in such a way as to make most actionable use of the information for local police commanders. The influence of HMI was perceivably important in heightening awareness of the forthcoming requirements of legislation and reflected another dimension of direct involvement which might influence or overturn previously made policy decisions.

The Inspectorate's position has also been increasingly associated with the dissemination of 'good practice' and directories were issued on an annual basis during the late 1980s and early 1990s. Similarly HMI reports of force performance make use of highlighting such items and recommending action which should be taken in other areas. Such reports are benchmark indicators which chief officers choose to ignore at their peril, and which return as agenda items both during the intervening periods between inspections and at subsequent inspection visits themselves. The role of HMI has become more central to the notions of improved performance than was evident during the period pre-1990. The combination of legislative change, the statutory requirements of the Audit Commission, and a belief that change can best be accomplished by a more lateral-thinking management approach exemplified by the younger breed of chief officers, have all been major influences on the developing role of Her Majesty's Inspectorate during the 1990s.

### ***1989-1997: an overview***

The period had begun with a significant degree of effort being put into the future of policing by ACPO and police forces themselves through addressing both the culture of the organisation and the *quality of service* given to the public. However, by the mid 1990s the lead had been firmly taken by Government, in not only setting out inspected criteria by which police performance would be judged, but in legislating to redefine the roles of key players on the policing stage, notably police authorities and chief constables. *Community*

*policing* had become submerged in a more statistically driven culture which, on the one hand acknowledged basic principles to which the public could subscribe in measuring the amount of time officers spent 'on patrol', whilst also placing requirements upon new police authorities to financially manage relatively scarce resources. Despite the willingness to devolve this accountability to police authorities, key concepts from within the *Morgan Report* of similarly divesting the *crime prevention* mantle to local authorities, who would have a legal responsibility with the police and others to ensure community safety, were not taken up under the Conservative administration. The move towards making other institutions as well as the police legally responsible for such matters was, however, to emerge as early 'flagship' legislation from the incoming Labour Government.

Of significant importance to this period was also the major constitutional change which took place in redefining the tri-partite structure to one which was more linear in nature and held the position of chief constables as potentially far more directed in their activities than at any previous time. The accountability now placed upon police authorities as the key mechanisms to ensure that effective consultation and priority setting took place was one which was accompanied by changes to their structure, making them more streamlined in their composition, but also potentially more able to be directed in their approach through a clear line of accountability through to central government. The dilemma which had been presented at the end of the *Dixon* era some thirty years earlier was one which had now been revisited and addressed in a far more wide-reaching and fundamental way; one which would see the wider sharing of power and responsibility across police and local agencies leading into the new millennium.

## Methodology

Explanation of how this work has been conducted will begin by considering the way in which the project developed in 1990 as a local police initiative, but changed focus as the author's role in the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary altered between 1992 and 1998. From a localised evaluation of policing activity in an area of Plymouth, with a specific focus on victims and inter-agency initiatives, the research grew, and diversified to encompass wider aspects of policing at both a local and national level. The chapter will go on to outline the methodology which has been employed and detail the extent of its use in a variety of situations.

The original idea for some sort of research in Plymouth stemmed from the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary's *Planned Policing* system which had been developed during 1989 as a structured approach to the 1980s philosophy 'management by objectives'<sup>1</sup>. During December 1989, the deputy sub-divisional commander for the Charles Cross (city centre) area of Plymouth, Chief Inspector Roger Mechan, submitted a 'form 301' through his divisional commander, to undertake a study of crime in his sub-division. The '301' was approved by the assistant chief constable Keith Portlock<sup>2</sup> on 22 December and returned to Chief Inspector Mechan for further action.

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<sup>1</sup> The purpose of the *Planned Policing* model was to identify specific problems and propose methods of solving them within a specific time-scale. Conventionally this process was used for measurable, and actionable, police operational work. It involved the completion of a 'form 301' (Objective/Action Planning Report Form) which ensured the process was linked to one of the 'Force Goals' and detailed how success was going to be measured. Within the police service this 'management by objectives' became 'policing by objectives'. The style was one encouraged through Home Office circular 114/1983.

<sup>2</sup> Keith Portlock Q.P.M. is now Deputy Chief Constable of Devon & Cornwall Constabulary.

FORM 301

OBJECTIVE: To undertake a two year study of crime in all its aspects, real and perceived in an area of Charles Cross sub division and produce a strategy for inter agency co-operation in tackling the problems highlighted and report on the results of that co-operation as it affects the reduction of crime, real and perceived.

During the months that followed in 1990, the chief inspector sought the views of Dr Rob Mawby of the University of Plymouth<sup>3</sup> as to how such a study could best be progressed. It was suggested that the work could form the basis of post-graduate research conducted by a police officer and it was decided to offer this opportunity to the author who was then stationed at Charles Cross as one of five uniform section inspectors. Following discussions, it was agreed that the area to form the basis of the study would be that known as *Stonehouse*<sup>4</sup> which, in 1990, was policed by two *community constables*. One covered the area on the North East side of Union Street up to the natural boundary with Victoria Park; the other, premises to the South and North West of Union Street. Union Street ran, more-or-less across the centre of the area and received a relatively large amount of police attention. The reason for this related particularly to the maintenance of public order as a result of the number of licensed premises and late-night refreshment establishments there located. For the purposes of the study it was seen as an ideal location for research given its relatively high level of criminal activity and level of deprivation in social and housing amenities which surrounded Union Street.<sup>5</sup>

Each section inspector had geographic responsibility for an area of Plymouth within the Charles Cross Sub-division in addition to supervising routine reactive patrol work. In

<sup>3</sup> Dr R I Mawby is now a professor at the University of Plymouth. The university title is used for the purposes of identification during this period although the actual change of status from Polytechnic South West to the new title did not occur until 1991.

<sup>4</sup> See Chapter 7 *National perspectives to local implementation* for more detail on the area of Stonehouse.

<sup>5</sup> Union Street is one which has an international reputation amongst sea-farers, and armed-service personnel in particular, for the night-life and 'services' it afforded. It is referred to in more detail throughout chapters 7 and 8.

reality the amount of pro-active work which they had the opportunity or incentive to commit to their areas varied considerably. The author did not have a specific responsibility for *Stonehouse*; his 'patch' was in a different part of the city known as Greenbank.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, the need to gain as close a position to the 'ground-activities' of *Stonehouse* as possible was seen as an important requirement of the research as there was a significant aura, or mystique, which surrounded the area, mainly by reputation. The importance of being in a position to report objectively on factors of the research within *Stonehouse*, without the 'baggage' of more general perceptions, was likely to be aided by a wider level of understanding of how the area functioned at a community and policing level. One of the initial considerations was, therefore, to regard at least part of the study as ethnographic in its research opportunities.

There were other considerations which played a part in the initial decisions on how the research would progress. Firstly, the work needed to reflect the area from as wide a cross section of views as possible. The importance of reflecting residents' and victims' views was significant in both evaluating their reaction to the environment and the services which they perceived were being provided by the police and other groups. No less important were the views of police officers themselves and the evidence which would be available to support an understanding of how policing in *Stonehouse* was being achieved. Secondly, all of these needed to be considered against the historic development of the area to provide a qualitative interpretation of the evidence presented. One aspect considered worthy of research was that of the police structures and activity pre-1990. There was perceived to be ample indicators of police development and an opportunity to place this 'factual'

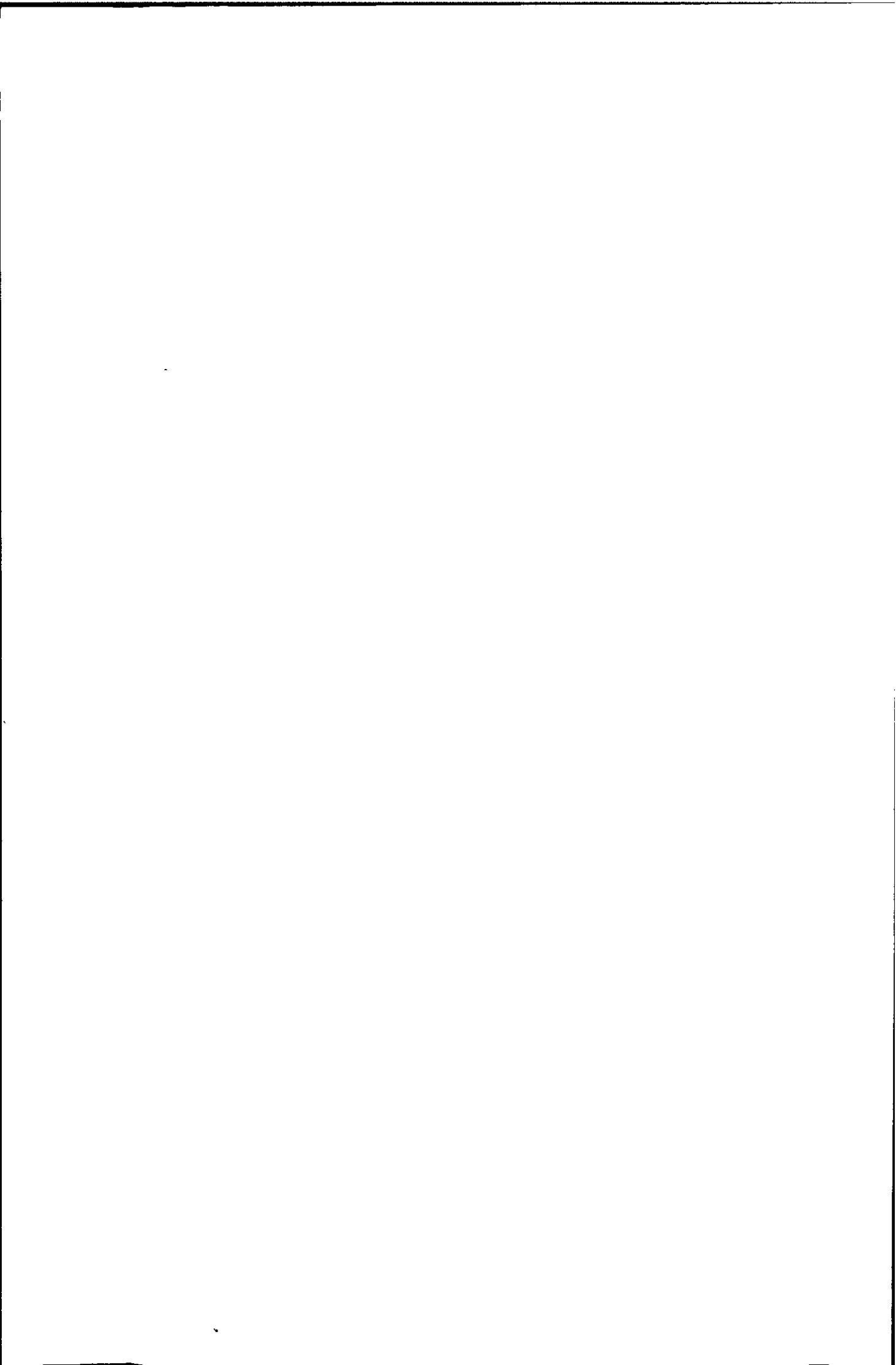
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<sup>6</sup> Initial attempts were made to move his geographic responsibility to the *Stonehouse* area but this met with resistance from the inspector currently responsible for the patch and the sub-divisional commander decided to abandon this idea.

information in a wider perspective through use of recollections and 'oral history'. The historic approach was one able to draw into focus perceptions of both police and public and provide a qualitative 'backdrop' against which to judge views expressed on the current environment. From the police side, this was able to concentrate upon structural issues as well as personal interpretations. Policy decisions at both local and Force level were able to be considered more critically against evidence from this method of enquiry. Public understanding of their environment, and the role of the police within it, potentially had a less structured perspective, but one which was able to be compared with other informed sources. These included residents and workers within the area. Thirdly, the statistical evidence of the makeup of the area was informative in terms of both demographic and official crime information.

There were clear advantages in the author's local working role and the relatively close liaison which occurred between him and those involved in policing and the other individuals and groups which were either residents, victims or, in some other way involved in the *Stonehouse* environment. This did not minimise the potential disadvantages from the research position, particularly ethnographically, which will be considered in the *section* which follows. Having established a number of core links and contacts within *Stonehouse* the 'servicing' of these was fairly easy to accomplish whilst the physical proximity of the author to individuals and groups concerned was maintained. This was reinforced by his position within the police division where his work could be seen as directly linked to the daily needs of police/public liaison. Clearly this was not an essential prerequisite of being able to conduct research at this level, but it was a distinct advantage.

By December 1991 a considerable amount of the initial *Stonehouse* research had been





undertaken. This included the completion of over ninety personal interviews with police officers, residents and victims of crime, as well as attendance and development of links with a number of key voluntary and formal groups active in the social arena. It was at this point that the author moved to Exeter to work as an inspector on the newly formed *Quality of Service Unit* based at force headquarters. The work which he was then to become involved in during the following three years, while working in this new capacity, drew into the equation a range of research work which was directed more towards the wider strategic levels of policing at both force and national level. The more localised focus of the study which had originally been intended became part of a wider picture of policing not originally envisaged when the study was started.<sup>7</sup> In reality, many of the objectives of the initial work had been completed but had not progressed in the way which would have been possible if the author had remained a member of the Plymouth division. These primarily related to the management of the results and impetus to accomplish change based on these.<sup>8</sup>

The structure of the work which the author now embarked upon within the *Quality of Service Unit* was, however, directly relevant to certain aspects of the study which had already been completed in *Stonehouse*. In particular, the reaction of crime victims to the service which they felt they had received from the police became a cornerstone of the activity which the force embarked upon during 1992. The way in which the organisation developed its internal structures to address some of these issues, although now considering

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<sup>7</sup> There were clearly a number of structural issues which had already been identified within Charles Cross sub-division which could be used in a practical sense to fulfil a number of the aims of the original proposals. These were highlighted and reported upon by the author in a memorandum forwarded to the divisional commander for Plymouth during March 1992. In addition, and in line with the intentions of Chief Inspector Meehan at the time of submitting the original '301', a presentation was made to members of the local police/public liaison group shortly afterwards.

<sup>8</sup> As with many such initiatives, the dynamic of the potential became lost when personal ownership did not reside with an individual who had direct responsibility for accomplishing results based on change. There were some indications that the work had not been totally without purpose, and the links which had been established did lead to certain initiatives being pursued.

the whole of Devon and Cornwall, was nonetheless equally relevant to *Stonehouse* and Plymouth in general. Whereas the 1990/91 project had produced information about the reactions to policing at a local level, this data was now able to be used to supplement some of the questions which were being asked across the whole force. However, *Stonehouse* was now being studied without the direct links and personal contacts being developed at the level which would have been possible had the author remained Plymouth based.

### *Methodology employed*

Four broad strands of research methodology have been used in this work. Firstly, an ongoing review of literature and subject-specific information from a range of sources which enabled the research to develop in a progressive and longitudinal fashion. Secondly, a review and analysis of demographic, criminal statistical and performance related data over periods according to the relevant key areas. Thirdly, methods of establishing activity and opinion through telephone, postal and personal interview surveys. And finally, ethnographic work conducted throughout the research.

The review of relevant sources was accomplished throughout this period by two primary means. One was developed to ensure that appropriate police research and articles were reviewed as they became available and indexed using the simplistic (but effective) *Cardfile* facility of Microsoft Windows<sup>®</sup>. This allowed a sufficient 'search' facility to be employed to identify such literature when writing-up parts of the work. A substantial amount of information was gained in the course of the research by way of documentation from Devon and Cornwall, as well as other police forces, including papers presented at conferences which were attended on a variety of themes during the period of the work. These often formed the basis for reference material rather than core texts but, when

indexed, were subsequently able to provide background information in developing certain aspects of the study. This was particularly so where documentation from sources outside Devon and Cornwall were made available to the author on a 'no-quote' basis. Amongst 'revealable' sources outside immediate police circles were those obtained through the British Criminology Conferences of 1993 and 1995, The Police Foundation, a number of management courses at the Police Staff College, plus *quality of service* and performance indicator seminars run by management consultants and other institutions.<sup>9</sup> The second method involved a wider review of sources directly related to subjects being researched and was accomplished by systematic reviews of library databases in a number of key locations. These included the Police Staff College, the Home Office library, the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary library and museum, and the University of Plymouth. In addition sources such as the Home Office Police Research Group's Enquiry Desk and, more recently, a variety of locations on the Internet were used. Information on crime statistics was provided from the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary Criminal Information System (CIS) and an earlier version of this database (CRIMES) which was in use prior to 1992, as well as the force's Operational Information System (OIS) and its original computerised 'command and control' system 'FALCON'. Other sources of assessing crime statistics were used through the Home Office national figures which provide information on a 'force by force' basis across the offences committed and recorded within Home Office 'counting rules'.

In terms of ethnography, there are inevitable problems in embarking upon any form of

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<sup>9</sup> IBC Technical Services, 57-61, Mortimer Street, London. 'Ensuring *Quality of Service* in the Public Sector' 2-3 November 1993 (at which chief constable Richard Wells presented a paper (Wells, 1993); Metropolitan Police, London 'Fairness, Community and Justice Conference' 26-28 February 1993; Police Foundation, London 'Performance Indicators' (July, 1993).

research using this method. Unlike statistical analysis of data, ethnography is more concerned with establishing 'closeness' and 'authenticity' in accounts of other people's lives. But to do so is fraught with danger as 'the ethnographer is never a neutral channel of communication, and to pretend to be is a deception' ... 'however carefully disguised...(the researcher)...is always the elephant in the room' (Pearson, 1993). Ethnography can take a number of forms and rely on different methods of data collection from anthropological styles of participant observation to in-depth interviews with 'actors' in their 'life-plays'. These are often combined to provide a multilateral perspective where direct evidence through interview is capable of being 'fleshed-out' through a background perspective of circumstances and environment.

However, this work did not seek to be primarily an ethnographic account of policing development at local level. It necessarily combined elements of this discipline which are acknowledged and accounted for by the author because of his position as an 'insider' in one of the environments being studied (in this case, the police service). In other situations, the author's position was far more 'outside' the groups under consideration (e.g. the residents of *Stonehouse*, and the formal and voluntary groups with whom contact was made). In each situation, potential pitfalls in the gathering and reporting of information had to be both acknowledged and accounted for. But the reason for suggesting that this work is not primarily concerned with being an ethnographic study is because each series of encounters has not been undertaken with a view to distancing the author from the 'baggage' which accompanies him as a police officer. There are examples of where this has been done with some of the evidence presented from the writer's position in a police environment, but to seek to justify the whole work as being detailed in an ethnographic way would be unsustainable. Nevertheless, issues such as the ethical considerations in data

collection, personal values and beliefs, as well as societal and employment status within the police organisation, all form important considerations in the way which this research has been conducted.

One of the issues which had to be considered was that of the ethics involved in conducting research whilst working within the normal employment environment. This was less critical in terms of the formal aspects of the study which was taking place, as established sociological techniques and standards would be applied to any interviews which were undertaken. These included the promise that the respondents would remain non-identifiable, an issue which was seen as particularly important when the remarks made may be critical of one or more aspects of the police service or, probably more relevantly, other officers. But other ethnographic reporting was perceived as potentially more problematic. The nature of the problems was seen as two-fold. Firstly, the simple fact that operating amongst one's colleagues, without them being aware that the substance of what they did and said held the possibility of being referred to in a piece of academic research. In other words, how much would they willingly impart to someone who they may have trusted less? Secondly, how accurately could the encounters be recorded, given the commonality of work experience and natural affiliation between researcher and researched? To what extent would they be relevant pieces of sociological research evidence, achieved through an objective understanding of the environment in which they took place? How much of the author's personal views and beliefs would be superimposed on the discussion, not to mention his position in the organisation when set against the position of some of the respondents?

On the positive side, however, to what extent could the detailed understanding of certain

pieces of 'inside knowledge' benefit the communication between researcher and researched? Barriers could be more effectively broken down in this two-way process, thus allowing better quality data to be recorded than might be possible in a less informed encounter. Jock Young (1991) suggested that an insider's account could hopefully achieve the 'finer grain and detail' demanded of post-modern 'anthropology at home' whilst 'reducing the problems faced by McCabe and Sutcliffe (1978) [...] where complex insider activities (were) being carried out in a sub-language designed to exclude the uninformed' (p.25). But if ethnography involves an element of 'stepping outside' oneself, together with an ability to perform a detached intellectual process, how adequate would information gained from internal personal research be? There were a number of aspects to this which provided a level of discomfort when writing up such information. It was therefore encouraging to note Tim May's (1993) observations on such issues, in particular the potential loss of understanding which can accompany the dismissal of personal feelings and perspectives in research situations; and being able to take these into account in later reviews of field notes for the writing up process (pp.92-4). Such matters have been considered and acknowledged elsewhere. Simon Holdaway (1983), an ex-police officer, placed much of his reporting in appropriate context but, nevertheless, still researched as an 'insider' on matters internal. Young's (1991) reflections on police practice and culture, provide careful consideration of the issues involved in participant observation in similar vein (pp.23-25) and Dick Hobbs (1988), although studying the police from the 'outside', nevertheless studied his own environment as a central element in his work whilst acknowledging some of the difficulties inherent in the interpretation of relationships in a later paper (Hobbs, 1993).

In an attempt to address some of these concerns, the way in which information was

recorded was perceived to be an important element of the ethnographic part of the research. To ensure as accurate a recording mechanism as possible was developed, the author sought to lay down some groundrules for the way in which he would collect, and subsequently be able to analyse, information which was gained during the course of his normal working environment. The procedure adopted he entitled 'NASAP' for the purposes of being able to identify, in the writing of the work, comments and experiences which were collected outside the structured and semi-structured interviews. It followed a tradition which has been both commonly used, but, unfortunately discredited (circa PACE Act) in formal policing evidential circles! NASAP stands for 'Notes made As Soon As Possible' and was seen as a highly desirable form of compiling information as a result of personal experience. The decision to make notes of particular events or conversations which were held, or overheard, by noting the experience as soon as possible after the event in a 'diary' format, was similar to the daily experience of all police officers in having to make such records in their pocket note books when dealing with incidents. There is, of course, one essential difference - police officers' notes are made for the purpose of presentation before a court of law and need to contain facts able to substantiate an offence having been committed. Wider experiences of routine patrol, therefore, never appeared in such documents, However, for such a method to be used to collect data for a piece of academic work, the need to ensure it was able to be scrutinised in a different, but no less important environment, required careful consideration. As such, a set of ground-rules were established by the researcher, to ensure that the notes made were as reflective as possible of what had actually been experienced.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> The 'Groundrules for use of NASAP data recording' are shown at appendix 'A'.

The basis on which NASAP was formulated proved particularly useful later in the research in different environments in which the researcher found himself. Life on the streets of Plymouth was the primary example of where the 'notes' proved particularly useful but the method was not exclusive to this use. NASAP had its problems in as much as it could never replace the accuracy of recall in recording properly constructed and controlled interview environments. However, in terms of understanding the wider environment in which comments and behaviour are perceived, it was potentially more valuable. It was also potentially controversial in its application, as the degree of trust invested in the researcher was one not based on an agreed notion of confidentiality prior to speech. Whether frank and controversial issues would have emerged through the course of semi-structured interviews is unclear, and it is probable that a number of subjects would not have been part of a more structured discussion in certain circumstances.

The author made a deliberate effort to integrate himself more fully into the working environment of the two community constables who covered *Stonehouse*. The practical effects of this were not dramatic in terms of how routine policing was accomplished. No role-ambiguity was experienced, nor conflict engendered by this more diverse integration of his management position. The effect was particularly useful to the research because of the wider level of understanding which developed from the local officers' perspectives on policing their particular areas. Good relationships were established with these community constables which enabled the desired 'feel' for the area to be accomplished. The position which the author held, in research terms, was highly privileged, with almost unrestricted access to the organisation in which he served. The ability to perform this semi-ethnographic study of the environment and its people was without many of the bounds which constrain researchers from outside the police service.



The need to gauge a 'feeling' for the environment in which the initial (local) research was based dictated the need to encompass ethnographic styles of data collection, a decision which was primarily influenced by the position in which the researcher found himself. An early evaluation of the task made it clear that whatever methodology was used to capture information from victims, residents and members of other groups in the area, the strategic nature of the role which was played by the officers who worked the *Stonehouse* patch, was crucial to an understanding of how the policing role was accomplished. A decision was made to concentrate attention upon officers who played the most prominent roles in daily policing tasks in the area, supplemented by qualitative background information gained from those who had been involved in policing *Stonehouse* in the past. The experiences of previous incumbents of a police mantle was a section of data collection which will be described later, but it was one considered desirable and informative as a tool to establishing how the current rationale of policing had developed. Within this particular aspect of the study were the seeds within which the focus of the overall work changed to a wider perspective on policework.

The method of personal recollection amongst previously serving officers was relatively conventional and uncomplicated through the use of semi-structured interview schedules being used in personal interviews. Contemporary study amongst serving police officers was, however, directed by circumstance and pre-planned structure simultaneously, with a degree of ethnography forming the structure through 'inside' participant observation. The area of *Stonehouse* covered two 'beat areas' within the St. Peters ward of the city and ran from the Tamar estuary and Millbay Docks area, north-westwards along the city centre boundary (Western Approach) and was bounded on the western side by *Stonehouse* Creek. It covered a relatively small proportion of the city and was comprised of a variety of

accommodation and household types, mainly in the lower bands of social status. The two beat officers (community constables) who had responsibility for the North East and South sides of the area were seen as key informants to the process of policing.

Personal interviews were conducted with both officers on a number of occasions. Each responded openly to an initial semi-structured interview aimed at identifying their perceptions of policing and the social environment which they policed, together with background information on their personal circumstances and views on a variety of subjects.<sup>11</sup> Other personal interview records were made by use of the NASAP based method which was to be used throughout the subsequent research. Notable examples are a tape-recorded interview conducted with a retired police officer who, when the interview had finished told the interviewer to turn off the tape and 'have a chat about what it was really like.' The circumstances precluded any notes being made at the time and, through trying to re-gain the threads of the interview schedule from memory, notes were made straight afterwards in the researcher's car, thus ensuring as much information as possible was still available for reference purposes. Similarly such notes were found to be the only effective way of monitoring the views and opinions of senior and chief police officers in informal discussions at seminars and meetings both within Devon and Cornwall and other forces. Again, the circumstances and the situation in which such 'chats' took place were always noted and great care taken not to attribute remarks to identifiable individuals.

### *Oral history*

A central strand which is used throughout this work to exemplify many of the issues is that

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<sup>11</sup> See Appendix 'B' for details of semi-structured interview schedule.

of oral history. This has been used in the recounting of interviews conducted with police officers who policed in Plymouth from the 1950s (and occasionally earlier) to the present day. The approach of using oral history as a technique to document individual experiences in unique situations has formed the basis of other writers' primary sources of information. Recent contributions such as Graef (1989), Brogden (1991) and Weinberger (1995), whilst developing the information at different levels of analytical debate, depict the use of various survival techniques adopted by those involved in countering aspects of their profession with which there requires a degree of rationale enhancement to support activities in the context of their historical perspective. Earlier criminal justice social investigation can be related back to the last century (Bennett, 1981) and throughout the twentieth century examples of this form of enquiry have added to the qualitative nature of understanding a range of aspects associated with criminal justice, lifestyles and the psychology of both the police and the policed (Sutherland, 1937; Punch, 1979; Hobbs, 1988; Reiner, 1991).

In making sense of wider contextual issues researchers have utilised the direct quotations of actors to gain a more detailed *inside* understanding of some of the intrinsic aspects associated with their debates. Brogden's text of the lives of police officers in Merseyside between the Wars developed the wealth of collected reminiscent evidence to elucidate the management of class and cross-pressures, contradictory class locations and notions of personal integrity to address 'the problem of surviving work-life, in the crucible of conflicting class pressures' (Brogden, 1991: p.165). The mystique which surrounds policework, for example, was approached by Punch (1979) as being capable of demystification by 'simply viewing it as work' and Hobbs (1988), through his semi-native study of the east-end of London was able to identify parallels of significant cross-occupational behaviour between the law-enforcers and law-breakers, where both groups

were as much constrained and encouraged by the social environment as formal legal or disciplinary rules which pervaded the justice system. Recollections and more recent oral testimony needs to be interpreted against the appropriate social and professional background to portray with any semblance of accuracy the meanings associated with the verbiage. *Stonehouse* through police eyes, therefore, could only ever be recorded as individualistic, guided snapshots of history when dealing with events and changes several decades ago but, set in the context of the historical development of the area, this information develops a greater degree of significance in interpretation.

The views of the past may lack objectivity in recollection but should not be disregarded as totally flawed. The ability of many to recount with the basis of hindsight may be singularly more appealing simply because of the wider historical knowledge base from which they now draw. The dichotomy here is that the views of present day officers may be more accurate from a factual perspective but often no less subjective and, with no opportunity to foresee outcomes, may well alter given the dynamic nature of operational policing in an intensely public and overt political atmosphere. In interviews conducted with serving and retired police officers the delicate, subjective interpretation of 'community' emerged frequently, as did the still more abstruse 'consent' model of policing.

There is no intention to create a one-sided account of events leading to present day policing development. The 'emotional mosaic' of direct speech and reference to real-life incidents is, however, an effective way to single out primary issues of both past and present. By doing so themes can be targeted and explored in greater depth; the agenda thereby being set by those whose experiences still hold centre stage in memories as well as through records available from the time. The police comments, therefore, set an agenda for

debate to some extent and are used in the integration and consideration of the public view of these issues.

### *Police officers serving at The Octagon*

Being centrally positioned in *Stonehouse*, this police station was one at which early evidence of how policing was accomplished prior to 1967 could be found. Formal records of life at *The Octagon* were not plentiful and those which were located tended to be from references within personal files and documentation offered once the series of personal interviews which were embarked upon took place. These interviews were seen as potentially providing two main functions: (i) obtaining information about the Octagon and the way in which the area was policed, and (ii) enabling key areas of the research to be explored from the perspective of personal recollections and views on how policing had developed over time.<sup>12</sup>

Contact was made through the police personnel department at Exeter, and through the National Association of Retired Police Officers (NARPO), in order to identify officers who had served at *The Octagon*. This search process proved not to be as straightforward as was first anticipated. Police records were not able to be searched through computerised means against search criteria of previous stations and, in any event, records of officers still serving tended to indicate that prior to 1967 they had been members of Plymouth City Police rather than the precise location at which they served in that constabulary. NARPO records were similarly unhelpful in this respect and contact made with the local secretary

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<sup>12</sup> For more information on *The Octagon* and its officers' recollections see chapter 9: *Community policing in Devon and Cornwall*.

of the branch indicated that the most fruitful way forward would be through personal contact with a number of officers who he knew had served in Plymouth City Police.

The opportunity to complete the selection of a small sample through conventional random means appeared to be problematic and hence a less conventional but nevertheless productive process was embarked upon. In any event, one of the overall objectives in this stage of the research was to gain a 'flavour' of what policing Plymouth pre-1967 meant for a relatively small sample of individuals through detailed semi-structured personal interviews rather than produce a scientifically valid and representative sample. Subsequently, however, a record was found of the names and addresses of all officers serving in Plymouth in 1967 with their home addresses at the time and details of where they were serving. In addition, the Chief Constable's Annual Report of 1967 provided additional data. This proved useful in placing the individuals who had been interviewed in a context of where they were in the organisation at that particular time.

The secretary of NARPO was able to provide the names and addresses of six officers who he knew had served in Plymouth and spent at least some of their careers at *The Octagon*. It was intended that constable and sergeant ranks in particular would be selected to provide information through interviews but there was also a wish to elicit the views of more senior officers. The period during which these individuals had been at *The Octagon* was also important in establishing some common ground in evaluating responses. Initially, contact was made with the six officers by letter, and subsequent personal contact was made to identify that the information which had been given was correct and that they had served during a period which was seen as appropriate for this study (1950-1967). Five of these individuals fell within this category and interviews were conducted. These, and subsequent

interviews with others, normally took place at their homes, but also at locations chosen by them (in one case a police station, and another, the local Conservative Club).<sup>13</sup>

Each of the five initially interviewed was asked to provide what information they could recall about colleagues who had also served at *The Octagon* and, in all cases, similar lists of names were provided. Some were referred to more than others in recollections and this was influential in deciding on some prioritisation to seeking further interviews. In all cases, names given were referred back to NARPO records to identify current addresses where appropriate (as some were no longer alive) and introductory letters forwarded to these ex-officers also. Table 2 reflects the sample which was eventually achieved.

	Constable	Sergeant	Inspector	Ch Inspector	Sup'tendent
Served 1950-1967	11	2	0	1	2
Served outside period	2	0	0	0	0
Other reasons No interview**	3	1	0	0	0
Total sample	16	3	0	1	2
Total interviewed	8***	2	0	0	2

\* Rank referred to is rank on completion of service.

\*\* Incorrect information on where served, dead or not contactable.

\*\*\* One officer was seriously ill and another could not be contacted.

Table 6.1: Plymouth City 'Octagon' officers interviewed\*

It would clearly have been possible to delve further into the NARPO and force records to identify additional officer to interview. However, the historic perspective to the research had only partial relevance to the overall thesis and, upon later reflection of the deployment of officers in 1967 (as listed in the Chief Constable's Annual Report), it was perceived that the twelve officers who had been interviewed did reflect a broadly representative selection

<sup>13</sup> See appendix 'C' for introductory letter sent to retired police officers and appendix 'D' for interview schedule employed.

of those who would have served during the period under study.<sup>14</sup> There was a second 'string' to this 'bow' which was able to be taken into account. That was the fact that this particular sample had been drawn exclusively from retired police officers and there were many who were still serving in Devon and Cornwall Constabulary who may have had personal experience or recollections about *The Octagon*.

### *Interviews with other police officers*

During 1991, whilst still serving as a shift inspector at Charles Cross in Plymouth, the author sought permission to undertake a number of interviews with constables who worked at that location, and elsewhere in the division, to elicit their views and opinions on policing styles particularly as they related to the *Stonehouse* area. Selection of the sample was drawn at random from the duty list of staff using a simple numbering and selection method. This was effectively stratified by the way in which the duty sheet was published, dividing officers into five sections with *community constables* being shown separately.

Twelve officers were sought, two from each of the five sections, and two community officers (other than the two who would be interviewed because of their positions as resident officers for the two beat areas covering *Stonehouse*). The establishment of constables at Charles Cross at that time fluctuated around 130 to 140 and the sample size of 12 was therefore in the order of some 9%. In addition to these officers, during the course of the following four years, a further five interviews were conducted using the same interview schedule with constables with whom the author worked at locations other than Charles Cross. These were conducted on a significantly more subjective basis for selection

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<sup>14</sup> A 'cast list' of individuals who have provided information for this work through interviews and NASAP is shown at appendix 'E'. Officers from the sample shown above are clearly identified within this.



- the central criterion being a perception that they had something to offer to considering how policing in Plymouth was being conducted or had developed. Officers with specialist knowledge in one or more of the four key theme areas of community policing, crime prevention, victims of crime and *quality of service* were also canvassed on their wider views on policing as they related to their professional interests. These included officers who were able to add value to the debate at *Stonehouse*, Plymouth, Devon and Cornwall, and national levels. In these cases, interviews were conducted against differing, sometimes less structured, schedules aimed at attaining wider, and more strategic overviews of policing. Amongst these were three officers who had performed a role of crime prevention officer at some point in their careers.

Literature and reports reviewed, and discussions which took place with police officers who had been involved in the policing of *Stonehouse* for some considerable time highlighted the need to take account of the way in which policing had developed in the area. The changes which had taken place, particularly during the 1960s and 1970s, were commented on by many as instrumental in shaping the feelings of individuals within the area. These initial discussions were influential in directing the line which was followed in the resident and victim surveys which were to be conducted. There were three central groups which could provide the type of information necessary to understanding *Stonehouse*. These were residents of the area who had been living there during the times where many of the major changes to policing styles emerged; victims of recent crimes which had occurred and, police officers who had been serving during this period or otherwise instrumental in policing the community at the present time.

From the initial deliberations there was a clear line of feeling, often observable, and detailed later in the ethnographic substance of this work, that the role which the police played in the area was one which few members of the public did not have a view upon. There was, however, an equally clear message which related to vestiges of authority and bureaucracy which indicated there was a likelihood that postal self-report questioning may produce a lower than average response rate. The quality of response which would potentially be missed through undertaking work by any other method other than personal interviews was perceived as not being in the best interests of the research. Parts of the research concentrated upon aspects of policing within the area such as *Community Policing* and inter-agency work. In these cases also it was felt that to be sufficiently detailed in its enquiry would be difficult to build into a self-report study with the same likely degree of success in response rate and quality of data returned.

### *Surveys*

Three primary means were used to survey public reaction to crime and police activity, as well as views relating to knowledge and feelings about the social environment of the area in which individuals resided. These were personal interviews, telephone surveys and postal questionnaires. Each was used during the course of the research at a level commensurate with the need for information on particular issues. In relation to the interviews which were conducted personally, these were primarily used to establish resident and victim perceptions within the *Stonehouse* area, whilst telephone and postal surveys were intended to gauge reaction at a wider level. Within this, benefit was gained through the work which the author was involved in instigating within the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary *Quality of Service Unit* based at police headquarters in Exeter. This enterprise consisted of the establishment and training of a pool of telephone interviewers who were tasked with

contacting victims of burglary and violent crime to inform the constabulary's *quality of service* and performance monitoring programme. The data gained from these surveys, together with postal questionnaires and stratification of the results enabled more focussed analysis of public opinion within the Plymouth and *Stonehouse* areas.

All structured questionnaire work was conducted within Devon and Cornwall and no formal surveys were administered outside the Force boundaries. The reasons for this were two-fold. First, the comparative nature of the research was able to be accomplished within the 'controlled' environment of the Force area, where factors which impinged upon reactions and views could be analysed against criteria capable of explanation and further research. This was notably relevant to questions asked of victims where the controlled nature of the service environment at both police and other agency level could be related to other aspects of the study. Second, the period during which this work was undertaken was one in which almost all police forces were conducting some level of public survey work either directly or through an agency of some description. Gaining access to survey public perceptions within another force which may have already completed or be involved in their own evaluation was therefore seen as potentially difficult at both a practical and political level.<sup>15</sup>

The methods of survey are outlined in more detail below, together with the methods which were employed in their administration. They will follow a chronological order, depicting the nature of the research as it developed, and explaining the considerations which were

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<sup>15</sup> Political difficulty being perceived because of the nature of questions which, effectively, asked the public to 'rate' the service which they had received, thereby providing an outside Force with 'inside' information about another. In practical terms, the enterprise would have been problematic given that a significant proportion of the questions asked related to procedures which were common within Devon & Cornwall, but which may not be applicable elsewhere.

influential in deciding to conduct research in these ways. The first strands of survey work were completed in the local 1990/91 stage of the project and involved victims of crime and police officers. The rationale for selecting each group for study in this way was encouraged by the experience of the author in his ethnographic work role.

### *Victims of crime*

Between 31 August and 27 October 1991, a total of 263 criminal offences were recorded by the police as having occurred in *Stonehouse*. Of these just under one third (87) involved victims who resided in that area or who had a business located in the area in which they were directly involved. Interestingly these figures did not immediately indicate residents of *Stonehouse* as being disproportionately victimised when compared to figures relating to the city of Plymouth as a whole. Crimes which had occurred between 1 January and 16 September 1991 in the three city sub-divisions of Charles Cross, Devonport and Crownhill totalled 17,477 and of these 1,179 (6.7%) were committed in *Stonehouse*. However when crimes which were *non-personal-victim* specific were excluded from the overall figure (i.e. shoplifting, commercial theft/burglary, corporate fraud), as well as crimes which were recorded due to their detection (in categories such as going equipped to steal and handling stolen goods), the overall crime figure for the city fell to 14,556 indicating an 8.1% total of crime being committed in the area of study.

### *1991 Personal Interviews*

The thrust of this initial stage of the work was to uncover, amongst a representative proportion of victims within the area, details of the police involvement in that and any previous crimes, personal beliefs and feelings about police activity in the area generally, views on the most appropriate way of policing the area, knowledge of other agencies

which operated from bases within the city and *Stonehouse* in particular and, the level of *feelgood factor* of living where they did. One of the potential benefits which was identified as being derived from undertaking this detailed and time-consuming level of investigation was the likelihood of gaining a greater level of qualitative data than would likely be gained through self-report questionnaires.

The advantages derived from personal interviews are primarily in the hands of the researcher and the interpretative opportunities which exist with a semi-structured questionnaire can potentially lead the study in a direction not originally anticipated. In this instance a structured interview form was used with opportunity, through open questions, to provide verbatim qualitative data. Notes were made at the time and later transcribed by hand to a card filing system for subsequent use in analysis. A decision not to tape-record the interviews was taken as this was not the most opportune method given the structured nature of the questionnaire and subsequent resources available to transcribe information were not readily available. It was found that the information forthcoming was of such a length and nature as to be easily noted at the time.

The benefit of developing the personal interpretative data from residents was seen as providing an opportunity to form a link between perceived and *actual* rates of crime from a perspective otherwise overlooked or ignored. By attempting to 'steer a course' through personal experience clearly hid many problems in both the collection of such data objectively and in subsequent interpretation. In any event, the result would only provide a relatively small personal snapshot over what would be a different period of time for each individual. The likelihood of this providing any more than an interesting set of reminiscent data was an accepted possibility but the opportunity of it being capable of a more tangible

linkage to policing activity, the quality of which could be well in excess of that gathered in simpler, less time-consuming ways, was the encouragement and rationale for its continuance.

The questionnaire was piloted during August 1991 with five victims of crime taking part. This led to a number of important changes being made to the format of the document which related, in particular, to alteration of questions previously requiring pre-coded responses to allow verbatim replies to be recorded and coded later.<sup>16</sup> This change was found to be desirable in that wider development of discussion about police activity, outside the confines of the crime which had occurred during the September/October period, often proved difficult to place in the initial categories with development of the interview occasionally drawing into question the appropriateness of an earlier coded answer. The need for clearly labelled 'show-cards' for certain questions also became apparent, particularly in questions relating to the interviewee being required to grade a response according to personal opinion rather than *fact*. The questionnaire was sectioned into the following main category areas:

- (i) the most recent crime which had occurred.<sup>17</sup> The questions relating to this section concentrated upon the victim's knowledge of the crime being committed, reasons for contacting the police and method of so doing, initial response of the police upon receipt of the information, satisfaction with this response from the police, attendance of the police, attitude of the officer(s) attending and satisfaction with action taken at this stage, further visits from the police and/or other agencies (primarily Victim Support);
- (ii) the individual's personal beliefs of levels of police patrolling, police effectiveness and visibility of police in the area;
- (iii) previous contacts with the police and feelings about these;
- (iv) understanding of the crime level in the area in relation to both other areas of the city and over time as well as fear of becoming a victim of crime again;

<sup>16</sup> See appendix 'G' for details of interview schedule used with victims of crime in Stonehouse.

<sup>17</sup> In 3 cases this was not the offence which had been identified the victim for research, i.e. they had been a victim subsequent to the one which occurred during the eight week study period). It was deemed more appropriate to detail responses to the most recent incident in order to minimise the likelihood of confusion between events and maximise the chances of accurate recall.

(v) the area in which the victim resided in terms of their feelings for its *community* aspects and *spirit* both in the present and over time with reference to what influence, police, public and other agencies could have;

(vi) knowledge of other agencies operating within the city and *Stonehouse* with information on previous involvement (including Victim Support assistance given);

(vii) details of household makeup by individuals there resident.

The period of the year which was chosen to administer this survey was selected partly in line with the availability of the researcher but also being immediately outside the summer holiday period when it was suspected there would be a higher number of non-responses due to residents being away from the area. Similarly avoidance of the summer was more likely to ensure student rented accommodation was occupied and would capture this information as being part of the transient nature of certain areas of *Stonehouse*. It was uncertain how important interviewing students, and others who had been in accommodation for a relatively short period of time, would be. It was deemed inappropriate to simply exclude them from the sample frame simply because of their student status as the period of their residence could well be relatively long-term.

The Devon and Cornwall Constabulary crime recording system in 1991 (named 'CRIMES '91') allowed searches to be conducted across a range of variables including name, address, beat area code, date, type of offence and post code. Because the beat code areas were, effectively by design, co-terminus with the boundaries of the area being called *Stonehouse* for this work, the most appropriate starting point for a crime search was through the beat codes 35D (mainly north of Union Street) and 35B (mainly south of Union Street) by date. However, the location of *Stonehouse*, immediately on the edge of the city centre, drew into the beat areas a small number of central shops and also a large multi-storey car park. It was deemed that neither had a direct enough impact on the

residents of the area by either personal victimisation or geographic influence to justify their inclusion. Offences relating to theft of and from vehicles, as well as shoplifting, were therefore excluded if committed in these areas. However personal 'street' offences (e.g. theft from person and robbery) remained where the victim was identified as residing in *Stonehouse*.

The original sample was drawn on 21 September and covered crimes reported to the police between 1 - 20 September. A second sample was drawn on 28 October for crimes reported between 21 September and 27 October, a total period of eight weeks. By searching CRIMES '91 using the listings page of 'aggrieved persons for Victim Support'<sup>18</sup> sufficient information was included on four lines to allow selection of the sample. Information on each crime was studied and, of the 263 offences originally listed against straight 'location by date' searches, 176 victims who lived outside the *Stonehouse* area were excluded from the sample. Weeding based on the other criteria took place also which resulted in 87 crimes being identified for research.

What was apparent from the analysis of the total crimes committed, when compared with residency of victims, was the proportion of offences which appeared to have had no obvious local impact on individuals as direct victims. Burglary showed the highest percentage of victims living locally and of the 24 cases shown above as having residents in the area, 20 were conventional residencies, 2 were a corner store (burgled twice during the period), 1 was a church and 1 a public house (table 6.2).

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<sup>18</sup> This page, although a facility available on the system which enabled a print-out of offences to be given to Victim Support was never actually used in this way even though a relatively open system of allowing access to 'crime recording books' by VS volunteers operated.



Offence	Total No. of offences	No. of offences with victim a resident of area	No. of offences with victim not a resident
Burglary	44	24	20
Theft of/m M/V	110	31	79
Damage	41	16	25
Assault	22	6	16
Theft (other)	42	10	32
Robbery	2	0	2
Other	2	0	2
TOTAL	263	87	176

Source: Devon & Cornwall Constabulary - CRIMES '91 information system

Table 6.2: Crimes recorded by police as having occurred in area beat codes 35B & 35D between 1/9/91 & 27/10/91

The samples were drawn in two separate groups to enable visits to be made to addresses as soon as practicable. Attempts were made to interview in as chronological sequence as possible but this proved to be difficult to achieve due to the restrictive nature of the interviewer's time and the availability of victims. On average, victims were surveyed five weeks after the crime had occurred with the shortest period of time elapsing being ten days, and the longest just over two months. Nevertheless the difference in delay appeared to have produced few adverse results in ability to recall events during the interviews.

Because major *pruning* of the original sampling frame had taken place as a means of being specific on the criteria of individual to be surveyed, the sample, reduced to 87 offences, proved to be a manageable size and no further sampling was undertaken to reduce this figure. It was deemed more beneficial to commence work on this group rather than take a wider time frame and random sample within the selected criteria. Primarily this was because it was considered that the immediacy of the interviews within a few weeks if possible was important and that should a wider time period be taken, stratified random sampling would have proved difficult with what would still have been relatively small numbers of cases.

Initially letters were written to each victim introducing the researcher and indicating that he would make contact during the following few weeks with a view to 'talking through' some aspects of 'policing in Plymouth' and in particular the crime which they had reported.<sup>19</sup> The letter was found to be a useful tool for reassuring interviewees upon later contact that the interviewer was genuine although in one case he was kept waiting on the doorstep, through a semi-opened door, required to show his identification which was snatched off him and only allowed full access to the flat once the occupier had telephoned the police to confirm that all was in order. Five minutes into the interview a police constable arrived to further reassure the 42 year old single mother that the interviewer was who he claimed to be.

There was a general willingness amongst all but a few victims to welcome the researcher into their home and spend normally at least an hour and on average ninety minutes discussing the case and their views on the area and its police. Overall, of the 87 cases, only one individual specifically refused to co-operate and 20 households were visited or telephoned on at least three occasions without replies forthcoming.<sup>20</sup> 6 cases were deemed unsuitable, 3 because they were identified as being related to assaults of a domestic (intra-familial) nature, 2 due to the offence appearing as one of two attacks on the same premises/person during that period (both occurrences therefore being able to be covered in the one interview) and 1 wrongly identifying the victim as being local to the area. In total, therefore, 60 of the 87 potential victims chosen to form the sample completed the interview, an equivalent response rate of 69% (table 6.3).

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<sup>19</sup> See appendix 'H' for details of letter used as introduction to victims in Stonehouse.

<sup>20</sup> Visits/telephone calls were made during the daytime and on at least 1 evening to ensure the greatest likelihood of success.

	Number of interviews	Average age	Gender
Assault	2	37 (27 - 47)	1 M, 1 F
Burglary (dwelling)	15	38 (19 - 69)	8 M, 7 F
Auto-crime	23	32 (19 - 67)	17 M, 6 F
Damage	12	41 (22 - 64)	8 M, 4 F
Other offences	8	28 (18 - 46)	3 M, 5 F
Total	60	34 (18-69)	37M, 23F

Table 6.3: Overview of resident-victims interviewed (by reference to crime recorded)

In the majority of cases interviews were conducted with only one member of the household. An initial question sought to identify whether or not the person named in the police record as being the victim was the person who had actually suffered the loss, harm or damage. In a small number of cases it was found to be more appropriate to interview another member of the home. In others, where it was clear that there had been effectively similar impact upon more than one resident, second and third members were invited to remain during the questioning and supplement any particular aspect of the responses which they felt relevant. This only occurred in five cases and did not cause any undue conflict in alternative responses which were given by those in attendance. Where opposing views were offered, this fact was noted on the questionnaire and any comments made in relation to the question were noted as verbatim responses for subsequent use as appropriate.

### *Quality of Service Surveys*

The 1990s has seen formalisation of the collection of performance indicators across a wide range of service areas. The police *Quality of Service* initiative had resulted in the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary embarking upon a number of ways in which the indicators of performance, set by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), could be monitored. Two of these indicators related to the satisfaction of victims of crime with the service which they had received from the police. Two specific victim categories were included:

victims of household burglary and victims of violent crime. Between October 1992 and June 1996 a total of nine individual surveys were completed for burglary and violent crime cases, each following similar methodological procedures and utilising identical questions to identify the standard of service which had been provided by the police officer attending the scene, as well as subsequent action which the police service had taken to keep the victims informed.<sup>21</sup> A *Quality Assurance Check* system had assisted by identifying areas of initial police action which might require examining and it was considered appropriate to use the recollections of victims to evaluate whether or not these procedures had been followed.<sup>22</sup> In total, through these surveys, the recollections of over three thousand burglary (dwelling) victims, and more than thirteen hundred violent crime victims were recorded. Table 6.4 shows the regularity with which these surveys took place and the sample size responding in each case.

Surveys conducted	When conducted	Sample responding	Notes
Burglary victims	Feb - May 1993	776	Postal & telephone questionnaire
Burglary victims Violence victims	October 1993	236 132	Postal & telephone questionnaire
Burglary victims Violence victims	January 1994	302 196	Postal & telephone questionnaire
Burglary victims Violence victims	April 1994	218 149	Postal & telephone questionnaire
Burglary victims Violence victims	August 1994	305 182	Postal & telephone questionnaire
Burglary victims Violence victims	Sept - Dec 1994	575 236	Postal & telephone questionnaire
Burglary victims Violence victims	Jan - June 1995	243 154	Postal & telephone questionnaire
Burglary victims Violence victims	July - Dec 1995	217 147	Postal & telephone questionnaire
Burglary victims Violence victims	Jan - June 1996	235 136	Postal questionnaire

Table 6.4: Devon and Cornwall Constabulary *Quality of Service* surveys conducted

<sup>21</sup> See appendix 'I' for details of postal questionnaires which were used. Telephone surveys followed this structure also.

<sup>22</sup> See chapter 8: *Quality of Service in Devon and Cornwall* for further information on the *Quality Assurance Check* system.

It was intended that the surveys would provide a useful management tool within the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary rather than only a general indication of the public's perceptions. The key issue was 'if people aren't satisfied - what can be done differently?' The need to translate the more detailed analysis of the survey findings into direct management action to accomplish change was the aim. This proved to be a difficult task, and one which has met with varying degrees of success. As will be shown in later chapters, public perceptions of the police were generally positive, but in an attempt to ascertain precisely what police officers were doing in their interactions with victims, the survey questions were structured to ask recollections of fact in more detail than recalling feelings of satisfaction or otherwise.

An analysis of how the specific questions asked in the Quality of Service work was broken down to identify the responses given by victims of burglary and violent crimes. The responses were coded to show whether the victims were residents in one of the following three areas: *Stonehouse*, the rest of Plymouth and the rest of the force area. The administration of the surveys to allow data to be analysed at the *Stonehouse* level was completed on those which were conducted during 1994 only. This was primarily because the surveys procedure was, by late 1993, sufficiently established and reliable to enable such changes to be made without undue disruption to the working procedures of the interviewers. They did not continue in this form after 1994 as the author moved to another location in the force and, by 1996, surveys for the *Quality of Service* process were then accomplished through use of postal questionnaire only. In any event, it was felt that the size of sample surveyed during 1994 was sufficient to enable a representative view to be achieved of how these aspects of police investigation and service delivery were being accomplished at the *Stonehouse* level.

### *Survey samples and responses*

In all 166 victims of burglary residing in *Stonehouse* responded. The total sample frame across the force for burglary victims during the 1994 period was 2,608 with an overall response rate of 54% (1,400) being achieved. The sample frame of victims within *Stonehouse* was 362, from which a response rate of 46% (166) was achieved. By comparison, response rates of 54% (256) and 57% (1018) had been achieved for the rest of Plymouth and the force respectively. Of those who responded across the whole force (including Plymouth and *Stonehouse*) 760 (53%) were female and 680 (47%) male in the cases of burglary. The trend was similar in the three geographic areas. The response is not of particular surprise, given that burglary in the home is likely to have an impact on anyone there residing and women may have been as likely to complete a postal questionnaire as their male partners. In terms of telephone questioning, interviewers were instructed to ask for the person named on the crime report but to be prepared to interview another member of the household if that person answered and suggested that they were there at the time when the police called. A higher proportion of the burglary victims responding from outside the Plymouth and *Stonehouse* areas were 45 years of age or older: 57% as against 33% (*Stonehouse*) and 34% (rest of Plymouth).

Victims of violent crime were surveyed on the basis of where the offence had occurred, as opposed to where they resided. This meant that, of the responses, only 22% of those victims whose offences occurred in *Stonehouse* lived in this area. However, (including the *Stonehouse* responses) 87% resided at a Plymouth address which was policed by officers within the city. Out of a sample frame of 1,289, 763 replies (59%) were received. 549 of these were through successful telephone contacts with 11 further victims contacted by this

means declining to take part in the survey. In all 732 postal questionnaires were sent and 214 (29%) returned completed.

The surveys were identical in format to those administered amongst burglary victims and the method of selecting the sample was identical, using a time-frame to identify the cases to be surveyed. The main difference was that more of the original selection was excluded after checking to ensure that victims who were under 16 years of age, those where the offender was shown as a family member (or lived at the same address) and victims of sexual assault did not receive a telephone call or postal questionnaire. 242 (32%) female victims responded and 521 (68%) male. The type of violence cases surveyed (i.e. excluding sexual, domestic assaults etc.) showed a slight over-representation of female respondents compared to the likelihood of them reporting such offences across the whole force. Two-thirds of violence victims were under 35 years of age (65%), whilst 38% were under 25. Only 53 (7%) were 55 years of age or more.

The proportion of the sixty victims surveyed by personal interview in 1991, who had resided in the area prior to 1980, was relatively small (7) and included 3 who had resided in more than one home in the area during that period. The desire to supplement this number resulted in an additional question on length of residence being added to the telephone interviews of burglary and violence victims from the area as part of the *quality of service* process during 1994 (table 6.5). This sample frame had been boosted specifically to enable a larger number of victims from the *Stonehouse* area to be surveyed.

	1-6 months	6-12 months	1-5 years	5-10 years	10+ years	Total
Burglary victims	3	27	42	34	11	117
Violence victims	0	8	11	9	0	28
Total	3	35	53	43	11	145

Table 6.5: Length of residence of victims in Stonehouse as reported in Quality of Service surveys 1994

Eleven burglary victims were identified as residing in the area for 10 years or more and were subsequently contacted again by phone, this time by the author rather than a *Quality of Service* interviewer. Each was asked if they could indicate precisely how long they had lived in *Stonehouse* and whether they would have any objection to being interviewed about their recollections of policing in the past. One individual refused and the remaining ten agreed to be seen personally for the purpose of interview. Of these ten, four had been in the area prior to 1975, three since between 1975 and 1980 and the remaining three had taken up occupancy between 1980 and 1984. The six residents who had resided in the area before the 1980s were visited and a semi-structured interview conducted relating to their opinions and recollections of policing now and in the past. Together, with the interviews which had been completed in 1991, this meant that a total of 254 victim-residents had been surveyed using either personal interview, *quality of service* questions or a combination of the two (Table 6.6). This included questioning around their recollections of *The Octagon* police station, any personal dealings with the police they could recall from that time, and their feelings about the effectiveness of policing in the area. The probing was designed to illuminate and draw linkages with the recollections of other respondents (notably police officers) who had been involved during this period.



Personal interview (1991)	QoS survey plus personal interview	QoS Survey only	Total
60	6	188	254

Table 6.6: *Stonehouse resident victims by means of interview (1991-1994)*

### *Methodology: an overview*

Although the writing up of what has actually been undertaken by way of research appears fairly logical in its enterprise, there is no doubt that the changes in direction throughout the work have made the final product far more complex and wide-ranging than that which was originally intended. Within each of the key areas of review: *community policing*, *crime prevention*, *victims of crime* and *quality of service* there is massive potential for wide and detailed elaboration at both national and local level. In reality the methodology developed alongside the author's regularly changing environment although, upon reflection, early principles and objectives still provided a useful foundation on which to build. If the opportunity to revisit the way in which the work has developed were possible then a somewhat more planned approach would have been preferred. However rewriting the past is not possible and the need to draw together that which has been gained to provide a useful perspective on local issues in a national perspective is, hopefully, one which is now possible.

## National Perspectives to Local Implementation

Chapters 2 to 5 considered the development of policing at national level since 1950 with specific attention being paid to the four key themes of *community policing*, *crime prevention*, *victims of crime* and *quality of service*. This chapter will set the scene for those which follow concerning the way in which policing has developed in Devon and Cornwall. To do this it will consider demographic and crime data at national and local level, review the development of Devon and Cornwall Constabulary where the more detailed research has been conducted, identify the changing internal structures of policing, and debate the rationale for these changes in the national and local context. The national perspective on policing development, which has been discussed in the previous chapters, will be brought into local context by identifying the area of *Stonehouse* which formed the basis for much of the research, and the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary will be reviewed taking account of general developments in its structure since amalgamation in 1967. The city of Plymouth, and the ward of St Peter (in which the area of *Stonehouse* is located), is described in more detail taking account of the demographic and crime factors which relate to the area together with the extent of crime in Devon and Cornwall.

### *The national policing perspective*

In the early 1960s, at the time of the Royal Commission, there were one hundred and nineteen separate police forces in England and Wales.<sup>1</sup> Following the Police Act 1964 this

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<sup>1</sup> Excluding national forces such as the British Transport Police, Atomic Energy Authority Police, Royal Parks and MOD Police.

number reduced dramatically and, by the early 1970s, just forty three forces remained. In the south-west of England, four forces within Devon and Cornwall became amalgamated (see next section of this chapter). On a national level the nature of crime and policing have changed significantly since then as previous chapters have identified. Here it is perhaps worth noting two particular changes – the number of police officers employed, and the extent of crime. In 1950 the total police strength was 63,091 serving a population of 43.6 million. By 1998 the number of police officers had almost doubled to over 124,000 serving a population of some 52 million. The average number of officers per 1,000 residents in 1950 was, therefore, 1.5 whilst in 1998 this figure was 2.4 (table 7.1).<sup>2</sup>

	Population	Police officers	Civilian staff	Special Constables	Police officers per 1,000 pop.
1950	43,595,000	63,091	4,203	63,648	1.5
1967	48,075,300	86,935	17,713	41,873	1.8
1979	49,461,700	109,669	39,494	15,960	2.2
1989	50,485,500	124,166	46,102	15,589	2.4
1998*	51,823,073	124,933	57,196	19,874	2.4

Source: CIPFA statistical tables (1950-1998) and HMCIC Annual Reports (1979-1998)

\* figures have not reflected secondments from forces.

Table 7.1: Police staff and population figures (England and Wales) 1950-1998\*

The highest concentration of police per head of population has remained within the larger city forces during this period, whilst less densely populated provincial areas have had proportionately less police resources to deploy. For example, taking account of the 1998 data, the Metropolitan Police had 3.6 officers per 1,000 population and Merseyside, 3.2. However Devon and Cornwall shared one of the lowest average number of officers per 1,000 population with nine other forces (1.9), whilst only two forces, Cambridgeshire and North Yorkshire, had a lower ratio (1.8).<sup>3</sup> Also worthy of note is the extent to which civilian support staff numbers have risen during this period. Originally employed in

<sup>2</sup> Interestingly, despite Government and opposition party public pledges to increase police numbers by several thousand during the 1990s, the nine years between 1989 and 1998 saw relatively little change to the police strength.

<sup>3</sup> HMCIC data, 1993.

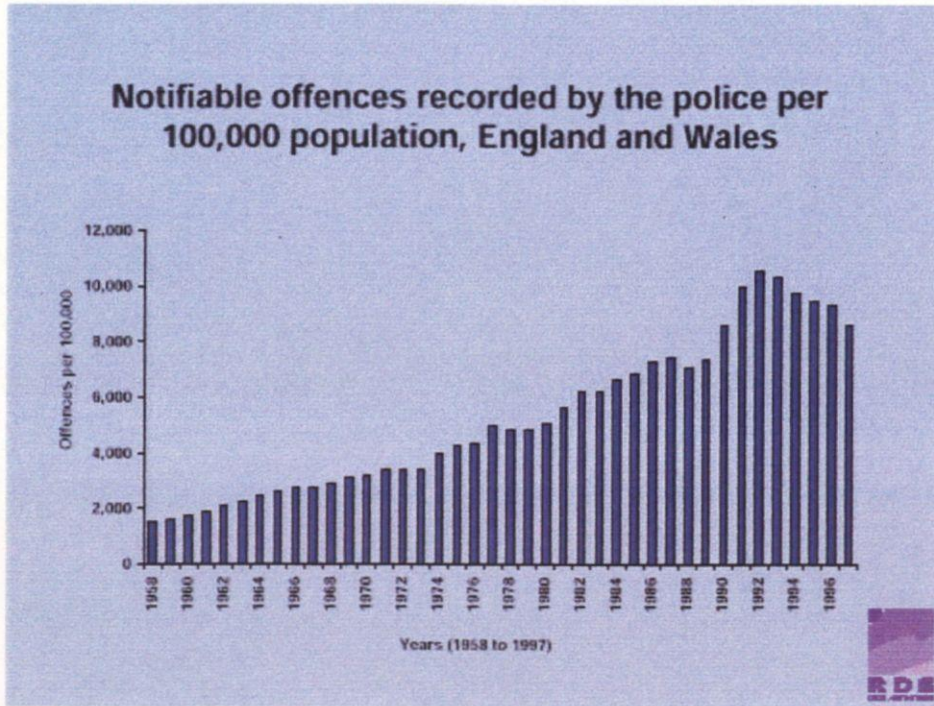
primarily routine administrative capacities, support staff have increasingly been used to perform functions which were seen as exclusively roles for police officers. These have included the introduction of traffic wardens, professional finance, administration and personnel managers, gaolers, scenes of crime officers and enquiry office clerks. Overall, the number of civilian employees per 100 police officers has risen from 6.7 in 1950, to 45.8 in 1998, a significant upward trend which has been observed in all forces across England and Wales. Interestingly, special constables outnumbered regular police officers according to the official figures of 1950 but their numbers had reduced to a third of this by 1998.<sup>4</sup> The initial high figure may have reflected the number of volunteers who became involved in the special constabulary during the period following the War, whilst the subsequent decline in numbers appeared to have reached its lowest level during the 1980s, after which time more concerted drives towards recruiting volunteers resulted in the increase observable during the 1990s (table 7.1).

During the last forty years overall recorded crime in England and Wales rose at an average rate of over 5% a year, from 669,000 in 1958 to 4,467,000 in 1997. This eight-fold increase represented 1,500 crimes per 100,000 population in the 1950s having risen to 8,600 per 100,000 population by 1997, although the peak of total crime occurred in 1992 when 5,383,000 offences were recorded (10,500 per 100,000 population) (figure 7.1). The vast majority of recorded crime is identified by police as property-related (in 1997 over 90 per cent were property related) but the proportion of violent crime as a percentage of total

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<sup>4</sup> In 1950, within three of the four forces serving Devon and Cornwall, special constables outnumbered regular officers by an even higher proportion. In Devon this was 2,606:546, and Cornwall, 635:392. In Exeter City the difference was less dramatic at 167:107, and in Plymouth City special constables were outnumbered by regular officers - 144:310 (CIPFA statistical tables).

crime has increased from around five per cent in 1958 to eight percent in 1997 (Home Office Research and Development Statistics Directorate, 1998).

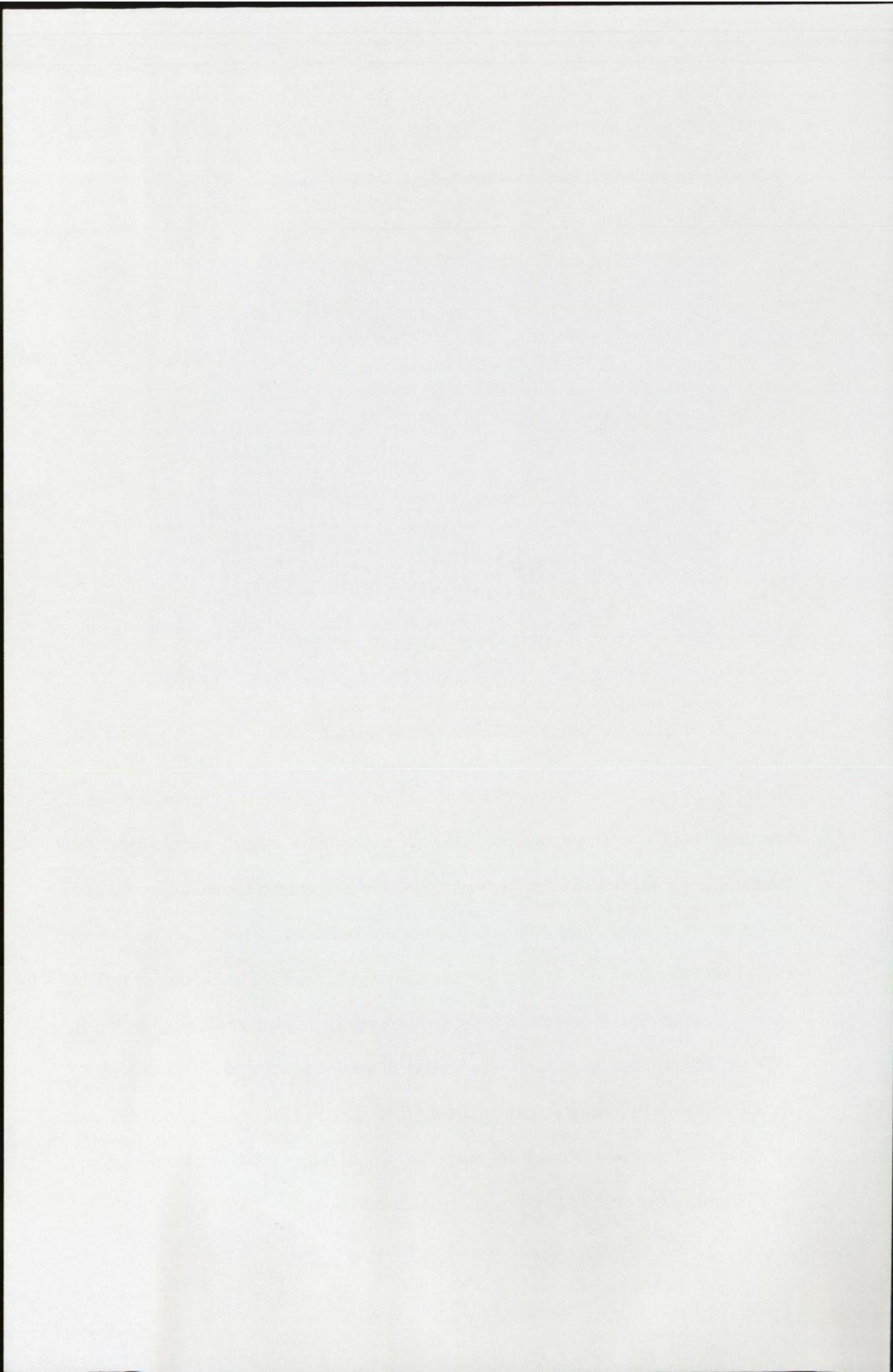


Source: Home Office Research and Development Statistics Directorate.

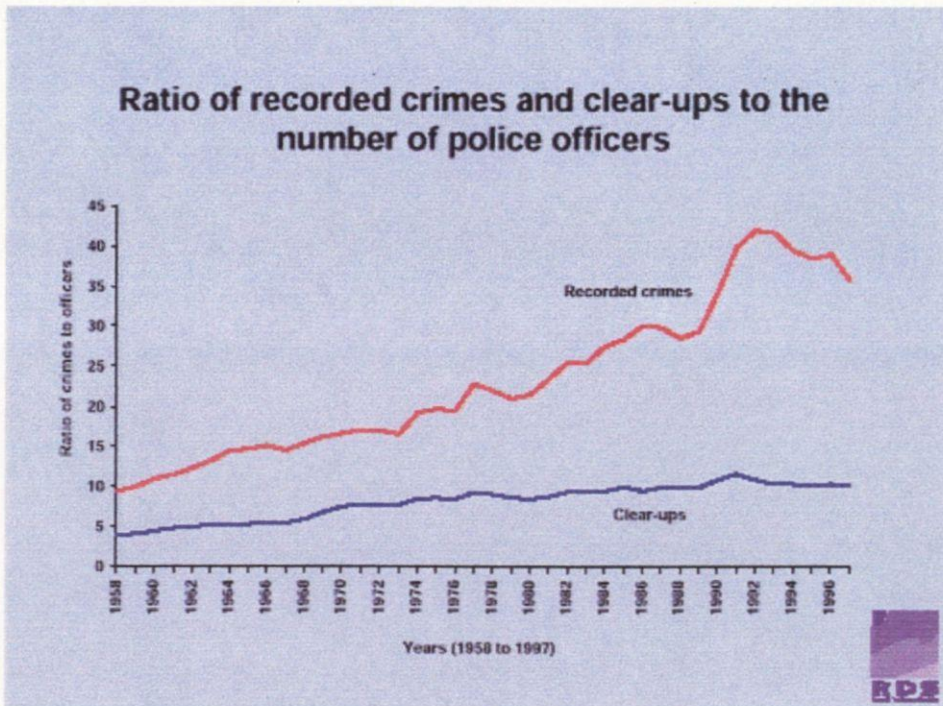
Figure 7.1: Notifiable offences per 100,000 population (1958 – 1997)

However, the extent to which recorded crime reflects the true level of criminal behaviour has long been considered inappropriate as an accurate measurement. Since the establishment of the British Crime Survey in the 1980s as a regular monitoring mechanism on the extent of crime, wide differences between recorded levels and higher unrecorded crime have been noted. The level of success which the police have had in detecting these offences has increased in proportion to the resources which they had available to deploy. In 1958 the ratio of recorded crimes to the number of serving police officers was 9:1 with a detection rate which equated to 4 offences per officer. By 1992 the ratio of recorded crimes per officer had increased substantially and peaked at 42:1 with a detection rate of 12:1, and by 1997 crimes per officer had fallen to 36:1 with detections per officer at 10:1. Recorded





crime levels had, therefore, been increasing at a faster rate than the number of police clear-ups despite a substantial increase in police staffing. However, the increase in staff had developed at a slower rate than that of recorded crime but individual officer productivity appeared to have more than doubled in terms of crimes detected (figure 7.2).<sup>5</sup>



Source: Home Office Research and Development Statistics Dept.

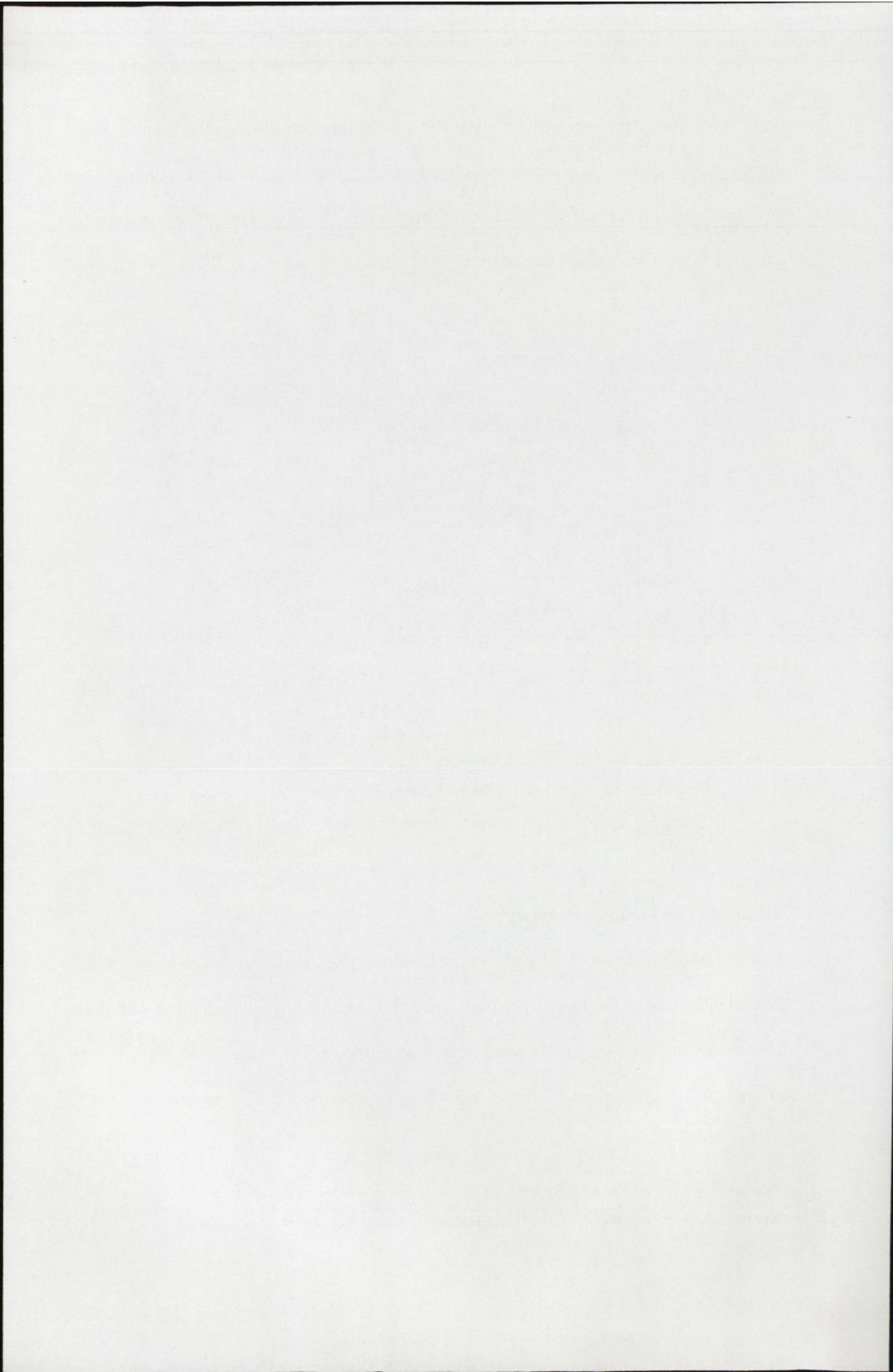
Figure 7.2: Ratio of recorded crimes and clear-ups to the number of police officers (1958 – 1997)

### *Devon and Cornwall Constabulary*

Forming the most south-westerly portion of the United Kingdom, the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary covers the largest geographical police area in England extending 180 miles from the Dorset and Somerset borders in the east to the Isles of Scilly in the West, in total an area of 2.5 million acres. To consider its size in perspective, it is large enough to

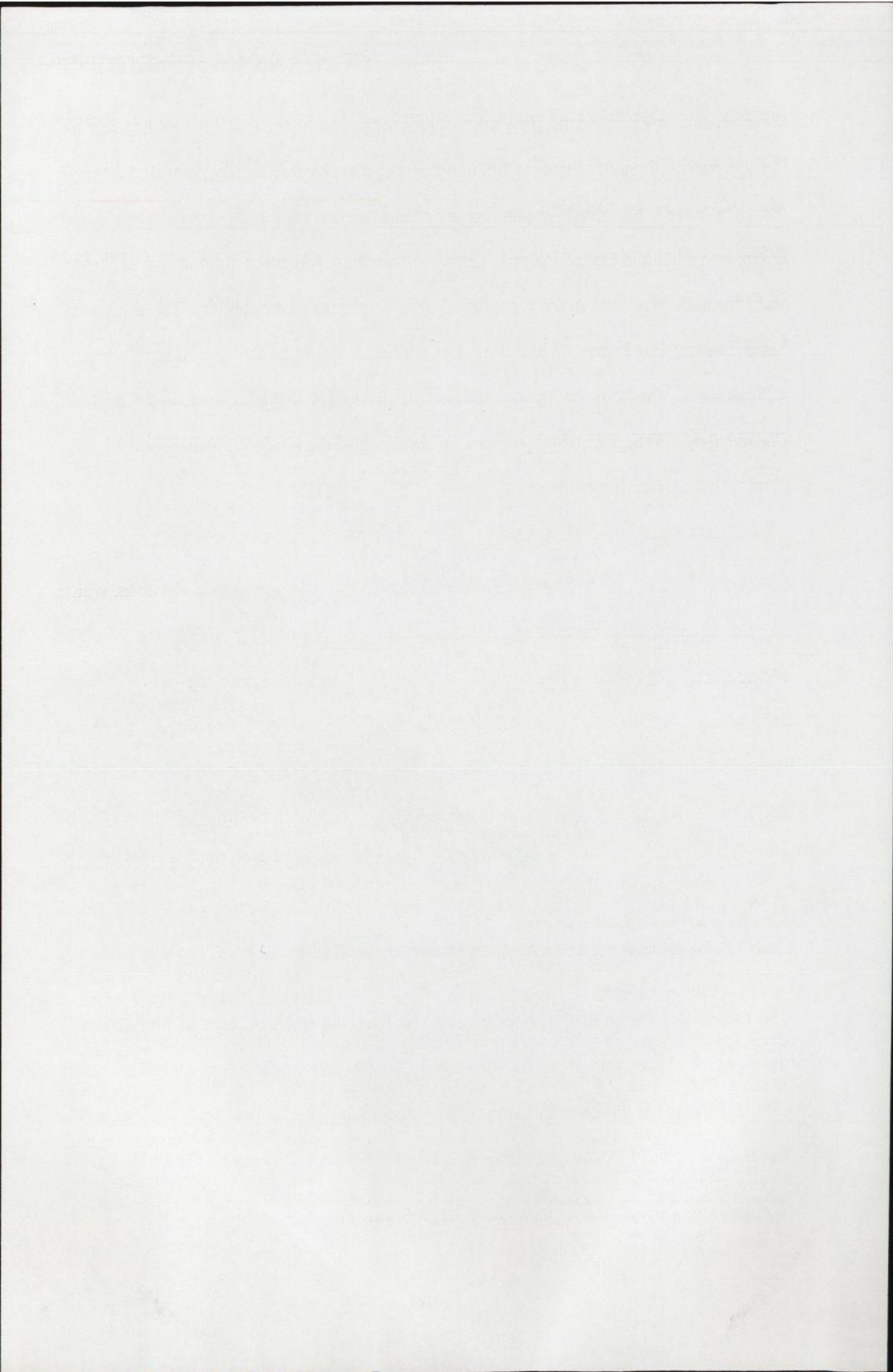
<sup>5</sup> Detections included all crimes solved irrespective of the manner of detection. Therefore, taking account of those which were concluded by secondary means such as 'taking into consideration' (TIC), or the more widespread use of post-conviction interviews in the 1990s, individual officer productivity could not be regarded as being fully reflective of primary detection work.











the time of amalgamation the total police strength of the combined forces was just short of two thousand officers serving a resident population of almost one and a quarter million. These figures reflected an average ratio of police officers per thousand population as 1.6 across the two counties. However, this ratio was not evenly spread across the four constituent forces, with Plymouth having 2.1 officers per 1,000 population, whilst the Devon and Exeter, and Cornwall constabularies had 1.6 and 1.3 respectively (table 7.2).

	Cornwall	Devon & Exeter	Plymouth	Combined
Population	353,360	651,140	213,980	1,218,480
Police officers	469	1,065	438	1,972
Officers per 1,000 pop.	1.3	1.6	2.1	1.6

Table 7.2: Police staff and population figures (Cornwall, Devon & Exeter, and Cornwall) 1966

Following the establishment of the new force it was divided into thirteen divisions, within three districts, each district being under the command of an assistant chief constable. The districts and divisions are shown at table 7.3 with their respective personnel establishments at the time of amalgamation. Interestingly, in an apparent attempt to reduce the level of parochialism which might occur if No.1 district covered only the county of Cornwall, Okehampton, and part of the former Barnstaple division (both previously within the Devon and Exeter Constabulary) were included as part of the district area within 'D' division. In 1969 the number of divisions was reduced to eleven with 'B' (Truro) and 'N' (Tiverton) divisions being incorporated into neighbouring areas. On 1 January 1971 this number was reduced further with the removal of 'M' division (Newton Abbot) from the force structure and subsequently a forcewide traffic division was established also. A Chief Constable's General Orders (part 1)<sup>7</sup> dated 3 September 1969 indicated that a number of country police

<sup>7</sup> General Orders (part 1) are now referred to as force 'weekly orders' and provide updates on staff promotions, transfers, legislative updates, and other issues of relevance to the routine administration of the force.

stations would be closed during the forthcoming years, although increased availability of alternative police accommodation for officers would dictate the rate at which these closures would take place. This involved, in total, 137 stations being listed for closure in an appendix to the order, a factor which has a bearing upon the discussion on community policing which takes place later in this work.

	Chief Const	Ass't Chief Const	Chief Supt	Supt	Chief Insps	Insp	Sergts	Const	Total
Force Headquarters	1	3	3	6	5	17	18	82	135
No 1 District HQ		1	1	1	2		5	1	11
'A' Div (Camborne)			1	1	3	4	21	116	146
'B' Div (Truro)			1	1	4	3	22	115	146
'C' Div (Liskeard)			1	1	3	4	22	114	145
'D' Div (Launceston)				1	1	5	15	75	97
No 2 District HQ		1	1	1	3	3	10	20	39
'E' Div (Plym Central)			1	1	2	14	36	176	230
'F' Div (Crownhill)				2	3	9	22	161	197
'G' Div (Plympton)			1	1	2	5	21	132	162
No 3 District HQ		1	1	1	2				5
'H' Div (Barnstaple)			1	1	2	4	20	106	134
'J' Div (Exeter)			1	1	3	10	29	139	183
'K' Div (Torbay)			1	1	4	7	27	141	181
'L' Div (Exmouth)				1	1	4	17	100	123
'M' Div (Newton Abbot)				1	1	4	16	95	117
'N' Div (Tiverton)				1	1	3	13	74	92
Totals	1	6	14	23	42	96	314	1547	2,143

Devon & Cornwall Constabulary Annual Report 1967

Table 7.3: Composition of Police Officers: Devon and Cornwall Constabulary 1967

During the next ten years further changes to district and divisional boundaries took place. In the 1970s Cornish divisions lost the geographic management structure which had linked them to part of Devon in No.1 District when the three ACC commanded districts disappeared and eight divisions, each under the command of a chief superintendent were created (table 7.4). Further reviews of the policing structure and staffing deployments took place during the 1980s and a change during the early years of the decade saw the number of divisions reduce still further to six, a position which was to remain until 1994 (table 7.5) although changes to the sub-divisional boundaries within the divisions saw the original total of twenty five reduce to twenty in the early 1990s. The main rationale underpinning these various organisational changes was operational effectiveness and staffing

deployment. Whereas the number of constables had risen, so too had the higher management ranks in the organisation, a position which was to change significantly during the 1990s as pressure brought about by Government and, in particular, the report of Patrick Sheehy (Home Office, 1993a), concentrated upon the management 'on-costs' of the police service.

	Chief Const	Ass't Chief Const*	Chief Supt	Supt	Chief Insp	Insp	Sergts	Const	Total
Force Headquarters	1	4	7	15	15	39	57	97	225
'A' Div (Camborne)			1	2	7	13	67	265	355
'B' Div (Launceston)			1	2	6	10	48	192	259
'E' Div (Plymouth)			1	6	5	22	65	378	477
'G' Div (Plympton)			1	1	4	5	31	121	163
'H' Div (Barnstaple)			1	1	5	7	29	156	199
'J' Div (Exeter)			1	2	3	11	44	199	260
'K' Div (Torbay)			1	3	5	17	53	283	362
'L' Div (Exmouth)			1	1	4	4	32	120	162
Traffic Division				3	4	5	26	205	243
Totals	1	4	15	36	68	133	452	2,006	2,705

Devon & Cornwall Constabulary Annual Report 1979. \* including Deputy Chief Constable.

Table 7.4: Composition of Police Officers: Devon and Cornwall Constabulary 1979

	Chief Const	Ass't Chief Const*	Chief Supt	Supt	Chief Insp	Insp	Sergts	Const	Total
Force Headquarters	1	4	7	15	17	32	50	97	223
'A' Div (Camborne)			1	3	6	17	63	314	404
'B' Div (Launceston)			1	2	5	9	52	214	283
'C' Div (Barnstaple)			1	2	4	8	38	179	232
'D' Div (Exeter)			1	4	4	20	76	340	445
'E' Div (Plymouth)			1	5	8	25	85	471	595
'F' Div (Torbay)			1	4	4	18	71	363	461
Traffic Division			1	2	3	5	23	208	242
Totals	1	4	14	37	51	134	458	2,186	2,885

Devon & Cornwall Constabulary Annual Report 1989. \* including Deputy Chief Constable.

Table 7.5: Composition of Police Officers: Devon and Cornwall Constabulary 1989

During 1993 a review was conducted of the force organisational structure which, in April 1994, led to the realigning of divisional boundaries and the establishment of three headquarters 'support' divisions. The decision to review the management and structure of the force was influenced by the Audit Commission and Her Majesty's Inspectorate, both of which identified potential benefits to be derived through moving towards a single-tier command structure outside headquarters. In addition to pressure being applied to reduce

management on-costs, the reorganisation also took account of the government review of local authority administration and boundaries which was, at that time, being conducted by Sir John Banham. The decision to review boundaries in this way was influenced by the Morgan Report (Home Office, 1991a) which had identified the role which local authorities could have in the reduction of crime.

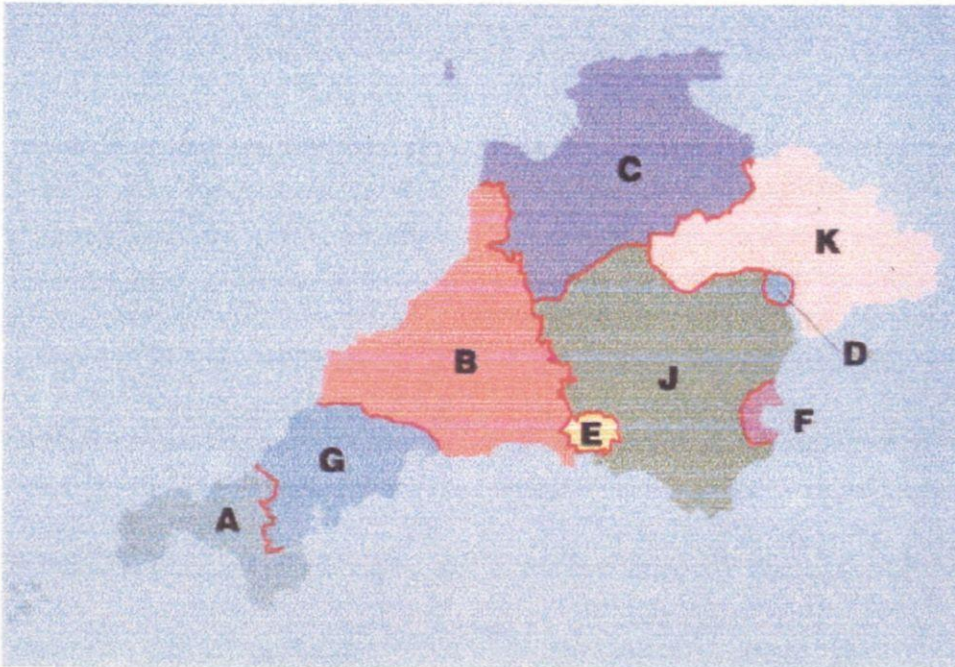
It was clear that certain local government areas were likely to receive 'unitary authority' status with their own budgets distinct from those of the county areas within which they resided. The police reorganisation team identified three locations within Devon and Cornwall which were likely to become unitary in the future: Exeter, Torbay and Plymouth. The police divisional boundaries were, therefore, redrawn to reflect the geographic areas which would form those of the new authorities, whilst the remainder of the force area became divided into six divisions broadly encompassing district council boundaries (figure 7.4). In the event, the reorganisation team correctly assumed the majority of recommendations which Banham was to make, with the exception of those relating to the city of Exeter which failed to gain unitary status and remained part of the two-tier local government structure. The effect of these changes meant that the two unitary authority areas of Plymouth and Torbay, as well as the non-unitary Exeter City Council, each had a police commander responsible for policing only these specific areas ('E', 'F' and 'D' divisions respectively), whilst commanders in the remaining divisions served either two or three district authorities. Cornwall, with its six district authorities and the Isles of Scilly,<sup>8</sup> became three police divisions ('A', 'B' and 'G') which each covered two authority areas,

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<sup>8</sup> The Isles of Scilly enjoys a unitary status in terms of its local government budgetary and decision making processes.



and the remainder of Devon, with eight district authorities, realigned into three police divisions also ('C', 'J' and 'K').

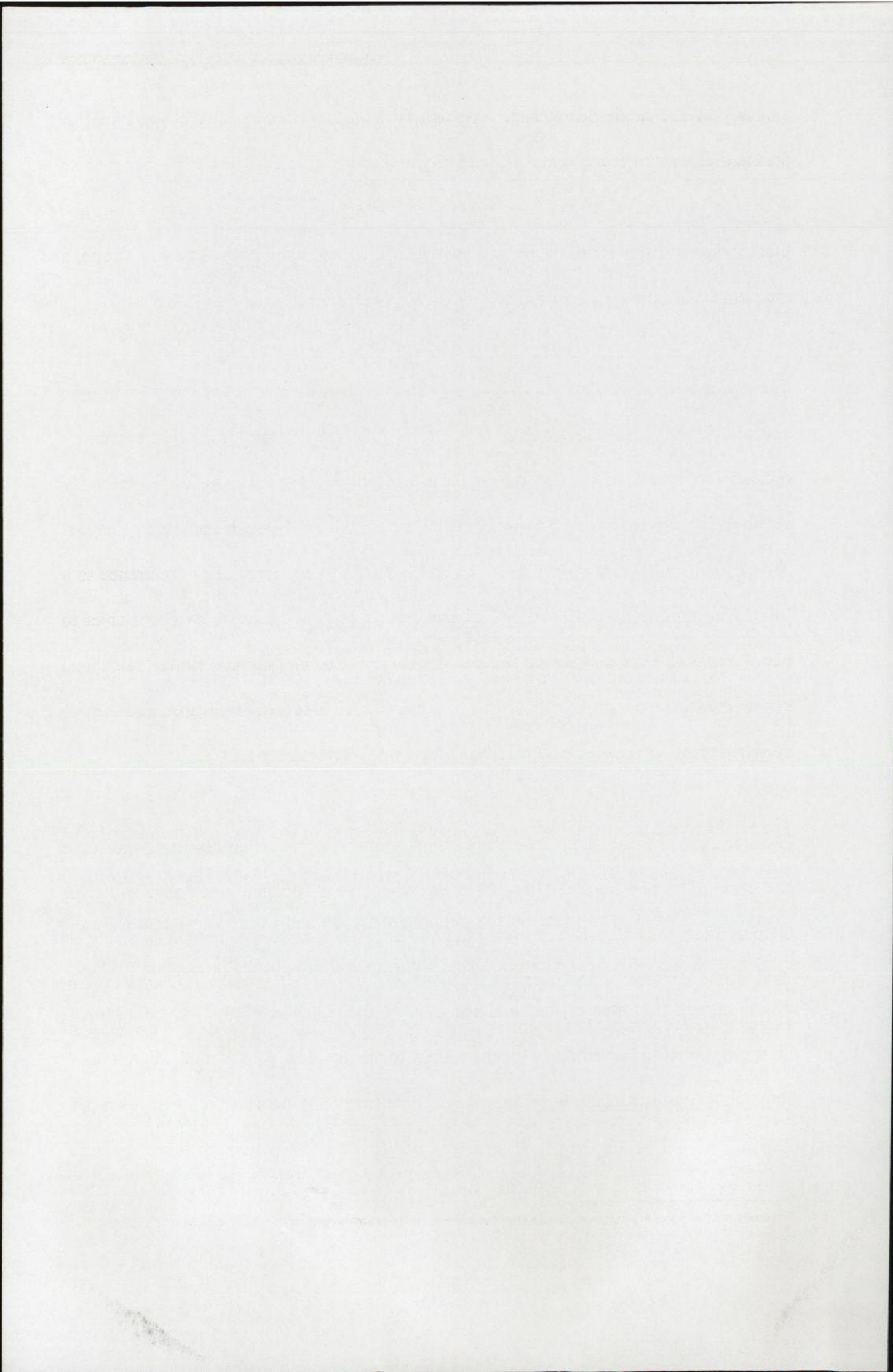


- |   |  |
|---|--|
| A Division (Penwith and Kerrier District Councils)        | F Division (Torbay District Council)                             |
| B Division (Caradon and North Cornwall District Councils) | G Division (Carrick and Restormel District Councils)             |
| C Division (Torrige and North Devon District Councils)    | J Division (W.Devon, South Hams & Teignbridge District Councils) |
| D Division (Exeter City Council)                          | K Division (East Devon & Mid Devon District Councils)            |
| E Division (Plymouth City Council)                        |  |
- Source: Devon and Cornwall Constabulary ('X Department')

Figure 7.4: Devon and Cornwall Constabulary territorial divisions (April 1994)

The timing of the reorganisation was also relevant in terms of the structural changes which were taking place in policing nationally, particularly through the *Police and Magistrates' Courts Act 1994*. Annual Plans for the policing of Devon and Cornwall were already in existence, as were five year Strategic Plans, but responsibility for the production of these was to change from that of the chief constable to the police authority.<sup>9</sup> In turn, police divisions produced annual plans for their areas following local consultation. Within both force and divisional plans were targets which reflected the national key objectives set

<sup>9</sup> In reality, the plan was formulated by the constabulary and submitted to the police authority for approval and adoption as its policing plan.





annually by the Home Secretary.<sup>10</sup> Together with an increased level of devolvement of certain budgets and decision making authority to divisions, the nine territorial commanders became more accountable than previously for the results which were achieved against these indicators; a position which was emphasised through the Policy Advisory Group, a monthly management group chaired by the chief constable.

The *Police and Magistrates' Courts Act* had also widened the scope for generating income and, although still subject to force approval, local commanders were encouraged to identify options for increasing income within their areas through sponsorship or payment for services. Examples of where this was done included the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital Trust's decision to employ two full-time constables at its Exeter sites in preference to a local security firm; a Cornish council's agreement to pay for the services of constables to patrol a coastal village during the summer months; sponsorship of 'Ringmaster' telephone systems to enable the regular updating of Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators, and various sponsorship of vehicles and equipment under crime prevention banners.<sup>11</sup>

However, the nature of local responsibility and accountability within divisions increased the opportunity and rationale for continued development of crime prevention initiatives such as those already embarked upon in Plymouth.<sup>12</sup> Approaches to community safety, as having a wider level of significance to agencies other than the police, became evident through the development of 'community safety strategy groups' (CSSG) in other areas of

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<sup>10</sup> National Key Objectives (NKO) were set by the Home Office and reflected the Government's emphasis on directing the priorities which the police should work to, together with an agenda against which the Audit Commission and HMIC could measure performance. With the change in Government in 1997 NKOs became 'Ministerial Priorities'.

<sup>11</sup> The extent to which Devon and Cornwall promoted the opportunity for income generation was one which developed at a cautious rate taking account of the wider political situation whereby the extent to which income received had the potential to be 'clawed-back' by the Treasury. It was also clear, from research conducted, that the willingness of other forces to become involved varied according to pragmatic and philosophical positions adopted by chief constables and police authorities (see Bunt et al., 1997).

<sup>12</sup> See chapter 10: *Crime Prevention in Devon and Cornwall*.

the force, whilst in Plymouth, the emergence of a *ward policing* system in which teams worked to problem solving agendas alongside other agencies received recognition nationally (Audit Commission, 1996b).<sup>13</sup> Whereas no statutory responsibility for the prevention of crime lay with any agencies (a position which was to change following the *Crime and Disorder Act 1998*), the extent to which the thrust of multi-agency work was being followed, and initiated, by police commanders who sought to achieve targets of reducing and detecting crime, dictated much of the pace in the initiatives. In Plymouth, the work which had developed during the previous few years was given additional impetus through the reorganisation and the potential for wider levels of funding such as that available through *Safer Cities* added to the practical opportunities still further.

In 1997 an internal force review of the changes which had taken place during the reorganisation of 1994 was instigated. A small team of officers and support staff (including the author), under the command of a superintendent, conducted the review between January and March. As well as considering the effects which reorganisation had made to the financial and management structure of the force, the views of officers were seen as an important factor in determining the overall benefits which may have been derived. In addition to canvassing views from individuals of all ranks and positions, as well as the staff associations, particular effort was made to ensure that senior officers' views were taken into account. This qualitative evaluation explored how reorganisation had worked in practice, how it had been received by members of the constabulary and whether roles and structures were understood. It also sought to determine whether the effectiveness of the Force could be improved and if there had been any perceived adverse consequences which

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<sup>13</sup> See chapter 9: *Community policing in Devon and Cornwall*.

were not foreseen in the planning and implementation of the reorganisation. As part of the process attempts were made to personally interview all divisional commanders and heads of headquarters departments, as well as members of divisional management teams (DMTs).<sup>14</sup> The interviews revealed that the majority of respondents felt the establishment of the three support divisions ('L', 'M' and 'O') had been a positive development. However, concern was expressed that, in some instances, these divisions were seen to be leading rather than supporting divisional work. This was more prevalent in comments which related to 'L' (crime) and 'O' (operations) divisions where territorial commanders expressed the view that the lead taken, on occasions, drew into question whose decisions on deployment of resources had primacy.

The steps which had been taken to develop the support divisions was seen as having increased the professionalism of the force in being able to respond to major incidents, and those requiring specialist experience. However, the movement of resources to centrally managed divisions was also potentially problematic in as much as these staff were not perceived as being directly available for deployment by territorial divisions to address local policing needs. There was undoubtedly a pool of expertise available to supplement specific initiatives, particularly in the guise of officers from the 'tactical aid group' (TAG), who were trained to a high level of competence in public order policing; and within the crime division (L) who undertook intelligence support and major incident management. However, these resources needed to be bid for by local divisions, and the opportunity for this to cause territorial commanders to perceive that they were not always receiving an equitable share of

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<sup>14</sup> In all 41 constables, 19 sergeants, 14 inspectors and 12 civilian support staff submitted views to the reorganisation review team. Personal interviews were conducted by the author with a total of 62 staff including 4 chief officers (one of whom was the civilian director of finance and administration), 11 of the 12 divisional commanders, 9 department heads, 29 members of DMTs and 9 other senior individuals from within divisions or departments.

the resources was potentially problematic. The structure and establishment of the force thirty years after amalgamation is shown at table 7.6. Following on from the review, and with the impetus given by the *Crime and Disorder Act 1998*, the force restructured again in 1999 along lines which emphasised the local district council boundaries even more than the 1994 changes had done. The new structure saw the establishment of district commanders (in either chief inspector or superintendent rank) each responsible for one of the sixteen local government authority areas of the force. These districts formed part of four new 'areas' each commanded by a chief superintendent.

	Chief Const	Ass't Chief Const*	Chief Supt	Supt	Chief Insp	Insp	Sergts	Const	Total
Force HQ	1	3	4	4	12	16	31	16	81
'A' Div (Camborne)				1	2	8	26	164	201
'G' Div (Truro)			1	1	2	7	26	191	228
'B' Div (Launceston)				1	3	8	28	154	194
'C' Div (Barnstaple)			1		3	9	22	146	181
'D' Div (Exeter)			1		2	9	16	157	185
'E' Div (Plymouth)			1	1	4	18	40	385	449
'F' Div (Torbay)			1		3	9	21	170	204
'J' Div (Totnes)			1	1	2	11	37	221	273
'K' Div (Exeter)				1	3	6	27	152	189
'L' Div (Crime)			1	3	6	7	31	175	223
'M' Div (Crim Justice)				1	2	13	61	64	141
'O' Div (Operations)			1	3	4	17	54	328	407
Totals	1	4	12	17	48	138	420	2,322	2,963

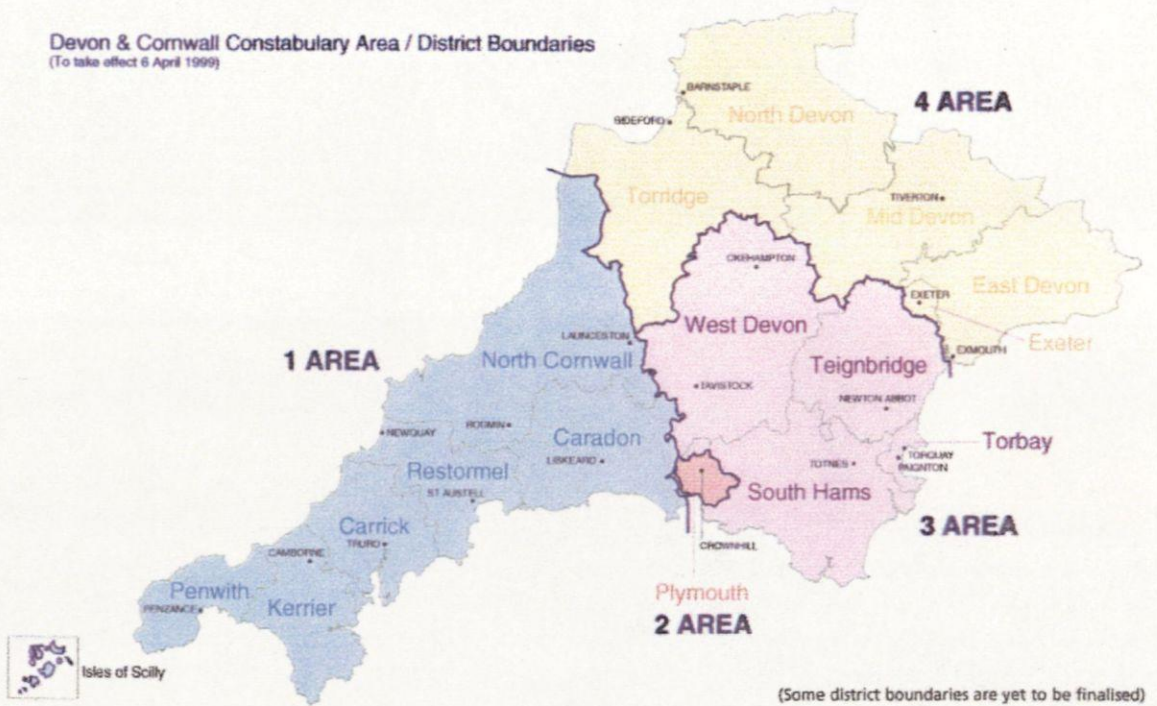
Devon & Cornwall Constabulary Annual Report 1997/98.

\* including Deputy Chief Constable.

Table 7.6: Composition of Police Officers: Devon and Cornwall Constabulary 1998

This change saw '1 Area' covering Cornwall; '2 Area', Plymouth; '3 Area', South and West Devon; and '4 Area', East and North Devon. Whereas Areas 1, 3 and 4 each covered a number of district authority locations, 2 Area had responsibility for the Plymouth City Council area alone (partly because of its unitary authority status, and also because of its size and challenges in policing terms). Its organisational management structure was reflected in there being no officer delegated to a district command role as in other areas of the force. In Plymouth the Area Commander assumed overall responsibility for local policing issues, assisted by officers of superintendent and chief inspector rank with specific

responsibilities for crime reduction, community safety and operational matters. The rationale for the force restructuring was based around local ownership of problem solving between the police and local authorities, a central tenet on which the *Crime and Disorder Act* had been built. A map showing the geographic structure of the force post-6/4/99 is shown at figure 7.5.

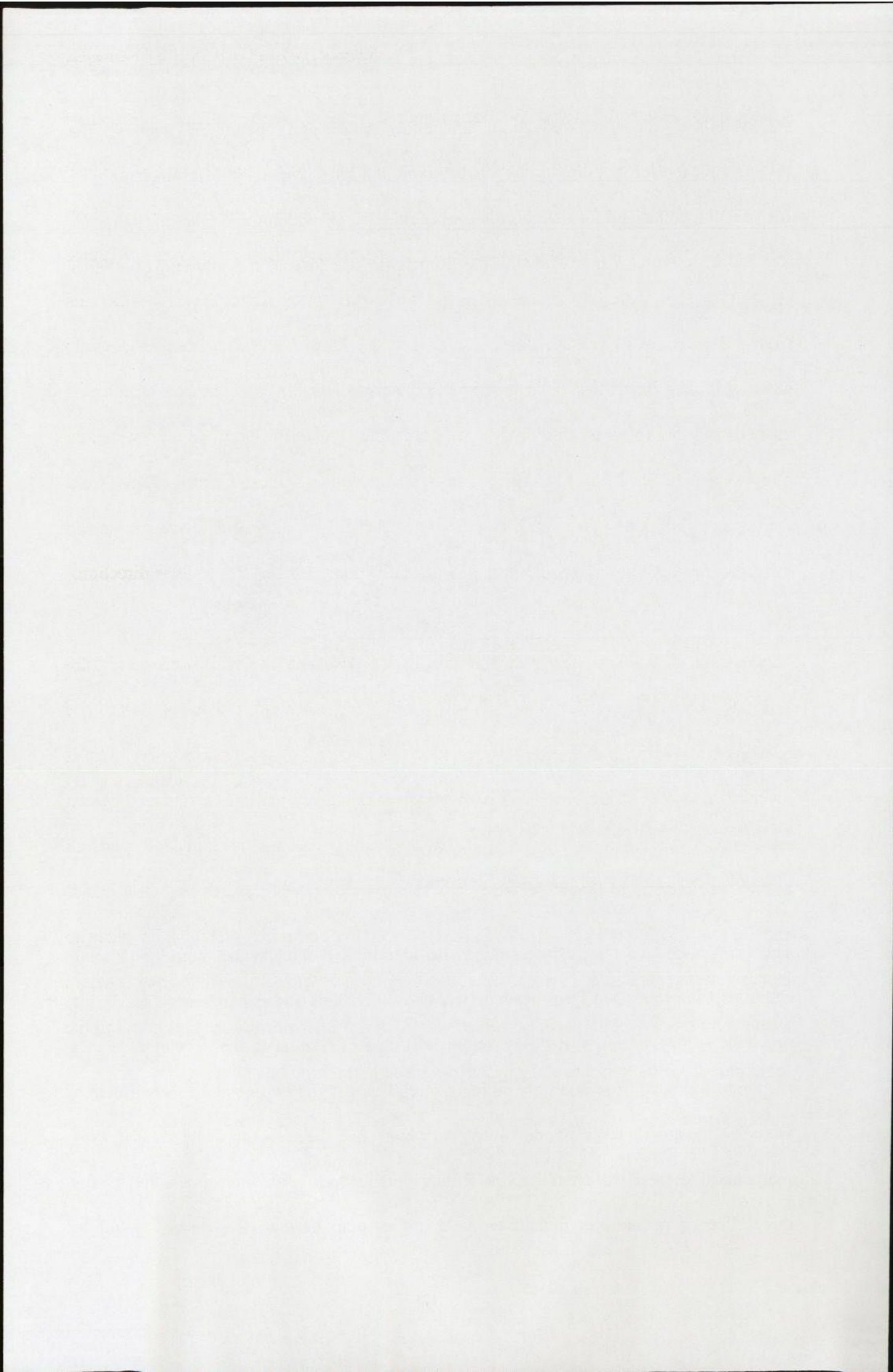


Source: Devon and Cornwall Constabulary ('X' Department)

Figure 7.5: Devon and Cornwall Constabulary territorial divisions (April 1999)

The 1997 review of force structure had also identified a much wider range of policing activities being managed from headquarters-based divisions and departments than during previous periods. There was a clear rationale to this in relation to the development of a corporate approach to providing a policing service across the two counties. Nevertheless, with an increased level of devolvement which had been a product of the 1994 reorganisation, there was an underlying feeling amongst territorial commanders that a more direct line of resource command to them, rather than through the centre, would be





beneficial in local problem solving. The headquarters role in policy making and direction was accepted as an essential element of force organisation, epitomised by central departments such as 'community affairs', which had been in existence under this title (or other variations of it) since the establishment of crime prevention officers in the 1960s. Structurally, the force had seized many of the numerous opportunities to develop its strategies in terms of community safety, crime prevention, victim services and quality issues, by directing policy from headquarters. At local level, divisions had established mechanisms to implement these policies. These were conventionally under the command of the divisional superintending rank, although direction would also be forthcoming from the centre. Resultantly, posts such as crime prevention, youth affairs and schools liaison officers often exhibit some ambiguity in terms of line management and strategic direction.

The position in which the force 'community affairs' department found itself during the early 1990s was one which saw it move from being a department, to become part of the headquarters 'uniform operations' and, later, 'operations' (O) divisions'. In 1995 it reverted to being a department in its own right (R department). The rationale which underpinned the incorporation of it into an operational division was, in large part, an acknowledgement that the perceived gap between what was being done on 'the ground' and in 'the office' had grown too wide. However, no structures were put in place to incorporate the community constables' roles more coherently into the strategy and, within a relatively short period, it was perceived that the nature of work which was central to the 'community affairs' existence had become reduced in importance.

This early 1990s period was one within Devon and Cornwall which saw the relegation of the community policing role in its strategic importance to the force. Moving responsibility for its forcewide strategic direction away from a specialist department to within 'operations' was more than just cosmetic in its wider significance. What happened could not be divorced from the sea-change of emphasis at national level where performance was becoming even more statistically measured and use of resources needed to be seen to be having an immediate, rather than long-term effect. There was a more pragmatic approach being conceived at force level to the use of resources, and integration of a specialist department servicing the 'soft-core' of policing did not necessarily fit with a model which was becoming based more on strategies of intelligence-led policing<sup>15</sup> than community problem solving. The fact that the more community based approaches to policing became re-established as a separate department again, relatively shortly after their amalgamation was, to a large extent, an acknowledgement of the significance of much of the strategic work relating to ancillary matters such as support and servicing of neighbourhood watch, Victim Support and crime prevention. It was not, however, until the work which was completed in reviewing the force structure again in 1997, that the force aim became specifically directive in its acknowledgement of the role which community based policing and problem solving strategies had in achieving results.

### *Crime in Devon and Cornwall*

In the last year of its existence (1966), Plymouth City Police recorded 6,436 crimes of which 2,704 were detected.<sup>16</sup> Recorded crime was about twice that of ten years previously:

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<sup>15</sup> Intelligence-led policing was developed as a model across the force in the early-mid 1990s following a rational philosophy of making best use of intelligence to enable the detection of crime. Centrally driven by the force's Crime Division, and with substantial resources devoted to the technological requirements of computerisation, it became a model of good practice acknowledge as such by HMI and others.

<sup>16</sup> Of interest is the fact that 669 (almost 10%) of the recorded 6,436 crimes were subsequently shown as 'no crimes having been



3,280 (1956), a trend not out of line with that observed nationally. The rate of increase in recorded crime had almost doubled in Cornwall over a similar period, from 4,291 in 1957 to 7,803 in 1966, whilst in the rest of Devon and Exeter crime had risen by as much as thirty six percent in the three year period covering 1964 to 1966: from 8,453 to 11,467.<sup>17</sup> Between the mid 1960s and 1998, crime across Devon and Cornwall rose in line with the national trend with the first set of data for the newly formed Devon and Cornwall Constabulary showing 26,448 crimes being recorded, as against 92,196 in 1997/8 (table 7.7). The overall percentage rise in the various categories of crime is shown at figure 7.6.

	1967*	1979	1989	1997/8
Violent crime	519	1,980	3,845	6,614
Sexual offences	576	577	702	812
Burglary	2,908	7,661	15,845	19,244
Auto thefts	4,070	7,142	17,702	22,355
Thefts (other)	15,810	19,243	23,950	25,183
Damage	948**	2,774	9,677	14,301
Other offences	1,617	1,955	3,946	3,687
<b>Total</b>	<b>26,448</b>	<b>41,332</b>	<b>75,667</b>	<b>92,196</b>

Source: Devon and Cornwall Constabulary Annual Reports 1967-1997/98.

\* 1967 figures extrapolated from data showing theft previously defined as 'larceny' and other alternative titles such as 'housebreaking' and 'shopbreaking' being included above as 'burglary'.

\*\* 'Malicious injury to property' has been combined with 'kindred offences' under the heading 'offences against property with violence' to arrive at this figure. The former definition showed only 71 offences which clearly under-reported damage offences.

Table 7.7: Recorded crime in Devon and Cornwall between 1967 and 1998

The way in which the recorded crime rate varied across regions of Devon and Cornwall followed a reasonably consistent trend with Plymouth regularly accounting for some quarter of the total crime for the two counties, well above that predicted from its share of the population (see Plymouth section of this chapter). Moreover, the proportion of certain crimes, notably violence against the person, showed a consistently higher level of occurrence in Plymouth than elsewhere with the distribution of such crimes distinctly

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committed' in the official figures making a nett crime rate of 5,767. However, in view of the proven under-recording of crime through the later British Crime Surveys it appears most appropriate to consider the larger of the two figures to be more closely aligned with a representative figure.

<sup>17</sup> Source: Chief Constables' Annual reports during the periods referred to.

focused on certain areas of the city such as *Stonehouse*. This increase in crime impacted upon different areas of the force and, whilst subject to local variations, followed a relatively consistent trend throughout the period. Factors such as increased opportunities for criminals to travel over much improved road systems ensured that criminal activity became more possible further away from places of residence. In terms of residential crime within urban locations, such as inner-city Plymouth, offenders remained predominantly natives of that city, whilst conurbations within striking distance attracted a criminal element away from their places of residence.

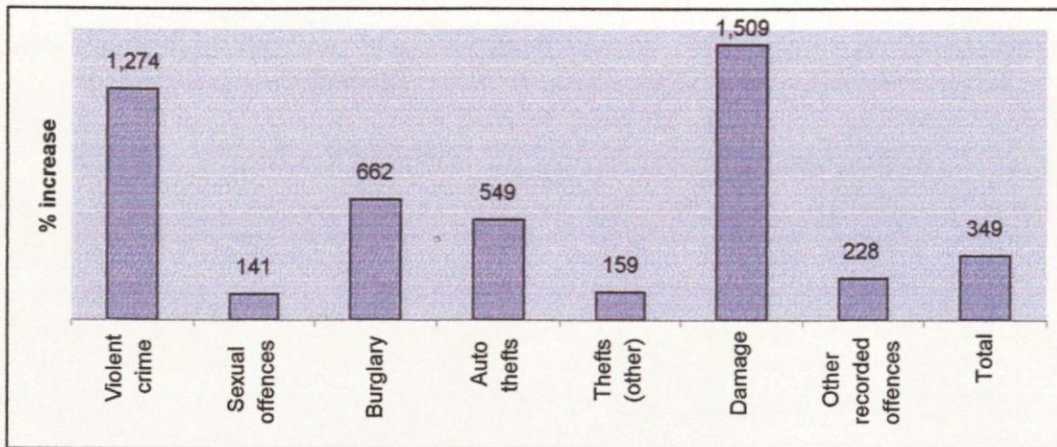
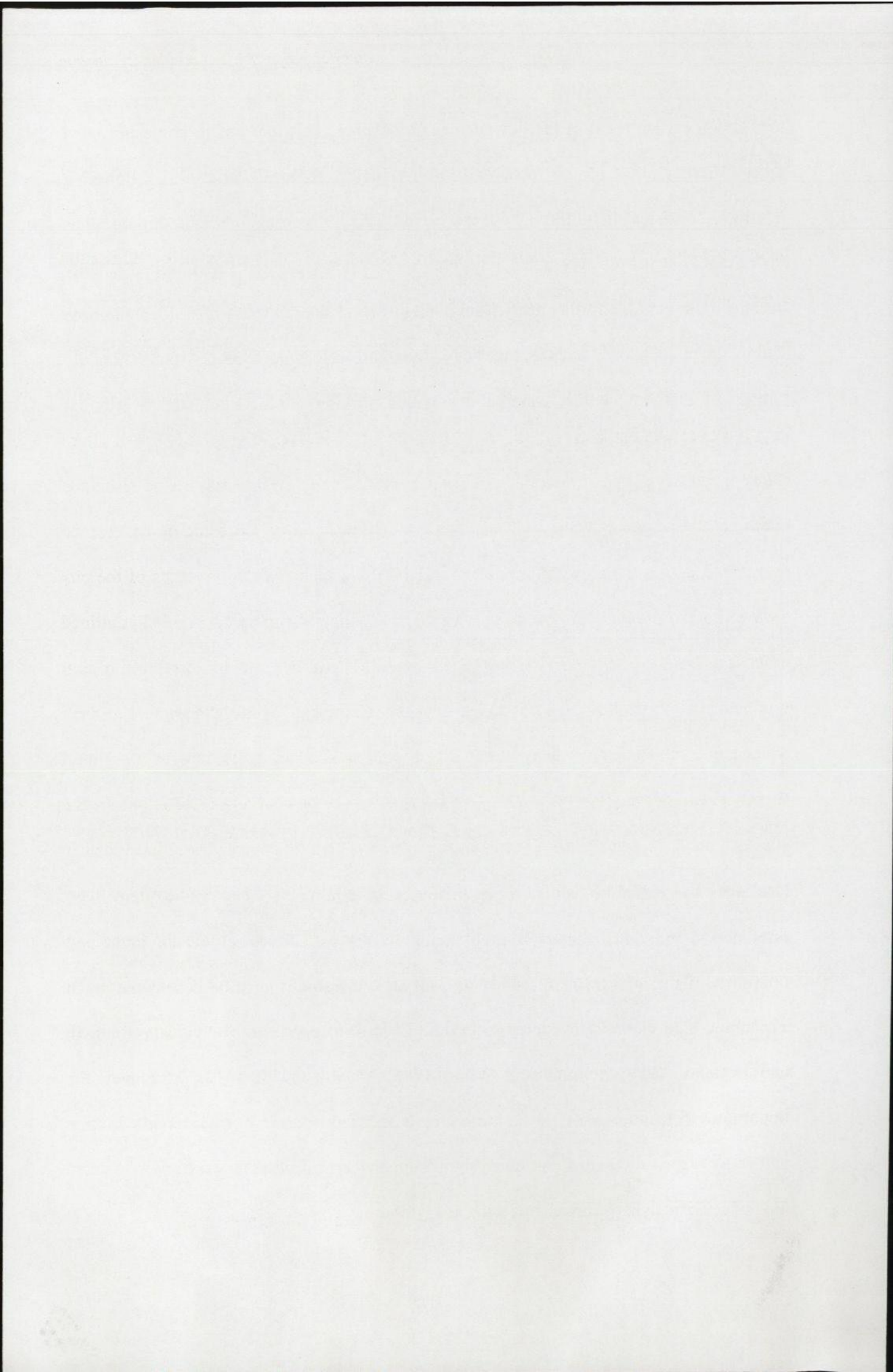


Figure 7.6: Recorded crime in Devon and Cornwall shown as % increase between 1967 and 1997/8

However, the extent to which these increases in criminal activity are explained by reference to individual factors is problematic. Wider variables, such as the status and proximity of the area to the offender, as well as vulnerability must be considered when explaining high victimisation rates for certain areas or categories of individuals (Baldwin and Bottoms, 1976; Bottoms and Wiles, 1986; Mawby, 1978; 1979). Moreover, the opportunity for these factors to be more clearly focused in areas of high recorded crime and social deprivation is of particular significance when considering a densely populated area of a relatively large urban area such as Plymouth.





### *Plymouth*

Plymouth is the most significant urban area within Devon and Cornwall. It is atypical of the force area generally, being the only one of the centres of population which resembles other large cities of the UK. This is so in terms of at least three criteria: its concentration economically around industrial bases, such as the Royal Naval dockyard at Devonport; areas of higher than average population density; and specific inner city council wards such as St Peter, which are both more economically and socially deprived than elsewhere, with high levels of criminal activity (see later in this chapter). Historically, the city's position as a key naval base, and centre of population, caused it to be the subject of sustained bombing during the Second World War, a factor which was to result in widespread destruction across the area and the eventual rebuilding of significant amounts of the city during the years which followed. The 'Plan for Plymouth', prepared in 1943, outlined proposals to redevelop the city along totally new lines and not attempt to rebuild it as it was before the blitz. This resulted in the dispersal of the city's population across a much wider area. In 1938 the population of 220,000 occupied 5,719 acres, contrasting with a slightly smaller number of residents living in accommodation covering 13,136 acres by the 1960s.<sup>18</sup> A large proportion of council-provided housing, however, was redeveloped in locations relatively central to the city centre. St Peter ward in particular saw significant development of multi-storey accommodation, in the main restricted to three and four storey buildings, but with higher-rise accommodation being erected in the Devonport area. Therefore, whilst overall acreage provided for accommodation per resident across the city had increased, the concentration of residents within the this inner-city area was generally higher than elsewhere.

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<sup>18</sup> Source: *The New Book of Plymouth* by W. Best Harris, published by The Guild of Social Services, Buckwell Street, Plymouth (undated).

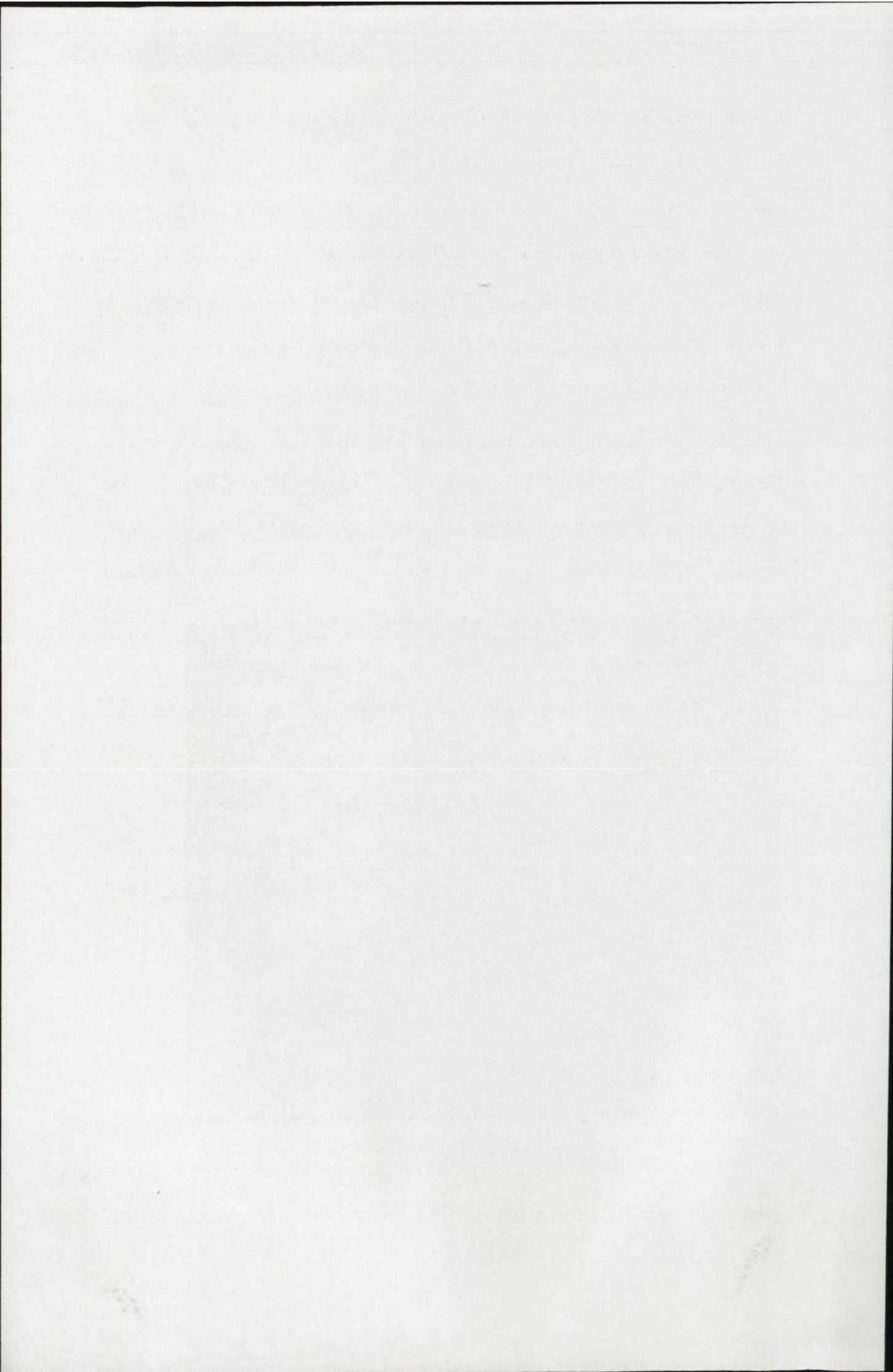


Forming part of St Peter ward, *Stonehouse* is demographically diverse in its make up and comprises a mixture of council, housing association, privately rented and privately owned property. St Peter has an especially high level of deprivation when measured against national indicators: a situation noted in studies conducted during the 1990s. Payne (1995, p.49), for example, used the Department of Environment (DoE) Index of Local Conditions to measure relative deprivation and identified that it was 'the most deprived ward in England' with index scores well above those recorded for the next three most deprived wards in Tower Hamlets and comparable with Granby in Liverpool.. Previously, Dunkerley (1991, pp.168-176) had used 1981 census data to indicate St Peter as having the highest rates of unemployment, and the lowest for car ownership and owner-occupation in Plymouth.



Figure7.7: Plymouth showing location of *Stonehouse* within the council ward area of St Peter (yellow)





A review of the data confirms the ward's deprived status with a disproportionately high percentage of children living in low earning households (48%) and 'unsuitable' accommodation (78%); almost a quarter of residents (24%) being unemployed, and just over a third (37%) of households owning a car, with only 6% possessing more than one motor vehicle. Against all these measurements St Peter was found to be the most deprived ward in the city. Figure 7.7 shows the council ward area of St Peter within which is *Stonehouse*. Table 7.8 depicts the available social indicators.

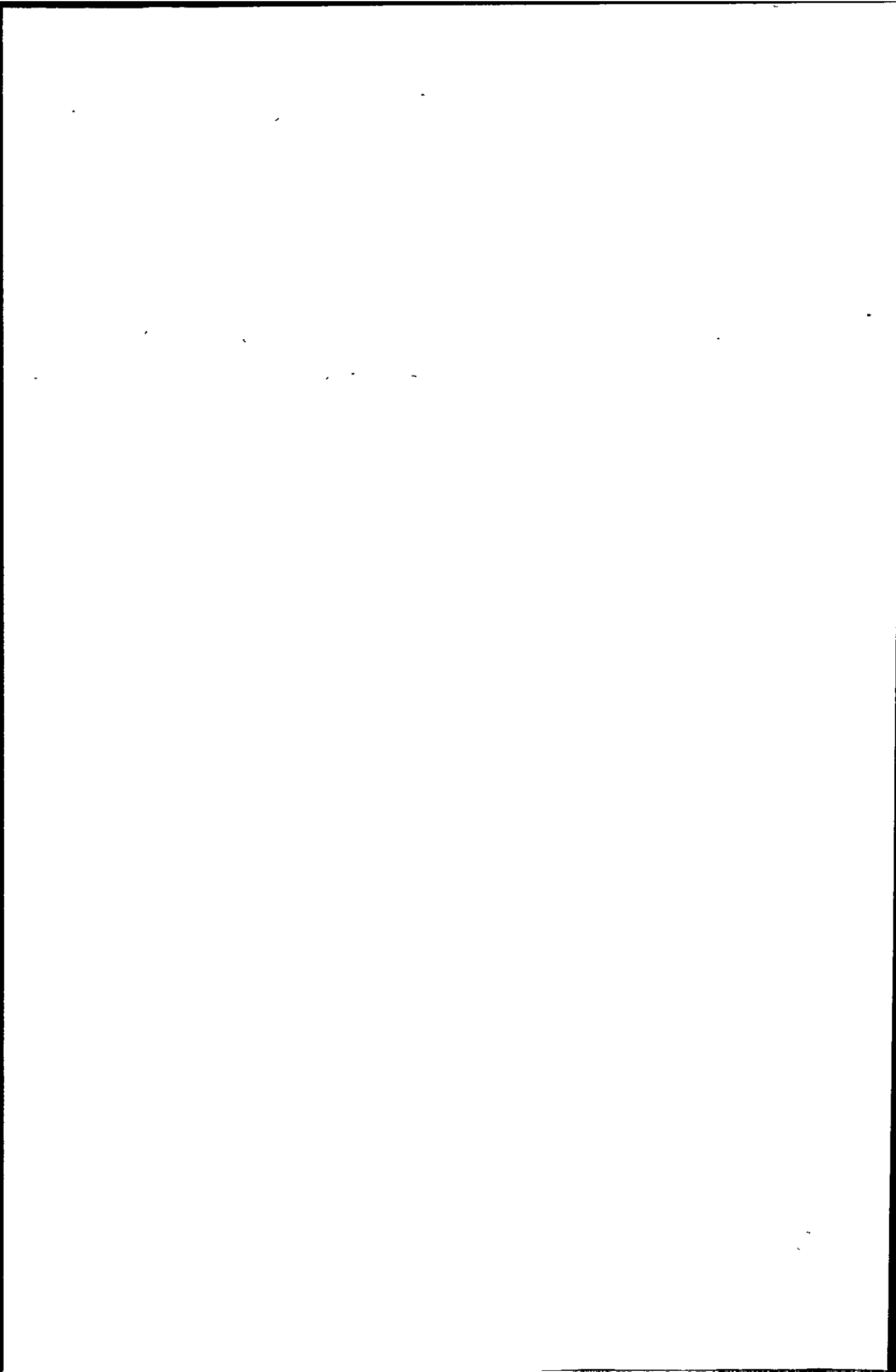
	St Peter ward	Plymouth: nearest comparable ward	Plymouth: least Comparable ward
Children in low earning households	48.2%	38.2% (Ham)	8.2% (Plympton)
Children in unsuitable accommodation	77.8%	43.5% (Keyham)	0.69% (Plymstock Dunstone)
Total unemployment (16-64 yr. olds)	23.8%	17.7% (Sutton)	5.5% (Plympton St Mary)
Total unemployment (16-24 yr. olds)	27.7%	24.5% (Ham)	9.41% (Plympton Earle)
Own 1 or more motor vehicles	37.4%	46.1% (Sutton)	84.7% (Plympton Earle)
Own 2 or more motor vehicles	6.1%	7.9% (Sutton)	30.4% (Plympton St Mary)
'Breadline Britain' deprivation index score*	38.7	31.0 (Budshead)	10.4 (Plympton St Mary)
DoE local conditions index score*	17.1	15.2 (Keyham)	-11.9 (Plympton Earle)
Jarman Underprivileged Area index score*	65.4	42.3 (Keyham)	-12.6 (Plympton St Mary)
'Townsend material' deprivation index score*	17.1	10.13 (Sutton)	-3.74 (Plympton St Mary)

Source: 1991 census.

Table 7.8: Comparison of social indicators - Plymouth wards

### *Policing Plymouth*

Throughout the half century during which various changes to police style and structure in Devon and Cornwall took place, Plymouth city has remained a central focus as either a force in its own right, or latterly as one of the four area commands within the two





counties.<sup>19</sup> Plymouth, pre-1967, was a city policed from six locations, within three territorial divisions: Greenbank, and the City Centre stations covered the centre and adjoining residencies and shops to the East; Ker Street (latterly Exmouth Road in 1966), had a responsibility for *The Octagon* police station within *Stonehouse* (see below); and Crownhill and West Park stations covered the North East of the city. Since the 1967 amalgamation, policing of the *Stonehouse* area has been undertaken from the station which also covers the city centre and adjoining areas. However, for thirty years prior to this, a small police base situated on the ground floor of a block of flats in Octagon Street, less than a hundred yards from Union Street, was the station from which policing took place. Known by all as *The Octagon*, it provided a twenty-four hour service and was a local landmark which figured tellingly in the recollections of those residents and police officers interviewed during the research.<sup>20</sup> Its position was one which epitomised much of that which could be considered 'locational policing', through both its geographic closeness to the area of patrol, and the work which officers based there performed. It was perceived as strategically important because of its close proximity to Union Street and that location's notoriety for a large number of public houses and night clubs, together with the regular public disorder problems which were experienced there. Although its location was also a the centre of a densely populated urban area, there is little to suggest that its position was determined by a wish to provide a service base for local residents (even though subsequent recollections later in this work indicate that those stationed there felt this to be one of their key roles).

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<sup>19</sup> For a history of the Plymouth City Police leading through to the 1970s, but concentrating mainly on the period earlier in this century, see Dickaty (1977).

<sup>20</sup> See Chapter 9: *Community Policing in Devon and Cornwall*.

Pre-amalgamation, shifts in the two divisions of Plymouth City Police which covered the city centre were based on six tours of duty which ensured that men were available at times when they were most needed. The third division worked a four-relief scheme which was seen as most beneficial to its quieter location.<sup>21</sup> Writing of the new shift scheme in the Police Review, J.F. Skittery (1951), the chief constable, indicated that the views of his men had been canvassed and that eighty-five percent preferred the six-relief system to either a seven-relief one, which had been piloted during 1949/1950, or the three-relief scheme. He cited the reasons for change as the number of officers available at times when most incidents of crime occurred, welfare of his staff, and levels of supervision. Clearly, availability and obvious police presence were part of the strategy, but this was seen, primarily, in connection with response policing and an increased ability to have officers available at times when it was believed most incidents occurred. Nowhere in the article were the public mentioned and no acknowledgement was given to the possible impact of higher visibility on public perceptions or reassurance. Policing was still locally based with officers patrolling from their respective stations, but the purpose of patrol had, effectively, been more directly defined through the alterations to duty arrangements. That definition had concentrated on crime detection as the main imperative, with Skittery drawing attention to the number of officers which he would previously have had patrolling during the 'dead hours' between 2am and 8am. His evidence, he said, clearly showed 'that the normal "breaker" [*burglar*] does not get out of a warm bed in the small hours of the morning and sally forth to commit crime.'<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> In November 1949, the Chief Constable, J.F. Skittery had broken new ground by moving away from the conventional system of three shifts. A trial period with a seven shift roster had been refined by 1951 to one which ensured police cover on the basis of working times following a pattern of: 6am-2pm; 8am-4pm; 10am-6pm; 2pm-10pm; 6pm-2am and 10pm-6am.

<sup>22</sup> The absence of the 'public' being mentioned in the article could not be taken to indicate any ambivalence by the police of that period to the potential knock-on benefits to be derived from their more structured scheme aimed at crime detections. However, any direct linkage between these conventional attitudes of police purpose and the concepts of 'community' support were not immediately evident during the period through, either documentation or oral history. It was a relatively easy task to obtain detailed and interesting reminiscences from officers and public who recalled policing during this period, but making meaningful linkages between what was

	Constable	Sergeant	Inspector*	Ch. Inspector*	Sup'tendent*
<b>A Division</b>			5	1	1
City Centre	48	10			
Greenbank	38	4			
<b>B Division</b>			4	1	1
West Park	35	5			
Crownhill	35	4			
<b>C Division</b>			6	1	1
Exmouth Rd	49	5			
The Octagon	24	4			
<b>Specialists**</b>	118	29	13	1	3
<b>Total</b>	347	61	28	4	6

\*\* These ranks were in charge of the divisions and were not assigned to specific stations. \*\* Specialists for this table include CID, traffic and administrative divisions. Source: Plymouth City Police Annual Report, 1967, p.3.

Table 7.9: Plymouth City Police: Rank and location of service, 31st March 1967

In 1967, where officers lived was a situation not totally within their control because of the requirement placed upon them to reside at locations approved by the chief constable.<sup>23</sup> The high number of officers who were residing in their own properties, or receiving rent/lodging allowance during 1967, appeared indicative of a high degree of personal preference being allowed. However, all but three of the officers serving in 1967 resided in Plymouth or the neighbouring towns of Plympton and Plymstock which fell within the force boundary. The other three lived at Saltash, Torpoint and Donderry, all three locations being on the Cornwall side of the River Tamar and accessible via ferry and/or rail and road bridges (the road crossing of the Tamar having opened in 1961).

Owner occupiers	302
Officers in Police houses	9
Officers in Council houses	40
Other Officers receiving rent or lodging allowances	109

Source: Plymouth City Police Annual Report, 1967, p.11.

Table 7.10: Plymouth City Police: Housing occupier status, 31st March 1967

perceived as 'normality' and the wider ideological and structural changes which would occur during the next forty or so years was not within the scope of most interviewees natural responses.

<sup>23</sup> A protocol which exists still towards the end of the century.

The emergence of the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary saw considerable changes to the way in which aspects of the locational nature of policing was to develop over the next thirty years. Plymouth, having been initially established as three divisions, was reorganised as four sub-divisions within one division (E division) under the command of a chief superintendent with superintendents in charge of each sub-division during the 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s. The sub-divisions were based at Charles Cross (covering the city centre), Exmouth Road, Devonport (covering the Western side of the city up to the Tamar boundary), Crownhill (the divisional headquarters covering the northern section) and Plympton (the suburbs of Plymstock and Plympton, together with the market town of Tavistock some twelve miles away on the edge of Dartmoor, and Ivybridge to the East). The local Octagon base was disbanded in 1973 having been used as primarily CID and task force office locations between 1967 and that date. Greenbank and West Park, together with the original city centre base, had been closed and resources centralised at either Charles Cross or Crownhill. Specialised traffic resources became managed under a chief superintendent based at Exeter with local area superintendents, chief inspectors and inspectors based at Plympton and Charles Cross within the Plymouth area. The deployment of officers within each sub-division was primarily based around a five week duty roster covering the twenty four hour period. Post-1979, community constables were assigned to beat areas and worked a variety of shift patterns dependant upon the station from which they patrolled. Despite the divisional structure between 1967 and 1994 seeing command of the area also encompassing the adjoining areas of West Devon and parts of the South Hams, the relatively high crime rates and industrial base of the city ensured that significant resources servicing the area were based within the city itself.

These moves also saw a much wider spread of locations in terms of where officers who

had dealings with the policing of the Plymouth city area personally resided. Whilst the total number of officers who now had a working base somewhere within the Plymouth area had significantly increased since the final annual report of the Plymouth City Police was published in 1967, the proportion of these who now resided within the new divisional area (including Plympton and Plymstock, but excluding Tavistock, Ivybridge, and the rural areas outside the city) was less come the 1990s. Better road communications had enabled officers to develop their careers both laterally and promotionally without the need to uproot families. Locations as far afield as Exeter (42 miles away) could now be reached easily within one hour and less. Whereas records available from the final nominal role of Plymouth City Police had shown almost all officers residing within Plymouth and its Devon-side suburbs (99%), by 1996 this percentage had reduced to 63%.

This move away from locational 'closeness' was one which did not depend upon police officers' personal preferences alone. The 1980s in particular had seen a move nationally to dispose of police-owned accommodation within areas where officers had conventionally been housed, allowing wider opportunities for owner-occupation in places of the officers' choice. Local regulations dictated that these individuals could only be required to travel up to a maximum of twenty miles to perform duty, but it became more common for officers to voluntarily forego this rule in order to reside at locations of their choice. The extent to which these domestic considerations had determined the contemporary structure of policing in the city, and in particular within *Stonehouse*, needs to be understood in context. An address check from the 1967 nominal role only identified two officers who actually resided in accommodation with a *Stonehouse* address whilst 1996 showed three. It was also observable from the results of interviews conducted with public-residents in the *Stonehouse* area that perceptions of how well they considered they were policed from a

community perspective bore little reference to where police officers' homes were, and more distinct calls for a need to identify with an individual officer by name, or a policing base more local to the community in which they lived. How such views, and the perceptions of officers themselves, had an effect upon the question of affinity with local areas and problems are, therefore, questionable. The concept of public servants as 'gatekeeper-commuters' of community affairs is, however, one not exclusively a preserve of the police as previous research has shown (Mawby, 1986). For example: probation workers' locations of residence compared with areas of work responsibility in Mawby's study showed over a third residing in villages and small towns within approximately fifteen miles of the city, whilst the remaining forty addresses which were mapped showed a considerable spread of homes within Plymouth ward boundary areas with no clear correlation to factors of crime or other work-related need.

The part which the police played within the community, whether based there by way of residence or station, together with their role as 'local generalists not central specialists' (Mawby, 1986) was also found to be influential in the opinions which residents expressed of the way in which their local communities were policed. If a 'golden era' of policing ever existed, where bobbies on bicycles spent their days patrolling the streets and talking to residents, it appears to have made little difference to the way in which those living in Devon and Cornwall and, in particular, Plymouth regard what constitutes effective police methods. The apparent reality that a street foot-patrol presence became a less obvious symbol of policing following the development of Unit Beat Policing in the 1960s was one which interviews conducted in *Stonehouse* in 1991 evidenced: 80% of residents in this inner-city location reported that they saw an officer on foot patrol in the area in which they lived 'less than once a week' or 'never' and the general consensus was one which showed

these, and residents interviewed in later surveys, to feel that the police did not pay enough attention to the areas in which they (the public) lived. This level of satisfaction with foot patrol was common across the force area with surveys conducted in the course of the force *Quality of Service* initiative indicating that between 17 and 23 percent of those surveyed were satisfied with the level of foot patrol in their area.<sup>24</sup>

In terms of crime, between 1966 and 1998, Plymouth maintained a significantly higher level of recorded offences per head of population than other areas within Devon and Cornwall. Taking account of the rest of Devon and Cornwall during this period, it can be seen that, the proportion of crime committed in Plymouth had risen at a slightly higher rate than the rest of the force area (a 326% rise in Plymouth as against a 316% rise elsewhere). This equated to 30 crimes per 1,000 population in Plymouth in 1966, compared with 18 per 1,000 across the rest of the force. By 1997 the differential had altered little, although the number of victims per 1,000 population had risen in line with the increase in crime, with 98 victims per 1,000 in Plymouth and 58 per 1,000 elsewhere (table 7.11). Recorded violent crime across the whole force rose by over 1,300% during this period, but whereas less than 1 in 1,000 population were victims of violence forcewide in 1966, by 1996/7, 7 victims per 1,000 were identified in Plymouth, as against 3.5 per 1,000 elsewhere (table 7.12).

	Plymouth	Rest of D&C
1966	6,436 (30.1)	18,411 (18.3)
1996/7	25,097 (98.4)	75,520 (57.9)

Table 7.11: Total recorded crime in Devon and Cornwall and Plymouth (and crime per 1,000 population)

<sup>24</sup> See chapter 9: *Community policing in Devon and Cornwall*.

1966	137 (0.6)	350 (0.4)
1996/7	1,795 (7.0)	4,592 (3.5)

Sources: Plymouth City, Devon and Exeter, and Devon and Cornwall Constabulary Annual Reports (1967 and 1996/7) and D&C Constabulary CIS data. Registrar General's Mid-1997 Population Estimates.

Table 7.12: Total recorded violent crime in Devon and Cornwall and Plymouth (and crime per 1,000 population)

This factor is also significant in considering how increasing crime levels have impacted on residents in *Stonehouse*. The position of Union Street in *Stonehouse* plays an important part in the lives of residents, and is one which is referred to throughout the evidence which has been gained for this work. Its notoriety as *the* principal location in the city around which night-life is based extends back many decades, and is one to which residents and police officers alike have referred in their recollections past and present. The crime rate is relatively high compared to the rest of Plymouth when considered on a crimes per head of population basis. Of significance to the impact which Union Street's night-life has upon those who reside in *Stonehouse* is that of the amount of disorder and assaults which occur. In a review of recorded violent crimes committed in public areas in Plymouth during 1996, almost a quarter (22%) occurred in Union Street itself. This figure excluded crimes which were committed in roads and alleys which adjoined or led to the street and when the net was widened to one which included the *Stonehouse* area generally, this figure rose to nearer 30%. An analysis of data collected during the research also revealed that of all incidents which were reported as occurring in *Stonehouse* during a twelve month period, almost ninety percent of the streets within this area had been subject of at least one call for police assistance. Whereas Union Street and the surrounding area accounted for a high proportion of these calls, the extent to which almost all locations in *Stonehouse* had



received some police attention during the period underlined the overall pattern of crime or disorder which epitomised the area.

*National and local perspectives: an overview*

The extent to which the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary developed its style of policing over thirty years was one which took account of, and reacted to, the wider political situation and direction given by central government on many issues. Within this period were examples of where the force has been at the forefront of certain developments. Alderson's community policing, the early establishment of a quality of service unit, investment in computer technology enabling an intelligence driven crime system to be developed to a high level of effectiveness, and the emergence of multi-agency based initiatives within Plymouth such as ward policing, have been just four of the notable milestones. Of interest in each case is the extent to which their developments impacted upon the wider central direction and philosophy of the force itself. Community policing appeared to find relatively little prioritisation in its continued development after Alderson retired in the early 1980s, as internal studies subsequently indicated (Shaw, 1987; Wilcox et al., 1987). The work of the quality of service unit, inspired through the national initiative of the staff associations, seemed to change direction from one of ensuring quality, to one of measuring quantity, with the direct contact telephone surveys being replaced by conventional self-report questionnaires. Computer technology and the crime management system which enabled an effective model to be developed received much praise but has still to reach its full potential in terms of predictive analysis and development of 'problem orientated policing' strategies; whilst ward policing developed steadily within Plymouth despite a force strategy of centralisation of many services and resources 'in support' rather than at 'the coal-face' of policing contact with the public.

These observations are not put forward in order to reduce the importance of any of the initiatives and strategies employed. However, they do epitomise the way in which changing priorities, and personal visions of senior members of the organisation, caused development towards a single goal to be problematic. The idea of a single goal itself was not without its problems as the changing priorities and messages at national level, particularly during the 1990s, indicated. To what extent the post-1994 changes in legislation, and restructuring of the force leading up to 1999, developed a prolonged and critical reappraisal of the way in which policing could be most effectively conducted in Devon and Cornwall has yet to be evaluated. Certainly the changes which took place in the more devolved and locally accountable 1999 structure, bringing statutory responsibility to the doors of district/county authorities and other agencies, appears to provide an opportunity to develop a more coherent and productive method of operation. Time will tell. Clearly Devon and Cornwall is not typical of England and Wales as a whole, and the fact that HMCIC and the Audit Commission have incorporated forces into different 'families' for comparison purposes tends to underline the diverse nature of the geography within the region. Nevertheless, within the force, and within the context of Plymouth and *Stonehouse*, evidence can be found of how changes at national level have impacted upon the structure and philosophy of the organisation.

The chapters which follow will interpret these findings in greater detail, with specific reference to the core themes outlined in earlier chapters. The order in which these chapters, which deal with the more localised evidence of policing in Devon and Cornwall, has been decided upon has been primarily dictated by the needs of the reader to have certain information to hand in order to meaningfully interpret how the information was gathered. Chronologically, the order in which *community policing* has been followed by *crime*

*prevention, victims of crime and quality of service* in the earlier chapters is logical taking account of the periods during which certain initiatives developed. However, much of the information which follows has been based on work conducted during the 1990s when the *quality of service* structure was central and influential in the gathering of data. Therefore, an appreciation of how and why this *unit* was established, together with the methodology employed during this period, is desirable to make sense of parts of the information in subsequent chapters. Resultantly, the chronological thrust will be interrupted by the next chapter considering *Quality of Service in Devon and Cornwall* but, it is hoped that this temporary departure from the structure will enhance, rather than reduce, the overall impact. Subsequent chapters then revert to the original ordering, covering, respectively *community policing, crime prevention and victims of crime*.

## Quality of Service in Devon and Cornwall

Whereas the *quality of service* initiative at national level did not emerge until the late 1980s it is perhaps surprising, given his forward thinking approach to community based solutions, that chief constable John Alderson had not also developed a culturally and performance driven model to accompany that of *community policing*. A speculative answer to why this did not occur may lie as much in Alderson's own perspective on making change occur, and in particular 'selling' that message within his own organisation. Structurally the opportunities afforded through the *Exeter Crime Prevention Support Unit* (CPSU) were clear and developed to become Devon and Cornwall's *community policing* of the late 1970s and 1980s. However, as evidence provided in chapter 9 will show, Alderson encountered a number of difficulties in convincing those within his own organisation of the process and, in particular, the nature of policing which he saw as primarily *service* rather than *enforcement* based. Although changes which occurred within Devon and Cornwall clearly outlined what was effectively an integral review of policing methods relating to the *quality of service* which was being offered, it was never effectively sold under this umbrella.

As an opportunity to develop notions of *quality of service* alongside *community policing*, Alderson's approach appeared to more naturally revert to his academic leanings than those of inspirational internal change manager. Information in chapter 9 clearly indicates that there were varying degrees of confusion and scepticism within his own organisation as to what he was hoping to achieve. Not, therefore, a basis on which the type of cultural change

and focus which became the hallmark of late 1980s work in other forces, and subsequently the ACPO *Quality of Service* initiative, was born. The extent to which *community policing* became accepted as a policing style within Devon and Cornwall was one of which the public appeared to generally approve, but through reminiscences of that period appeared to place its value in the visible elements of the service provided. That focus was on community based constables, rather than an understanding of the wider inter-agency work which formed the cornerstone of the philosophy. It was the nature of some of the *quality of service* work some ten years later which, if having formed a part of the original *community policing* structure, may have alerted the force to the more focused indicators of performance and the need to consider some of the internal cultural issues debated later.

Quality of Service, as a specific initiative, did not emerge in the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary until the 1990s. However, the focus which had followed the force since the work of Alderson as the Chief Constable, laid the foundations on which the organisation could build. *Community policing* remained the publicly proclaimed mainstay of policing philosophy within the force and was a concept which was approved of by the public. The opportunity to develop notions of effectiveness and efficiency, and latterly quality of service, against a backdrop of a strategy which placed *community* at the centre of policing activity should, therefore, have been a significant advantage.

### *Developments during the 1980s*

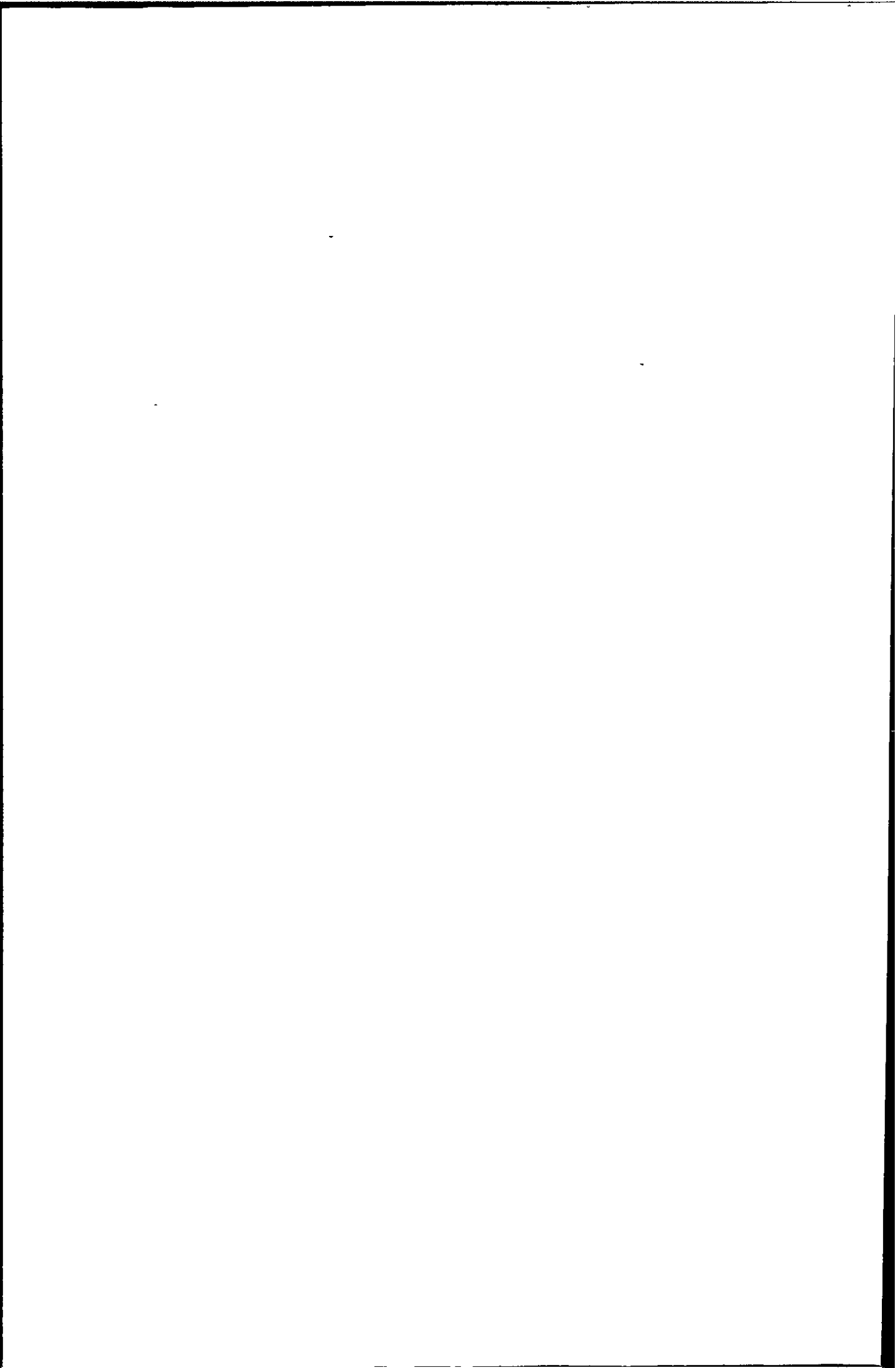
Home Office Circular 114/1983 was addressed by the force in relation to the publishing of annual *aims* and *objectives* and reviewing levels of *effectiveness* and *efficiency*. These were, primarily, internal reviews of staff deployment and usage with attention being paid to reducing costs where possible, notably through a programme of civilianisation of police

posts. Consulting the public on levels of individual service delivery did not form part of a force strategy although police/public liaison meetings (required under section 106 of PACE) had become well established by the end of the decade. *Management by objectives* was introduced in response to the circular and the annual task of producing the forthcoming year's *aims* and *objectives* followed a course not dissimilar to other constabularies.

The 1989 version of *management by objectives* was developed with the arrival of John Evans as the newly appointed chief constable. Building on a model from his previous force, Surrey, the system of *Planned Policing* became the structure on which policing in Devon and Cornwall was to develop. Its principles and aims relied on operational officers working to a system which was linked to realistic and achievable objectives within their own abilities and the resources of the force. The need to link objectives with action was perceived as an important factor in achieving results. As a model of management it was structured and had distinct potential. However, as an internal *thematic inspection* conducted in 1993 showed, the outcomes were more difficult to accomplish than was originally anticipated. One of the main observations in the inspection document was the problem of officers understanding in what circumstances the process should be used. In theory it could be applied to almost any policing activity but, because it was bureaucratically based and required forms to be completed (forms 301),<sup>1</sup> work was often undertaken outside the system and therefore not recorded and made subject of realistic measurement (Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, 1993a). Nevertheless it was a process

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<sup>1</sup> It will be recalled from chapter 6: *Methodology*, that the basis for the beginnings of this thesis were subject of a form 301.



which attempted to identify, plan and measure policing tasks and had the unfulfilled potential of being a measure of public satisfaction with service delivery.

### *Quality of Service Unit*

In December 1991, the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary established a *Quality of Service Unit*, based at force headquarters and staffed by a superintendent and inspector. The rationale for establishing such a unit came at a time when the police service was beginning to build on the public acceptance of community policing as a style and develop a more overt 'service' ethos following the events of the 1980s. This *unit* developed its terms of reference to encompass many of the national strategies which were being either initiated from within the police service itself, or imposed upon it from central government. A variety of options for the way in which the force could most beneficially develop its service strategy had already been produced (Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, 1991). The unit, when established, had only loose terms of reference. It was to report directly to the then deputy chief constable, David Phillips<sup>2</sup> who had a wish to see the unit develop in a pragmatic way. In particular he wanted to ensure that any work was not seen as 'window dressing' the force, but could clearly be distinguished as having an active role in improving police performance. As notes, made by the author as the *Quality of Service Unit* inspector following his first meeting with the deputy chief constable on 10 December 1991 reveal, Mr Phillips was reflective of the way in which some police forces had chosen to approach the issue in terms of merely surveying the public without then producing tangible data, able to be acted upon by police managers. The linkage between getting notions of

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<sup>2</sup> J.D. Phillips Esq., Q.P.M., B.A. (Econ). Mr Phillips left the Devon & Cornwall Constabulary in March 1993 to take up the position of Chief Constable of Kent Police.



'ownership' of *quality* where it belonged 'on the ground', and management issues of supervision and training, were key principles which Mr Phillips felt needed addressing.<sup>3</sup>

The establishment of the *Quality of Service Unit* was one which involved a three month review of the experiences of other police forces in this relatively new arena. Central to the rationale of what the new *unit* should be concentrating upon was a presumption that *quality of service* was 'about setting agreed standards in line with public demands and measuring delivery of those standards' (Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, 1992). But the question of measurement was the one which was central to the philosophy which dictated the initial methodology of the unit. As was discussed in the meeting with deputy chief constable Phillips on 10 December, 'how could an organisation improve if it did not know precisely where it was at the moment?' The need for the new enterprise to therefore concentrate on inspecting aspects of its work against a form of template which would be regarded as minimum service standards was the direction which was to dominate 1992. The other part of the *quality of service* presumption - that of 'public demands', was not seen as problematic if combined with a realistic 'inside' view of how the organisation was actually working. Providing any questioning of the public was done in such a way as to make the results capable of direct action, then it was felt that progress could be made. However, Mr Phillips was determinedly resolved not to embark upon any general public attitude surveys which he regarded as of little real use to the force.<sup>4</sup> One analogy made at the time by another senior police officer was that of a washing machine manufacturer:

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<sup>3</sup> A discussion paper presented on behalf of ACPO outlined the wide differences between the pragmatic and cultural extremes of quality of service initiatives being pursued by forces - Devon and Cornwall beginning to develop at the pragmatic end of the continuum (Bunt, 1995).

<sup>4</sup> This position was not one suggested by the Audit Commission as being appropriate. They felt that it was 'important to assess satisfaction amongst members of the public who have not encountered the police directly. Opinion surveys usually omit this majority on the basis that its opinion will owe more to its diet of TV police fiction than real life. But (...) it is no less important in relations between the police and community on which they depend' (Audit Commission, 1990: p.24).

'If you want to know what people think of Hotpoint washing machines, you ask someone who has got one and not someone who has got a Hoover' (LV).

How correct the interpretation was in market research terms is debatable given that one can learn much from the experiences of the satisfied customer of a competitor, but the police were not perceived to be in that position. The question was more simple: '*Did we do what you expected, and how well did we do it?*' The feeling of negativity towards general attitude surveys was that the public may have unrealistic or unachievable demands, dependant upon their individual circumstances. There was a need to spend money wisely and surveys of this nature, as well as being costly, were not perceived to be capable of producing real value for money in policing terms. The argument went that, in terms of *satisfaction*, what was to be gained from knowing that, in line with national surveys which had been conducted against a more rigorous methodological framework, 70%+ felt that the police did a very or fairly good job? What was to be done with that information? The debate was one which continued with the deputy chief constable during the initiation period of the unit, where the potential advantages of gauging a wider degree of public satisfaction, other than with only those who had direct involvement with the police, were outlined. Arguments for a general survey to establish this wider perspective were not successful until much later.<sup>5</sup>

### *Quality Assurance Checks*

In line with the terms of reference which were eventually determined for the *Quality of Service Unit*, internally inspecting to establish the level of service currently given was to be the first weapon in the armoury of improvement. A system of *Quality Assurance Checks*

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<sup>5</sup> Public attitude surveys took place as part of the force's consultative process from 1994 onwards in the form of interviews with members of the public at the two County Shows (Devon County and Royal Cornwall) conducted by staff from the Executive Support Department of Headquarters ('X' department).

was established which involved supervisory officers (sergeants and inspectors) reviewing a number of burglary cases which their own subordinates had dealt with against a template of expected actions. The methodology was far from scientific in its implementation but was seen as a management tool rather than any instrument of sociological research. The purpose was to identify common themes which could lead to improvements.

Sub-divisional commanders were allowed to pick a number of cases 'at random' or 'by selection' from within their own area and delegate supervisors to re-evaluate the service which had been provided.<sup>6</sup> Amongst the areas which these officers were tasked with reporting on were the time taken to respond, the action taken at the scene, whether forensic examination had been carried out, and the nature of inquiries which had been made. Of concern also was whether paperwork had been correctly completed, messages routed and, through re-visiting the victim, establishing to what extent these individuals felt the police had performed a satisfactory role.<sup>7</sup> The results were returned to the *Quality of Service Unit* which reported the findings back to the deputy chief constable without identifying any individual officers by name. In all, over four hundred checks were completed and the results made available to sub-divisional commanders as well as the force's chief officers.<sup>8</sup> This resulted in certain changes to working practice such as rationalising the circumstances under which statements of evidence were taken from victims, reducing duplication of information on forms and messages, and providing clearer guidelines on the initial investigation of crimes.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> The selection process allowed senior managers to select cases dealt with by officers with whom they may have had concerns. Subsequent analysis of the selections which were actually made did not indicate that commanders had specifically targeted more than a small number of such officers and the results showed that some officers who were generally held in high regard had conducted poor investigations. (See also chapter 11: *Victims of Crime in Devon and Cornwall*).

<sup>7</sup> See 'appendix 'J' for a copy of the evaluation form which was used by supervisors to complete the *Quality Assurance Checks*.

<sup>8</sup> See chapter 11: *Victims of crime in Devon and Cornwall*, for details of the results achieved.

<sup>9</sup> The exercise also highlighted the difficulty caused in communicating information by paper across a geographically large area. This issue led to the introduction of a 24 hour telephone bureau being established which allowed officers to telephone crimes directly from

### *Quality of Service surveys*

Within the performance measurements which had been circulated nationally were a number of indicators formulated by ACPO designed to establish the quality of police response through the eyes of the public. These were based on the need to survey 'customer' attitudes. One of the principles which the author succeeded in persuading his force to accept in embarking upon surveys of the public was that the methods used should be professional and conform to valid and accepted social science methods. It was therefore agreed that the services of Dr Mawby from Plymouth University should be employed as a consultant to the *Quality of Service Unit* for the purposes of assisting in the establishment of a suitable set of questionnaires and methods of sampling and administration. In addition he was to give advice on the analysis of the data. It was decided to incorporate, within each questionnaire, a number of questions which would identify the level of service and satisfaction in relation to call handling, time of arrival and encounters at police station public enquiry counters.<sup>10</sup> Following discussion, it was agreed to develop a trained team of staff to conduct interviews by telephone amongst victims of burglary and violent crime, as well as drivers who had been involved in road traffic accidents. The force agreed to pay a number of its civilian support staff, who volunteered to conduct telephone surveys during the evenings, at the standard overtime rate.<sup>11</sup>

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the scene by use of a 'Freephone' number. Subsequently, the force's crime management model was completely revised to incorporate crime recording with a networked crime intelligence system accessible across the whole area.

<sup>10</sup> These were also required by ACPO to be surveyed. The decision to incorporate them was determined by the inaccessibility of suitable data which would enable samples of this nature to be drawn by other than manual collection. In the event, it proved a streamlined and effective way to capture data required without undue additional work.

<sup>11</sup> All such staff graded for pay purposes within grades 1 to 3 (the least costly!) were written to and invited to volunteer. The selection process resulted in a team of twenty three being offered positions in late 1992. Each individual then undertook training which the author provided. This initially involved telephoning 'stooges' and administering the first set of questionnaires which had been written, a process which also enabled 'safe' piloting of the surveys to take place.

Quality control of the process was seen as of particular importance and, therefore, the surveyors worked in groups of three with a supervisor. Four staff were identified as suitable for additional training in this role and the services of a market research company, based in Plymouth (RKR Research) developed, with the *Unit*, a day's course of instruction for these people.<sup>12</sup> This was followed up with a refresher half-day some six months into the project. The process worked well and the standard of interviews was generally high. Close attention was always paid to the attitude of the interviewer in ensuring any element of bias in asking questions was kept to an absolute minimum. Asking the question which was written, and not their interpretation of it was continually reinforced during training.<sup>13</sup>

The surveys were conducted using a piece of software developed by SPSS called 'Data Entry II' (DEII). It enabled questionnaires to be written direct onto an IBM compatible computer with each response field capable of being automatically coded and labelled ready for immediate use on the standard SPSS statistical analysis programme. It also enabled 'skip' and 'range' rules to be set, thus minimising the opportunity for inappropriate coding to be entered during the interviews. The questions relating to respondent's satisfaction also benefited from use of DEII. Four options were given for responses, they were:

- Satisfied - all aspects
- Generally satisfied - some areas of dissatisfaction
- Generally dissatisfied - some areas of satisfaction
- Dissatisfied - all aspects

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<sup>12</sup> RKR undertook regular market research telephone surveys and their expertise in the management of such an environment was identified as being useful for the professional development of the team. The day's course identified and formulated suitable quality control check sheets and methods of allowing the supervisors to monitor calls in a non-intrusive way. Advice was also given on dealing with members of the public who may be concerned or aggravated by receiving telephone calls of this nature.

<sup>13</sup> Interviewers' attitudes were emphasised as important. In particular, they were encouraged to not respond to comments in any way which could indicate pleasure or displeasure with a reply which was given. One trainee quickly learned that the response of 'Lovely' to every other answer she received was not the most appropriate terminology. A visit to another force which conducted telephone interviews had identified that surveyors would regularly ask questions such as 'So you were satisfied then?' as opposed to the structured question on their sheet.

DEII allowed the interviewer to get a response to the question in this way:

*'So would you say that you were generally satisfied or dissatisfied with the service the police provided?'*

If the answer was 'satisfied' the interviewer would then ask, prompted by the machine, which would adjust the next question according to the previous answer given:

*'Were you satisfied with all aspects of what the police did or were there any areas you were dissatisfied with?'*

If the answer to the first question had been 'dissatisfied' the software would have provided the second question with the words satisfied and dissatisfied in opposite positions.

The survey samples were drawn from information held on the force's crime recording system, as well as data from the accident database. Surveys took place, on average, three times a year during the period between 1992 and 1995 when the telephone interviewing method was used. The sample frame was taken from a period during the month prior to surveying where print-outs of each individual's name, address and telephone number were listed by date of report with each day being stratified by the divisional area in which the crime or accident had taken place. Where no telephone number was known, a postal questionnaire was sent, a procedure which was also followed when three unsuccessful attempts had been made to contact someone by telephone. Postal responses were also sought if the victim was shown to be over sixty five years of age to minimise any likelihood of concern being caused to an elderly person receiving a telephone call. The telephone surveys proved to be successful for two particular reasons. Firstly, response rates were high amongst those with whom contact was made. On average only between one and two percent of the public contacted in this way declined to be interviewed. Secondly, the direct contact allowed prompt remedial action to be taken if there was any level of dissatisfaction; most commonly this involved individuals who wanted further information. Interviewers could access a screen on their computer terminal which allowed a

memorandum to be printed and faxed to the division concerned asking that further contact be made.

### ***Policing Charter***

The benefit of establishing standards which the public could expect were becoming increasingly relevant in the light of the work which the *Quality of Service Unit* had undertaken during its first twelve months. The *Quality Assurance Checks* had indicated, not only that police officers appeared uncertain as to the minimum level of investigation and service which they were to offer, but that the public were either similarly confused or had unrealistic expectations. In addition, the newly formed Conservative Government under Prime Minister John Major had produced the *Citizen's Charter* in which public bodies, including the police, were seen to play an important role in the provision of quality services throughout the country. A separate charter in relation to victims of crime had already been made public (Home Office, 1990b) and, the combined effects made the potential benefits of a local charter for policing considerable. During the early months of 1993, the force embarked on a consultation exercise with its staff and used data attained through its *Quality of Service* process to produce a number of draft *Charters*. The final version was approved and launched at the Police Authority meeting in Autumn of that year and was accompanied by a publicly available video and poster campaign which was staged during the month leading up to the launch to gain maximum awareness of the issues which the *Charter* sought to address.

### ***Getting Things Right***

The ACPO summer conference at Bramshill in 1992 had been devoted to the quality of service issue and it was at this meeting that a strategy of attempting to ensure that police

officers *got things right* emerged publicly. Under the title *Getting Things Right* (ACPO, 1993a) it identified a number of key internal elements to policing which were seen as important aspects to moving the cultural and management elements of *quality of service* forward. These included systems and procedures, managing resources, leadership and communication. The principal message in the documentation was, however, that the police service was changing to one of a no-blame culture in which openness and trust were considered essential cultural features alongside the empowerment of staff. A series of documents and leaflets were produced and made available for forces to purchase and distribute to officers of both management and constable/support staff positions. These outlined the cultural nature of change which was seen as important to *getting things right*.

The extent to which forces took up the initiative was not universal. In Devon and Cornwall, although there appeared to be a willingness at chief officer level to support the ACPO lead, a decision was made to not circulate the leaflets widely. The substance of *Getting Things Right* was made available and discussed at senior officer level but there was general agreement that any such initiative locally should be carefully introduced and guided in order to ensure that clear and relatively unambiguous messages were given by those involved in the process. It was also felt, with the uncertainty which was being created by the forthcoming enquiry into police pay and conditions of service (Home Office, 1993c), together with the ongoing *quality of service* initiative, that there may be difficulty in developing a positive enough atmosphere within which a programme aimed at cultural change could flourish. *Getting Things Right* did not, therefore, become used by the force in the form in which it was produced by ACPO. However, many of the principles of devolvement and empowerment of decision making to the lowest appropriate level began



to become more openly debated and used as the style of management, particularly amongst newly promoted senior officers.

### ***Performance Indicators***

As the role of the Audit Commission became increasingly active in policing matters, notably following the *Local Government Act 1992*, the need for the force to establish mechanisms to collect and publish data on their performance became obvious. The coordination of this task fell to the *Quality of Service Unit* which resulted in a degree of misgiving being expressed as to how relevant this particular job was to furthering the effectiveness of the service. Devon and Cornwall Constabulary published the first indicators of its performance in July 1994, having had the figures audited by the District Audit Service during the previous month. It was the first force in the country to complete the task and this occurred on 13 July, the same day as the first local authority (Brent, London) made public their information. The police publication took the form of an eight page, part colour, supplement in a local newspaper, *The Western Morning News* (Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, 1994b), and a one page monochrome summary published in eight other, more local, weekly publications. The cost of this had been supplemented by selling advertising space in the supplement which covered approximately half the overall cost. It was done in such a way that, whereas all the required indicators were included, they were seen as secondary to the potential to portray the force in a positive light and 'sell' images and messages relating to crime prevention, victim support and traffic safety. A number of forces followed the lead set by Devon and Cornwall and arranged for similar supplements to be produced in local newspapers. Others adopted a legislatively acceptable, but less impactful approach by providing just the figures required in a tabular or list form, although these forces commonly accompanied their enterprise with a press release and

coordinated PR strategy. Some chose to produce their own literature for circulation whilst still complying with the terms of Act in as cost efficient way as possible.

The Audit Commission had made arrangements for some of the early examples of publications to be reviewed by a management consultancy group<sup>14</sup> and the Devon and Cornwall supplement and one page advertisements were chosen as part of this evaluation. In all the company conducted 305 personal interviews with residents stratified by gender, age and employment status across the two counties in eight locations (Barnstaple, Exeter, Honiton, Plymouth, Launceston, Redruth, St. Austell and Truro). Of those asked only 2% spontaneously recalled seeing the PIs published in any newspaper and, after prompting a total of 16% remembered either the supplement or one page advertisement. These responses were from a sample of which 53% said that they regularly read one or other of the publications which the PIs were published in. The company had defined an 'exposure measurement' score<sup>15</sup> which they utilised to identify good practice across the range of authorities which had published. The score given to the Devon and Cornwall initiative was 14%.<sup>16</sup> This compared with a range of between 7% and 19% for other authorities which had relied solely on newspapers. However, those which had sought to make an impact over and above their legal requirements, by distributing their own publication on a door-to-door basis had achieved scores in the range of 27% to 36%.

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<sup>14</sup> Robertson Bell Associates Ltd., 172-174, Harrogate Road, Leeds LS7 4NZ

<sup>15</sup> 'Exposure measurement' score was based on the exposure to the PIs amongst the public, i.e. the proportion of residents who say that they saw a one-page publication or at least glanced at a publication of more than one page.

<sup>16</sup> The qualitative research results in relation to the Devon & Cornwall publication identified that the WMN supplement was the more popular of the two means used to display the information. The advertising was seen as making the supplement more 'real' in terms of what would be seen in other pages of the newspaper and it appeared to many as a 'crime supplement' produced by the newspaper rather than the police which gave a perceived degree of independence and credibility to it. Criticisms of the format primarily related to certain aspects of the layout and lack of colour co-ordination. The consultant's overall summary was that the work was 'a good first effort with room for improvement on the newspaper insert format or scope for a slightly different format, e.g. Newsletter or magazine.

*Quality of Service during the mid 1990s*

By 1994, the *Quality of Service Unit* had become an established part of the management and direction of the force. A full-time researcher had been employed within the unit and the original superintendent who had formed it, having retired, was replaced by an officer of identical rank who had the wider responsibility of running the Executive Support Department ('X' department). This department reported directly to the deputy chief constable and, in addition to the *Quality of Service Unit*, comprised the force inspectorate,<sup>17</sup> statistics section, activity analysis and, subsequently, corporate planning unit. 'X' department became active in the dissemination of management information throughout the force and, in January 1994, produced the first *Quarterly Performance Review*<sup>18</sup> which was circulated to police and support staff ranks of inspector (or equivalent) and above, as well as members of the police authority. The document contained information on force performance aimed at identifying good practice and highlighting the extent to which standards proclaimed in the force charter were being met. Results of the on-going customer surveys formed a regular part of this document. In 1995, a monthly circulation entitled *Divisional Management Information* was also produced which provided more in-depth statistical analysis of local performance. Such information was, subsequently, also networked using the force computer system and became a regular item of discussion and action at the force *Policy Advisory Group*, attended by divisional and departmental heads from Devon and Cornwall.

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<sup>17</sup> Forming part of X department, and working to the Deputy Chief Constable, the *Force Inspectorate* was responsible for administering the internal inspections system. This developed as a self-inspection and thematic inspection system during the early 1990s but reverted to one of personal review by officers of the *inspectorate* during the mid 1990s.

<sup>18</sup> The first three *Quarterly Performance Reviews* (QPR) were edited and contributed to by the author, it having been his original concept. The document continued to be produced every three months until the end of 1998 when it was replaced by an improved monthly management information paper. Attempts to alter the format of the QPR prior to this had been resisted at chief officer level because of the perceived use and value they placed upon it and its use by Police Authority members at their meetings (an audience which the original editor had regarded as secondary).

Customer attitude surveys moved to a less costly, but also arguably, less impactful system from the end of 1995 onwards when use of telephone interviewing was dropped in favour of only postal questionnaires. Nevertheless, continued review of the areas which were of concern in earlier surveys became developed within the questionnaires to establish a wider level of understanding about the action which could be taken to improve the service. What had begun as a pragmatic attempt to improve working practices in the early part of the decade had grown to encompass the feared quantitative indicators of the Audit Commission and HMIC in a way which became complementary to the objectives of both forms of measurement.

#### *Quality of service: an overview*

It is clear that there was potential for a quality of service initiative to have been developed in Devon and Cornwall much earlier than it actually was. As has been alluded to at the beginning of this chapter, the extent to which Alderson's vision of policing had the potential to encompass much of which was to follow is a matter of conjecture. However, once a decision had been made in 1991 to establish a unit specifically to address the extent to which quality was being provided in service delivery by the police a number of developing outside factors were already in play. The decision to address the national debate on *quality of service* at local level in this way was one which had been researched (Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, 1991) but had then taken a distinctly more pragmatic than cultural approach under the leadership of the then deputy chief constable.

The extent to which this strategy was successful is debatable. There were undoubted benefits in having thorough reviews of police procedures such as the *quality assurance checks* but there was an overlap between this work and that which was simultaneously

being undertaken by the force inspectorate. Commitment to a philosophy of standard setting was evidenced in the production of the force charter in 1994 and the need to monitor the extent to which these commitments were being met needed a continuing review system which the *Quality of Service Unit* was well positioned to undertake. The development of victim and customer surveys mirrored what many other forces were doing but as the 1990s progressed the original rationale for surveying as a tool for direct line managers became less evident. Performance indicators emerged as a dominant driving force behind the *Quality of Service Unit* with the remedial action procedure, which formed an essential part of the early work, being discontinued. This having been done, the survey work became a less immediately impactful management tool moving emphasis away from ensuring individual customers in the process received immediate feedback or remedial action. However, as an effective way of monitoring general levels of customer satisfaction for management digest on a quarterly, and subsequently monthly basis, these figures maintained a force commitment to regarding qualitative measurement as an important performance indicator. The force inspections system developed alongside this to review wider aspects of policework during the mid to late 1990s, and made some use of the data attained by the *Quality of Service Unit*. However, the extent to which the unit failed to fulfil its full potential as a vehicle for accomplishing change, as opposed to a mechanism for collecting performance data, is a matter of record.

## Community Policing in Devon and Cornwall

If the term *community policing* had an association with any one police force, or any one individual, then Devon and Cornwall, and its chief constable between 1973 and 1982, John Alderson acquired such recognition. The term itself is not without problems of definition but, nonetheless, maintains a symbolic positive appeal even though over twenty years have passed since Alderson's ideas were first put into embryonic practice in the city of Exeter. The purpose of this chapter is to consider how the term *community policing* became defined and enacted in Devon and Cornwall during the era when Alderson was in command, and both before and after this; in total a period of some fifty years during which a number of major changes occurred in how the police organisation was both structured and managed. These considerations will involve the examination of police and public perceptions, details of internal management structures, development of local initiatives, and debate on which dimensions of community relations with the police have been most influential in determining the success, or otherwise, of working at community level. Many aspects of *community policing* have a basis in crime prevention and this is clearly the case with the development of Neighbourhood Watch which, for the purpose of this work, has been included in the following chapter dealing with crime prevention in Devon and Cornwall. In particular, the way in which these developments can be understood within the local environment of *Stonehouse* provides a more intimate focus on a number of the wider issues.

To set this scene, the initial sections will consider certain developments in Plymouth which

were prevalent during the 1950s and early to mid-1960s and became affected by strategic national changes to the policing environment. The way in which routine operational policing took place during the period between 1950 and 1967 (prior to the amalgamation of Plymouth with the rest of Devon and Cornwall) signifies an appropriate starting point for considering later developments in the city. Although relatively detailed in the extent to which the evidence portrays some of the structures and personal recollections prevalent to the period, it nevertheless underlines a strategy which epitomised the continuing reactive nature of local policing. Whilst general evidence based on the Plymouth City Police did not appear to focus attention on the 'community' nature of policing, interviews conducted with officers who served at the police base central to *Stonehouse*, *The Octagon*, provided an insight into how work was accomplished and the way in which this was perceived. The section which follows strays slightly further back in time than 1950 in relation to some of the background and comments about policing from *The Octagon*. However, it is relevant to do this, in order to understand the nature of policework within this small local environment. It is also useful to an understanding of how and why long-term residents of *Stonehouse* responded as they did in interviews dealing with the nature of community and policing in their area.

### ***The Octagon***

For almost three decades prior to the disbanding of the Plymouth City Police the 'street policing' of *Stonehouse* was conducted from *The Octagon* Police Station. Occupying a position at the ground floor corner of a three storey block of council flats, and accessed from Octagon Street just thirty yards from Union Street, *The Octagon*, was approved for occupation by the watch committee in 1935, and eventually became operational in 1938. The need for its positioning had less to do with the perceived needs of providing a service

for local residents than as an easy deployment post for policing public order problems in Union Street. It formed part of D division of Plymouth City Police and was the responsibility of a superintendent based at Ker Street Police Station in Devonport, about half a mile away. The facilities were sparse, as were those generally in Plymouth City stations of the day.

'It was just a flat: a charge room, a bit of a kitchen and toilet and a room with a table and lockers.' .... 'You were locking up these stinking bloody prostitutes and drunks while we was there eating our grub.' (AB)

Its lowly status and effect upon local policing morale were eluded to in a letter, sent anonymously on 6 August 1937 by a constable with twenty five and a half years service, to the Home Secretary of the day. In it he wrote:

'The Council has had a small police station built under some slum dwellers, as you can see by this photograph marked X. I should not think the Home Office would have that, this is the roughish part of our city with no police station with any cells in it. In this district are all the picture houses, theatres, amusement arcades, and about 70 public houses, some of them two policemen has to be outside at closing time on account of the class of people that frequent them, in the main street, there is a fun fair a disgrace to Plymouth, two policemen has to be stationed in there every night to throw out the rowdy characters who go there for the purpose of having a fight. There is not enough policemen here, some nights a policemen has to look after about 30 public houses. No lavatory accommodation a disgrace.'

This letter led to an enquiry involving handwriting experts who identified the writer as one constable Frank Toms. He appeared before the chief constable who requested his resignation as an alternative to appearing before the watch committee when a recommendation of dismissal without pension would be made. Toms resigned. He died in 1962.

Despite this criticism of the physical conditions, the sense of pride felt by retired officers from the war and post war period leading up to the change of use of the premises upon amalgamation to a CID and task force base was obvious in many comments. The



impression of camaraderie in adversity appeared instilled through feelings of having provided local residents with a much appreciated local service.

'The flat residents (Rendle Street/Octagon Street) regarded the police station as their own and even changed money there for the gas meter.' ... 'At *The Octagon* you were one of the family' .... 'well more than one family I suppose, there was a family of policemen, sure, but there was a bigger family outside and we were part of it.' ... 'It was understood that the station PC would look after the residents of the flats. They would come in when they couldn't sleep and talk to the office man.' ... 'They were as poor as church mice - but it was their community.' (DQ)

'Who else's shoulder could they cry on?' (QC)

'All sorts of people used to come in at night. The dark people living nearby in cheap lodging houses came in and asked for the time because of the black-out.' (AB)

These comments from officers whose working lives had revolved around policing in a force where a posting or promotion would take them literally only a maximum of a few miles in one direction or another can be interpreted as more than mere sentiment. The whole nature of policing such a small part of the city was implicitly linked with a need to feel protection and belonging from people and an environment which could often be hostile. In a time where safety was not provided through the benefits of personal radios and mobile 'metal boxes', the reliance officers felt had, as a matter of course, to be provided by their colleagues working in close proximity. Being a small and singular unit within a relatively compact city area had such perceived advantages for officers serving there.

'We were always within view of each other in Union Street and would always know roughly where we could find each other elsewhere. Because we all worked from *The Octagon* and knew each other and we knew about each other. We knew who was going to need helping out and who could handle himself in a rough-house.' (RC)

The unitary nature of policing from such a small station was one which was accompanied by some apparent concerns by senior officers as to its independent nature. A sergeant, who served at *The Octagon*, recalled:

'Skitter (Skittery the Chief Constable) used to come down. He'd say "I hear you've got a force of your own down here", joking really I suppose because he was the one who put me there.' (AB)

The extent of concern expressed by the hierarchy about how policing was conducted from *The Octagon* was not obvious from official documentation. Whereas the research has discovered obvious incidents of undisciplined conduct, assault complaints and criminal offences from the 1,800 or so cases to come before chief constables between 1892 and 1967, there was no common linkage or theme to the officers' posting or attitude relevant to *The Octagon* or Union Street areas.<sup>1</sup> However, the acceptance that its policing style may not have met with universal acceptance and was subject to more local cultural rules of engagement than elsewhere was implicit in comments made by a former Superintendent serving in the early 1960s who had responsibility for the area from his base in the divisional headquarters at Ker Street.

'I had the impression that *The Octagon* was a police force within a police force.' [*what in particular gave you that impression?*] 'I suppose the way we acted, as a group who were there doing a dirty job and had to put up with the aggro on the streets every night.' ... 'There was an inbuilt pride in what we did down there and we policed in a way which might not have been approved of officially.' ... 'The bosses knew what went on though and I knew when I was a higher rank ... approved of a lot of it I suppose ... but couldn't say so out loud.' ... 'AB (*the sergeant quoted above*), he was the backbone, and IV, (*a constable serving at the station for many years*) they were it - not me. I was the person who's name went up front for everything; but policing, real policing, was done by them - they led and did it well most of the time. People followed a strong lead.' [*It's been suggested that *The Octagon* was a "force within a force". Do you think that is a fair description?*] 'Only in as much it was a part of the city policed in a hard way but I don't think it was the only place like that.' (DV)

The central theme returned to remorselessly by officers who had served at *The Octagon* was one of maintaining public order, mainly in Union Street. The 'strip', as it is now infectiously referred to by these officers' contemporaries historically portrayed the 'big city'

<sup>1</sup> The Plymouth City Police discipline book, now held at the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary Museum in Exeter, contained, in one bound volume, all cases which came before the Chief Constables of the period.

image of trouble in a predominantly rural county. The kudos of having served in, and policed, Union Street continues to be one of the more impressive career achievements of police officers in the modern force without any detailed evaluation being considered as to the precise nature of how policing was done.

'They can't take that away from you, two years at Charlies (*Charles Cross Police Station*) or Devonport - it will always stand you in good stead.' (CD)

To have survived without adverse comment on any aspect of an individual's ability, rather than most appropriate practice, tended to be the benchmark of a successful tour on the 'mean streets' of Plymouth. Indeed the pre-amalgamation Plymouth City officers regularly cited incidents of violence in Union Street to emphasise their own, or their colleagues', strengths as good police officers. For those who served at *The Octagon* theirs was a sense of having been selected to perform a role due to personal attributes of good solid policing tradition. As Toms wrote in a subsequent letter of appeal to the Home Secretary on 4 April 1938:

'We were a kind of picked men for this locality, because that is where a Policeman got to be a Policeman. "And may I say a man".'

The sergeant referred to above as one of 'the backbones' of *The Octagon* held a similar view of his vocation:

'The Chief Constable said to me "I want you to show the young men how to keep order there." He meant in Union Street and there you had to keep them (the public) in order.' (AB)

And order there would apparently be. But the recollections of officers at *The Octagon* was of two specific types of order: that necessary to quell disorder brought about through 'large scale' disturbances in Union Street (primarily involving service personnel), often couched in humorous remembrance:

'The old Paramount dance hall' ... 'a real disturbance one night. A group of yobbos wanted to get the Yanks' ... 'We saw there would be trouble as soon as they went there and there was.' ... 'we went in and chucked 'em out and rounded 'em up. A dozen easily.' ... 'I threw the bastards down the steps. I whacked one with my truncheon and they all started to shout out "They hit him. He hit him." and then the landlady said (to me) "Oh *Charlie*, you've hit the bloody bandsman, he's one of ours!" I said "Served the bastard right, he's been playing like a cunt all night." ... 'All these bastards were charged and they all had two months.' (AB)

'HMS Bulwark was in and Naval Patrol had heard there was going to be trouble. There were hundreds of them from Two Trees [*a local pub*] to *The Octagon*. I used the speaker system on the car and they lined up in threes.' ... 'I shouted over the speaker like a sergeant major "Quick march and sing you bastards, sing." They did and off we went down Union Street back to their ship.' ... 'At the old bomb site I said "Fall out for a slash". I marched them all to St. Levan Gate and there: "Fall out for oggies."' (IA)

...and a more delicate form of social order to which the apparently deserving residents of the area would be treated.

'I can think of one time in particular: I got him 6 months for stealing and he was worried about his wife and family. I went straight from court to his wife, leant her some money and she repaid it. National Assistance came down within the hour.' (IA)

'You made it your business to tell people what was happening and they, in return, used to tell you things.' (DQ)

'People used to look after each other more than today. They knew who their neighbours were and they helped each other. I remember a right villain who lived there and when his wife was poorly his neighbours who were all straight down-the-line still went in and saw she was OK.' (BP)

'Remember I was the superintendent so didn't actually work there then but the people down there thought the world of the police. I knew because people would say to me things like "why don't you bring him back" about officers who used to work there.' (DV)

'People weren't afraid of us. We didn't have to make people afraid to get our job done or keep them in order. Not like what I saw on TV the other day, you remember when Downing Street was bombed, that PC out in the street shouting at the cameramen.' ... 'I remember it took me a lot more time to get the confidence of the people down at the Barbican than it did around Rendle Street flats.' (QC)

There was a sense of policing two communities, one an overt controlling presence to maintain order amongst the transient, night time community, based around the pubs and clubs of Union Street; and the other a 'community based' control model constructed on

perceived 'consent' and assistance. But what of the public's perceptions of policing? Again, their recollections clearly had to be treated with caution because of the relatively small number of individuals who were interviewed in depth.<sup>2</sup> Comments tended to be more interesting than objectively illuminating but were, nevertheless, appropriate 'snap-shots' of certain aspects of policing. The perception of the *Stonehouse* police revolved around notions of 'hard but fair' work being done which met with the approval of local residents. Resident interviews made reference to the more 'corporal' nature of policing but notions of what might have been defined as *community policing* were equally as ambiguous as their police 'servants'.

'They were times much harder than now. The police might have been about more but some of them didn't speak to you.' (ref: 2/1991)

'Where we lived you were lucky if you ever saw a policeman. There were plenty in Union Street and the rougher areas where there was trouble, but they didn't patrol up and down our street, that's for sure.' (ref: 5/1991)

'I suppose it was community policing because they were at *The Octagon* and that was our 'community' I suppose.' (ref: 33/1991)

There was an underlying tone of acceptance that a degree of class played a part in relationships between police and public. The police were portrayed as basically 'working-class' individuals who had an affinity with the residents of the area. However, their role was perceived as controllers and helpers rather than as friends and associates. Examples tended towards a remembrance of the police as people who you 'could not trust' but who would 'always be prepared to help' in times of need. Residents who recalled the Plymouth City period were normally able to name at least one police officer either with whom they had dealings, or whom they knew by sight or reputation.

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<sup>2</sup> The total number of interviews with 'long-term' residents (pre-1980) was 13. Brief descriptions of all victims personally interviewed, together with the crime committed against them, is shown at appendix 'K'.

'You could call at the police station [*The Octagon*] if you needed help and it would be given when they could.' (ref: 23/1991)

'I know they would bend the rules to get convictions and they would be pretty rough when the need arose, but I think they were basically OK.' (ref: 6/1994)

'When my mum needed some help with a 'lodger' she called them and a constable come along. There was a bit of ruckus but he [*the lodger*] left and my mum made the constable a cup of tea.' ..... 'He would pop in again from time to time and have a 'cuppa'.' (ref: 29/1991)

What linkages, then, between these recollections and *community policing*? It could be said that, in terms of the pro-active nature of the system which was to emerge over a decade after amalgamation, there were few direct similarities which were found from the interviews with residents of the area. The trend was equally apparent in recollections leading up to 1979 with little to indicate that a bond outside the strictly defined roles of 'police' and 'policed' existed. Where there did appear to be commonality in interpretation was at a level where neither perceived the police role as being oppressive in a formal sense. Whereas there were examples cited which would accurately fit a definition of 'oppression' in individual circumstances, the overriding tone was one of 'belonging' and 'ownership' based on a geographic and social area. There was also 'compassion' for individuals in certain circumstances. It was a one-way compassion in that police would recollect their thoughts on how they felt sympathy for individual residents (including some of the criminals) in the encounters which they had with them but there was little compassion offered in return. What there was, was a degree of recalled gratitude where specific circumstances were related. It was not necessarily the 'oh thank you so much' type of gratitude, as a more general appreciation of police officers just doing their jobs and occasionally bending rules or going outside their immediate remit to help. Exceptions, either way, can always be found, but in the course of the interviews tended not to be.

That policing was conducted in a hard way was not indicative of it also being uncompromising. The attitude with which officers and others recounted them performing their duties regularly underlined the nature of the 'compassion' which was perceived to unwittingly permeate the recollections. A letter which was written to the chief constable on 24 October 1959 from a convicted prisoner bore testimony to one specific officer, Constable Arthur Uzzell, who had served in the city between 1925 and 1959. He had passed away on 22 October of that year. The letter contained the following comments:

'As you know, Sir, Arthur Uzzle [*prisoner's spelling*] was always greatly respected and admired by the men from Plymouth. Sir, on behalf of all the men in here from Plymouth we are asking you if you would be kind enough to pass on our very deepest regrets and sympathy to Mr. Uzzle's relations and to the people who are closely connected to him. Many of us here will always remember Arthur as one of the finest person whom we have ever known' ... 'Arthur was a good one. He spent his life doing what he could to help other people and he never tired of trying to make things as pleasant as possible for us.' (Police Review, 13 November 1959, p.774)

One such example clearly does not provide an indication of everyone in Plymouth Police being as compassionate and considerate as Arthur. Records of discipline and complaint revealed numerous relatively minor misdemeanours as well as some elements of dishonesty and more regular entries concerning officers' inappropriate drinking habits (although such entries were far more plentiful during the early half of the century than during the post-1950s).<sup>3</sup> Whereas the level of service provided appears now to have been recalled with some degree of fondness, one police constable of the 1960s did reveal his personal concerns that there was an underlying level of corruption which was informally acknowledged, but never checked.

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<sup>3</sup> There were relatively few formal complaints found from members of the public but this is of no great surprise as the nature of policework at the time would have dictated that the sergeant or inspector at the station concerned would have dealt with the matter without necessarily recourse to more formal channels. Thus, it is inappropriate to think of the era prior to amalgamation as being one which was free from scandal or corruption.

'It depends what you mean by corrupt. There were bent coppers, but only a handful and no one had any time for them. But there were others who, today you would say were corrupt, but then it wasn't seen that way.' ... 'the pocket book for a start was probably one of the biggest fairy tales going. I know one officer who had lost the evidence - it was a broken bottle from a fight, with blood on it. He got a bottle and broke it and nicked his finger to squeeze blood over it before he went to court.' ... 'no one would accept it today and I suppose we shouldn't have then, but he would have been disciplined if he had said he lost evidence.' (JM)

### ***Unit Beat Policing***

If *community policing* is to be considered in its widest sense, and related to how the interaction between police and public is not only accomplished, but perceived, then the Unit Beat system (UBP) has to be an important step in the evolution of modern day policing. Its inception is generally acknowledged as having had its roots in a scheme developed in the town of Kirkby in Lancashire during 1964<sup>4</sup> where the amalgamation of eleven foot patrol beats to form five areas covered by 24 hour mobile patrols with personal radio communication was established to address high crime and vandalism rates. The apparent fall in crime and rise in detection rates during the following year resulted in the Home Office Police Research and Planning Branch becoming involved in the initiation of a modified version of the Kirkby scheme which was to run in Accrington later that year. It involved four mobile patrol beats with two constables within each area being responsible for foot patrol with a detective also being assigned responsibility for the area. This, together with the establishment of a police 'collator' who was responsible for collecting and disseminating information, formed the basis upon which the new faster response mobile units and maintenance of a visible foot presence was seen to provide the best of new technology and traditional policing methods (Weatheritt, 1986).

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<sup>4</sup> See chapter 2: *From Dixon to Dilemma*, for further information on UBP in relation to the chief constable of Lancashire's subsequent appointment as Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary.



This section will outline, in more detail, how UBP was introduced to Plymouth and Devon and Cornwall. The nature of the changes which it brought about at local level are considered against the views and opinions of officers and residents who took part in the interviews. UBP will be considered first of all from the Plymouth perspective because it was this area in which the initiative was progressed during 1966 whilst the city was still under the command of its own chief constable, Ronald Gregory. A superintendent who was interviewed for this research recalled that he had already begun a scheme a year earlier which he considered was not dissimilar to UBP in its concept, but lacking some of the then more innovative use of technology which was fast becoming available.

'I started a system when I went there and Inspector RL who was then a sergeant at Ker Street was with me. I told him I wanted a very large map on my wall showing the area. I got flags, not flags, pins, for crimes to put on it. I got it up in two to three weeks. Then I asked for a car and had a driver. We only had one, a Ford Prefect, it had a driver in uniform and others in civvies. There was a system up in Lancashire where it had started where they had a terrific amount of crime. This system was nothing like that. I had a small group who worked a month with no holiday then had a week off. Three officers would be dropped off and later on they were picked up and another three dropped off - dropping off, coming back. They were concentrating on the prevalent crimes on the map. I had a sergeant in charge of them. It was so successful crime just fell - finished. This was only in C division. The Mets sent two people down from the Home Office to interview me and look at the system. They told Ronald Gregory that they wanted this system breaking down to see why it was successful. We did all this - I explained it all to them. After a few months we packed it up and they introduced the Lancashire system.' (DV)

The experiment was referred to in the Annual Report of the force in May 1967 in the following terms which were portrayed in a more positive light than the recollections of 'DV'.

In February 1966 an experimental system of policing was introduced in the Devonport Division to measure the effectiveness of combined uniform and plain clothes patrols to deal with:

- (i) commitments where it was considered a man in uniform was necessary;
- (ii) crime pattern areas where plain clothes patrols could be more effective;
- (iii) the examination and supervision of vulnerable and high value property by mobile patrols without fixed beat coverage and

- (iv) the allocation of selected officers to specific tasks, e.g., breaking offences, thefts from unattended cars, indecency offences etc.

After a period of 12 months the results were found to be inconclusive, but many lessons were learned and the Research and Planning Branch at Home Office were able to formulate the basis of a new method of policing which was subsequently to be introduced as "unit-beat policing".

(Plymouth City Police, 1967, p.31)

The arrangements for UBP in Plymouth were set out in a letter from the Home Office dated 5th December 1966 to the Chief Constable:

'As regards equipment, we will provide six Morris 1100 saloon cars, three automatics and three geared. It will be very interesting to see how they compare. The cars will be painted to our specification and will be taxed for the year. they will be on loan to you for six months. We have also consulted Communications Branch regarding personal radio and they have agreed to co-operate. It is anticipated that we shall require about thirty sets for the experiment.' .... 'We are also considering an experiment with a form of centralised dictation which can be used with personal radio. I am not sure how we can do this, but if we decide to try it, I would be pleased if we can introduce it in Plymouth to run with this experiment.'

The scheme was an immediate success! According to divisional order no. 1/1967 dated 24 January:

'UNIT BEAT POLICING SYSTEM

On the 11 th December, 1966 a pilot scheme of Unit Beat Policing was commenced in 'B' Division. This has *proved successful* (author's italicisation) and it is now intended to extend the scheme to the whole of 'B' Division. In conjunction with the Home Office Research and Planning Branch the experiment will extend for 6 months from 12th February, 1967.'

There should be little surprise at this given the local context - 'success' was more likely to be defined as '*to date the wheel hasn't come off*' as to any objective evaluation set against specific criteria of accomplishment. The entry gives support to Weatheritt's (1986) contention that little research of any consequence was conducted to analyse the perceived advantages of UBP. The 'Reflections on the Experiment' document (Gregory,<sup>5</sup> 1967) was,

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<sup>5</sup> The report was prepared by E. Gregory at the Home Office and not R. Gregory the Chief Constable of Plymouth. The two were reputed to be brothers which may have had some influence on the choice of force for one of the early experiments following on from Lancashire.

she explains, not a research study but primarily an 'operational *aide memoire*' giving advice on such issues as the preferred residency of officers, tenure of post and single or double crewing of patrol cars. The divisional order continued:

'AIMS

- (1) To increase police efficiency.
- (2) Cultivate a better understanding with members of the public by:-
  - (a) Closed contact with the man on the beat.
  - (b) Swifter response to calls for assistance and complaints.
- (3) To increase and improve the information flow.
- (4) By combining resources to overcome the shortage of police officers.
- (5) To create a new challenge in the method of beat working, particularly for the younger constables.'

By August 1967, two months after amalgamation, plans were already well advanced to extend the scheme further in Plymouth. UBP became the newly established policing ethos for the people of *Stonehouse*. There was little about it which the public could feel dramatically concerned at this point and, whereas the publicity afforded the scheme concentrated upon the positive nature of providing everyone with a modern, well-equipped crime fighting organisation, little (if any) attention was directed towards evaluation of what the public actually thought of the service.

If the 1950-67 period could be argued as a conventional epitome of what the public expected to be *community policing* then the nature of UBP was to drastically alter perceptions. It was also a watershed which was recalled equally by police and residents alike in the interviews. Whether public attitudes towards aspects of UBP pre-dated concerns which were felt by the police themselves is dubious. In Plymouth, however, the negative perceptions of changes which were occurring could not be laid totally at the door of UBP as it emerged at the same time as the loss of the city's own constabulary. More importantly to those involved in the area, it would appear, was the concurrent loss of *The*

*Octagon* as an operational uniform station.<sup>6</sup> Before considering UBP in more detail it is worth revisiting *The Octagon* and some of the recollections which accompanied its demise. Not surprisingly the feelings of that station 'belonging' to both police and residents alike resulted in a belief that lack of the close locality of police officers, at least in a work situation, if not a residential one, was partly to blame for the perceived breakdown in police-public relations since amalgamation. Officers who had served at *The Octagon* recalled:

'Yes, *The Octagon* could open up again and people would know they could come in there. You could build up to the policing as it was 23 years ago.' [but don't you feel that society and the people who live there today would not accept the strong-arm policing of the past?] 'In time, it would take time, but we could do it. It would work, but gradually.' (IA)

'It was a mistake to close it down. I hear about how they are thinking of setting up shops where people can go in some areas and in towns to meet their needs. Well *The Octagon* did that, and very well, so why shut it?' (DQ)

'There is too much centralisation. *The Octagon* would be right there - in where it happens. There was no doubt in the policeman's minds about what the problems were because they were there - in it. They could respond to it, knowing what it was all about. Not like today. Today they come in from outside and no one really cares. Well they care, but they don't understand and appreciate the results of what they do. They don't really know what they mean to the people who live there, and I think, if *The Octagon* was still there, the people down there would think an awful lot more of the police.' (DV)

Residents' views of the appropriate nature of having a police base close to their community were recounted in terms not dissimilar to those of police officers. Its loss was perceived to be symbolic of negative change in much the same way that constables riding around in cars rather than walking was. Recollections were commonly depicted at this level of symbolism rather than in accounts of how the station being where it was had provided specific services for residents:

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<sup>6</sup> Unit Beat Policing does not stand alone in its importance to the policing of Plymouth and *Stonehouse* during the late 1960s and 1970s because other factors such as the loss of Plymouth City Police accompanied its occurrence in the early stages, and changes to the divisional structures of the force which followed in later years. But it is a stage in the evolution of policing the city which is identified with by many officers and residents alike from a variety of perspectives.

'I do think it was a wrong move to move away from the area. It might not have been much more than an office, but at least people knew where the police were - not too far away from where they lived.' (ref: 5/1994)

'There were times when I would actually walk back home that way because I knew the police station was there. It meant I actually had to walk closer to Union Street than I might have done otherwise but at least you knew there were going to be policemen about in that area.' (ref: 3/1994)

'It would be nice to have a local station back. Not saying that place necessarily, maybe just a base where they could be somewhere in the area. Not hundreds of them, just enough so we know there was a policeman always in the area.' (ref: 31/1991)

What, then, of the perceptions which accompanied the new techno-mechanical age of structured policing under UBP? To begin with it is important to realise that, of those officers who were spoken to, few had initial reservations about a number of the advances which were being made to bring their local police into the twentieth century. Radios might not originally have been plentiful enough for each officer to have one issued to them for each tour of duty which they performed, and motor vehicles were not supplied in such quantity as to negate the necessity for many to still ride 'Shanks's pony'. However, there was an unmistakable theme which identified many of the changes as being beneficial.

'I think most saw it as a move towards making us more professional. It certainly meant we were able to do our work without having to be chased up hill and down dale by the sergeant every two minutes. He could check up on you over the radio if he needed to.' (RC)

'The cars were great because you knew you could get a fair bit more done and didn't have to break your back going from A to B on foot.' (BC)

'I know a lot of officers now look back and say Unit Beat was a bad thing for the police but I was aware of quite a few at the time who couldn't wait to get their hands on the radios and cars which came with the package.' ... 'Perhaps there were others who didn't appreciate it as much but I suspect that they would say that to any sort of change.' (ER)

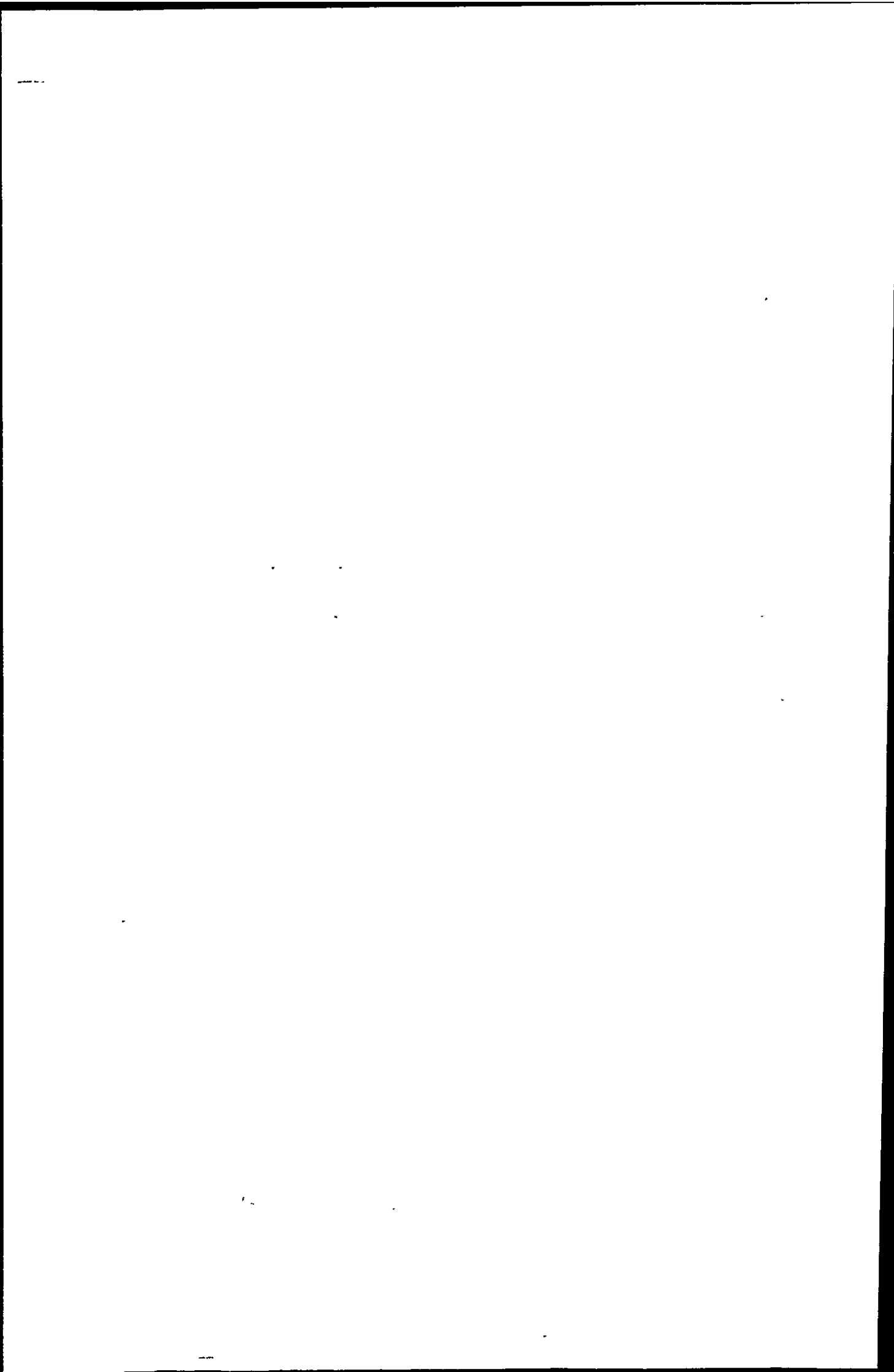
The exceptions were obvious, although not as plentiful in replies as those appreciating the technological advances. ER's final comment is possibly an accurate reflection of life in general and at least one officer spoken to appeared to fall within this category.

'Change, bloody change. It just moved on so damn quick. No one knew where they were or what they were supposed to be doing. Walkie-talkies, cars, new instructions - better they left it alone and did things a bit more slowly.' (RD)

The experience of UBP did affect the nature of policing in Plymouth during the years which were to follow. However, consideration of policing as being one which was valued because of its local nature also brought into question the extent to which officers who worked in the area also resided there and, by implied definition from the types of comments from residents of the area, had an affinity and understanding for the types of problems the communities encountered.

### *The Alderson Era*

It was in Devon and Cornwall that *Community Policing* first came to be given wide public prominence on the back of the large-scale public disorder in cities throughout Britain which occurred during the early 1980s. Through the pioneering activities of John Alderson, the chief constable between 1973 and 1982, community policing elaborated on the necessity to link police and community in a concerted alliance against disorder and crime. Alderson began an experiment in 1976 based in Exeter (Moore and Brown, 1981) which drew police and other agencies closer together in their respective responsibilities with a view to 'cutting crime off in the seedbed.' Targeted work on the extent of crime and who committed it, together with 'pro-active' initiatives to draw police officers themselves closer to the community in non-confrontational situations were key elements of the new *community policing* philosophy. *Resident Beat Officers* (RBOs) or *Community Constables*



were advised that only half of their time spent policing was to be on routine patrol, whilst the rest was to be devoted to working with the community, for the community. This meant that direct involvement of such officers in the running, and even setting up, of community facilities such as youth clubs and voluntary initiatives was encouraged. It was a scheme which, by May 1979, was seen as being ready to be implemented across the rest of the force area.

Community policing in Devon and Cornwall was introduced across the Force some twelve years after amalgamation. The recollections of the author at the time when he joined the service (about a year before community policing was launched forcewide) was one of a days work in St Austell, Cornwall being ordered and routine with enough stress to excite when necessary but insufficient to break the back of the proverbial camel. Community policing was launched there at a meeting when a senior officer addressed the constables and sergeants informing them of who would be covering which area as a 'new and improved' constable. Such 'marketing' (or lack of it) led to widespread misunderstanding and scepticism over the initiative, particularly as many of the country police stations which, in the view of many, offered the ideal base for true community policing had now been sold and a more rational form of reactionary policing was already being conducted from central locations such as St Austell. In addition the 'Panda' had bitten hard. Few officers ever walked country beats and, although the halcyon days were still recounted with fondness, there was much less of a wish to become more directly involved with the community by spending hours walking when a car was more comfortable and 'safe'.

The, then radical nature of Alderson's opinions, which formed the basis of a number of his books and papers, did not win him universal support from rank and file officers or even



senior colleagues from other forces. One of the most public examples of the dislike which his own patrol officers felt about the new philosophy was broadcast on national radio<sup>7</sup> during 1979 and subsequently reported in *Police Review* (6 April 1979, pp.538-539). One police officer interviewed for the programme offered the following personal view:

'Alderson tends to talk way over people's heads. He is not addressing a seminar at the bloody Queen's College, or whatever it is; he's talking to the people of Plymouth, or Devon and Cornwall. I get the impression that people think "what the hell has he just said?'

There was a perception that his doctrine, which acknowledged a Durkheimian perspective<sup>8</sup> of crime being a natural part of society and one which saw cure as only ever partial and relative to society's acceptance of behavioural norms, overturned much of established policing culture by concentrating too readily on offender-based models of crime reduction. This model, growing as it did from the Exeter-Crime Prevention Support Unit (CPSU), was strongly based around inter-agency co-operation and wider police-public consultative groups. Within five years of community policing being implemented in Devon and Cornwall some of these notions were enshrined in legislation (*Police and Criminal Evidence Act, 1984*) following the recommendations of Lord Justice Scarman to whom Alderson had given evidence at the enquiry into the Brixton disorders.<sup>9</sup>

The work of *community constables* was intended to be deliberately 'pro-active' in its approach, along the lines of the Exeter CPSU experiment, and was one which emphasised the integrated approach to policing which involved other groups and individuals from the

<sup>7</sup> BBC Radio 4 'File on Four' programme.

<sup>8</sup> 'Crime is normal because a society exempt from it is utterly impossible' (Emile Durkheim, *The Rules of Sociological Method*, New York Free Press, 1964, p.67).

<sup>9</sup> Latterly, the multi-agency approach to crime prevention gathered even greater significance with the Morgan Report (Home Office, 1991a) and as a priority of the new Labour government in 1998 with the enactment of Crime and Disorder legislation (Home Office, 1998), see chapter 12: *1997-1999 and into a new century*.

community. In 1979, the reality of inter-agency co-operation was one which was boosted through the decision to fund a 'unique £170,000 Government experiment to bring police and Social Services together in new initiatives to tackle crime and other problems involving young people'. The joint venture 'the first of its type in Britain' was a result of 'national interest in new *community policing* concepts being developed by Devon and Cornwall's Chief Constable'. Funded by the Department of the Environment as a five year research project it sought to bring 'elements of the two agencies together under one roof (and) strengthen existing procedures and build on them for the future.'<sup>10</sup>

Clearly the respective positions of establishment agencies such as social services and probation had ideological and professional positions which needed to be addressed in identifying the common denominators which existed in any co-operative functions to be undertaken with the police.<sup>11</sup> There were formal and voluntary mechanisms of integration which became established during the mid to late 1980s, some of which were more routine, rather than inspirational, functions. However, whereas the concept had been developed along the pioneering efforts of Alderson's CPSU, the position of the officers who had been newly assigned to positions as *community constables* across the force area did not fit clearly within this framework when devolved to a local level. The building blocks had been carefully laid to enable these constables to have a wider strategic view of how their role, and that of other agencies, could be understood and built on.<sup>12</sup> The evidence of the actual development, however, saw the specialist function held within the headquarters inspired initiative, whilst the locally based 'resident-beat' function developed

<sup>10</sup> Devon and Cornwall Constabulary press release, 23 May 1979 (see Forbes et al., 1979, appndx. 6).

<sup>11</sup> A situation which was acknowledged as needing to be addressed in the early stages of debate over how best to police communities, as indicated, for example by Kilby and Constable (1975) and Howe (1975).

<sup>12</sup> Primarily through a two day locally based training programme for community constables (see Forbes et al., 1979, appndx. 4).

a more day-to-day visible imperative than a structured and integrated social service approach.

*The problematic evolution of community constables*

1984 saw the development of the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary's 'Community Services Department' which was to become the 'Youth and Community Department' during the following year. It provided, what one of Alderson's chief constable successors, Donald Elliott<sup>13</sup> saw as 'a strengthening of the already good relationship with other agencies ... to ensure that young people are given every possible chance to develop into responsible and law abiding members of the community' (Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, 1986, p.5). The department oversaw the work of six juvenile bureaux located in each division of the force. In Plymouth, the bureau was established in conjunction with social services and the staff involved worked alongside each other in shared premises owned by the local authority. Part of the remit of the bureau involved administering a new tiered cautioning policy for young offenders. At a different level, social services and the probation department were directing their efforts towards the support of functions and initiatives which were more diversely supportive of community and individual needs. Part of the rationale for this related to the opportunities for voluntary groups to achieve alternative funding which the formal institutions were forbidden to seek. Close linkage with voluntary funded groups enabled finance to be targeted in such a way as to benefit the workings of social services, probation and voluntary groups alike.

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<sup>13</sup> Donald Elliott, QPM, was chief constable of Devon and Cornwall between 1984 and 1989, then moving to a position in Her Majesty's Inspectorate, eventually retiring from the service in 1996. Between Alderson's retirement and Elliott taking command, David East, the deputy chief constable under Alderson had been promoted to chief constable of the force.

The level at which these developments had a direct impact upon the work of *community constables* was less observable from the point of view of both police and public. These were targeted measures, often with the primary beneficiaries being most obvious as those who had in some way transgressed societal rules. Youth and community services had become a centrally led function and the development of specialist officers within the divisions, operating under this banner, drew into question the precise nature of the rôle which *community constables* were expected to perform. The terms of reference for a police inspector who undertook an evaluation of the role of *community constables* in Plymouth during 1986 included the question of whether they were 'the first tier in a community policing system or simply window dressing to appease the community?' (Shaw, 1987, p.1). Thirty three officers responded to a questionnaire which was sent to all fifty seven *community constables* in the city. Almost half felt that 'other social agencies' working in the area saw the problems which were cited by the officers themselves in the same way as they did, with a similar proportion identifying that there were tasks which the police undertook which 'might be dealt with by other agencies' (p.17).

Devon and Cornwall was the subject of research in the field of *community policing* in the early 1980s when a comparison was made of the scheme with one of policing in Greater Manchester (Jones, 1983). In addition to establishing relatively high levels of public confidence in the police, where aspects of *community policing* were most obvious, Jones sought to compare the perceptions of both public and police concerning the image which they felt was portrayed. Where public expressions of satisfaction were concerned, these regularly fell below those which were perceived to be their levels of satisfaction by police officers in Devon and Cornwall (although in Greater Manchester the opposite was the case). The most noticeable variation was in Plymouth where 74% of the public interviewed

indicated that they felt satisfied with the way community policing was developing, whilst 89% of police officers asked said they felt that the public were satisfied with the situation. In March 1987, the results of an internal review concerning the role of community constables was finalised in Devon and Cornwall. This work concluded that it had been 'difficult to isolate the role of the community constable from that of any other PPD<sup>14</sup> constable for, in many respects, it is identical' and went on to indicate that conditions under which officers designated as *community constables* had to operate did not allow the concept of *proactivity* envisaged by Alderson to be accomplished (Willcox et al., 1987).

The inception of the scheme in Plymouth had less dramatic effects in terms of geographic upheaval than in the rest of Devon and Cornwall. The contextuality within Plymouth bore a closer relationship to one of lost leadership and unwelcoming locale than difficulties associated with those in other areas of the Force such as St Austell. There was an apparent resentment, recalled by the officers interviewed for this thesis, concerning what were seen as Alderson's idealistic and political intentions.<sup>15</sup>

'I know everybody got really excited about Devon and Cornwall when the riots occurred and said that we'd got it right, but we were doing all that already. It wasn't community policing that made us accepted in the community - we already were.'  
(DG)

'Alderson just wanted to feather his own nest - you can see that. His ideas were "don't lock 'em up, talk to them instead" and getting involved in running youth clubs and the like. Officers got prizes for it.' (IV)

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<sup>14</sup> PPD stood for 'Preventative Policing Department', a title given to officers performing routine patrol functions. 'Formerly described as the uniformed branch, the title ... denotes a determination to prevent crime by social action rather than simply reacting after offences have been committed' (Chief Constable's Annual Report, 1979, p. 16).

<sup>15</sup> The latter was re-enforced to many when, following his retirement, he stood as the Liberal parliamentary candidate for Teignbridge in 1983 (he was unsuccessful and did not stand for political office again).

The comments of officers were similar to those made in outspoken form during the 'File on Four' radio broadcast of 1979.<sup>16</sup> The officers from Plymouth who were interviewed in the programme had a sanguine view of *community policing* and what it would mean to them.

'I think our job is quite simple, and if he starts to complicate it with these funny ideas, I think a lot of people are going to get disgruntled with the job, jack it in, move away, transfer. It's starting now you know?' ..... 'They understand [Alderson's views] all right, but they don't want them.'

'The Chief's idea is that if someone throws a piece of fish and chip paper down on the floor we're supposed to tell them it's anti-social. Well you get a chap and you tell him it's anti-social, he thinks you're just a pile of muck and he'll pitch into you.'

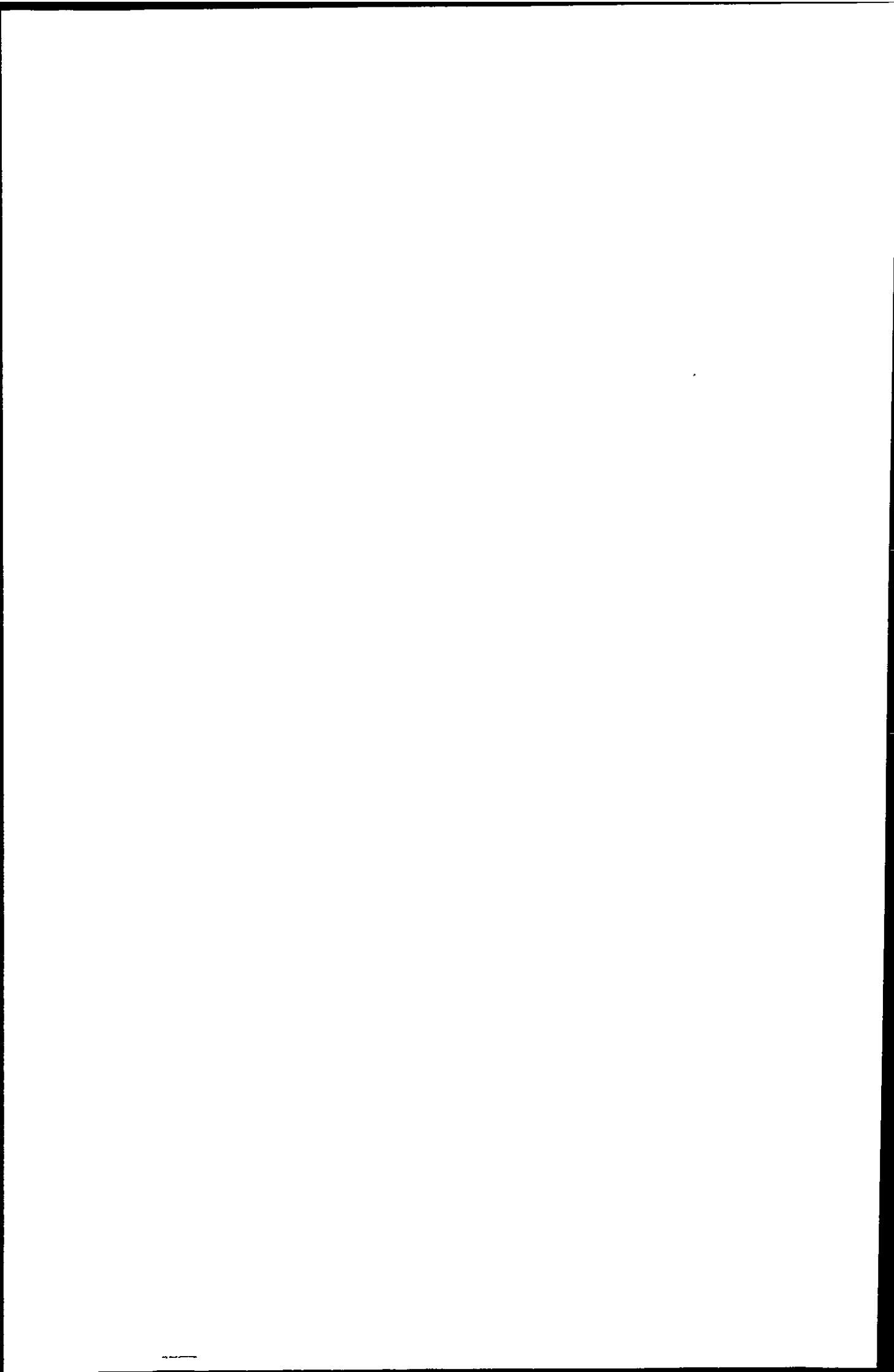
Alderson's own comments in the programme acknowledged the problem and depicted the issues which were prevalent in a city environment to be more difficult to overcome than in other areas.

'... I think you will find that it's more difficult to convert, if that's the right word, officers who work in response circumstances in city centres. They do see the atmosphere as hostile and that is quite dangerous and it causes this drift and this alienation. It is an occupying army syndrome and I've got to explain to these officers that is not acceptable.'

Despite such negative views, *community policing* had become a catalyst to change in policing philosophy which was to develop even more dramatically in the following years within many other areas of the country. To a large extent the feelings which officers appeared to hold, or at least, publicly proclaimed they held, was a reaction to change, but also a reaction to Alderson himself who was perceived by some as an academic rather than a policeman. The 'File on Four' quotes are clearly ideal fodder for media broadcasts and there would be great difficulty in sustaining an argument that the whole basis on which

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<sup>16</sup> The quotes from the programme were reproduced in *Police Review* (6 April 1979, pp.538-539).



Devon and Cornwall's *community policing* was built was universally dismissed by officers as worthless. Evidence tends to show that it was at least a title which encouraged positive attitudes from the public and the creation of a feel-good factor about how the local police were determined to place working in the community environment higher on the agenda. The same evidence also indicates that few had a genuine understanding of what the details of *community policing* actually involved, with many relating it back to pre-1979 determinants of foot patrol, or the 'bobby on the beat' (a 'picture' which was neatly coloured-in through media interpretations of the concept also). The term 'community' was an essential element to its public acceptance as 'not only is this word rich in symbolic power, but it lacks any negative connotations' (Cohen, 1985, p. 117).

But the essence of the Alderson model bore deliberate attention on the notion of consultation and policing by the community as well as the formal police organisation. It was an early attempt to convince that communities policed themselves and that the police role was one of assisting them to so do. The underlying message that the police would now 'control' less, but assist to 'control', is one which remained at the heart of the debate on policing, arguably through the initiatives of the Conservative party's post-Thatcher period and more clearly with the recent Labour government moves towards police being seen as partners in the enterprise of crime reduction and not necessarily the lead agencies.

### *Stonehouse's Community Constables*

There were still degrees of negotiation and trade-offs necessary in 1979 in order to fill the number of vacancies available for *community constables*. An officer who undertook one of the first community roles in *Stonehouse* recalls:



'I was called in and he (the superintendent) said "I see you're getting married in October." They wanted me to move to Bodmin Traffic. I said "well that's going to be dandy for me!" or words to that effect anyway. Then he said "Well I've got a vacancy here for a community constable cause I've got to find three more because they're starting this community policing, if you take that I guarantee you won't go to Bodmin traffic." I said "Thank you, I'll take it." It wasn't till I walked out the door I realised.' (CG)

Other officers who had already established what was, effectively, a 'community' basis as their policing style adapted to the role more readily.

'They asked me to be a community constable. I said "I already am."' (LG)

However, *Stonehouse* had lost *The Octagon* police station twelve years previously and police deployment had been based far more on a reactive style of policing from the centrally based city centre stations during this period. Society had also changed dramatically; now more ready to question the role and authority of a uniform presence and react to what was, in the eyes of many, an alien rather than integrated presence.

'I knew my residents. I could walk there, by myself, without any fear. When I (first) went there I had lumps of rock and stone all thrown at me. St Peter's Secondary School, I wouldn't dare walk past the playground there, I'd be absolutely mobbed with stuff coming over the wire. With a hundred kids in the playground there's no way you could ever identify who throws what could you? Not that they'd tell you anyway. But I cracked that, I kept going back there every day and I kept going back and in the end of course they.... I mean in a place like Rendle Street Flats that's where there was an awful lot of them. I could walk in most of those flats and there wouldn't be any trouble and deal with people and I'd deal with them in difficult circumstances.' [For you to have to go in and overcome that beforehand seems quite an indictment of policing the place pre-1979] 'Yes, I think it is to a degree because when they lost *The Octagon* they lost what they saw as their police.' (CG)

Another of the community constables, who served in the area for over a decade, proclaimed much of the philosophy to which Alderson prescribed as central to the style of policing which he developed in *Stonehouse*.

'What you're doing is building up a relationship with the majority of the public then instead of dealing with a minority of the public which we're doing most of the time, which has to be dealt with, and you've got to put resources to that. There's a

wider view, of dealing with the majority of the public and gaining public sympathy and co-operation and you can only get there by gaining their confidence and doing the sort of things we've been talking about. These are things which, over the years have tended to be pushed into the background because crime figures have risen and its gone to the stage now where a lot of the minor stuff is being disregarded.' (IL)

'CG', a servant of eleven years in the role, considered that certain members of the community were likely to accept any officer who was prepared to become involved as more than just a uniform carrying individual charged with law enforcement:

'In some families, even after eleven years, I was never accepted but I think, you know, (it) got better. I was in the schools, after eleven years I mean I had kids running round who were this high who had families of their own when I left. I'm Godfather to many and best man to others.' [*are these people who you didn't know prior to you policing the patch?*] 'Oh yes, too right' .... 'Godfather to half a dozen, eight.' .... 'I mean to a lot of kids I was a pseudo-father, I mean mother would call me in to batter their ears, if not physically, verbally because, you know, there was a lot of thieving within the family and if you're a single parent mother what sanction do you use? If you use the sanction (of saying) "I'll get the policeman for you" then you've got to get the policeman eventually. Being in the schools is a valued bit of it because it actually gets you recognised.' ... 'I ended up being on nineteen committees.' (CG)

But there was an acceptance, by him, that his roles required a degree of authority to maintain credibility:

'I'd never "play" in uniform ... you don't want to lessen the power of the uniform ... particularly in the kid's eyes. So youth clubs was always in jeans, because I think kids can identify you can't they, they can identify you're playing a role, when your a policeman with your hat on your someone different to 'CG' who hasn't got his hat on.' (CG)

These views were far from being generally accepted as the 'correct' style of policing in *Stonehouse* even amongst colleagues who performed similar roles on adjoining beats. The perception that a police officers primary role related to overt and direct involvement with the community in uniform only, and that to become embroiled in the organising and running of such establishments as youth clubs was inappropriate, was central to many arguments.

'Community policing isn't about attending meetings and running clubs. Its about walking the streets of the area you police, knowing the people you police and actually policing - detecting crime, moving on nuisance, enforcing the law. There's no substitute for the fact that we are there to enforce the law. People know and expect that and respect you for it when you do it.' (LG)

The position which the police found themselves in was one of trying to accomplish two primary demands which the public had. On the one hand, a highly visible presence with pro-active work being accomplished by *community constables* against Alderson's model and, on the other, swift and effective response to incidents as they arose. By 1986, four years after Alderson's departure from the Force, Chief Superintendent Brian Phillips,<sup>17</sup> who was in charge of policing Plymouth acknowledged the problem formally.

No-one would disagree that the relaxed, avuncular officer on foot patrol is desirable and comforting. However, he lacks one ability and that is to meet an equally persistent demand for rapid response. (.....) It has to be recognised that to some significant degree, these styles of policing - street walking and fifth cavalry - are often incompatible (Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, 1986, p.46).

The perceptions of *Stonehouse* residents about the nature of *community policing* following the public proclamation of this new style of police involvement was one which met with mixed reaction and varying degrees of understanding. There was a general inclination to re-draw the picture of the *community constable* in the same image as the one which was related by those residents who had been asked to recall their views on policing during the 1960s and 1970s. The visible presence continued to be regarded as one of high importance, and this was an issue which few of those interviewed related as being a benefit which had become obvious through *community policing*.

'The thing I thought was that we would see more policemen on the beat, but that's not something I can ever remember being the case.' (ref. 2/1994)

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<sup>17</sup> Brian Phillips, QPM, MSc ended his career in Devon and Cornwall Constabulary as Assistant Chief Constable, retiring in 1992.

'When John Alderton<sup>18</sup> took over he made a lot about how we were having our own *community constables*. I knew who mine was, 'CG' [interviewee correctly named the officer], but it wasn't like I saw him any more than I'd seen police around the area before that.' (ref: 5/1991)

'I believe in community policing and think it's right to have more police on the streets.' [Do you feel that there were more police on the streets after community policing came in?] 'No, I don't. I think it was done to make us feel better about the police but it didn't result in us seeing much evidence of them being there.' (ref: 29/1991)

Of those residents who did relate a more visible presence being a benefit were two who had specific involvement with community activities:

'I was always aware that the police had an interest in the club [youth club] but there was a more positive approach when 'CG' came in. Probably there will always be barriers between the police and youngsters but I did feel that here was a real effort to break those barriers down. 'CG' came in very frequently and did this for as long as I remember him being our *community constable*. It dropped off after he left.' (ref: 53/1991)

'As a resident on the committee I knew that the police would always come along if they were asked. If there were any real problems, they would call on me sometimes. I think that community policing probably did have something to do with it. There was a reason behind what they did and it made them more available.' (ref: 29/1991)

*Community constables'* positions within the force were perceived by their colleagues within Plymouth in a similarly negative way to that which Irving et al. (1986) had identified elsewhere. Superintendent Webster, the sub-divisional officer responsible for the city centre area (which included *Stonehouse*) had identified that:

They seem to be very much on their own and this tends to create a form of barrier between them and other departments. I would stress that the community officers themselves have made little effort in removing any barrier. Steps are in hand in an endeavour to rectify the situation (Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, 1981, p.52).

The level at which this had been considered a problem was one which appeared to show an underlying belief by Superintendent Webster that the problem was more connected to how

<sup>18</sup> The interviewee referred to 'Alderton', meaning 'Alderson'. The mistake was common, with there being numerous examples in the media of where the surnames of the chief constables of Devon and Cornwall, and Greater Manchester (Alderton) became confused.

*community constables* saw themselves than how others saw them. It was a theme which was acknowledged by officers in such positions themselves, although from an anticipated opposite stance.

'There were those who didn't know what we did and didn't appreciate the reasons for us doing it. I think they saw it as a soft option and the way in which we could work shifts which were best for us, and the area we worked, was, I think, the cause of a degree of envy.' (LG)

'I did object to being called the 'social worker' by my sergeant. 'Look', I said, 'it's part of the job', but he always called me it, in front of junior officers too, so what sort of impression did that give?' (NS)

Research which had been conducted during the 1980s had revealed a gap between what had been originally intentioned as a proactive style of policing accomplished by specified *community constables* within a broader framework of inter-agency work, and the day-to-day reality of policing. The studies conducted in Devon and Cornwall (Shaw, 1987; Willcox et al., 1987) had identified time taken away from intended duties in order to fulfil more routine commitments, by bolstering the response sections, to be practical management which distracted *community constables* from what was perceived to be their role. When a further study was completed some seven years later, things were found to have changed little (Virgo, 1994). Much was still made of the force's commitment to the concept of 'policing with the community' (Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, 1993b) but the focus on how the proactive approach towards policing could be integrated into a fast evolving criminal justice system was developing outside the established positions of *community constables* themselves.

### *Community involvement in Stonehouse*

Policing the *Stonehouse* area did not, of course, take place in a social vacuum. The area was one which exhibited numerous examples of community based initiatives which were

either specifically relevant to the local communities, or had a wider catchment area, but were often based in *Stonehouse* or the city centre nearby. Groups and facilities included: Crossline, part of the Plymouth City Mission financed totally by voluntary contributions mainly from churches, providing a telephone counselling and drop-in service based in Union Street; Ichthus (a church based community support organisation); Plymouth Homemakers, a care and resettlement agency sponsored by the probation service and Plymouth City Housing Department; SWITCH (Support Women in their Crisis Hours); Saifline, (support to adults who were sexually abused as children); a HIV-positive support drop-in centre based within the Eddystone Project; Voice, (mental stress and rehabilitation); as well as more established provisions such as the Citizens' Advice Bureau, NSPCC, Family Conciliation Service, Samaritans and Salvation Army.

In the early 1990s, groups such as these met on a regular basis under the umbrella of Plymouth Inter-Agency Forum (PIAF), a meeting structure which one group representative felt to be of value because 'people rarely have just one problem and discussing and sharing our resources and knowledge can be of great value'.<sup>19</sup> The personal interviews with residents which took place as part of this research sought to identify the extent to which those living in the area had both knowledge of, and involvement in, the various groups which formed part of area's makeup. It also asked residents to consider the extent to which they felt an affinity with the area in which they lived and required them, where possible, to give examples of what they considered to be observable 'community spirit' and whether the police and/or local authority should have a role in promoting such activities.

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<sup>19</sup> The author met representatives of many of these groups at one of their meetings in December 1990 and was able to take notes as a participant observer which informed the process of the research.

Although *Stonehouse* consisted of one geographic area, the development of diverse housing and environmental factors within this meant that residents often considered themselves as being part of smaller identified groups rather than members of a general *Stonehouse* community. This was based on different factors. Residents in older style, primarily terraced or semi-detached housing to the north of the area, in which many homes had been turned into flats and bedsits, related to their 'communities' in different ways. Some made reference to their residents' association which worked towards the resolution of local community problems and provided contacts and meeting points for individuals at various points in their year, whilst more transient residents such as students and those living in, what they considered to be 'temporary accommodation', found less affinity with any community based on geography but more so within their work or academic environment such as the university. Those in the 'north of Union Street' council flat accommodation, several of which were identified as being relatively long-term residents related a stronger sense of 'belonging' to a community based around that specific area and often made reference to environmental factors which they felt impinged on their lives in that specific locality. To the south of Union Street, where small scale industrial and commercial premises abutted private and rented accommodation, there was a mixture of perceptions based on personal experience and environmental factors such as the area commonly used for prostitutes to solicit for business.

The information acquired from the sixty residents personally interviewed during 1991 did not allow a large enough set of data to be gathered for each area of *Stonehouse* to be analysed separately but there was, nevertheless, the opportunity to compare the types of responses given and consider common themes which emerged across the whole area. Generally, residents were relatively positive about their perspectives on whether a

'community spirit' existed in the area in which they resided with only one in four (14 - 23%) saying that they felt that there was 'no evidence of any community spirit' whilst 34 (55%) said that they believed community spirit to be either 'very' or 'fairly strong'. When asked to score what residents believed to be their personal commitment to that community spirit however only 21 (35%) said that this was 'very strong' or 'fairly strong'. The notion of 'community spirit' was, of course, open to a degree of subjectivity in definition and interviewees were, therefore, asked to give their personal interpretation of what this meant to them, together with recollections which might exemplify their perspectives. These naturally varied although a common understanding of 'community spirit' involving individual activity in support of others was noticeable.

'A wholeness in the community where individuals care and interact with one another in a mutually beneficial way' (ref: 9/1991)

'People in this area getting together to try and maintain standards of property' (ref: 1/1991)

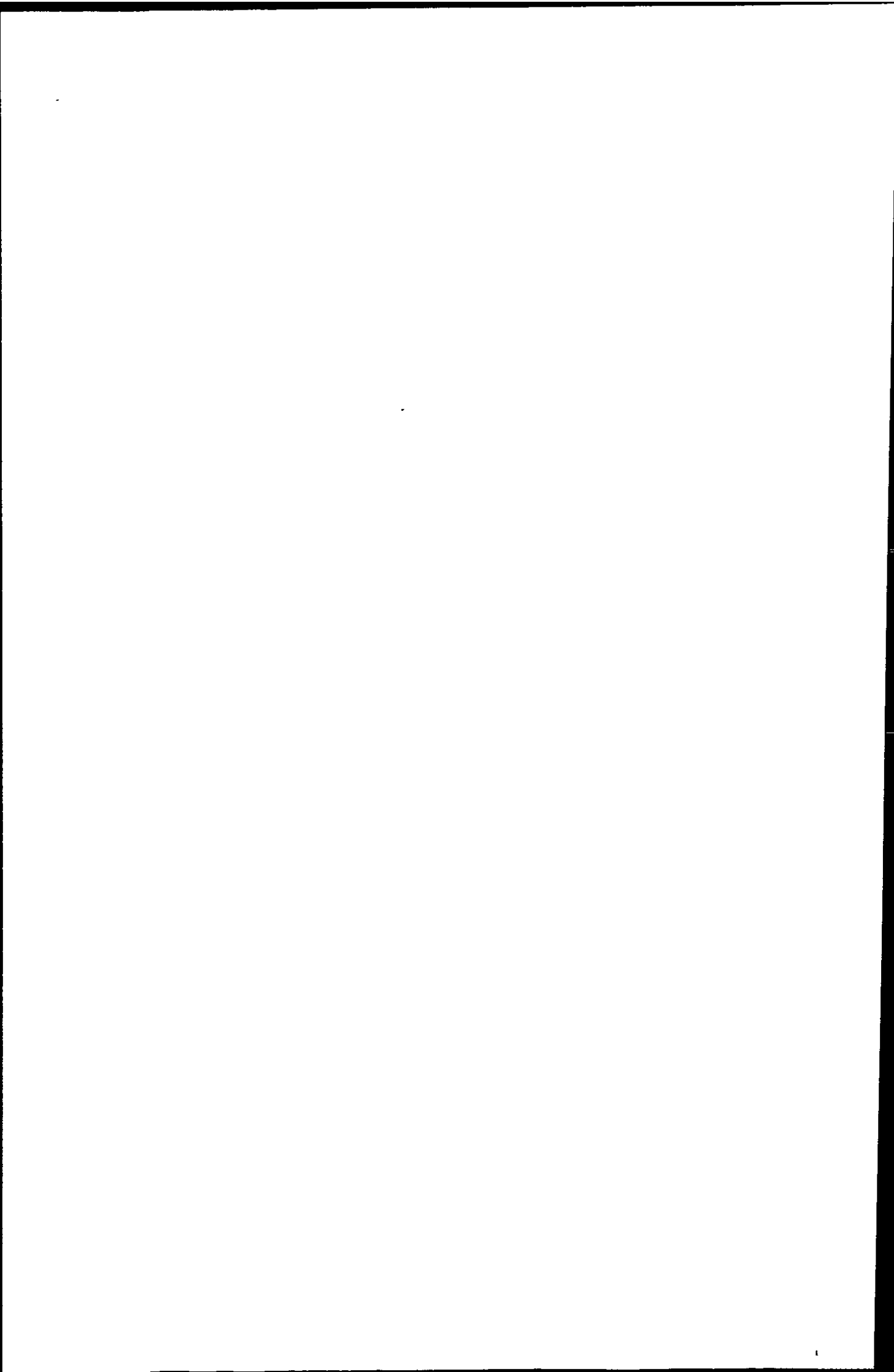
'Just looking out for each other I suppose' (ref: 37/1991)

The extent to which the police were seen as being able to contribute to a 'community spirit' in the area showed that 51 residents (85%) felt this commitment should be either 'a lot' (32) or 'some' (19). In being asked to relate what form this could most beneficially take common themes related to increased visibility by foot patrolling, more involvement with young people, and a quicker response to residents when there were problems in the area.

'...better to be seen as a partner in the community by being seen and being accessible. To be part of the community rather than a heavy hand when needed.' (ref: 4/1991)

'It can work but it takes time to create a relationship. I feel the police shouldn't have to take the initiative but should then get involved. Drop-in centres for 11 to 15 year olds can be good things. It seems to be missing in this age group particularly. People seem to know each other round here though ... most have nothing.' (ref: 10/1991)



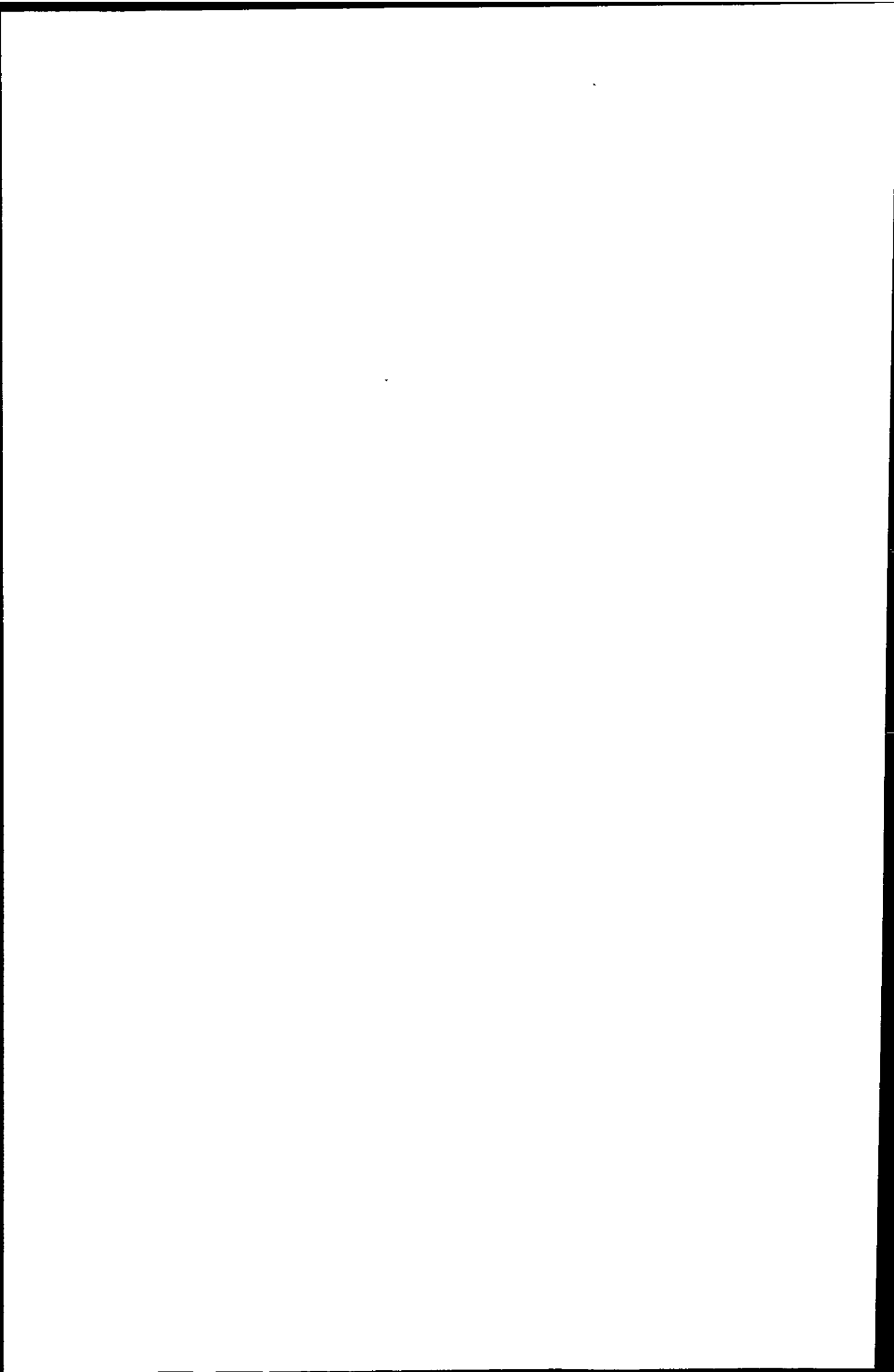


'Those born in the area have grown up rough and streetwise. They don't have no finesse about them and don't care or need 'community' encouraged by the police. They do their own thing and don't like the police ... many like it here because it's their scene, beer etc. They don't give a damn.' (ref: 6/1991)

'The police can encourage community spirit by being seen and available. Showing that they have an interest in the area can make a difference. Not everyone has the time to make the effort but I feel the police should make that time and they would be repaid accordingly.' (ref: 44/1991)

'We might not be able to make this place like Mayfair, but there's some good people down here who still respect the police and feel let down that they seem to have gone away from the area and not taken an interest ... they would be able to start to make a difference.' (ref: 51/1991)

The proportion of interviewees who said they knew at least one police officer personally by name and were able to identify the person whom they regarded as their 'community constable' was relatively low. Only 6 (10%) knew who their local officer was but a further 11 (18%) were able to recount the names of police officers who worked in some capacity or other in the *Stonehouse* area. Few residents regarded the amount of effort which the police put into routine patrolling of their area (with the exception of late evening patrols in Union Street) as sufficient with only 3 (5%) recalling that they saw a police officer more regularly than once a month. It was interesting to note, given the level of late 1990s moves towards increasing the statutory ownership of 'community safety' towards local authorities, that residents felt this institution to have a relevant part to play in their area. 27 (78%) felt that local authority involvement should be 'a lot' (45%) or 'some' (33%), with only 2 (3%) feeling that involvement should be 'little' or 'none' (18% being unsure). There was often more difficulty to residents in answering the question of what form such commitment had taken or should take. However the most common themes related to provision of activities and centres for young people, general cleanliness and repair of the area, and a need to redefine priorities to see more attention being given to residential areas of the city and less being spent within the shopping area.



'People aren't really interested in direct contact with local authorities but the local authority can give assistance in financial ways.' (ref: 3/1991)

'More should be done to encourage people to call in at community centres. Also the lighting here is very poor and old people are afraid to go out.' (ref: 11/1991)

'The street cleaners don't do their jobs. All the alleys are foul and the litter is disgraceful everywhere outside the city centre.' (ref: 2/1991)

'I am not sure that there is much they can do - they can't catch criminals for instance can they? That's the job of the police.' (ref: 50/1991)

'If the council had to do certain things that the police wanted - like not letting drinking go on 'til all hours and not putting up with some of their council tenants - kick them out when they cause a problem - then things could be better.' (ref: 30/1991)

Given the relatively high level of community based projects within or close to *Stonehouse*, many of which were established because of perceived need in the area, residents knowledge of these was considered important to identifying the extent to which their individual and community needs could be met over and above the service which they believed the police and local authority should be providing. In total, fourteen 'assistance' groups, facilities and organisations were related to respondents in the interviews and their levels of knowledge about the existence and purpose of these facilities was probed. It was accepted that, because of the specialised nature and relatively low-profile of some of these, few residents would be likely to respond that they were aware of the existence of all fourteen and this proved to be the case. However, there appeared to be a generally low knowledge amongst respondents of many of the facilities which were locally based, even where the purpose of these groups was generally appreciated e.g. neighbourhood watch (NHW), Victim Support and residents' associations.

Table 9.1 indicates the level of knowledge and involvement which was shown by residents in groups or associations which were relevant to their community areas. In relation to NHW, although 57 (95%) said that they had not heard of or were unsure of a scheme

covering their area, 11 resided in streets which were covered, and in the case of residents' associations, where just over half of the interviewees (33) said they were unaware of such a group covering their area, all but 9 of the remainder fell within catchment areas where their presence on such a group would have been welcomed. The facility which most residents said that they were aware of (although only one identified as having had any dealings with) was the Plymouth Night Shelter, a facility not of specific benefit to residents of *Stonehouse*, but one which was well known of through publicity and its location in Bath Street, just off Union Street. Two-thirds (40) were aware of the services of Victim Support which, had this been a survey of general residents, may have been reassuring. However, in view of the fact that all interviewees had been victims of some form of crime this result was less encouraging, although only 14 (23%) victims were in categories which would have been regular referrals to that organisation (auto-crime, accounting for 47% of offences not normally being referred).

Whereas involvement as either helper or client with the facilities listed was generally very low, the list was not seen to be exhaustive and, therefore, residents were also asked to indicate their involvement in other activities at both social and voluntary level as they related to the *Stonehouse* area and elsewhere. Two-thirds (40) said that they did not have regular dealings with any other local groups or facilities whilst 7 individuals (12%) cited voluntary work which included involvement in youth clubs, Save the Children and Samaritans.

Group or association	Residents unaware or unsure	Residents aware (no involvement)	Residents with involvement (as either member or client)
Eddystone project	58 (97%)	2 (3%)	0 (0%)
SWITCH	58 (96%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)
Neighbourhood Watch	57 (95%)	1 (2%)	2 (3%)
Icthus	56 (93%)	4 (7%)	0 (0%)
Youth Enquiry Service	56 (93%)	3 (5%)	1 (2%)
Voice	56 (93%)	3 (5%)	1 (2%)
Probation Co'munity Development Team	56 (93%)	3 (5%)	1 (2%)
Saifline	54 (92%)	2 (3%)	2 (3%)
Homemakers	49 (82%)	5 (8%)	6 (10%)
Crossline	43 (72%)	15 (25%)	2 (3%)
Local residents' association	33 (55%)	18 (30%)	9 (15%)
Local Community Centre	29 (48%)	26 (43%)	5 (8%)
Victim Support	20 (33%)	33 (55%)	7 (12%)
Night Shelter	19 (31%)	40 (67%)	1 (2%)

Table 9.1: *Stonehouse* residents' knowledge/involvement with groups/associations relevant to their communities (1991)

The extent to which residents' felt affinity with the area in which they lived was also tested in asking them to consider, providing there was no change to their personal circumstances, and the accommodation in which they resided was identical, whether they would choose to move to another location in the Plymouth area. Almost two-thirds (37) said that, given this opportunity they would take it. The most common primary reason given for this decision (given by 17 residents) was a perception that crime happened more frequently in *Stonehouse* than in other areas of Plymouth and that this change would reassure them of being less likely of becoming victims in the future. Just slightly less (16 residents) indicated that environmental factors such as a close proximity to Union Street, dirty streets, the change in status of many properties from one family residences to flats/bedsits and outward signs of low-level disorder (noise, drunkenness, graffiti, vandalism) formed the

main rationale for their decision. Two of the remaining three residents said that personal reasons associated with their crimes would make a move desirable and one person cited the move to be more beneficial to him because of his business. Of the 23 who said they would stay in the area, 15 referred to the 'convenient' location, close to the city centre and local amenities as their principle reason for staying; 7 felt that as they had resided in the area over a long period and had made friends and associates they had no wish to move, and 1 resident did not wish to move as they felt all other areas of Plymouth were 'just as bad'.

'I like it here, it's close to town and mother wouldn't shift anyway.' (ref: 11/1991)

'It's probably pretty obvious from what I've said already: I was born here - brought up here - it's my home.' (ref: 9/1991)

'We were debating about moving out of Plymouth altogether, but to another part of the city? No.' (ref: 7/1991)

'I run the youth club and have a good time with friends here. I wouldn't want to move.' (ref: 4/1991)

'It would be a job to find somewhere closer or more convenient to all the things on offer in the city centre. I can put up with some of the hassle - you can get that anywhere.' (ref: 34/1991)

It must be acknowledged that the personal interviews conducted provided only a 'snapshot' of views and experiences in the early 1990s but were, nevertheless, telling in some of the responses which were given in terms of being told from within an area of relatively high deprivation and crime. Although perspectives on 'community spirit' varied across locations in *Stonehouse* there was an apparent desire to see both police and local authority play a bigger role in addressing issues of concern. The extent to which many of those interviewed believed that they had a meaningful part to play in improving the area was less certain given the relatively low instances of structured community involvement. No account was taken of whether any individuals had criminal 'careers' in their own right. The potential value in considering how variability in community makeup can enable an understanding of the influence this has upon crime rates (Reiss and Tonry, 1986) was

considered. However, for the purposes of developing a structure within which the *community policing* of *Stonehouse* was concerned, a decision to concentrate attention on resident victims and police specifically was considered sufficient, although not ideal.

### ***Ward Policing***

The 1994 reorganisation saw 'E' division, which previously covered Plymouth and a substantial amount of West Devon, have its territorial boundaries changed to cover only the area which, it was anticipated correctly at the time, would be coterminous with those of the new local unitary authority for the city. This, combined with the change of divisional commander for the area, gave the opportunity for a number of initiatives to be undertaken, one of which involved a complete change to the way police patrolling was directed. Plymouth had four main police stations: Charles Cross, Devonport, Crownhill and Plympton. Previously, each of the three main stations had been the centre of a sub-division, but with the change to a 'single-tier' command structure, based at Crownhill, these sub-divisions disappeared as 'lines on the map'.

Following reorganisation, the vast majority of uniform staff were designated titles of either 'response' or 'ward'. All response officers were posted to Crownhill from where the mobile reactionary nature of policing was distributed according to need. Ward officers were based at each of five stations around the city under the supervision of a sergeant at each location. All came under the command of a chief inspector specifically responsible for ward policing. One of the principles which was intended to be an essential element of these new positions was that officers who were part of ward teams should not be abstracted for routine response duties elsewhere. It was hoped that this would alleviate the type of



problems which had previously been identified as one of the main factors in affecting *community constable's* abilities to perform the role for which they had been intended.

The objectives of ward team policing were set out in a document dated 10 June 1994, the main aim being 'to reduce the public demand on police time by an effective ward based system that is able to target its policing response in accord with local community needs' (Devon and Cornwall, 1994a). Included in the paper were job descriptions which made it clear that members of the new teams were a 'front line' police resource who would be expected to take a 'longer term approach to law enforcement' by building knowledge and confidence in relationships with people in the community which they policed. The style which was being formulated was one which took account of recommendations elsewhere of the need to select officers who would be prepared to commit themselves to the project for at least two years (NACRO, 1988).

Research which was conducted within the first twelve months of ward policing being introduced (Coffey, 1995) identified that officers surveyed felt the number of occasions on which they had been abstracted from their normal role, in order to fulfil some other functions, had been greatly reduced. Respondents also indicated that they were broadly happy with the size of the area which they were expected to cover and the shift system which they had to work. A concern was expressed by over half of the 54 who replied to the survey that of the amount of work which each officer carried was either 'too heavy' (21) or 'much too heavy' (6). Mixed messages emerged from answers to other questions in the survey in terms of perceived status as viewed by both colleagues and the public, leading to the conclusion that it could not 'be claimed with any certainty that ... (status) ... has improved in comparison to community constables generally' (p.63). The findings also

showed a majority of officers (58%) believing that ward teams should spend more time in collaboration with other agencies. However, 16 officers (30%) said they did not feel this should be the case (p.55).<sup>20</sup>

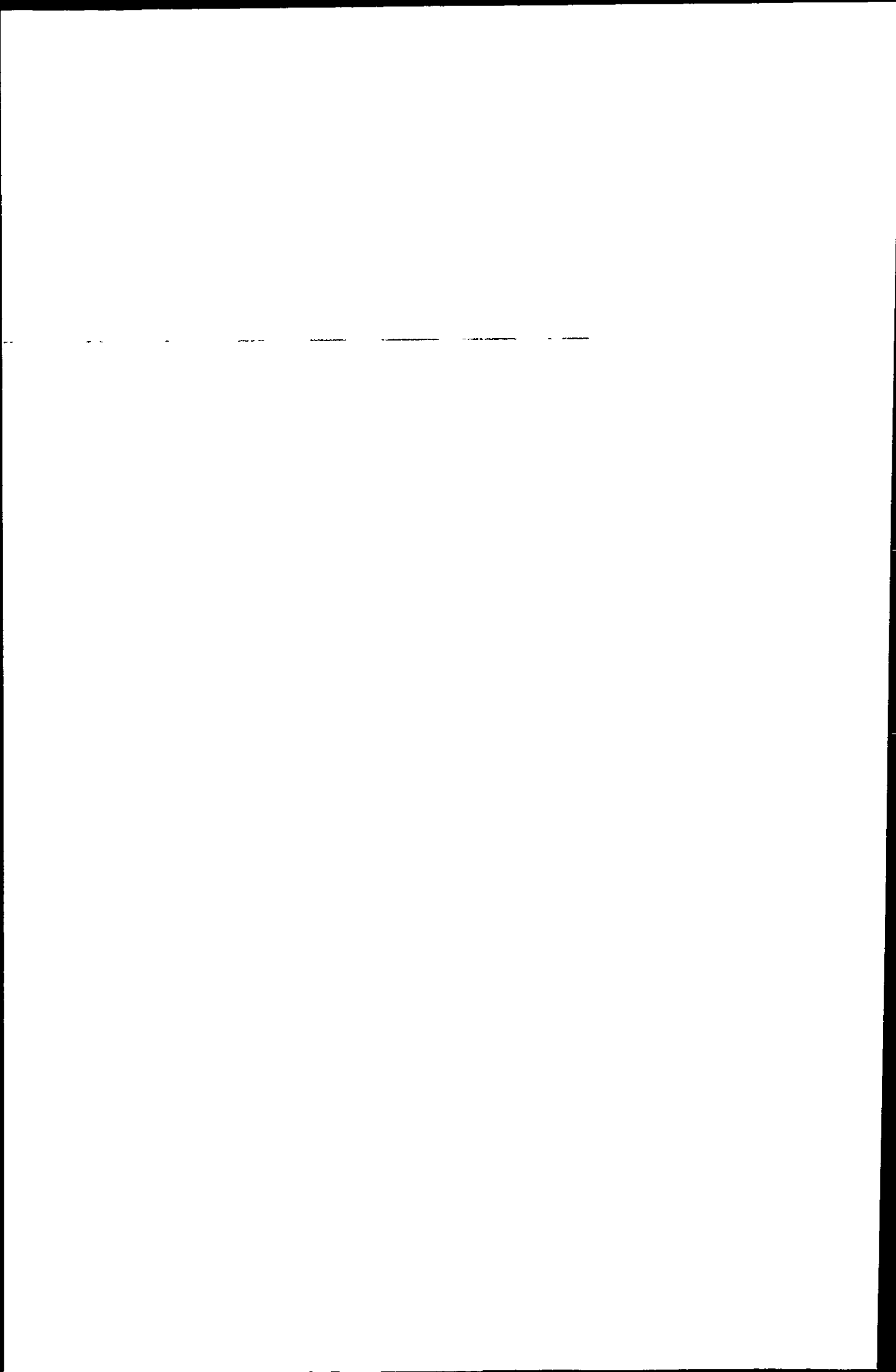
One of the purposes of ward policing was to develop a wider inter-agency team ethos towards community problem solving. This was not a totally new concept as there were numerous examples available, before the scheme came into being, of the previous structure producing results which had benefited the relatively smooth running of sub-divisions. The primary difference to the new approach was development of the teams based on council ward areas, where there was anticipated a greater sense of ownership and resolve to address problems would be common to more than one agency. The effects of the scheme have yet to be fully evaluated in terms of detailed understanding of public perceptions and experiences. Nevertheless, at a point in the development of *community policing* within Devon and Cornwall, when structural imperatives called into question the precise nature of the role which *community constables* were to fulfil, Plymouth's *Ward* scheme appeared to address many of the issues.

### ***Community policing in Devon and Cornwall: an overview***

This chapter has reviewed the various processes which the Devon and Cornwall area, and Plymouth and *Stonehouse* in particular, have been subject to over a considerable period of time. It has concentrated upon the way in which community policing developed and, through a chequered history of acceptance amongst members of the constabulary, evolved into a model of ward policing within the reconstituted Plymouth division post-1994. Whereas more detailed contemporary evidence has not been cited from elsewhere in the

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<sup>20</sup> A further 6 (12%) gave no reply to the question.



force area, similar difficulties to those encountered in Plymouth have been recorded through the internal reviews undertaken by members of the constabulary during the late 1980s and 1990s (Shaw, 1987; Willcox et al., 1987; Virgo, 1994) as well as participative observation and records of the author during his career and period of study. What has been obvious during this process is that community policing has had a variety of meanings to both those involved in providing a service and those who have been in receipt of it. This has been able to be applied in relation to long-term residents of *Stonehouse* and police officers of various lengths of service, some of whom encountered substantial changes to their policing environments over many years.

However, key themes have emerged which are worthy of review. Firstly, the locational perspective on policing which has been observed in residents' and police officers' views on where police stations (notably *The Octagon*) are sited in relation to the communities which they serve. Although providing only a partial picture of how the policing of communities takes place, and therefore not detailing the multifaceted nature of work which is undertaken, a clear linkage was observed through the interviews which indicated perceptions of police availability and patrolling as apparently enhanced through knowledge that officers paraded for duty at locations which has some connection with a local area. Less obvious from the information gained, however, is the extent to which police officers did actually patrol the types of residential locations under study in *Stonehouse*. Although there are recollections of personal involvement between residents and officers these have commonly been referred to as being a result of a specific incident or crime which had taken place. Perceptions that the police were more available to local residents due to their police base being in relatively close proximity have to be treated with some caution, particularly when referred to by interviewees who have been asked to recall, what many perceived to

be, a 'golden age' of policing. But perceptions are often more impactful than fact, and the so called 'golden age' of the 1950s and early 1960s have been observed elsewhere in the force to have given way to a new generation of local residents throughout Devon and Cornwall who, in 1999, reflect upon a period pre-1996 when all telephone calls to the police were answered at local stations as opposed to a central call-handling facility which was introduced alongside improved 'command and control' computerisation.

Also of significance is the extent to which Alderson's vision of community policing, being reliant on 'activated' communities, was not evidenced in *Stonehouse* where a minority of surveyed residents appear to have active community interests. It is, of course, accepted that a small scale survey of the type undertaken can not be fully representative of the whole area, let alone Devon and Cornwall, but as a 'snapshot in time' the findings are at least of interest and worthy of further research. The *Stonehouse* experience is relevant because of the atypical nature of the area, as compared with the rest of the force, as it is an inner-city locality of high deprivation and social need, but one which has a high number of voluntary and statutory agencies and groups nearby which appear have been utilised or assisted by only a small number of those interviewed. The extent to which 'community spirit' appears to pervade more rural towns and villages in Devon and Cornwall is clearly not able to be ascertained from the Plymouth data, however most other areas of the force have limited local organised resources on which to draw compared to the inner-city and the element of real and perceived need elsewhere is similarly worthy of further research.

Finally, the extent to which community policing has sought to be reinvented through the development of ward teams is significant to both Plymouth and the force as a whole. Taking account of more recent developments with the introduction of the *Crime and*

*Disorder Act 1998* it has become a standard strategy in policing local districts to develop teams able to address local problems in conjunction with local authorities and other agencies. The *Stonehouse* data gives some indications in respect of local residents' beliefs that agencies other than the police, and in particular local authorities, have a part to play in the wellbeing of communities.

## Crime Prevention in Devon and Cornwall

This chapter is about the development of *crime prevention* in Devon and Cornwall Constabulary with particular attention being paid to the way in which this emerged in Plymouth, notably during the 1990s, when the majority of the initiatives which were being developed at national level began to bear fruit within the force. Details of the wider issues concerning their development, together with examples of initiatives elsewhere in the country have been discussed in chapters four and five. However the form which these took in the south-west, and in particular Plymouth, is subject to more detailed consideration in this chapter. Development of innovative approaches to *crime prevention* in Devon and Cornwall have not been universally obvious across the area, and neither have the opportunities afforded the majority of communities been as structured as those which applied in Plymouth. The reasons for this are partly due to the city's acknowledged urban status and the potential for additional funding from government sources, but also the level of commitment which was given to the 1990s multi-agency approach by the management structure of the division. Consequently Plymouth developed a range of initiatives which were not in place elsewhere in the force and met with a measurable degree of success in some instances. However, to appreciate the background to developments in the 1990s, a review of how crime prevention was dealt with in the Devon and Cornwall area over the decades preceding this will be useful.

**1950 - 1967: Plymouth City**

In the early 1960s, the Cornish Committee had recommended the establishment of specialist *crime prevention* departments with an officer of at least inspector rank appointed in each force as its Crime Prevention Officer (CPO), with officers in each division being identified to liaise with patrolling constables. These departments had sprung up, relatively quickly, on the back of the report and in 1966, the final year of the Plymouth City force (prior to amalgamation), one sergeant had been identified for the work. The Chief Constable's Annual Report of that year contained one and a quarter pages devoted to the implementation of the initiative and various 'successful' projects which had been undertaken. The success was acknowledged to be difficult to accurately evaluate but, 'through a constant flow of enquiries and requests for advice' it was considered that there was 'an increasing awareness of the need to take precautions to protect property against crime' (Plymouth City Police, 1967, paras. 101-113).

The early interest in the scheme had enabled the Plymouth force to embark upon a number of projects which quickly became, and remained, commonly used methods of imparting and receiving information. Leaflets giving advice were one of the main methods and newsagents, hotels and the Local Authority Motor Taxation Department assisted in distributing over 60,000 public information leaflets.<sup>1</sup> Talks were given to various organisations and, according to the Annual Report, 'requests for these is increasing' (para. 109). The media were apparently keen to support the initiative with the local independent television station, *Westward*, producing a weekly five minute programme entitled 'Crime Call'. Use was also made of a number of firms which utilised radio communication from

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<sup>1</sup> An initiative which is still used nationally through the (now centralised) Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority as well as other organisations such as insurance companies.



vehicle to vehicle in the city to pass information about stolen vehicles and other crime related subjects.

The initiatives do not seem especially imaginative when looked back on from the media-technology driven 1990s but, as the first year of a new campaign dawned, the police's enthusiasm for producing information appeared to be substantial. There are, however, two main points which can be considered from the evidence locally: (i) recollections of police officers from the period do not support the contention that anything particularly new was happening, and (ii) the next twenty years were not perceived as producing any great tangible benefits, whilst the initiatives themselves did not form the basis for development of any criteria to measure the impact which they might have been having.

'I don't think we were doing a great deal new really. The leaflets were there, and there was a new department, but that's about all.' (RD)

'You reminded me about the talks - well yes there were talks given but I don't know what I could say they did to help us. They told people to lock their windows and doors, but the people I knew did anyway and it didn't stop people coming in.' (AQ)

'So what else did we do after that? Surveys and talks to the converted most of the time.' (RB)

*Stonehouse* residents' recollections were not especially revealing on the crime prevention issue as a specific subject when concentrating upon the past. However, those who did offer an opinion as to whether or not there were real benefits to be derived from the system of specialisation which was developing, tended to cite the public relations face of the enterprise rather than its aims or results.

'It was more obvious that they were interested in preventing crime and not just catching the culprits.' (ref: 5/1991)

'We keep leaflets at the (community) centre and probably have long before I came. I don't think many get taken.' (ref: 4/1991)

when the notion of locally based police officers, known by name, were seen to have total responsibility for all aspects of policing for their area. The worth of developing the issue at residential level through the recollective evidence is dubious but, nevertheless, can be observed in the context of the responses which were also given in relation to the *community policing* issue reported on in chapter 9.

### *The 1970s: development towards situational approaches*

Within the newly formed constabulary, the commitment to maintaining the *crime prevention* departments continued and with it the increased aura of the nature of those involved as 'specialists' grew. But, unlike other 'specialists' within the organisation whose roles were sought after as high status positions with varying degrees of operational credibility, e.g. CID and Traffic Patrol Officers, the *crime prevention officers* occupied positions which were conventionally seen as 'retirement posts'. Their roles had become more specialised in the areas which continued to be based on the 'locks and bolts' philosophy of prevention, and their work comprised of significant degrees of professionalism in producing security advice reports on behalf of property owners. Talks to groups continued, as did the circulation of leaflets and various initiatives which were bolstering attempts to address the rising tide of crime by the promotion of information to the public. There was little doubt that the police saw the commitment and co-operation of the public as essential to winning the fight, but the question of whether other agencies which served the public should become involved was not one which had yet taken shape in the early 1970s. The police were the primary owners of the crime prevention mantle and, although in 1974 nineteen CPOs formed the nucleus of the crime prevention department,

their work was almost exclusively based on a strategy of encouraging the public to take greater care of their belongings.

Public apathy towards escalating crime - "it can't happen to me" attitudes - must be overcome if any significant progress is to be made in reversing the trends of the past year. (Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, 1975, p.19)

By 1976, the two pages of the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary Annual Report devoted to the issue listed many of the features for which the growing expertise of the *Crime Prevention Officers* had been trained. It included an abundance of statistics showing the number of alarm installations, arrests as a result of them, hundreds of thousands of leaflets which had been distributed, and the emergence of a 'talking car' which was strategically placed in car parks around the force area to periodically play a tape recorded voice which bemoaned the fact that its owner had left it unlocked with property clearly on display - it never got stolen! (Devon and Cornwall, 1976, pp.20-22).

In the course of the research, the strategies which were employed by the force in the field of *crime prevention* were examined through interviews which took place with three officers who had performed *Crime Prevention Officer*<sup>2</sup> roles at periods which ranged between 1974 and 1996. In particular, two had served as what could be defined as 'old-style' CPOs, whilst the other, who was in post during the late 1980s and 1990s presented a newly formed multi-agency approach to his work. Of interest was the extent to which the strategy which they had adopted matched what they understood to be that of the force during the time they served. They were also questioned on their personal views of what the role was intended to achieve and how this fitted with national policy in *crime prevention*

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<sup>2</sup> Included in this term is that of *Community Safety Officer* which became the new title during the 1990s. This is discussed later in this chapter.

models. Responses illuminated the position which these individuals perceived themselves as occupying within the organisation, where a specialist post was viewed in a generally negative fashion by many of their colleagues. There was acknowledgement that this was the case but the level of commitment which the CPOs believed they had shown to their jobs was rarely understood or taken into account by other officers.

It was clear that the specialist nature of their roles inspired in the CPOs a genuine belief in its value, and the training which they had received was perceived to be something which the force had been wise to invest in. The property visits, presentations, publicity and leaflets were acknowledged to be the way in which the CPO's role was seen by many, but the feeling was that this ignored the general importance of the position and additional work which was beginning to emerge in relation to positive contacts which were being established with, for example, local authorities and building firms in designing-out crime at an early stage. They felt there was ample evidence to suggest that the force was progressing with its strategy in line with the 'tools' and encouragement which were being given to it by government to fulfil the role intended. The extent to which a wider net should have been cast at that time to bring other social agencies into the equation was seen as something which had yet to become an accepted way of progressing, not only from the point of view of the police, but agencies such as the probation and social services.

'I am sure that this is something of its time. It took a time for that to become the standard method of looking for solutions. It was difficult to perceive of a situation where it wasn't mainly the responsibility of the community to keep their valuables safe ... The police role was seen as the role which could best inform and encourage - I don't only think it was seen like that by us, but by the public - and I think the government too.' (KN)

'What we did for a long time was provide a useful service to those who wanted us to give advice ... certainly it was based on property protection but you have to remember that that's what the majority of crime is - property crime. It was logical to perform in the way we did ... the problem tended to be more of how we were believed to be operating by those who didn't know better. We helped them (the

*constables*) a lot when you think about it. If we weren't doing the visits and alarms for example then they would have had to.' (RB)

There was a movement towards a constructive approach of 'opportunity reduction' preventative measures with the establishment in the headquarters department responsible for *crime prevention* of a constable appointed as the *architectural liaison officer* (ALO). Given specific training in issues relating to planning legislation, and through liaison with builders, local authority departments, and security firms, the officer was the force's attempt to pre-empt the building of property in such designs as might cause later problems in making them more vulnerable as crime target areas. The role was effectively advisory in its nature but was built on the theory of *defensible space* and the new importance which was being placed on the *situational* approach by government.<sup>3</sup> Partnership in the arena of *crime prevention* was evolving slowly on these types of structural lines, but the social prevention aspects were still to emerge in the mid to late part of the 1970s through John Alderson's commitment to bringing a wider range of agencies together in an alternative focus on the issue.

#### ***Late 1970s: the foundations of a multi-agency approach***

The historic development of *crime prevention* in Devon and Cornwall during the mid to late 1970s was epitomised by the pioneering work of the *Crime Prevention Support Unit* (CPSU), inspired by chief constable John Alderson, and based in the city of Exeter. Although this new scheme led to the late 1970s observing the introduction of *community policing* in the force, such a development merely served to reinforce the inter-dependant nature and close overlap between *community policing* and *crime prevention*. Because of

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<sup>3</sup> See chapter 3 1967-1979: *Technology to Community*.

the author's 'growing up' with the system, and the subsequent interviews which were conducted with officers who recalled experiences of *community policing* from a personal perspective, this aspect of policework has been able to be considered in chapter 9 but will be briefly covered. Less available from these interviews was a more in-depth understanding amongst the rank-and-file of the inter-agency perspective which was a mainstay of the CPSU during this period. An individual view on its successes and problems was recounted through one interview with an officer who, at the time, worked on the unit and, as part of his role, addressed various courses held at the police training college in Exeter. His particular recollections were perceived to be of relevance because of the observably negative and short-sighted attitude of one such course he attended, and debatably gave an insight into some of the problems with the 'sale' of *community policing* during the period.<sup>4</sup>

The potential misunderstanding of the scheme's benefits, and the different interpretations given to the role which each agency within the structure could most beneficially play, was exemplified at the time in the research which the head of the CPSU, Colin Moore, conducted by way of interview and attitude survey (Moore and Brown, 1981, pp.78-112). Agency workers showed more enthusiasm for non-reactive styles of policing than did the police themselves and there was a wider appreciation obvious, amongst the former group, of the scope and potential for initiatives which cut across more conventional beliefs of where the dividing line between policework and socially influential work lay. Few of the police verbatim responses given in Moore's work are in such critical vein as those which were reported in a BBC *File on Four* programme on Alderson and community policing

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<sup>4</sup> The negativity is evidenced through the author's own involvement as one of the course. The general level of scepticism is also detailed in chapter 9 *Community Policing in Devon and Cornwall*.

(referred to in chapter 9). However the BBC quotes were the views of constables in Plymouth and not the Exeter area, and were almost certainly based on little or no experience of policing in a style which had been implemented in the area where the CPSU had operated. Nevertheless the narrow-minded nature of the responses at a time when attempts were underway to develop a style of policing which relied on a less reactive approach and higher levels of cooperation between the police, public and other agencies is a significant indicator of the problems experienced in bringing the troops 'on board'.

Elsewhere in the force the work of the CPSU was being developed which included research on the extent of juvenile crime patterns in West Cornwall, the results of which were presented to representatives of social services, probation and education departments. This led to a more detailed evaluation being conducted of a specific problem estate and the overall information gained was used as the basis for establishing a juvenile bureau in West Cornwall in 1980. Similar work in the east of the county, followed by a public presentation in Bodmin, resulted in the establishment of a community association. In Launceston a community action group which aimed to reduce juvenile crime was inaugurated after a series of successful police 'night schools'. An analysis of crime within Plymouth was used to consider methods of policing in the city and the chief constable presented the findings to Plymouth City Council and South Hams (South Devon) District Council. Building of bridges with other agencies was also underway through such initiatives as a weekend training course for youth workers and community constables where appreciation of respective roles and future cooperation was the aim. Also a total of 61 officers spent various week-long attachments to social service and probation departments and members of those agencies engaged in reciprocal visits (Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, 1980, pp.21-22).

The 1970s had seen the constabulary begin to follow much of the lead which was implicit in encouragement given by government for the *situational* approach to *crime prevention*. With the development of Alderson's appreciation of the need for a wider cross-section of society and other agencies to become involved in policing, the thrust given to *community safety* as a concept, rather than one which concentrated solely on the *situational* perspective, provided the opportunity for further innovative and impactful policing methods to be pursued.

#### *Late 1980s-early 1990s in Devon and Cornwall*

Government interest in seeing the multi-agency approach to crime prevention established was one which pre-dated the 1990s by several years. The 1984 circular to chief constables and local authority chief executives (Home Office, 1984) had encouraged them to adopt such an approach but had met with limited response. However, Home Office Circular 44/1990 *Partnership in Crime Prevention* (Home Office, 1990a), which asked the same recipients to submit to the Home Office details of the arrangements which they had in place, or proposed, met with a joint policy statement being returned, signed by the chief constable, heads of key agencies and chief executives, agreeing their respective organisations' commitment to working in partnership to devise strategies which would support the concept of *community safety*.

The extent to which the force headquarters' *community services* structure became involved in a more coordinated steer being given to *crime prevention* throughout the area emerged during the next couple of years. The various circulars and articles emanating from central government around the time of the Morgan Committee report began to form the stimulus for more directed action throughout the force. Home Office Circular 44/1990 was



beginning to form the basis on which HMIC was viewing forces' effectiveness of delivery in this field. The thrust of *Morgan* was one which encompassed far more agencies than just the police and, despite a respectable to good level of less coordinated relationships already existing between police and others with a part to play in *community safety*, the force was becoming concerned that the level of commitment which others had to developing such strategies was less than enthusiastic. In November 1992, in an attempt to re-invigorate the process which had already been signed up to by the leaders of the main agencies throughout the two counties in 1990, the chief constable, John Evans, wrote to one chief executive expressing his views on the lack of momentum which appeared to epitomise certain district councils' attitudes towards the *community safety* ethos. In pointing out that he considered that his force had already encompassed *Morgan* as the 'backbone of the Force's strategy on crime prevention' he made reference to others who had 'little knowledge' of the partnership approach and were 'currently reluctant to progress any further'. In the same letter he also made reference to the consultation which the force had been involved in with the two Probation Services which he felt were 'fully committed to a partnership approach'.

During the next few years *Community Safety Strategy Groups* became established in several locations around the force and the Plymouth example of this structure was put into place in 1993. It contained representatives of the expected agencies and each of the four sub-divisional commanders in the Plymouth division as well as the divisional commander and divisional CPO.

*Late 1980s - early 1990s in Plymouth*

The structure of policing in Plymouth was still one based on three main city sub-divisions and one covering Plympton and Plymstock on the outskirts of the city. Each had their own *crime prevention officer* working to a relatively uncoordinated agenda. It was a situation which one of them recalled as needing reform in both its structure and status.

'I was concerned that we were isolated from the structure. We were not at all regarded by our own organisation. We needed to find ways to move it into the core business of the organisation ... CPOs were divorced from the real world. We didn't even have crime figures - it was response led activity.' (JZ)

There was also a retrospective underlying resentment of the perception that police management generally were still more concerned with day-to-day reactive work than placing any additional resources or commitment into a coordinated *crime prevention* strategy. The CPOs were felt to each have individual agendas to which they worked, either because of personal perceptions of what was the most important or productive part of the role they were expected to fulfil, or because local sub-divisional commanders dictated they worked in certain ways. The officer interviewed in depth about his role as one of these was of the opinion that at least two of his colleagues were primarily used as 'gofers' for the local CID, being available to respond to specific tasks such as alarm installation or the provision of preventative measures which were designed more to apprehend offenders than prevent crime in the first instance. The role of another of his colleagues was predominantly connected with administrative work alongside the juvenile bureau, and the interviewee himself felt the need to provide a variety of services - from public presentations to alarm fitting - but against an undefined and unmeasurable set of objectives.

His experiences also caused him to believe that the message which was being given was not particularly welcomed by the public generally, particularly the more vulnerable. In

talking of the presentational work he would regularly perform, often to groups who could inaccurately be described as 'the converted', he expressed the opinion that the work he was doing was simply 'not worth the effort' and cited one particular example of where he had attended a day centre to discuss crime prevention issues and man a display. The target audience were senior citizens who paid less than a passing interest in his work.

'I got the impression that if we didn't talk about it then it would go away. Fear of crime affects the elderly but it's like talking about death, they prefer not to do it.'  
(JZ)

The extent to which innovative ideas were developed but not embarked upon in such a way as to measure the effectiveness of activity against the resources put into them was exemplified by the *crime prevention house* which was opened to the public on 6 February 1991 following negotiation with Plymouth City Council. They provided a terraced house about half a mile from the city centre which was fitted and equipped to a standard of security advised by the police and was to be available as a 'show-home' in which various *crime prevention* displays and presentations could be housed. The idea found much favour and good local press but its servicing as an enterprise fell squarely on the shoulders of the police who found that the resources being put into it in terms of staff was unsustainable when other more beneficial inter-agency initiatives were being developed.

### *The 1990s: Morgan and after*

Moves towards enhancing the commitment and resources of other agencies became a more evident feature of crime prevention policy in Devon and Cornwall and Plymouth in particular during the early 1990s. In 1993 a Community Safety Strategy Group (CSSG) was established in the city. It was a voluntary partnership which agreed to the prioritisation of specific crime issues and sought to influence them. The group consisted of

representatives of the city council, probation service, social services and health as the main statutory bodies. It was an enterprise in which the police were primarily instrumental in encouraging development of issues relevant to crime and disorder in the city and the divisional commander of the area, Chief Superintendent Rus Mitchell, had no doubts about the potential advantages which could be derived from targeted and deliberate action to address the core issues. There was evidence of other partners in the process apparently being less enthused by the initiative, not necessarily because of a belief that there were not fundamental advantages to be gained through partnership working, but rather because of the necessity to commit resources to a process which they did not particularly see as their core business.

One particular individual who became involved in the process from the police service related the extent to which it was commonly the police, normally represented by the divisional commander, who were able to make executive decisions regarding the use of resources and commitment which could be given to specific projects, whilst others on the group often had no such personal authority and needed to get decisions ratified before action could take place. This was set against a perception that other agencies did not understand the full implications and advantages of 'community safety' as a concept, felt it to be a police matter, and were threatened by government action to facilitate wider agency involvement without resourcing it nationally at a time of shrinking budgets. The lead-up to the establishment of Plymouth as a unitary local authority was also seen to be a barrier with groups such as the county based social services and education authority having apparent reservations as to what the position would be once Plymouth became autonomous in budgetary terms. The local authority were, however, perceived by the police to be the key agency which could make a difference to the effectiveness of establishing community

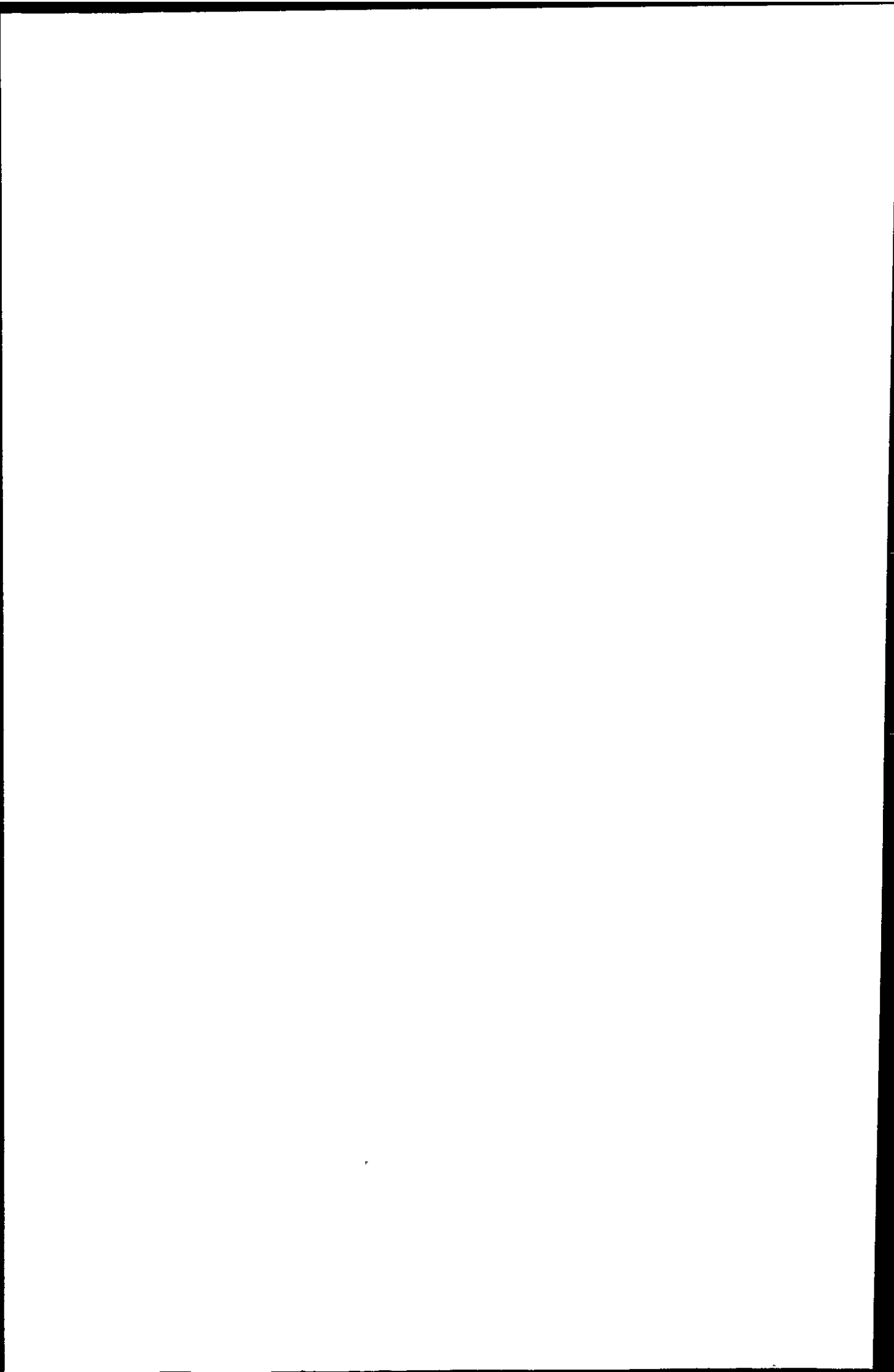
safety in the city. It was necessary, at times, for plain speaking in terms of the extent to which commitment was being shown towards developing a level of dynamism in the system. An attendee at one specific meeting related to the author the forthright stance which a senior police representative had taken with his counterpart from the local authority in threatening to walk away from the group if there wasn't a tangible example of continued commitment given. The meeting agreed to have a paper prepared for the lead-up to unitary status and to present proposals for the future development of community safety in the city - one which was to place a wider level of ownership on agencies other than the police.

However, in discussion with the author, one Plymouth based police officer with an interest in seeing the local work develop believed that there was a lack of a definite lead, and specific encouragement and support for community safety as a multi-agency concept within the force itself. The Plymouth experience was one which was seen to have developed relatively successfully despite, rather than because of, a centrally inspired lead. The force headquarters department which oversaw community safety issues was perceived to have not taken on board the extent to which key recommendations of the Morgan Report were becoming common ways of progression in areas such as Plymouth, this despite the chief constable's clear wish to encourage others into the process and a public commitment by the force to commit resources to initiatives. It was a position which caused the police officer discussing the issue to believe that the force commitment to encouraging the work which was ongoing was more 'rhetorical' than one committed to turning that 'rhetoric into action'.

### *Community Safety initiatives in Plymouth*

Despite the problems which were evident in some of the experiences of developing community safety as a meaningful and resourced concept in Plymouth, it should not be ignored that, in terms of the rest of Devon and Cornwall generally, this city was progressing initiatives which the majority of other divisions had yet to address. Amongst these were projects which concentrated upon the potential to reduce youth crime and make young people aware of their actions in crimes such as auto-theft. The number of non or partially affiliated groups with a totally or semi-voluntary base which existed in the city during the early 1990s should not be ignored in terms of their impact on other aspects of the criminal justice system. The police played a role on the committee of Plymouth Mediation which developed a structured programme of action to address both civil disputes (commonly neighbour disputes) and criminal activity, the latter involving a court based strategy in which the referral could be made to the group as part of either pre-sentence or court decisions.

It is useful to consider research concerning two structured initiatives which took place as a result of the formal police/inter-agency work towards the mid 1990s as examples of where victims and offenders were both seen to have an equally important part to play in the level of crime which occurred. In 1994, Plymouth became incorporated into phase 2 of the *Safer Cities* programme which had as its objectives the reduction of crime, fear of crime and improvement in quality of life through community safety and crime prevention work. The programme provided for £100,000 to be available to *Plymouth Safer Cities* for a three year period with the costs of the actual project being funded from central source outside the £100,000. Central to its operation was a local inter-agency steering group, formed from the existing CSSG with additional members drawn from local business, academia, the media



and voluntary sectors. The steering group decided to target four particular issues of importance: violence, auto-crime, burglary and youth offending, and the police established respective committees, comprising of representatives of other agencies, to identify strategies which could be effective in addressing these problems.

In relation to burglary, Victim Support, the local authority housing department, probation service and the police formed the Domestic Burglary Strategy Group (DBSG), the aim of which was to reduce burglary and fear of burglary particularly in one specific area where such crime was high. It also sought to improve the response given to victims and particularly repeat and vulnerable individuals who had been burgled. A sponsorship deal with an insurance company was facilitated by Crime Concern to cover seven Safer Cities locations and was given the title 'Homesafe', although what this entailed developed in different ways in different areas, depending upon local needs and inter-agency structures. It concentrated upon improving security by providing prioritised homes<sup>5</sup> with a security check, fitting security locks, chains and smoke alarms, marking property and providing advice and leaflets. In the area chosen to be targeted, Mount Gould, a number of other changes were reported which it was considered may have been as a result of public support for the Homesafe project including a new neighbourhood watch scheme being established, the re-opening of a community centre and improvements to footways by Devon County Council (Mawby, 1997, p.5). This acceptance of the initiative was perceived to be a relevant factor in a later positive evaluation of the service given and a reduction in burglary which was more marked in Mount Gould than elsewhere in the city and seen to be an effect of the Homesafe initiative in particular (pp.13-14).

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<sup>5</sup> Homes were prioritised particularly if they had been recently burgled or were recommended as priorities normally by police or Victim Support (Mawby, 1997, p.4).



The establishment of the DBSG also had the effect of accelerating an initiative which had first emerged following discussion between the assistant chief probation officer and chair of the local health authority, where both identified the fact that many repeat offenders had serious drug-related problems, often failed to comply with community-based sentences, and went on to commit more crime. This position was exacerbated because of a waiting list for local statutory drug agency referrals causing 'a revolving door between offending, drug use, court and prison'. The effect which the DBSG had on the situation was important because of the priority which had been given to household burglary through Safer Cities, a crime which was directly linked to offenders with a drug-related problem. The project encompassed a multi-agency approach evident as being encouraged in government literature of the mid-1990s (Department of Health, 1995; Howard, 1993) but was seen as being 'ahead of the game' in Devon and Cornwall (a similar scheme having been established in Torbay) in respect of both its timing and by 'expanding current boundaries (by) being based on ... the notion of enforceability' (Barton and Mawby, 1997, p.8).

The scheme aimed to 'fast-track' offenders into drug stabilisation opportunities provided by local agencies in an attempt to reduce the likelihood of them re-offending. It relied on the court process in that the judiciary had to have sufficient confidence to see the scheme as being a viable community based option and sentence, with conditions of attendance, accordingly. The extent to which the scheme was successful was probably less able to be evidenced in terms of recorded burglary figures given the general fall in this type of crime and other initiatives evident in Plymouth during the period, and more in relation to the levels of cooperation and trust which were engendered between diverse agencies. This was, in no small part, due to the 'unreserved support of the police' (Barton and Mawby, 1997, p.31) but also to individuals within the process who built and earned mutual respect for

ideological positions and organisational cultures within the environments they operated.

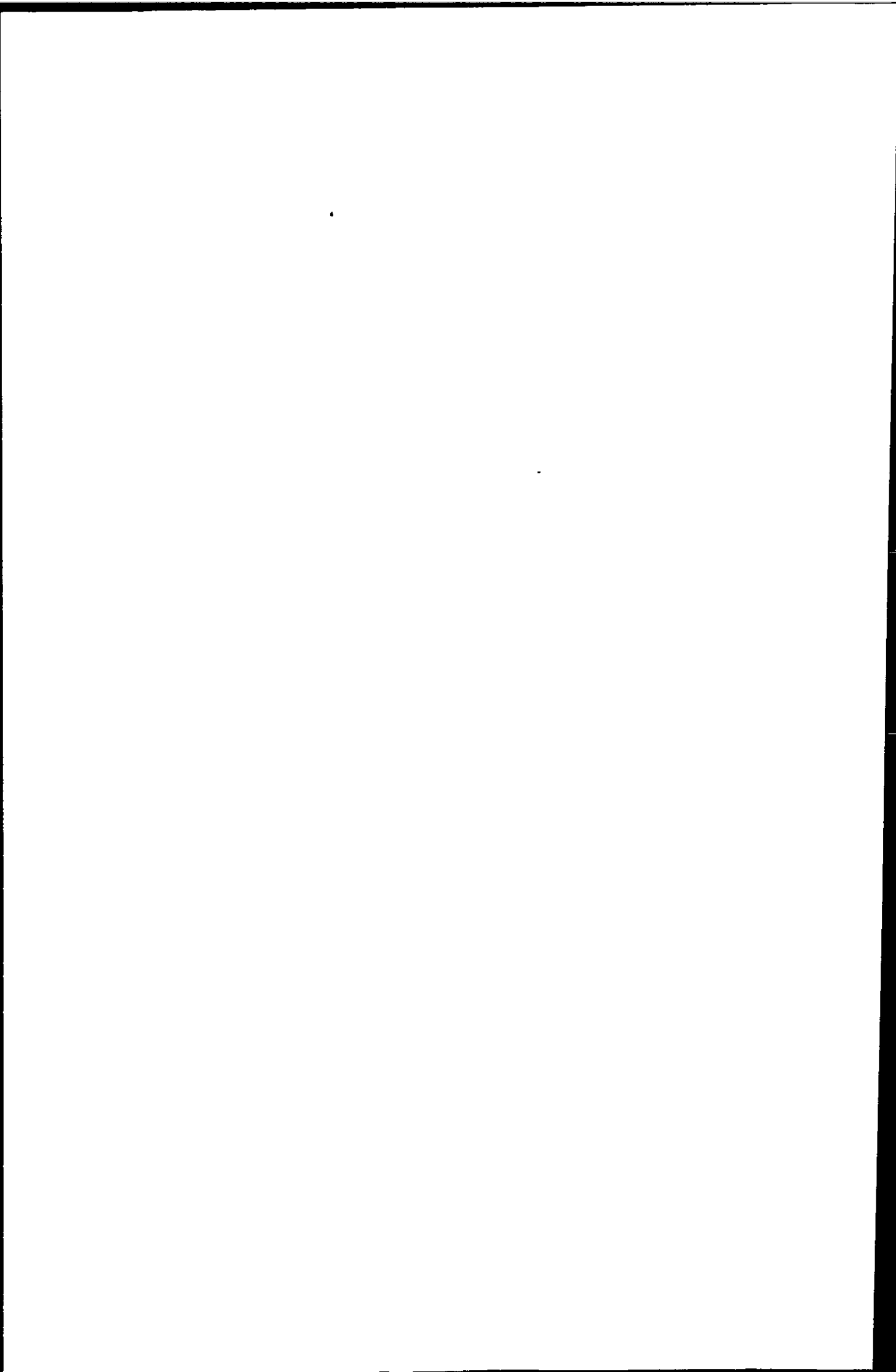
### *Neighbourhood Watch*

The mid 1980s saw *Neighbourhood Watch* (NHW) become a focus of attention nationally and the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary began to publicly promote the organisation of such schemes in 1987. In Plymouth NHW had begun in that year and the initial demand from the public for more information about joining or setting up schemes was overwhelming. With each enquiry came the necessity for the police to commit resources to helping establish contact, a job which was initially targeted at the community constables for the areas concerned. It was clear that a degree of organisation was necessary to the procedure and, as a result, a liaison group was set up which included established coordinators and the police. However the group was one which was dysfunctional in its makeup and perceived by an officer who had responsibility for overseeing its work as one in which 'the police had no role' (JZ). Although the committee continued for a number of years it produced relatively little of benefit to the wider community safety strategies which were being developed, and eventually folded. The Plymouth division appointed a police liaison officer to take responsibility for the quality and quantity of information which was disseminated to coordinators by the police, and to utilise the sponsored 'Ringmaster' automatic message passing service to best effect.<sup>6</sup>

An evaluation of the public's subscription to *Neighbourhood Watch* schemes (NHW) in Devon and Cornwall was conducted in January 1994 across its 20 sub-divisions resulting

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<sup>6</sup> This system allowed tape recorded messages alerting coordinators to crime in their areas to be directed automatically to programmed numbers in the system. The 1994 survey of NHW co-ordinators (details of which follow in this chapter) indicated a less than positive response to this method of contact, a result which came as no surprise to one officer (JZ) who believed that the public felt 'intimidated' by the process.



in figures which showed a wide diversity between them. There were not strikingly obvious factors which influenced the 'success' rate of sub-divisions in attracting volunteers to this aspect of *crime prevention* across the force. Sub-divisions at that time were more diverse in their geographic and social spread than was useful to analysing common factors on the quantity of households covered alone. Table 10.1 shows the diversity of take-up across the force according to the figures provided at the end of 1993 by local crime prevention officers. Interestingly, the two sub-divisions which had most households covered by NHW schemes were at either end of the spectrum of demographic factors in relation to housing tenure and household make-up. The difference in levels of crime in these areas was also significantly varied. The highest membership by some 17% above the force average and 8% above the next highest ranking sub-division was the one covering Exmouth and East Devon where crime was proportionately lower than half the other sub-divisions and the average age of the residents significantly higher, particularly in the catchment bands of Budleigh Salterton, Sidmouth and Seaton - areas affectionately known to many as 'God's Waiting Room'.

The second highest take-up, at over one quarter of households covered was the sub-division policed from Exmouth Road, Devonport which included a number of high-crime and socially deprived areas (including part of St. Peters ward), as well as a small number of more conventionally urban-middle class occupancy locations which, nevertheless, suffered proportionately similar problems in relation to the amount of crime committed. Here there was a much lower average age of residents and a much higher level of crime per person than in East Devon. At first glance this appears to conflict with the conclusions drawn from a survey of NHW scheme co-ordinators conducted in 1989 across Plymouth and other parts of the force area. Whereas the results showed variations across different areas of the

force, Plymouth schemes were not particularly common in low status, high crime areas or in the middle-class suburbs but tended to be more obvious in middle-class areas closer to the city centre. Schemes throughout the force were predominantly in better class housing areas (Mawby, 1990). The police figures (table 10.1) in relation to the Devonport sub-division in Plymouth show a relatively high proportion of residencies covered by NHW and, given the relatively low social and economic demography obvious in a sizable proportion of this area, it is appropriate to consider the formulation of such information a little further. Here, the distinction between methods of recording apparent success in the 'numbers game' of NHW is exemplified as being problematic.

Sub-division covering:	Primarily	%
Camborne/Redruth/Helston	Rural	9.8
Falmouth/Penryn	Rural	10.6
Newquay	Rural	10.5
Penzance	Rural	14.3
Truro	Rural	15.7
St Austell/Bodmin	Rural	15.9
Liskeard/Saltash/Looe	Rural	15.1
Launceston/North Cornwall	Rural	17.3
Barnstaple/North Devon	Rural	22.7
Bideford	Rural	21.8
Newton Abbot	Rural	16.7
Exmouth/East Devon	Rural	35.3
Tiverton	Rural	21.6
Plympton/Tavistock	Semi-Rural	16.9
Paignton	Semi-Rural	19.3
Plymouth - City centre	Urban	8.3
Plymouth- Crownhill	Urban	19.5
Plymouth-Devonport	Urban	27.5
Torquay	Urban	16.2
Exeter	Urban	17.6
Force average		18.7

(Devon & Cornwall Constabulary - Quarterly Performance Review, 1/1994, p.21).

Table 10.1: % of Households within sub-divisions of Devon & Cornwall which were members of Neighbourhood Watch Schemes at the end of 1993

NHW did not appeal to the underlying instincts of those directing policy and agency activity towards notions of *social prevention*, and neither was it portrayed in any such way. It was, in its most base form, 'nuts and bolts' *crime prevention* with a bonus: active two-way support between communities and police on a day-to-day basis which might ensure

that those members of the public who chose to be involved could play a crucial role in both preventing themselves being victims of crime and helping the police catch those who were responsible. The attempt to straddle the border between an *opportunity prevention* and *legislative prevention* model was distinct and the primacy given to the NHW approach at national level soon pervaded the public relations strategies of forces nationwide.

NHW has drawn a good deal of attention in research terms from a number of perspectives. There have been studies conducted in forces around the country in attempts to identify the value of the schemes which have been encouraged and these have, to a greater or lesser extent, provided information which was of no particular surprise in policing circles. Work conducted in Devon and Cornwall both as a telephone survey in connection with this work and five other surveys based on the original telephone interviewing structure, but distributed as a postal questionnaire as part of the force's inspection process, were administered during 1994 and 1995. The original questionnaire took into consideration an earlier questionnaire used by Mawby in a local study of NHW coordinators and replicated a number of the questions to provide a demographic picture of the status, age and housing tenure of the respondents.

A list of individuals named as NHW coordinators which was held by the Plymouth *Crime Prevention Department* was used as the sampling frame. The list was provided at the beginning of 1994 and, upon being passed it, the researcher was advised that the department were uncertain as to how up-to-date the list was as they were in the process of completing a review. The list totalled 513 names and addresses, the vast majority of which had telephone numbers alongside. Those which did not were checked against telephone directory entries and, where possible, numbers inserted. The list was stratified

geographically across the sub-divisions of Plymouth, which included Plympton and Plymstock but excluded more rural locations which formed part of the division covered from the Plymouth headquarters and extended to as far as Tavistock some 12 miles north. Those which did not have telephone numbers recorded were excluded for the purposes of the work which was to be conducted entirely by telephone interview. Under different circumstances this decision would have been considered problematic due to the under-representation of certain groups and areas which could have been ignored, thereby potentially produced a misleading picture of response based on a survey excluding lower social groupings. In this instance it was decided that the high number of coordinators who had telephone numbers listed (489 - 95%) meant that any exclusion was more likely to be based on administrative oversight rather than the individual not having a telephone. The sample drawn, involved 244 individual coordinators being telephoned.<sup>7</sup>

As with the *quality of service* surveys, where no response was received to the first telephone call, two further calls were made on different nights before the case was recorded as 'no response'. Of the 244 names telephoned, 167 contacts were made. Of these a relatively high number, 59 (35.3%) said that they were not NHW co-ordinators, a response which bore out the concerns which the Crime Prevention Department had as to the accuracy of the data provided for the research. Of the 59 who were not co-ordinators, 12 said that they had never undertaken such a role. In all but 2 of these cases however this was due to the individual being spoken to at the address now being a new resident on an

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<sup>7</sup> Use was made of the small bank of police civilian support staff who worked during evenings after having completed their normal duties and had originally been established in 1992 to conduct telephone interviews in connection with the force's *quality of service* initiative. The questionnaire was written on SPSS DEII software which enabled responses to be entered directly onto the computer screens. Space was available for answers to open questions and those where an additional explanation or view was offered by the respondent. The training and experience which the interviewers had received during the previous eighteen months in contacting literally hundreds of members of the public who had been victims of crime or road traffic accidents ensured that a good standard of interviewing took place. This system was one which had inbuilt quality control checks at both simultaneous and respective levels. See Chapter 8 *Quality of Service in Devon and Cornwall*.

old telephone number. This left a total of 106 co-ordinators who were contacted and all except one agreed to answer questions on the telephone. Therefore, of the original sample of 244 names, a response rate of 43% was achieved.

Around two-thirds of co-ordinators (66) had received at least one contact from the police over the previous six month period, either personally, on the telephone or by written communication, and three-quarters (79) felt that the scheme was working 'very' or 'fairly' well in their area. Imparting information through a telephone call was believed to be a 'good' way in which the police could make contact (80%); as was personal contact with a police officer (73%). However only 28% believed that sending a tape-recorded message to them over the telephone was good practice. A recently produced booklet entitled 'See it - Note it', which should have been forwarded to all NHW coordinators throughout the area was reported to have been received by all but 19 (18%) and 74 (86%) of those having received it felt that it was a useful initiative. Common reasons for dissatisfaction with the way in which NHW was working in their area tended to be around lack of police contact. Verbatim responses in this respect often related to, not only contact as a coordinator, but also to general perceptions of a lack of police presence generally.

'Residents would like to know that there is actually someone there for them - they have to try and ring the police to get any contact.' (ref: NHW/89/1994)

'I would like contact with the police occasionally to show they are interested.' (ref: NHW/87/1994)

'It is a good concept but needs better communication from the police. We need to be updated about crimes in the area.' (ref: NHW/66/1994)

'...more contact from the police - couldn't they just drive down the road to be seen?' (ref: NHW/65/1994)

A theme which had emanated from the government of the day was one where local residents were encouraged to take an active part in the policing of their communities



together with the idea of volunteer special constables assuming the role of 'parish constables' having specific interest in particular areas. Much talk abounded on the value of 'citizen patrols' which, whilst conjuring problems associated with vigilantism, saw a cautious degree of positive opportunity in the idea of NHW volunteers assisting in this process. The views of co-ordinators in this regard was perceived to be important to gauging the extent of support for such an idea. Only 19 were 'strongly' (4%) or 'generally' (14%) in favour of this idea. However, interestingly, 27 (26%) co-ordinators indicated that 'already did' or 'would be willing' to patrol if so requested.

Nevertheless, NHW was still considered by many to be an 'untapped resource' and one which required regularity in servicing rather than less regular meetings. The extent to which NHW had become an important link with members of the community in disseminating information and gaining intelligence was one established within the police environment and a measurable number of successes in crime reduction and arrests began to be recorded.

### ***Crime Prevention in Devon and Cornwall: an overview***

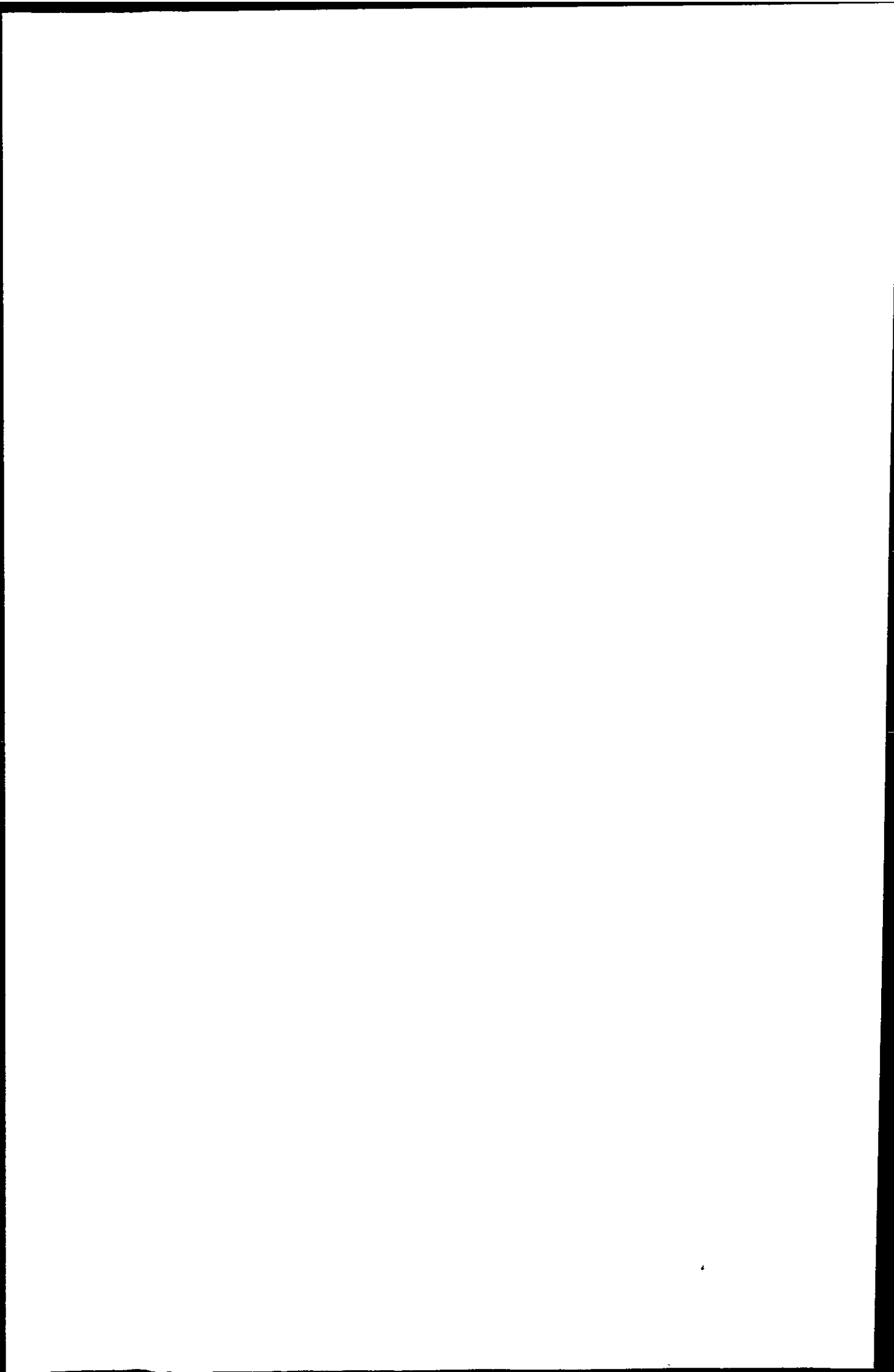
The development of crime prevention during the 1960s and into the 1970s within the two counties of Devon and Cornwall was epitomised by a structure which followed the national trend with the introduction of crime prevention departments and the training of officers as 'specialists' in the subject. There is nothing to suggest that Devon and Cornwall, like the vast majority of other forces, avoided the pitfalls of alienated special departments viewed by other officers with scepticism. However the force made its first tentative steps to move away from this image during the latter part of the 1970s under John Alderson and his Crime Prevention Support Unit which led to the formation of community policing. Despite

this, and arguably because with the retirement of Alderson in the early 1980s; some of the impetus for fully developing the inter-agency structure of crime prevention and community policing became attenuated amongst issues such as 'effectiveness and efficiency' and the Police and Criminal Evidence Act, both of which were resource intensive requirements. Although the late 1970s had seen innovative and meaningful progress being made towards a wider community problem solving process, the next most significant work was not to emerge until over ten years later. Links with other agencies had continued to be developed during this period and were, on the whole, positive and supportive in their nature. There were, nevertheless, cultural differences within these organisations (including the police) which needed to be overcome, and the extent to which this was beginning to happen was a testament to the professionalism of many of the leading individuals in the process.

Whereas a continued government concern with crime prevention as a political theme continued to receive prominence during the 1980s, the extent to which the approach was embraced within forces was variable. In Devon and Cornwall the closer work which was undertaken in regard to youth offending and cautioning policy with other agencies signified an important departure from a police-based prosecution system. But it was not until the early 1990s that a more structured co-ordinated approach to community safety began to emerge, given increased impetus by the Morgan Report. In Plymouth this was further encouraged through the increased funding which became available through 'Safer Cities' but, in particular, through the work of the divisional commander who visualised and promoted the advantages which could be gained through combined social resources. The methods and aims of CPOs in the city began to change alongside new strategies leading to a new breed of specialist, less one of 'locks and bolts' advisor and more one of partnership worker. Ward policing supplemented the overall strategy (as detailed in chapter 9) and

examples such as this received acknowledgement nationally as good practice (Audit Commission, 1996b).

This chapter has, therefore, primarily dealt with the strategies employed in leading towards a concept of 'community safety' replacing 'crime prevention'. The extent to which victims in the force area, and Plymouth and *Stonehouse* in particular, related to the changes and services provided to them is the subject of the chapter which follows.



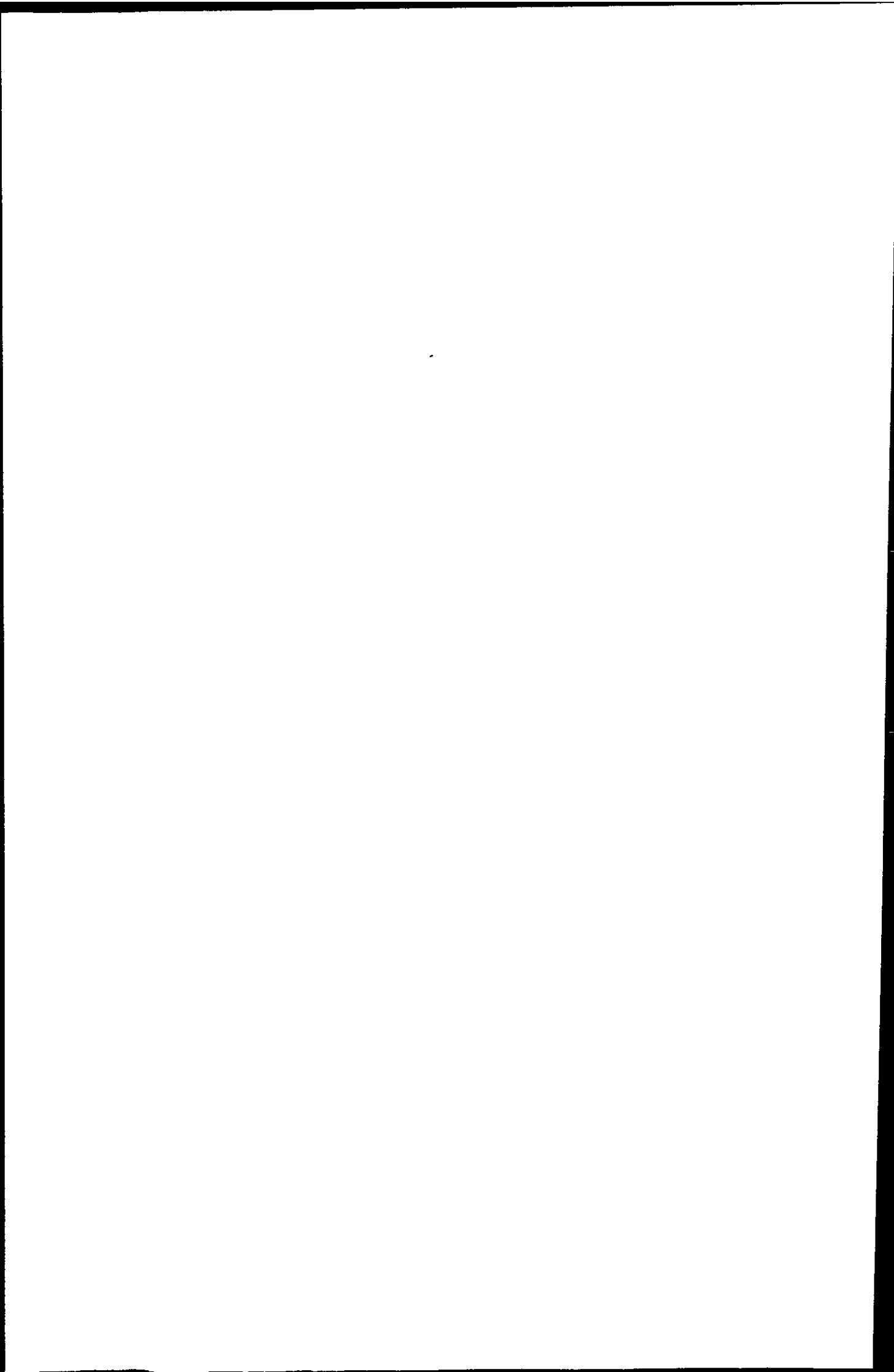
## Victims of Crime in Devon and Cornwall

This chapter will consider a number of issues relating to the position of victims within the Devon and Cornwall area. It will initially consider the perceptions of police officers with regard to victims and the issues surrounding their respective positions in the criminal justice process. Police policies will then be reviewed at force and local level, using information from the force records and through research conducted within the area. In particular, it will draw on evidence from the Plymouth City and *Stonehouse* areas to exemplify the level of effectiveness of these strategies. This issue will then be qualified in the consideration of results obtained from the *Quality of Service* surveys conducted during the 1990s and analysis of this and other data obtained through personal interviews.

Within the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, and at more local levels, research has revealed little formal<sup>1</sup> interest in the victim as an actor on the criminal justice stage until the late 1970s and early 1980s. Given the level of interest in the victim which was emerging during the late 1950s and early 1960s at national level, it might be assumed that the results of critical legislative changes such as the 1964 *Compensation for Victims of Crimes of Violence Act* would have manifested themselves in local police acknowledgement of their importance within a relatively short time period. This does not appear to have been the case. However, there were indications that certain aspects of the principles of both legislation, and wider moral concerns with the victim as someone

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<sup>1</sup> By 'formal' it is intended to indicate where specific policies or initiatives have been recorded in files, reports and other documents.



requiring an additional service were evident in the reminiscences of police officers and residents interviewed in Devon and Cornwall and *Stonehouse* in particular. This section will elaborate upon the findings in relation to both formal documentation and oral history during the period prior to the amalgamation of Plymouth City Police with the rest of Devon and Cornwall.

Much of the potentially revealing evidence from the Plymouth City Police reports is not available through the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary archives. That which has been located has often been through the contacts which were established with individuals who retained items as mementoes, and who now jealously guard their 'inheritance'. In relation to strategies which may have reflected a specific commitment to acknowledge the position of victims of crime within the Plymouth area, little evidence exists to support a belief that this was more than a 'gleam in the eye' of certain individuals who were visionary in their outlook. Reports of Watch Committee meetings during the period had little within them to identify with the work which was beginning to emerge at national level. The role which the police played in the administration of the compensation legislation was restricted to the provision of reports to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board in appropriate cases, but records no longer exist at either local level, or through the CICB itself, to identify the proportion of victims of violent crime who made application for compensation during the early years of the scheme.

Annual reports of the chief constable similarly failed to acknowledge the position of the victim. The crime section of the 1967 report covered the issue of assaults in four paragraphs covering less than half a page. This indicated a 'substantial increase' of 111 assaults (44%) over the 1965 figures (363 as against 252) with attention being drawn to the

'high proportion of young offenders' and the 'irresponsible' and 'unruly' behaviour evident amongst this age group. The word 'victim' did not appear at all in the five pages devoted to crime, and neither could the word be found in any other section of the thirty two page report. These findings were identical to those within the three annual reports of previous years. A similar situation was found to be evident in the annual reports of Devon, Exeter and Cornwall constabularies around the same period.

*Recollections and views from the past*

Police officers who had served during the 1960s and 1970s, mainly within Plymouth and at *The Octagon* police station, were asked their views on what they understood the police position in relation to crime victims was and whether they recalled any specific instruction ever being given in relation to what was expected of them. None suggested that any formal policy existed, although some referred to more recent initiatives, mainly in relation to Victim Support Schemes. However, there were a number of reminiscences of what officers recalled as being *their* contribution to lending a hand to victims of crime. All were individually personal in both their recollection and style of support which was recalled as being offered. The most common level of support which was suggested as being institutional in its structure was that of revisiting those who they regarded as most at risk; commonly the elderly and female residents.

'I would always go back and check if they were ok. later on. I think we all did as much as we could.' (AQ)

'The 'old dears' used to get a bit upset quite often' ..... 'They would sometimes come in and ask if we'd caught anyone and we would have a bit of a chat.' (BC)

'I'd ask them how they were and if they wanted me to pop back and see them, sometimes they did - it depended on how old they were and if they lived alone mainly.' (AB)



One officer equated his position as a policeman at *The Octagon* with the provider of a service and conduit to other means of support in the reply to a question which was not posed as one related specifically to service provision to victims. He perceived the role as one of support for the residents regardless of their background or offender/victim status. In similar vein, another officer also reflected what he perceived to be the reality of the status of those residents of the area.

'The people felt they could come in. It was strong arm policing but they respected us for it. We always gave them a fair deal.' ... 'If necessary we used to tell the National Assistance people and social services to go to them.' (IA)

'Don't forget, half of them were villains down there anyway. There was as much nicking went on between them as went on outside the place. We used to treat everyone the same - no prejudice - would get the same treatment as anyone else.' [*Did that include if they had been a victim?*] 'Yes. No prejudice. Everyone the same.' (RC)

Discussions with police officers relating to the period, in terms of their dealings with victims of crime, were often well recalled with names, places, and crime details themselves being referred to. The nature of the interviews sought to establish individual views on the position of the victim of crime within force policy of the time and the activities which took place at local level in their support at one level or another. One issue which commonly emerged was that of perceptions about what victims required and the extent to which police resources would allow any greater degree of involvement. A second issue related to how the officers perceived things to have not changed for victims in respect of the assistance given by the police and justice system agencies generally since they began policing.

'When I went to a burglary, I used to feel like there wasn't enough time to spend with the person. There was always something else to go to.' ... 'Even when you left, you'd say you'd come back and let them know how things were going but, to be honest, I rarely had time to.' (RD)

'The cars meant we could get around more easily but it didn't seem to mean that we had more time.' ..... 'I seem to think there was more time spent with people when you had to walk around'. (IA)

'Even then, once you left them they were on their own and had nobody to really help them, especially if they ever had to go to court.' ..... 'At least we used to go to court a bit more often to give evidence in the past so we could make sure they knew we were there.' (DQ)

Senior police officers also referred to the policy which they felt was being enacted by their staff which may, or may not, have fitted with the needs of victims. Victims, as a group, did not figure in recollections of any formal policies which were in being, the first such developments being post-1979 after the establishment of *Victim Support*.

'My officers always did their best for victims, I'm sure, but how they did this was very much down to them.' (ER)

'I did make sure they knew that I wanted a good job done. I wanted arrests and I wanted them to know this included supporting the victim to get them on our side if they went to court to give evidence.' ... 'I did send a couple of written instructions on this.' (GD)

The interviews which were conducted with police officers and victim/residents in *Stonehouse* revealed some common strands which it is worth considering further by reference to the evidence which has been uncovered relating to the period between 1967 and 1979; one during which *Victim Support* had yet to take root in the area. Victims who were able to recall experiences during this period told similar tales to the police officers interviewed. Commonly, the perceptions of how well the officer who had dealt with them was related to issues of empathy and politeness rather than the nature of specific services which had been provided. These 'services' recounted during a period of some fifteen to twenty years past were not able to be measured with the same degree of accuracy as those which were later provided and measured through the *quality of service* analysis of the 1990s but the recollections of what was, or was not impressive, still appeared to be relatively easy for victims to recall.

'I think the time I saw a policeman about the break-in was one I remember because of how helpful he was, even though I knew there wasn't much chance of anyone being caught.' (ref: 4/1994)

'Perhaps him not coming back to let me know what happened took the edge off it. At the time he came I do remember he seemed like he was going to make sure everything would be OK but I never heard any more.' (ref: 23/1991)

It was interesting to note, although not especially surprising, that victims' perceptions of the standards of service which the police had provided, together with expectations of these, were similar to those expressed about more recent 1990s crimes. The attitude of the officers attending, together with any further contacts, were the aspects of police performance most often referred to without any specific prompting during the interviews. When considering the levels of satisfaction with police actions during the 1990s it will be seen that these factors still appear to be common criteria against which victims judge the standards of police activity.

### *Victim Support Schemes*

The issues which surrounded the establishment of the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, following amalgamation in 1967, were often problematic in equating the different styles of policing, and individuals themselves, to one set of policies. Within the new force, Victim Support Schemes (VSS) appear to have been a contentious issue at a relatively early stage of their development. The speed of the uptake of VSS as an idea may well have owed much to the geographic location of the first scheme to be established within the force area: Exeter, situated some eighty miles from Bristol, where the original initiative was formed.<sup>2</sup> However, the strides which were being made in developing inter-agency work between the police and, in particular, the probation service in Exeter clearly underlined the enthusiasm

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<sup>2</sup> See chapter 3 1967-1979: *Technology to community* for details of the emergence of the first scheme in the Bristol area.

which was exhibited by members of these groups for the new concept. (Moore and Brown, 1981). There was a 'commitment provided by local agencies. The probation service was especially enthusiastic, with the Assistant Chief Probation Officer, John Harding, already committed to community developments within the criminal justice system' (Mawby and Gill, 1987: p.137). By the end of the 1970s, schemes had also begun to operate, or were being conceived, in Barnstaple, Torbay, Crediton, Teignbridge and Camborne/Redruth as well as Plymouth. The development of the Victim Support Scheme in Plymouth was established under the auspices of, primarily, the Guild of Community Services which, together with the Council for Christian Care, played an important part in the establishment of the initiative. It was a scheme which was relatively ad-hoc in its implementation and heavily reliant on the police for its custom. Little more can be said about this era, however, since most of the literature available refers to the early 1980s and onwards.

The schemes had common aims in line with those of their national co-ordinating body but, as might be expected with an enterprise as new as this, the way in which these aims were achieved were not without teething problems. Although support for the volunteers was becoming accepted by agencies such as the police and probation service, when it came to providing the type of support which was necessary for the groups themselves to operate in a productive way the situation was mired by uncertainty, protectionism and some degree of dogma. These traits were most observable in police officers' reactions to the schemes with their inherent role of 'gatekeepers' of the system and the information held within it. VSS looked to the police for its referrals and there was little indication in these early stages that those victims who were being selected for referral by police officers were identified against any criteria other than age and gender. Similar findings were uncovered by Mawby

and Gill in 1985 where referral rates in the Devon and Cornwall area overall showed each available volunteer taking an average of just eight referrals during the period 1984/85.<sup>3</sup>

The Devon and Cornwall Constabulary had laid out their support and the instructions to officers as to how VSS should be regarded in memoranda and orders of the time. Records from this period were difficult to locate, mainly because of the force's enthusiasm for discarding documents after a relatively short period of time.<sup>4</sup> Records sought for the early development of *Victim Support* from within the police headquarters revealed that a move of offices in the early 1990s, for example, had resulted in widespread destruction of files which may have shed more light on this development. Information at the force museum and library was similarly lacking. Data from the early period was therefore obtained primarily through interviews with officers and victims who recalled the period. This evidence revealed an underlying scepticism amongst officers with the development of a voluntary organisation which now sought to provide a relatively untried level of support in an area which many of them perceived to be a limited level of demand. In reality the true nature of police officers' views of the period are not able to be judged but the interviews did uncover a divergence of opinions which were tinged with a degree of reminiscence.

'We were told that there was a new group who were going to help victims and we could tell them if someone needed help. I think the idea is good, but in the time you are talking about I don't think many people got put in touch. It wasn't that we didn't want to, but we had to consider what the person who had been hurt wanted.' ... 'It wasn't seen as appropriate to have someone else call on them other than the police I don't think.' (BT)

'What we were told about them was not very clear.' ... 'I knew they existed but, to be honest, I wasn't too sure what they did. There was a general feeling, I suppose,

<sup>3</sup> The figure is only indicative as the data provided in Mawby & Gill (1987: p.140) shows the number of volunteers as the number available during 1985 and the figures of referrals by each scheme ranges from January 1984 to March 1986.

<sup>4</sup> The force's 'central registry', to which all official headquarters files should have been routed upon completion, was found to not contain the items sought. The process whereby individual departments stored, and eventually disposed of their own files, was found to be relatively widespread.

that trust played a part. Trust is important. We didn't 'not trust' them but we didn't trust them either.' (IL)

The idea of 'trust' in the volunteers concerned, and the idea of an organisation set up to look after a group which had previously been either, at worst ignored, or at best seen by the police as a preserve of their own, came across as important to the police officers who recounted their feelings about the early establishment of *Victim Support*. The experience was similarly recalled elsewhere by an early-involved volunteer from Cornwall who was spoken to, by chance, at a meeting totally unconnected with *Victim Support*. As reminiscences of other events unfurled in the course of conversation the subject of the individual's involvement in the voluntary sector came to the fore. The person concerned had not served in a role with the scheme for more than a few months but, when the question of how he thought things might have developed if he had stayed he was relatively dismissive of its potential as a result of his experience. He recounted that he had only been asked to visit two people and that, upon his arrival, they were surprised but grateful that someone had called. Overall he got the impression that the police did 'not really see the point of it'.

The 1980s was the period during which the victim 'came of age' and became a more established part of the daily workings of the police service. The position in Devon and Cornwall was reasonably advanced in its attitude towards the *Victim Support Schemes* which existed, but was not without its problems. The schemes arrived as a concerted initiative at roughly the same time as Alderson's model of *community policing*. With a commitment to a philosophy based around active citizenship, assisted by the police, the concept of *Victim Support* seemed to complement the overall policing ethos within Devon

and Cornwall. However, schemes themselves suffered from a general lack of volunteers prepared to undertake such work, against a background of low perceived needs.

Research identified the relatively large number of schemes operating in the area where crime rates and the number of referrals per scheme were relatively low. The independent nature of the schemes, together with ambiguity apparent in formal police support, were additional factors quoted which emphasised problematic aspects of a co-ordinated approach in these early stages (Mawby and Gill, 1987, pp.139-142). Mawby and Gill had sought the views of police officers on *Victim Support* and had received replies to a postal questionnaire from 179 officers of varying ranks, but primarily constables and sergeants. This was similar to the composition of the officers, both serving and retired, who were personally interviewed for *this* research during the early 1990s, the majority of which were constables and sergeants. The responses were gained through semi-structured interviews which covered a wide range of issues, *Victim Support* being one of them. Responses to questions which sought to illuminate certain issues were later coded to indicate whether a generally positive or negative view had been offered. In the case of *Victim Support* the issues were raised, whether or not the officer had been serving during the time when such schemes were in operation.

Questions about police officers' knowledge of *Victim Support* required a response which showed that the respondent knew what he or she was talking about. Whereas this did not mean that detailed knowledge of all that the scheme did was needed, a rough indication of their purpose and methods of operation was sought to qualify for a coding of 'Yes',

otherwise a 'No' was recorded.<sup>5</sup> Positive responses to the other two issues were where no overall concern was expressed with the services which the individual believed *Victim Support* provided to either the victims or police service. An overwhelming number of respondents had a positive view of the role which *Victim Support* played. Only one had a negative view of the organisation in relation to both victim and police and one had reservations about the value of the scheme to the police only. Positive responses tended to relate to issues of 'support', 'sympathy' and 'care' for victims, and in terms of assisting the police. The nature of support which was seen as unable to be provided from anywhere else was also commonly cited (Table 11.1).

	Yes or generally positive	No or generally negative	No view/unsure
Know of <i>Victim Support</i> and what it does	Yes : 17	No : 8	1
<i>Victim Support</i> provide useful service to victims?	Positive : 16	Negative : 1	9
<i>Victim Support</i> provide a useful facility for police	Positive : 14	Negative : 2	9

Table 11.1: Serving and retired police officers' perceptions of *Victim Support*

'The scheme here in Plymouth is very good. I have called on them a couple of times and they have always been there within 24 hours.' (LG)

'I don't think the police have the time to spend with victims anymore. I think we should, but, as we don't *Victim Support* do the job.' (NR)

'I used them when there was an RTA (*road traffic accident*) and they were very useful.' (JW)

'I know they help victims for a fact. The help they gave a relative of mine when she got burgled was very appreciated by her.' (AQ)

'There's a lot more they do now than ten years ago. I think I was a bit sceptical when they first started, but I can see the advantages now.' (NS)

Within the responses which officers gave were a number of actual examples of where they had personally called upon the services of *Victim Support* to assist in cases with which they

<sup>5</sup> This included the officers who were not serving when the schemes were in operation.



were dealing. These tended to be solicited experiences, through the interviewer asking if they could give any specific examples.

'I have rung them about an elderly woman who had been burgled and who was really upset and had no relatives nearby. I had to leave a message on their answerphone but I know they went round the next day.' (MM)

'I saw her (*the Victim Support co-ordinator*) at the station when she was checking the crime complaints and told her about the one I had just been to. She said she would make sure someone went around later on.' (CX)

The wish for the service to remain in its localised form amongst *Victim Support* schemes generally was, to a large extent, informally replicated in the way the police responded to the issue. Whereas the force had committed itself to support *Victim Support* through access to its records, local police commanders were allowed to practice relative autonomy in deciding the extent to which they would permit this to occur. However, where a senior officer pledged his officers' support to the principle of 'open access', one station in the east of Cornwall, to which a visit was made by the author during the late 1980s, resulted in a conversation with a sergeant who expressed her concern that it was for the police to decide on which cases should be referred as it was the police who had made initial contact with the victim and were best able to judge their needs. The local co-ordinator did not make regular visits to the station, possibly as a result of such attitudes, and referral rates were low.

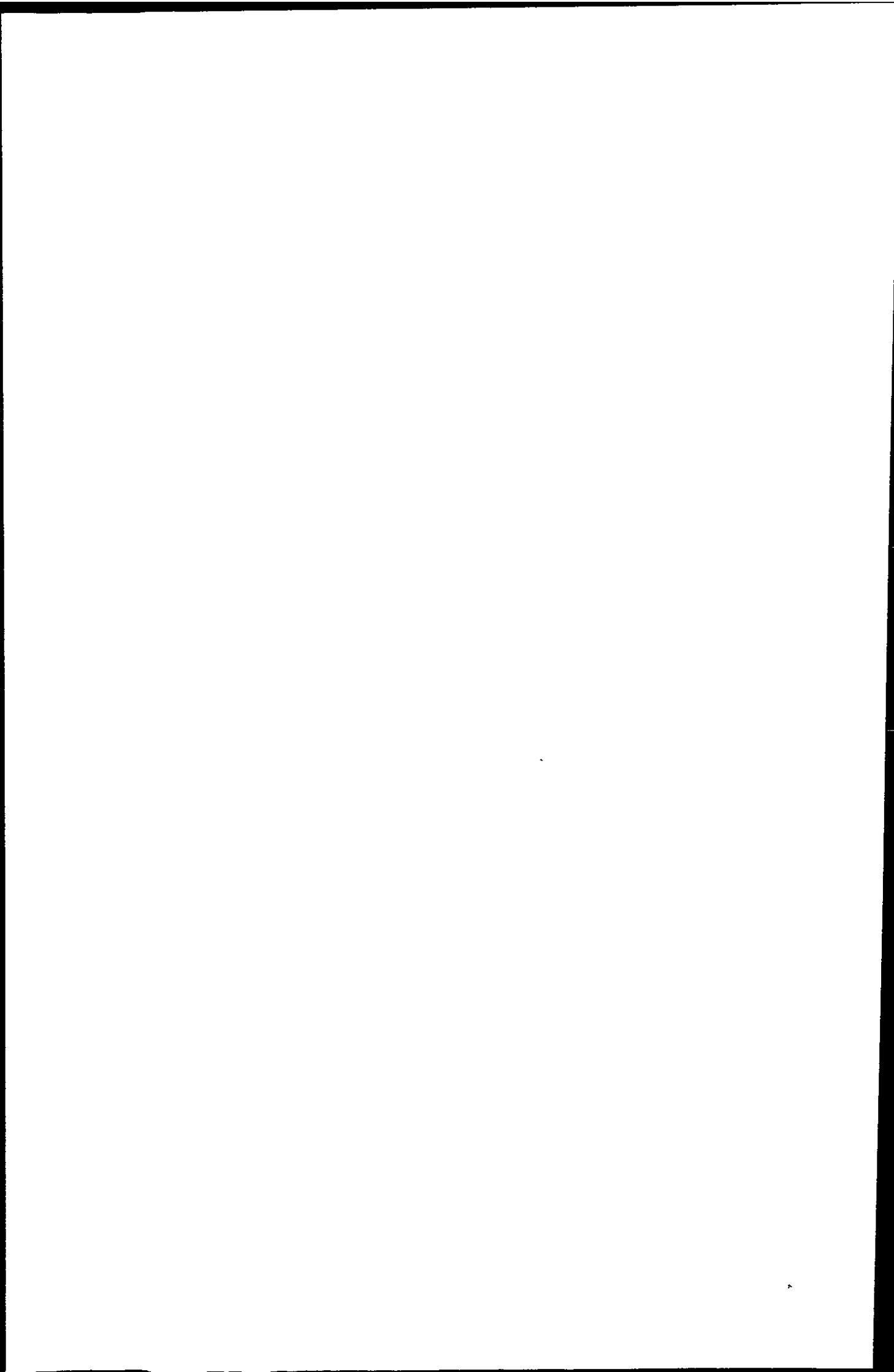
In Charles Cross police station (which covered *Stonehouse*), at the time when the initial personal interviews with victims were being conducted (1991), the position was one where the *Victim Support* co-ordinator would visit on a regular basis and be allowed access to the 'crime book' to select her referrals. It was therefore interesting to note that, of the sixty cases which formed the sample for interview, personal enquiries with the co-ordinator at her office revealed that only five of the burglaries were listed for referral and one 'theft

from person'. VSS were selective in the cases they took, primarily because of limited resources, but household burglaries normally received attention. However fifteen cases in the interview sample were such crimes and only five of these had been actioned by VSS.<sup>6</sup> In discussion with the co-ordinator the reasons for this apparent lack of contacts could not be explained other than by reference to an inadequate filing process. However discussion on the relevance of selecting victims by reference mainly to factors such as their age and crime committed allowed the opportunity for the author to relate the experiences of one young single mother from *Stonehouse* who had been interviewed as a result of being the victim of a vehicle theft. Her car was her only means of personal transport and its loss had caused her considerable problems over several weeks in getting her daughter back and forth to school and going to another part of Plymouth to work (ref: 19/1991). The extent to which a wider selection process of victims in need could be drawn from the data available in the 'crime book' was clearly one which the co-ordinator indicated as being useful if it were to be able to accomplished. However, as she convincingly pointed out, had the case been referred to her by the officer who had dealt with the crime, contact would have been made with the victim. The *Stonehouse* experience could not be regarded as indicative of Victim Support activity elsewhere and later research conducted by the force showed the referral rate to be in the region of 70% for burglary victims across the two counties (Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, 1994c).

*Victim Support* appeared to have an impact on the way in which the police considered dealing with victims' needs but, on a more structural front within the force itself, the issue of keeping victims up to date with the progress of enquiries was emphasised as an

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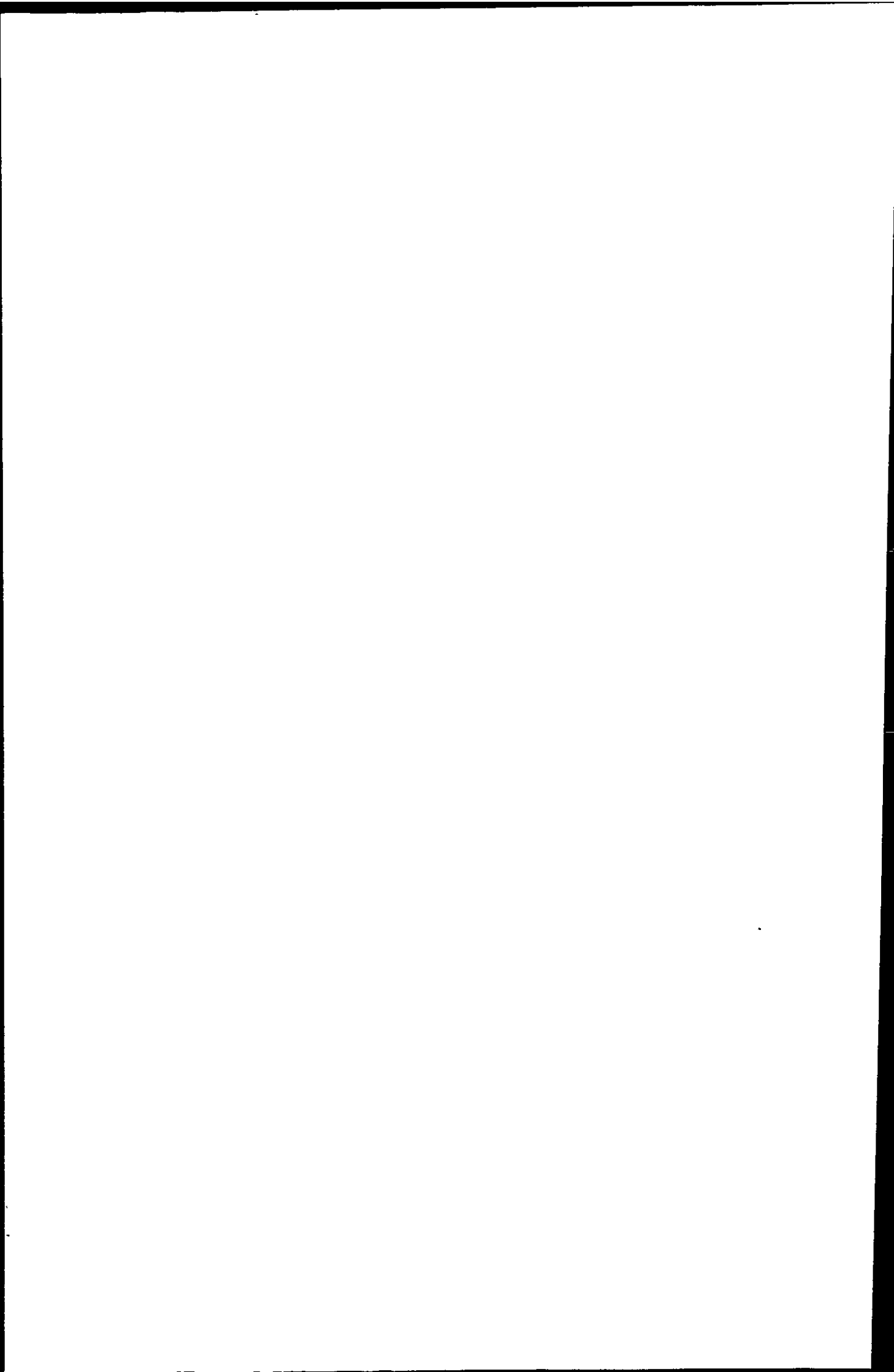
<sup>6</sup> In 3 cases personal visits had been made successfully, in 2 cases visits had found no one at home and a leaflet had been left. In the case of the 'theft from person' a letter had been sent.



important aspect of overall professionalism. Prior to the introduction of *crime screening*<sup>7</sup> from the late 1980s onwards, and to a lesser extent after this, officers were expected to retain the crime which they had recorded for a minimum of ten days prior to filing in undetected cases. This period was to allow further enquiries to be completed and for the victim to be advised of the result. The reality was different. Officers where the author was stationed (Devonport, Plymouth) regularly 'carried' some dozen crime complaints on average, with many holding more than this number over a period of time. The paperwork contained a 'progress sheet' which was to enable all enquiries to be noted prior to submission, at which point they would be checked to ensure no further lines of investigation should be conducted. As the author was the sergeant who completed all 'crime screening' for the station during 1989, he became aware of the level of inaccuracy in entries on progress sheets. On one occasion he telephoned ten victims of crime to establish the level of accuracy in the entries made, particularly where it had been stated that the victim had been advised of the result of enquiries. In only one of these cases was it found that this statement was true and a report submitted by him to the sub-divisional commander outlined his concerns. Other local research similarly highlighted concern at the level of information which was given to victims whose crimes had been detected. Here, out of eleven victims who were interviewed six months after their crimes had been committed, two were unaware of the fact that the person concerned had been arrested and dealt with, whilst others had still be to advised of the final outcome even though they knew the case had been detected (Bunt, 1990).

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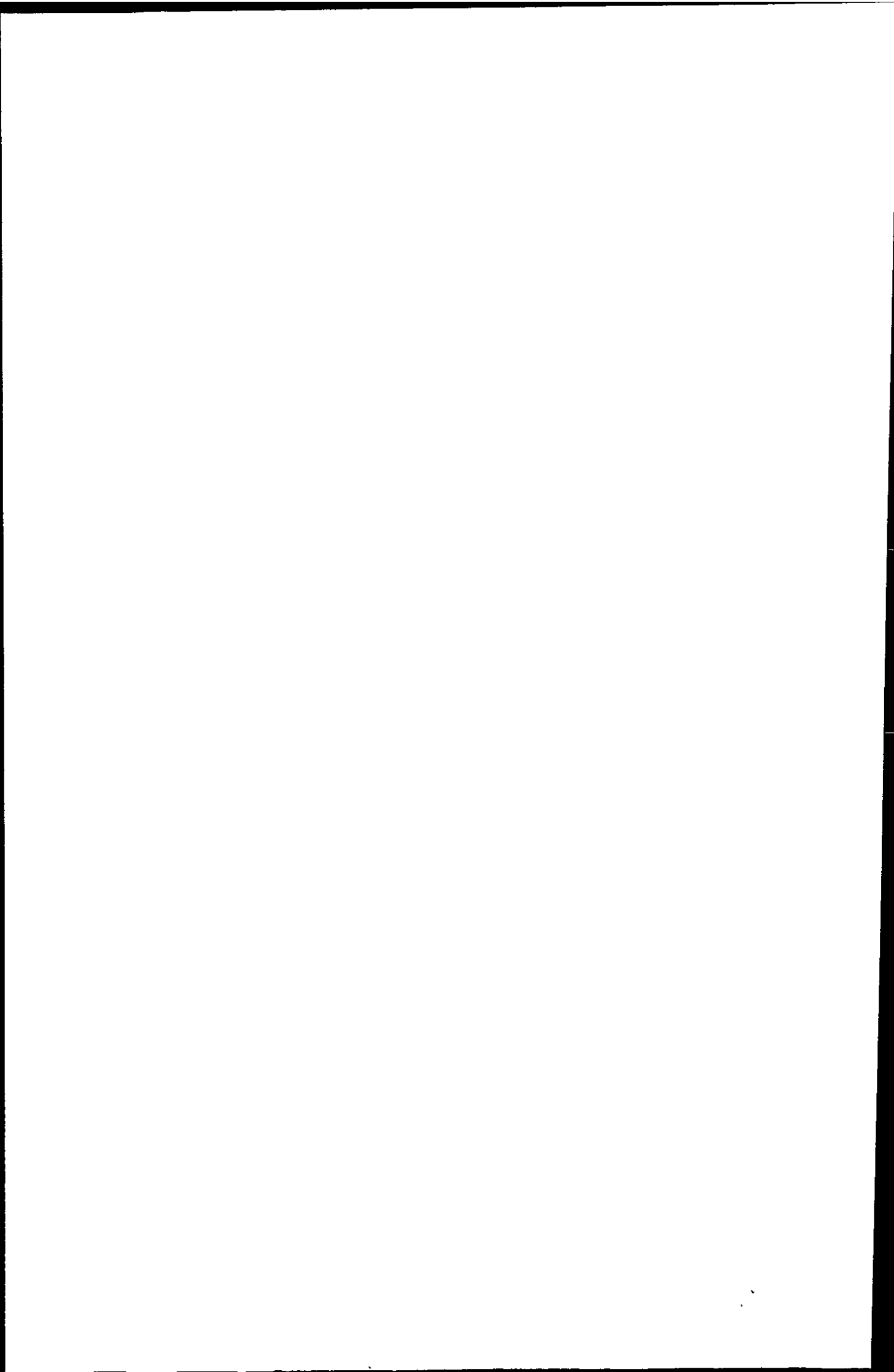
<sup>7</sup> *Crime Screening* was based on a system of 'scoring' crimes to 'screen out' those which were considered not worthy of further investigation. Based on an initial system developed in the Metropolitan Police ('BAYES'), the Devon and Cornwall version was based on two scores being multiplied together, one reflecting 'seriousness' and the other 'solvability'. Scoring for each was out of five and it required a score of 8 or more to be referred for further enquiry.



*Levels of service to victims in the 1990s*

The *Victim's Charter* (Home Office, 1990b), together with the later 'Charter for Policing' in Devon and Cornwall (Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, 1993b) gave a public commitment to provide all victims with a minimum level of service. These commitments included initial key services which required the officer attending the scene to provide the victim with their name, a reference number for the crime, give them a leaflet explaining the services of *Victim Support*, a contact telephone number and explain what further action would be taken. Measurement of the extent to which these service were being provided was accomplished from 1992 onwards through the surveys conducted by the force *Quality of Service Unit*.

One particular requirement which proved problematic in the early stages was that of providing a leaflet to victims. Initially the survey question related to the leaflet published by the Home Office entitled 'Victims of Crime' which was believed to be widely available to all officers throughout the force. In fact, following the first two surveys conducted (which showed less than one in three victims as having been given the form), two divisions contacted the *Quality of Service Unit* to explain that there were no such documents to be found in their stores. The matter was easily rectified and a significant rise in the number of leaflets given was observable by early 1994, although only to the extent of two-thirds of burglary victims, and four in ten violence victims, reporting having received them. There was also a noticeable difference between the recollections of burglary and violence victims. In the latter case, leaflets available, specifically for victims of violence should most appropriately have been given but the research revealed that this was happening only in a minority of cases. The provision of a leaflet of some description, which provided victims with answers to questions which they might have, was seen as the primary



objective however. This was because it drew attention to the services available from *Victim Support* and had a space on which the officer could write their name, contact telephone number and reference number, all of which would have ensured some of the initial services being measured through the surveys were, in fact, provided.

This issue became even more relevant during 1993 due to a complaint which was received from a victim who had been visited by a *Victim Support* volunteer. The person involved had not been made aware that her details would be passed to this organisation and was concerned that the force had infringed the *Data Protection Act 1984*. The immediate result of this was an instruction being issued to officers to specifically ask victims if they required the services of *Victim Support* and to ensure that, in all cases, a tick-box on the crime complaint form was completed only where the information could safely be given to scheme members. Unsurprisingly the number of referrals across the two counties dropped dramatically leading one co-ordinator to raise the issue with an assistant chief constable. After detailed discussion, and advice in relation to the legal position, new instructions were issued in a memorandum dated 27 September 1993. The procedure relied heavily on the Home Office leaflet being given in order to comply with the *Data Protection Act* as information contained therein indicated the action which the police would take in respect of passing information about the victim.<sup>8</sup> The instruction read:

- i) Each victim will be issued with the Home Office 'Victims of Crime' leaflet. This is a requirement of the Data Protection Registrar. This will be closely monitored by Sub Divisional Commanders, Inspector (OPI) and (XSY).<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> The policy was given further reinforcement during 1993 when the force produced its 'Charter for Policing'. In this it confirmed that the police would 'refer your case to victim support unless you ask us not to do so'. In addition, a decision had been made to replace the Home Office leaflet with a 'paid for by advertising' booklet which, in addition to a space for officers to record details such as name, telephone number and reference number included a disclaimer on the cover, under the title 'Data Protection Act 1984' which used similar wording to that in the charter to draw attention to the force's procedures.

<sup>9</sup> Inspector (OPI) referred to the officer based at headquarters who was responsible for liaison with Victim Support. Inspector (XSY) was the officer in the *Quality of Service* Unit (at that time the author of this work).



- ii) The statement on Form 41 'Victim Support Required' will always be ticked. The reporting officer will not decide whether the victims details are referred to *Victim Support*. Victims will not be asked whether they require *Victim Support*. If they specifically ask not to be referred, without prompting, then this fact will be written above the entry.

The change in policy had the effect of increasing the number of referrals which *Victim Support* began to take. The 'open door' system to co-ordinators which had been established in the 1980s, allowing them to visit police stations and thumb through crime reports in order to identify cases of interest, remained. This, combined with the fact that the 'Victim Support Required' box on the forms was now taken to read 'Yes' unless there was some specific comment to the contrary, ensured that a free choice was being given as to which cases the volunteers decided to take as referrals.

#### *Surveying victims and quality checks*

Within the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary surveys seeking the views of victims of household burglary and violent crime have been conducted regularly since 1992. Personal interviews with a total of sixty six resident-victims in the *Stonehouse* area also took place between 1991 and 1994 for the purposes of this thesis. Earlier in the process, a system of *Quality Assurance Checks* (QAC) considered how the police in Devon and Cornwall had gone about the actual investigation of cases of burglary. This included visits by sergeants and inspectors to the homes of victims to ascertain their views.<sup>10</sup> They were seen more as an internal police management inspection than as a way of gaining a detailed insight of victims views. The QACs involved supervisory police officers visiting a total of 505 victims of household burglary, within each of the force's twenty sub-divisions and asking

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<sup>10</sup> See chapter 6 *Methodology* and chapter 8 *Quality of service in Devon and Cornwall* for information relating to the way in which these surveys and QACs were conducted.

them whether they could recall the actions which the officer concerned actually took when attending the scene to investigate the crime (table 11.2).

Aspects of inspection	% of officers reported as having complied with standard (n=505)
Whether or not officer identified themselves to the victim	82%
Whether or not officer provided victim with contact details	81%
Whether or not officer provided a HO VOC leaflet	31%
Were House to House enquiries completed?	54%
Were Scenes of Crime Officers called to attend?	55%
Was a message circulation completed as required?	86%
Was a statement of evidence taken?	69%
Was victim told result of case?	23%
Was victim satisfied with action police had taken?	91%
Was supervisor reviewing satisfied with standard of work?	52%

Table 11.2: Results of Quality Assurance Checks (burglary - dwelling), 1992.

What appeared evident, was a high level of victim satisfaction with the way in which the police had dealt with the incidents. The QAC check sheet did not include rating satisfaction<sup>11</sup> as is the case with most surveys which identify some quantitative evaluation. Even from the qualitative perspective it might be considered in some senses lacking as the reasons for the dissatisfaction were not required to be specifically stated. But where a supervisory officer indicated that a victim was not satisfied, a reason was offered in the vast majority of cases. There was some suggestion from the reading of the returns received that the 'victim satisfaction' section of the sheet did not bear a specific relationship to the standard of work which the officer had been judged to have performed by their supervisor. In relation to the questions which might be considered 'essentials' of an investigation (enquiries in the area, and scenes of crime examination), lack of action by the officer to ensure these tasks were completed did not appear to affect the overall perceptions of the victims in respect of the types of replies which were given. It did, however, affect the views of the sergeant or inspector conducting the review with only half considering that all

<sup>11</sup> Victim satisfaction was asked, but only to the extent of a 'yes - satisfied', 'no - dissatisfied' response.

aspects of the enquiry had been completed to a satisfactory standard. There were no distinguishable variations between areas of the force in the types of evaluations which were made of crime investigation although certain anomalies in administrative practice were highlighted<sup>12</sup> and subsequently led to clarification of force policy.

The enquiries which were expected to form part of the normal investigation, such as house-to-house calls, were found to be lacking as supervisors had been specifically requested to make personal calls at houses nearby to ascertain residents' recollections about being contacted. In the 232 cases (46%) where house-to-house enquiries had not been completed satisfactorily, supervisors had routinely found neighbours who said that they had never been contacted at all by the police, as well as a number of instances where addresses listed as having been visited on crime progress sheets had clearly been recorded 'erroneously'. The QAC procedure also clearly identified a small number of officers who had entered information on the progress sheets which bore little resemblance to fact. One detective inspector who had been rather affronted by the requirement to undertake QACs, citing the fact that he checked crime recording paperwork on a monthly basis, and found few errors, was reflective enough of his administrative check to report back on its shortcomings. He freely admitted that, in order to conduct the QAC process in as short a time as possible, he had selected a burglary that he knew had been investigated by a well respected and experienced community officer. Having visited the victim he found that two further visits, logged on the progress sheet as being to 'update on the progress of enquiries', had never occurred; that no neighbouring resident had ever been visited (even though specific addresses were recorded on the crime report); and that, although the circumstances of the

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<sup>12</sup> One example was that of statement taking at the time of the report of the crime (described later in this chapter).

crime scene would clearly have meant forensic evidence might have been found, the scenes of crime department had never been alerted. His personal evaluation was one which caused him to consider that it may be the most experienced officers who were most capable of 'writing-up' a good investigation, rather than completing all aspects of the work required.

Whereas such instances of officers exaggerating the work they had conducted were relatively rare, the extent to which procedural variance occurred was obvious. Statements being taken in 69% of cases actually highlighted a general misunderstanding of the procedure which showed that, even within the same divisions, officers were performing this routine aspect of their work differently. For example, in the Charles Cross sub-division of Plymouth, 98% of burglary victims had statements of evidence taken, whilst in the Crownhill sub-division of the same city, only in 33% were such statements taken. The extent to which this variation indicated any lack of professionalism on behalf of the Crownhill officers, however, was not evidenced by reference to force standing orders, which allowed for different interpretations as to the circumstances requiring statements to be taken. This anomaly resulted in more concise instructions being given, during the next few months, of when statement taking procedures should occur, with policy being re-defined to indicate that this should only be where specific evidence, likely to be required by a court, was going to be gained.<sup>13</sup>

### *Findings from surveys*

An early trend which had been noticed in the Quality of Service survey process was that

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<sup>13</sup> This meant that statements were only normally required where a victim could give evidence relating to identifiable property or suspects.

the overall satisfaction of victims of violent crimes was significantly lower than those recorded by victims of burglary. Analysis of the data from 1994 sought to identify whether the trend was equally observable in Plymouth and *Stonehouse* as elsewhere in the force and seek possible explanations for the findings. The 'total' satisfaction of victims in the whole of Plymouth was generally lower than elsewhere in the force and those within the *Stonehouse* area were the lowest overall. Of those burglary victims who said that they were 'satisfied with all aspects' of police action, 62% in *Stonehouse* and 66% in the rest of Plymouth replied in this way, whilst 72% of victims elsewhere in Devon and Cornwall said they were totally satisfied. However, in terms of those who expressed 'general' or 'total' dissatisfaction, there was less to indicate that perceptions were more negative within the Plymouth area: 9% (*Stonehouse*), 9% (rest of Plymouth) and 8% (rest of force).

Victims of violence were also divided in their opinion along geographic lines with 41% (*Stonehouse*), 48% (rest of Plymouth) and 52% (rest of force) expressing 'total' satisfaction with police action. Overall, victims of violence were almost three times more likely to express 'total' or 'general' dissatisfaction than burglary victims (19% as against 7%) and almost a quarter of victims who had been assaulted in *Stonehouse*, said they were dissatisfied (24%) as against 18% in both the rest of Plymouth and the force (Table 11.3).

	Stonehouse (n=166)	Rest of Plymouth (n=256)	Rest of force (n= 1018)	Overall (n=1440)
<b><i>Burglary victims</i></b>				
Totally satisfied	61.5%	66.9%	72.4%	70.2%
Generally satisfied	29.5%	24.2%	21%	22.5%
Generally dis'atisfied	5.1%	3.2%	4.9%	4.7%
Totally dissatisfied	3.8%	5.6%	1.6%	2.6%
<b><i>Violence victims</i></b>				
Totally satisfied	41.1%	47.6%	52%	49.7%
Generally satisfied	34.8%	34.3%	30.3%	31.6%
Generally dis'atisfied	17%	10.5%	10.8%	11.7%
Totally dissatisfied	7.1%	7.6%	6.8%	7%

Table 11.3: Victims satisfaction ratings - *Quality of Service* surveys 1994

Analysis of some of this data which was undertaken during 1994 drew attention to the correlation between provision of (initial or secondary) police and Victim Support services to victims and overall satisfaction scores. Data collected during the latter part of 1994 was added to this to provide a larger sample for analysis and served to reinforce the findings.

'Analysis of victims' levels of satisfaction in relation to the overall handling of their cases during 1994 were found to relate closely to the levels of service which they received from the police. Those who were provided with the most information initially by the officer recording the incident, and those who received further communication from the police, were significantly more positive in their evaluation of the service overall. The apparently contradictory findings that police response to burglaries, with low detection rates, are viewed more favourably by victims than police responses to violence, with much higher detection rates, are explained in these terms. That is, it is the service that the police provide for victims at the time the crime is reported and subsequently that determines public satisfaction. The public does not have unrealistic expectations about the possibility of detection' (Bunt and Mawby, 1993; 1994).

The trend for there to be a 20% differential in satisfaction ratings between the two categories of victims was observable forcewide. However, whether aspects of the service victims had received was comparatively worse in *Stonehouse* and *Plymouth* required further examination to determine if they had impacted accordingly with the negative satisfaction levels recorded in these areas. The six key services<sup>14</sup> which should be given by the officer attending the scene were evaluated against the responses given by victims to the question of whether or not they were satisfied, overall, with the service the police provided. The responses to the questions were re-coded to show an answer of 'yes' to be 1 and 'no', 'don't know' or 'can't recall' as '0'. Computing of the results by adding the 1 or 0 given to each question was then undertaken, resulting in an overall score, for each case of between 0 and 6 being attained. These results were then re-coded into three categories to

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<sup>14</sup> 'Initial key services' were regarded as giving a name, contact and reference number, Victim Support leaflet and advice on support, telling the victim what would happen next. Secondary contacts included questions on whether any further contact had been made and from who.

show victims who had received 5 or 6 services, those who had received 3 or 4 and those receiving less than 3.

In the case of burglary victims, across the entire force area, an average of 52% had been provided with 5 or 6 of the initial services by the police, with victims in Plymouth indicating that they had received this level of service in 55% (*Stonehouse*) and 56% (rest of Plymouth) of cases. One in five *Stonehouse* burglary victims (22%) and one in ten of those in the rest of Plymouth (9%) had received less than 3 services, compared to one in five (18%) across the rest of the force. It appeared that these victims in Plymouth were not likely to receive a lower level of service, judged against the six initial 'charter standards' and may have actually received a better service than elsewhere in the force. By comparison, victims of violence seemed to have been better serviced initially in *Stonehouse* than both the rest of Plymouth and the remainder of the force: 43% within *Stonehouse* having received a 5/6 level as against 33% (rest of Plymouth) and 27% (rest of force). Similarly, only one in four *Stonehouse* victims were likely to have had less than three services provided (27%) as against an average of around 40% elsewhere.<sup>15</sup>

Victims were also asked whether they had received any further contact from the police following the visit of the first officer. This was stated as 'any contact - either in person, by telephone or by letter'. The survey enabled victims to identify who this contact had been from and each person making contact was awarded a score of '1' for the purpose of analysis.<sup>16</sup> One in three burglary victims in *Stonehouse* (35%) and one in four such victims

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<sup>15</sup> See appendix 'M' for tabulated results supporting this section.

<sup>16</sup> It should be noted that if a victim had identified that they had been visited by the same officer more than once, this would still only count as '1' on the score.

in the rest of Plymouth (27%), reported not having had any further contact from the police, whilst only one in five victims in the rest of the force (20%) were likely to have received no further encounters. Those in the rest of the force also said they had received at least two further contacts in almost half the cases (45%), whilst the likelihood of this being the case in *Stonehouse* was one in four (27%) and in the rest of Plymouth, one in three (32%).

As far as burglary victims were concerned, the level of further contact received from the police was, therefore, shown to be lower in both *Stonehouse* and Plymouth generally, but had not, apparently, been reflected in significantly lower levels of satisfaction than in the rest of the force. This level of secondary contact from the police was, similarly, not shown to be a major factor in determining whether burglary victims generally would be dissatisfied with the overall service provided by the police. Of those, throughout the force, who had received no further contact, 68% still responded that they were 'satisfied with all aspects' of what the police had done, whilst approximately 70% those who had received at least one further contact gave such a reply. Of those who had received no further contact, a higher proportion responded that they were 'generally' or 'totally' dissatisfied, with 11% responding this way as against 6% who had one or more contacts.

In relation to victims of violence, three quarters of those who were assaulted in *Stonehouse* had some further contact with the police, whilst elsewhere the chances were not much more than one in three. The data indicates that, overall, victims of violence were less likely to have received some form of additional contact from the police than were burglary victims (66% as against 77%) although those in the *Stonehouse* category appear to have been contacted on more occasions (75%) than in the rest of Plymouth (62%) and the force (64%). However, across the force as a whole, victims of violence who had received no



(27% as against 16% of those who had received one further contact and 9% of those who had received more than one). This criterion alone did not, therefore, appear to be indicative of why satisfaction levels of those who had been violence victims in *Stonehouse* were lower than elsewhere.

The role which Victim Support played in visiting and supporting victims was not ignored as it was felt that their role was one which may complement overall impressions of how the police were dealing with the case.<sup>17</sup> Victims were asked whether they had received any form of contact from this organisation, either by personal visit, telephone call, being sent a letter or having a leaflet delivered or posted. More burglary victims in Plymouth and *Stonehouse* had received some form of contact from Victim Support than similar victims in the rest of the force, and personal visits appeared to have been generally higher in number than elsewhere, with *Stonehouse* victims indicating that one in five of them had received a visit (22%). However, only 8 burglary victims in *Stonehouse* (5%) and 12 in the rest of Plymouth (5%) said they had received a telephone call as a form of contact, whilst in the remainder of the force 168 (17%) said that this means had been used to follow-up their crime. If the combination of a visit or telephone call are classed as 'personal contact', it can be seen that the overall performance of Victim Support outside Plymouth and *Stonehouse* schemes in relation to burglary offences equates to almost one in three victims (30%) receiving 'personal contact'. In *Stonehouse* it is roughly one in four (27%) and in the rest of Plymouth, nearer one in five (22%).

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<sup>17</sup> At the time of the personal interviews conducted in 1991 referral rates had been found to be low even though this had not been noted as a contributory factor in victim dissatisfaction with the overall service which the police had provided - see earlier section on Victim Support.

Victims of violence reported a significantly different response from Victim Support across the force. Just over a quarter had received any sort of contact at all (28%) and only half of these individuals had encountered any 'personal contact' by visit or telephone. Overall, only one in twenty five victims had been visited personally by a volunteer (4%) and the personal visit response in Plymouth and *Stonehouse* combined equated to approximately just one in fifty (2%).

The findings, across the three geographic divides, appeared to be somewhat contradictory in this respect; for whereas satisfaction levels had been observed to correlate with the level of initial services and further police contacts provided across the force area, within Plymouth (and *Stonehouse* in particular), the extent to which lack of these services being provided had shown a negative impact upon victim satisfaction was less obvious. In fact, in the case of victims of violence, both the levels of initial services and further contact from the police appeared higher in *Stonehouse* than in both the rest of Plymouth and the force generally. Even though the extent of 'personal contact' from *Victim Support* within *Stonehouse* was less than elsewhere, this was not perceived to necessarily be a significant contributory factor in victims' overall levels of satisfaction expressed with how the police had dealt with the matter.

What was shown to be of importance to victims of both burglary and violence was the expectations which they had of police activity. Victims of burglary tended towards a more sanguine view of what the police were likely to accomplish than those who had been subject of assaults. The former appeared to have little expectation that the police would be successful in identifying the burglar and, therefore, lack of any further contact was taken as confirmation of their views. However, victims of violence often knew or could identify

the person who had committed the crime, had made statements clarifying their suspicions, and expected that the police may be likely to identify and charge the offender. Here, where little further positive information had been forthcoming, victims appeared more likely to have a negative view some six weeks later when asked to gauge their satisfaction level.

'I have phoned three times to speak with the officer in the case but have had none of my calls returned.' (ref: 3249; burglary victim, female, age range 35-44 yrs)

'If the police want public support they ought to do more to look after the victim. Can you tell me why I have not been told whether he has been charged? I see him in our street and all he does is smirk at me.' (ref: 421; violence victim. Male. Age range 16-24 yrs)

'A lady up the road saw them (the offenders) and could recognise them but she has not seen any 'mugshots' as she was told she would.' (ref: 3237; burglary victim, male, age range 16-24 yrs)

'It's as if they're trained to keep you in the dark. They only tell you what you ask. They seem to have the ability to make you think it's your 'problem' but their 'business.' I find when I speak to policemen they're a bit like doctors in that way.' (ref: 6/1991; burglary victim, female, age range 25-34 yrs)

'No information was given and the only contact afterwards was when they came back with a person in a car and said they wanted to look at the flat. They never said whether they had caught anyone or not.' (ref: 4/1991; victim of wounding, male, age range 16-24 yrs)

'There appeared to be a lack of information generally about what would happen next. I made a statement but never got contacted again.' (ref: 203; violence victim, male, age range 16-24 yrs)

Interestingly, in cases where the police had advised the victim of the result, and this did not accord with that individual's feelings about what should have happened (most commonly a decision to take no further action or to 'caution' the offender), negative satisfaction scores with the police were often recorded. This was despite the fact that a decision to discontinue proceedings may have been made by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) over whom the police had no direct control.<sup>18</sup> Victims' perceptions of police performance appeared, therefore, to also be dependant upon factors which may have

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<sup>18</sup> Although police have no direct control over CPS decisions, such decisions would be made having taken account of the evidence available and police representation on the file.

been outside the direct influence of the police, thus reinforcing the 'lightning conductor' effect of all dissatisfaction being channelled through this most obvious symbol of the criminal justice system. Analysis of the verbatim and written responses achieved through the survey process gave some credence to these assumptions.

'Sometimes you wonder, 'what's the point?', who decides what happens? I presume it must be down to the evidence, but how much more did they need? Why do I get told they have warned him after all he has done? I wanted to see him in court.' (ref: 736: assault victim, male, age range: 25-34 yrs)

'I was contacted last week by the officer to say that no further action was going to be taken, even though they had arrested my attacker. I was amazed to say the least.' (ref: 1890: assault victim, male, age range: 25-34 yrs)

'I read in the paper that he had been to court and got fined. It would have been nice to have been told this.' (ref: 2126, burglary victim, female, age range: 25-34 yrs)

Although not directly provable from the data, there is evidence to suggest that it is not the number of contacts which victims have with the police which play a direct part in determining the likelihood of their eventual levels of satisfaction, rather it is what they might be told during these encounters which is important. Whereas this might not lead to a feeling of dissatisfaction with the police overall, those victims who did not respond that they were 'totally' satisfied often cited the 'final' outcome as their reason for having some reservations. Whether the outcome was directly within the control of the police did not, necessarily, play a part in determining their feelings. In having observed the perceived needs of victims to be kept up to date with the progress of enquiries in 'detected' cases (Bunt, 1990), the author drafted and submitted, on behalf of the divisional commander for Plymouth, an application to Plymouth City Council for *Urban Aid Funding* of a victim liaison officer during 1991. The proposal was made having identified a similar post which was so funded on Tyneside, Newcastle where victims were personally updated on the

progress of their cases by a *case status officer*.<sup>19</sup> Despite a generally positive reaction from local politicians the revenue based scheme was not successful, other projects perceived as being of more benefit to the people of the City taking priority.<sup>20</sup>

The extent to which victims who were resident in *Stonehouse* responded negatively to questions of satisfaction with police action also appeared to have a separate dimension. Here, environmental factors emerged as potential determinants of victims' feelings about the police. These feelings were most obviously portrayed during the personal interviews which were conducted during 1991 and 1994, where individual perceptions were able to be probed in more detail than either through telephone interview or self-report questionnaire. Whereas views on the quality of policing provided in the *Stonehouse* area from a 'community' perspective tended to indicate a wish for a more locally based response, so the reactions of victims to their crimes referred on many occasions to the perceived lawlessness of the area in which they lived and the inability of the police to impact on this. Although not able to be confirmed as significant from the statistical data gathered, this aspect of policing within an area with a relatively high crime rate, conceivably played a disproportionate part in determining victims views of police actions in their individual cases.

'There's little the police do about the petty crime in the area ... the street corner youths and the area which makes us feel vulnerable' (Female burglary victim, ref: 6/1991)

'Our residents' association sees a policeman from time to time but not enough for an area like this.' (ref: 29/1991)

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<sup>19</sup> The Northumbria Constabulary had employed a dedicated civilian member of staff to explore options for funding such as that which was attained to provide the Case Status Officer (CSO) and a clerk/typist. The role of the CSO was to monitor the progress of detected crimes and provide a direct liaison and contact point for victims in the process. Letters or phone calls would be generated at specific points in the enquiry and this included a regular contact with Victim Support.

<sup>20</sup> This was not without a good deal of personal effort being put into the process by the author who, supported by his sub-divisional commander, lobbied a number of councillors and attended the council meeting where the final decision was made.

'There's always one or two idiots, isn't there? The graffiti in the area is awful. Overall, I keep myself to myself, but I do speak to the neighbours.' (ref: 48/1991)

'Although the neighbours are chatty, we all feel a bit like we are prisoners sometimes.' (ref: 20/1991)

However, sight should not be lost of the fact that it was the minority of victims who felt aggrieved at the lack of police action, or dissatisfaction with the service standard more generally. Victims were regularly appreciative of the attitude displayed by officers with whom they had contact, whilst being supportive of the police service in general.

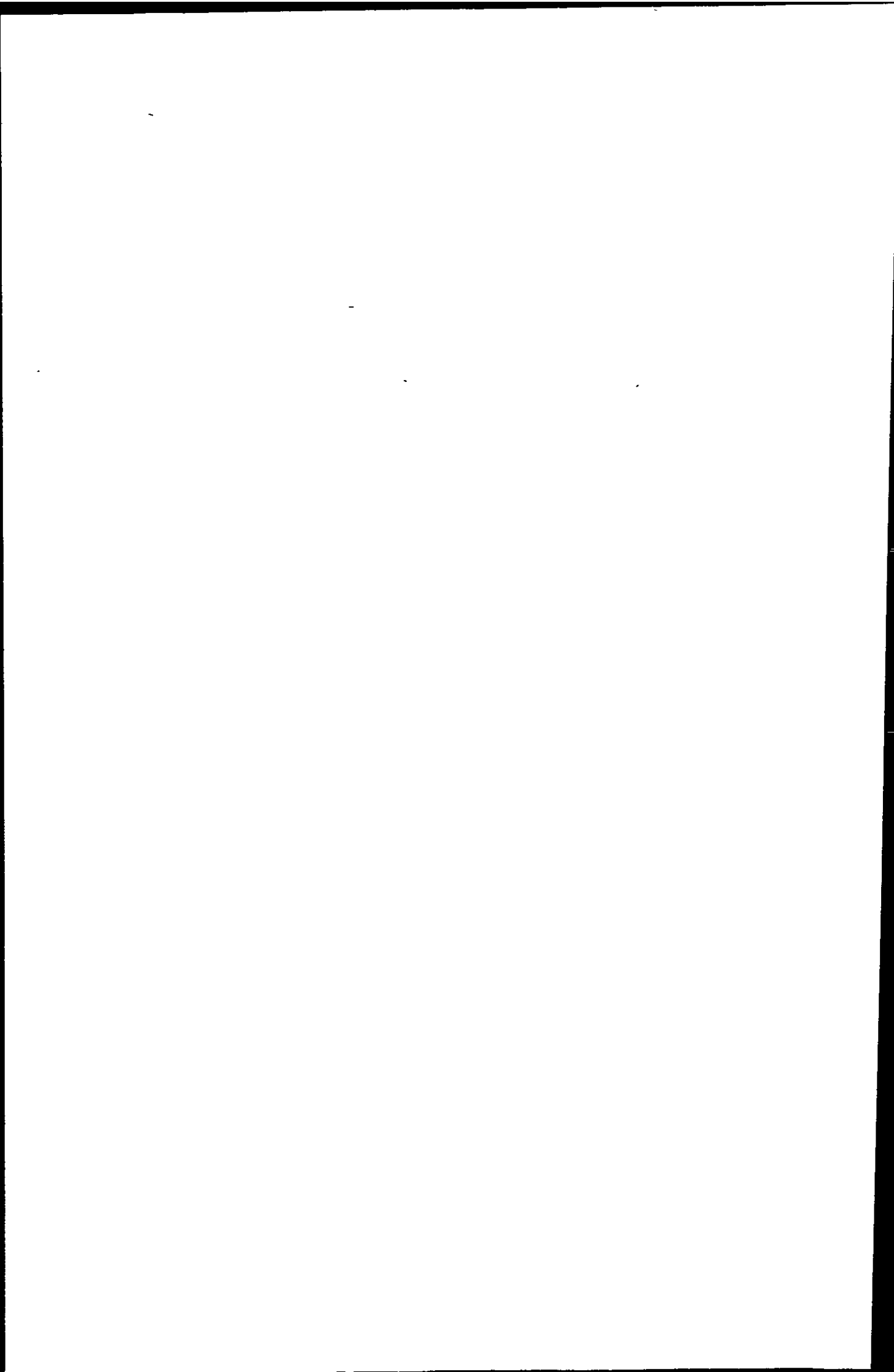
'There are some particularly charming officers' ..... 'I was very pleased with the support I received from the officers who have helped me.' (ref: 3141; burglary victim, female, age range 45-55 yrs)

'Pleasant young man. Was very helpful.' (ref: 3045; burglary victim, female, age range 65+ years)

'The policeman spent a long time with us and took all the details and a statement. I would rate his performance as exemplary.' (ref: 58/1991; burglary victim, male, 39 years)

### *Victims of crime in Devon and Cornwall: an overview*

The extent to which formal police concern for victims developed over the last half of the century, and in particular since the 1980s, is considerable. Information gained from the research has indicated that there was a good deal of empathy with the position in which victims found themselves from police officers serving before 1980 and this was confirmed by the small number of victims interviewed who had some dealings with the police that long ago. It was not until the emergence of Victim Support that a voluntary 'army' became available for the police to use but, once this became formalised, there appears to have been a reluctance amongst officers in Devon and Cornwall to make referrals to the service as exemplified in the evidence gained for this research. Whilst there was a discernible level of apparent commitment from senior officers in the force to promote the scheme, and

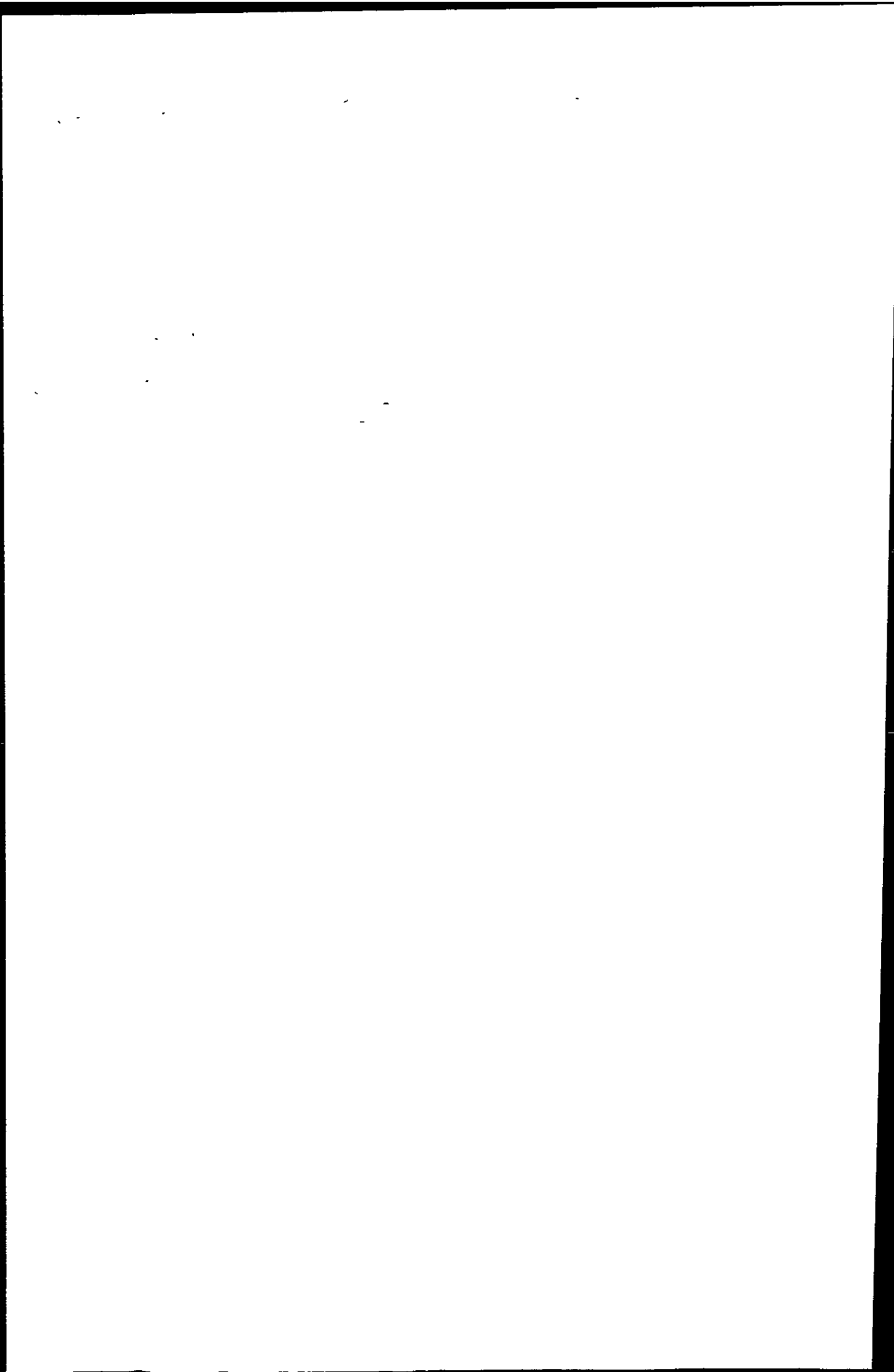


headquarters ownership of the initiative was under the direction of a specialist department, the implementation of Victim Support was not unproblematic.

The 1990s saw victim surveys become an established part of monitoring the level of service which was provided through the *quality of service* programme which, in Devon and Cornwall, developed as a pragmatic approach with the actions of officers themselves being seen as more important to improving the level of investigation than the statistical monitoring of victims' satisfaction through surveys. The advantage of this was that surveys which became developed had an inbuilt feedback mechanism which ensured senior officers were advised of where victims were dissatisfied in order that they could, if possible, take remedial action. The national movement away from the cultural issues of *quality of service*, to one of collecting and publishing performance indicators however saw the Devon and Cornwall model similarly change. Surveys which were conducted by the force during the early to mid 1990s did provide actionable information on which improvement could be made, as well as identifying a number of key anomalies such as the significant difference in satisfaction between victims of burglary and violent crime. This data was subsequently able to be used in considering factors which could account for this and the level of initial services provided appeared to be one criterion against which victims' satisfaction levels could be influenced. Research in *Stonehouse* similarly suggested the potential for individual expectations and environmental factors to be influential.

The history of victims of crime in Devon and Cornwall is one which has not been out of step with other areas of the country in terms of its development or strategic implementation problems. If looked at from a wider perspective, initiatives which have sought to address fear of crime and repeat offending within the crime prevention (and

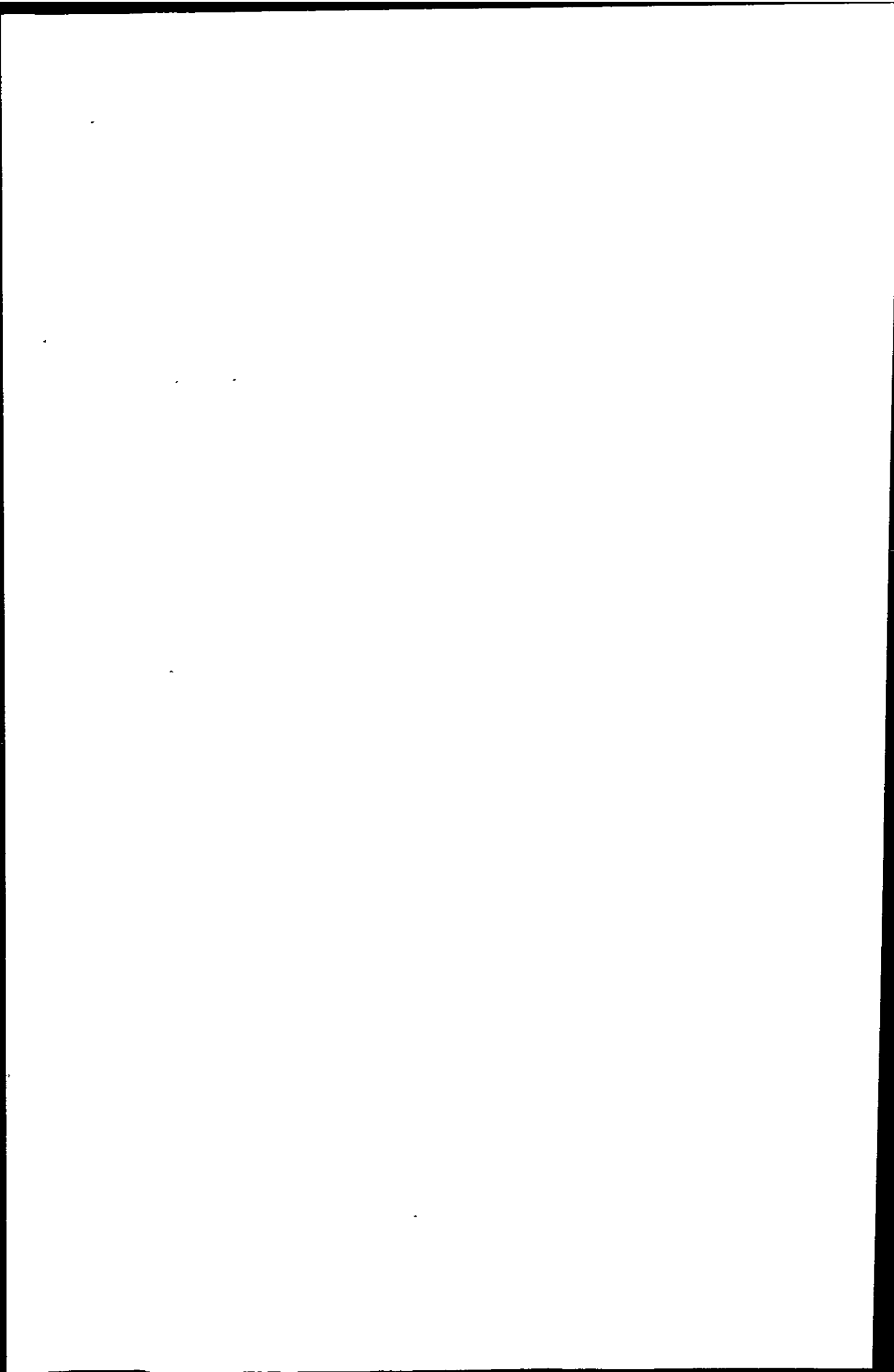




latterly community safety) arena have clearly impacted on victims' perceptions of police commitment at local level.<sup>21</sup> Other initiatives within the inter-agency structure which developed most noticeably during the 1990s have also involved levels of service to victims but have not been discussed within this work. The fact that policing has developed a wider problem-solving approach to community issues in general, however, can only be positive in terms of victims of crime who, because of their vulnerability, will be brought into that process.

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<sup>21</sup> See chapter 10 *Crime Prevention in Devon and Cornwall*.



1950-1999  
... and into a new century

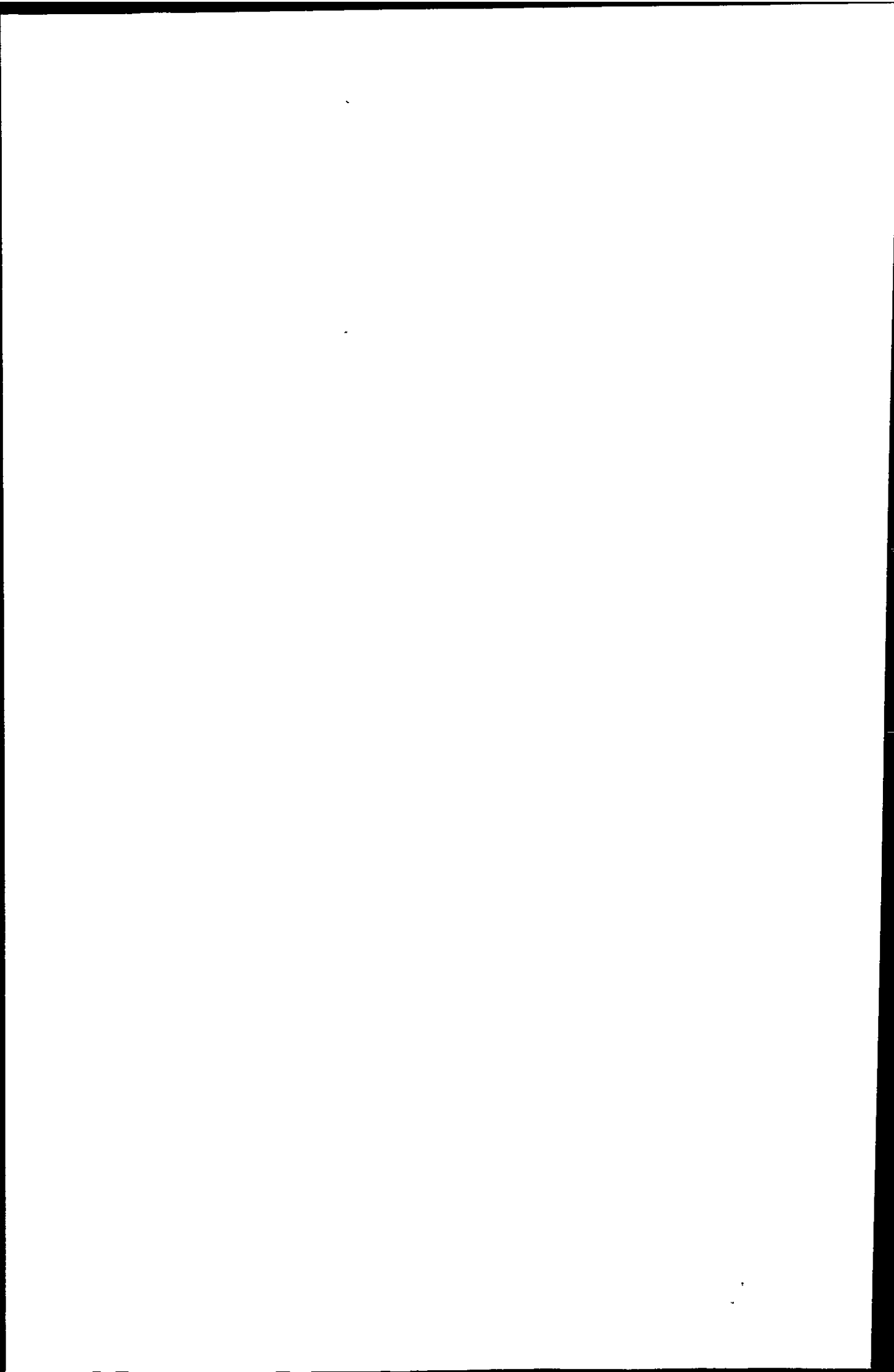
In this concluding chapter the issues which have been of specific relevance to this study will be reviewed and discussed. In particular, the extent to which policing has developed over the last half century against a backdrop of the public's confidence in a State service being regularly and critically tested through numerous social changes and events which have occurred is one which provides an opportunity to interpret alterations in policing at both national and local level. Within each of the four main themes considered; *community policing, crime prevention, victims of crime and quality of service*, the need for those policed to have confidence in the environment within which activities took place can be considered to have been influential in determining the effectiveness of changes which occurred. Therefore, to begin with, this notion of *public confidence* will be discussed generally to develop the review and conclusions which follow. During this process, the situation will be brought up to date by reference to the changes which have taken place during the period between 1997 and 1999 at both national level and locally within Devon and Cornwall.

***'Confidence' in policing?***

The period between 1950 and 1998 was one during which policing underwent many changes. Still at its core were notions of preventing and detecting crime, enshrined in the objectives for policing established a century and a half earlier, together with an underlying development of the service as non-military, and operating within a remit of 'public consent'. However, developments during the latter half of the twentieth century caused

both the principle of 'policing by consent', and the primary objectives of the police institution itself, to be tested and reviewed from political, ideological and implementational perspectives. It was a period which saw major realignments to forces' geographic boundaries, management systems and structures of political accountability. There was heightened tension between police and public in the environment of, particularly inner-cities, which brought the issues of policing diverse communities into sharp focus, leading to legislation designed to increase accountability in both evidential and consultative arenas. Recognition emerged of *crime prevention* needing to be considered more widely as *community safety* with initiatives being owned or supported through inter-agency groups. The police service's own attempts to regain some of the ground which was lost in maintaining public confidence through the quality of service programme became subsumed within a wider debate over police effectiveness and efficiency. All of these developments can be considered as having the reinforcement of public *confidence* as an underlying imperative to the way in which police services were provided.

The 'golden age' of policing, customarily defined as most likely referring to the 1950s when British policework became of particular interest within the dramatised media, was one which remained within the recollections of the general public well into the following decades. Perceived declines in policing standards and activity were subject to criticism against a backdrop of this 'golden age'. But the issues which underpinned how the national picture of 'bobby on the beat' was becoming eroded in many of the public's minds, could be considered to have a specific rationale related to the confidence which was felt in the State's ability to ensure safety at local levels. It is this notion of public confidence which permeates significant strands of the changes to policing which were observed during the second half of the 1900s. Whilst 'crises' have come and gone, the need to provide a service



which the public could have *confidence* in seemed to pervade the rhetoric of the media, politicians and spokespersons for the police themselves. The reaction is not surprising, nor unwarranted. The early 1950s appears best described as a period in which the country was still regaining its feet and fictionalisation of characters such as Dixon were convincing melodrama to the extent of sublime indifference to any reality. As the 1960s became the present decade so appeared the elements of 'kitchen-sink realism and toughness' in the television series *Z Cars* (Emsley, 1991 p.169). The media presentation of the police grew in political significance, a point recognised during the period from an early point (Reiner, 1985 p.138). Opportunities which existed to communicate ran in two directions, and controlling the news environment became significantly important in the police armoury of public reassurance and *confidence*.

The 1950s had concluded with a number of scandals involving police officers, which 'seem in retrospect pretty small beer' (Reiner, 1985 p.62) when considered against far more serious, and potentially damaging revelations, which were to reshape legislation, policy and practice throughout forces during the following decades. Public opinion became entwined with key issues and, whereas 'disquiet about aspects of police behaviour in the 1960s remained muted' (Emsley, 1991) the vocal nature of the public *conscience* during the 1970s and 1980s grew considerably more influential in engendering a coherent police response. The basis on which the issue of *confidence* became of such central importance relied not only on the 'rear-guard' action which became necessary for the police, in reaction to emerging scandals and miscarriages of justice, but on the underlying tenet of 'policing by consent'. The 'golden age' of policing, often affectionately referred to, never appeared to exist as an unchallenged local phenomena. Non-co-operation, and non-acceptance by certain sections of society, had clearly always been present, and the level of

skills of police officers in the past, combined with the extent of 'legitimate' violence necessary to enforce order, was a factor of little dispute.<sup>1</sup> Despite the lack of the 'golden age' 'there was little attempt at any period to challenge the legitimacy of the police force in a systematic way', or to identify how it could be managed, 'so that a desired style and pattern of policing' was actually produced. It is this type of challenge which has been made in recent years' (Morgan, 1989).

But the movement to reach the type of public consensus-involvement, legislated for in the *Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984*, itself was subject to question in terms of how far this legitimised the doctrine of *policing by consent*. Its impact on attitudinal and operational consent was not so easily assessed (Morgan, 1989). The nature which approaches to policing, post-Scarman, have had against a central notion of public confidence, have remained problematic. However, the *confidence* factor became increasingly identified as one which was central to the positive development of policing. The police service took action towards the end of the 1980s to lead the way with establishing, amongst other things, the nature of public attitude and police activity (ACPO, 1990a). The quality of policing, although in itself a difficult term to define, became the thrust of re-establishing public *confidence* which had been perceived, and recorded, as having fallen significantly during the past twenty years. This lead was given increased credibility during the next couple of years with the political initiatives of the newly elected Conservative government and its Citizen's Charter. Combined with the legislative movement towards collection and publication of performance indicators for public service organisations (including the police) under the Local Government Act 1992, and increased

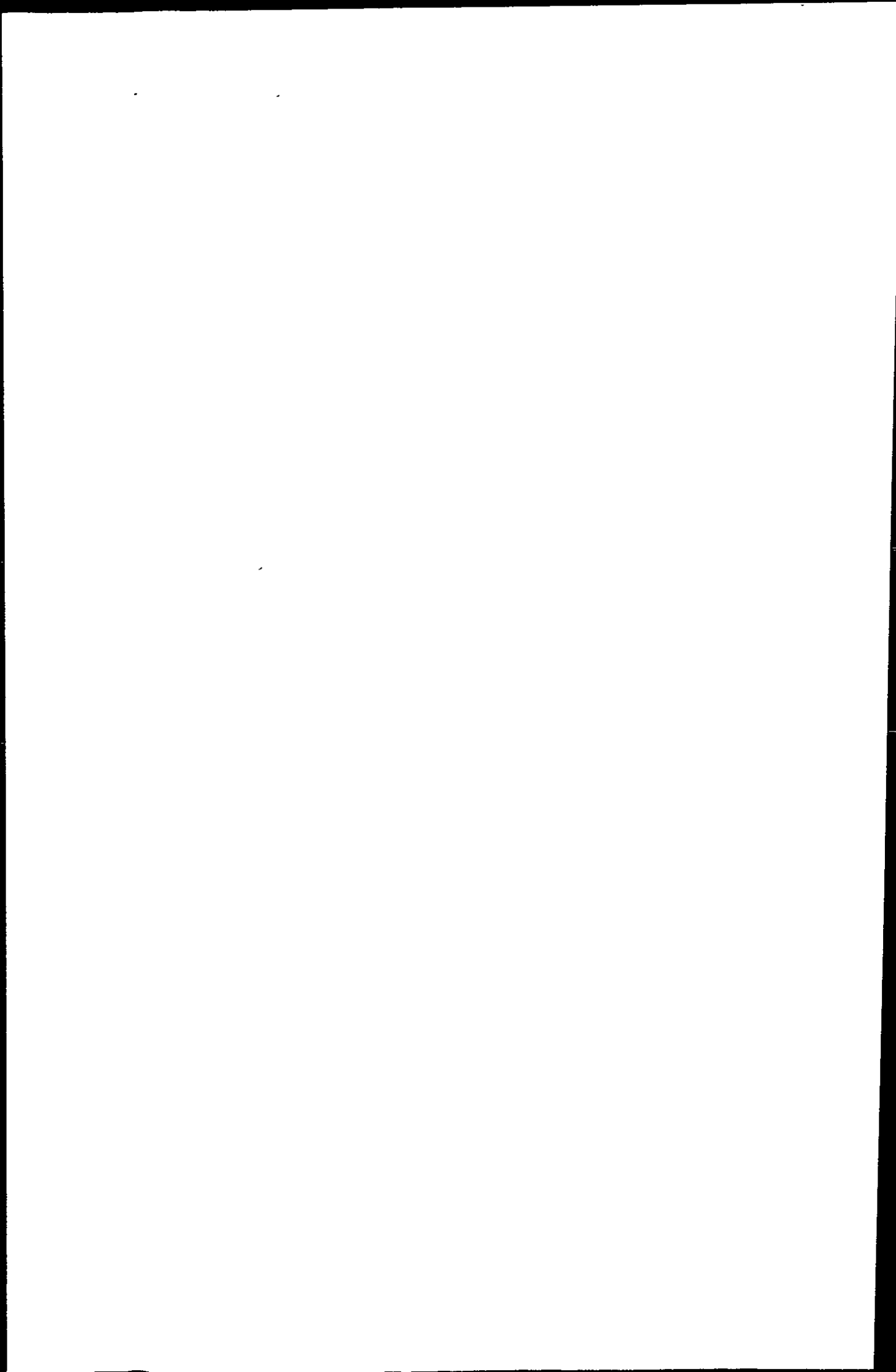
<sup>1</sup> The nature of police action in response to control through violence is well recited, and often justified by the teller. Brögdén's (1991) oral history accounts on policing Liverpool between the Wars provides good examples.



levels of information required by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary (HMIC) in relation to *quality* indicators, this ensured that a contemporary idea became increasingly part of police management culture.

By the 1990s public *confidence* had become formally established as a marker of police performance. However, the mould had been cast with the potentially substantial impact of the Sheehy report (Home Office, 1993a), the work of Posen (Home Office, 1994b); and Cassels (Police Foundation and Policy Studies Institute, 1994), together with the revision of accountability, control and financial flexibility delivered through the *Police and Magistrates Courts Act 1994*. Taken alongside the increasing legislative involvement of the Audit Commission through the *Local Government Act 1992*, and the more directed and stringent review of force organisation and performance evident from Her Majesty's Inspectorate, policing in the mid 1990s had developed in a more measured and politically accountable way than at any time in the past.

The late 1990s saw a change in Government and with it the introduction of a wide-reaching piece of legislation aimed at building upon notions of community safety which had been recommended in the *Morgan Committee Report* (Home Office, 1991a). Introduced as a parliamentary Bill in 1997, and receiving Royal Assent during the summer of 1998, the *Crime and Disorder Act* had 'a simple, practical ambition: to build a safer and more responsible society' (Home Secretary, second reading of the Bill, April, 1998). As well as introducing a number of measures to address youth crime, racism, protection of the public against offenders, and swifter, clearer sentencing provisions, the Act built upon the new Labour Government's manifesto commitments to address anti-social behaviour by widening the responsibility for implementing strategies across a more diverse group of



agencies. Central to this was the new focus on local authorities as having a key, statutory partnership role, alongside the police in addressing these issues. This was a position advocated at the beginning of the 1990s in the *Morgan Committee Report*, but one which had failed to find favour with the Conservative Government of the period. Each district, or unitary, authority was required, with the police and (where appropriate) county authority, to undertake an audit of their local area which was to include consultation with the public and, specifically, 'hard-to-reach' minority groups. These audits were specifically directed to be based upon as wide a range of data as was available, and not to be based solely on information provided from official police records. From this process, strategies were to be drafted, consulted upon, and published by 1 April 1999. In all, work which was to be conducted over a relatively short period of time – just nine months from the Act's inclusion on the statute book to the April deadline.<sup>2</sup> Strategies had to include objectives and targets against which performance could be measured and, for the first time, local authorities were legally required to take account of the crime and disorder implications of all their policies.

Working relationships with local authorities, and other agencies, were already well advanced across Devon and Cornwall, and the effect of the *Crime and Disorder Act* was one which placed these local arrangements on a more structured basis still. The force re-organisation in 1994 had already taken account of the benefits which could be derived from having divisional boundaries tied to those of local authorities. With this more distinct geographic responsibility being placed upon the nine divisional commanders, community safety strategy groups, originally formalised in Plymouth during the early 1990s, had been

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<sup>2</sup> In fact, through circulars and other means of communication such as seminars, most areas were alerted to the tight time-scale several months before this. However, this still left relatively little time to organise a process which was requiring widespread consultation, against a backdrop of data being held in varying forms, within numerous agencies.

established in many areas of the two counties. These commonly incorporated fruitful inter-district working arrangements, although the notion of specific local authority ownership of the wide range of issues which were to become established under the new Act, meant that it was primarily the police who were the driving force behind many of these arrangements. Nevertheless, the structures which had been established, together with a wider acceptance of inter-agency initiatives being of benefit in addressing specific issues, meant that the basis on which the new statutory arrangements were to come into operation was less problematic than might have otherwise been. The extent to which the force's structure was best able to meet the new challenges inherent in the *Crime and Disorder Act*, however, was a central motivating factor which caused a further re-organisation to take place in 1999.<sup>3</sup>

### *Community policing*

The raft of changes which took place during the last half of the century impacted upon local policing, and the way in which this was perceived by the public, in a number of ways. Of significance were local residents' perceptions of a community style of policing being the most appropriate to their particular locality, although definitions of what that style should encompass were inevitable ambiguous. The research at local level in *Stonehouse* appeared to show an affinity, amongst residents who had resided in the area for some considerable period, with the local police base at *The Octagon* which closed as a conventional station in 1967. A style of policing which had a degree of personal availability and identity within it was one which was similarly shown to meet with general approval, whilst the introduction of *community policing* in Devon and Cornwall at the end of the 1970s provided a title with which local residents were to become familiar, without

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<sup>3</sup> See chapter 7: *National Perspectives to Local Implementation*.

fully appreciating the wider multi-agency opportunities which were being developed within that concept. The locational nature of policing, with an identifiable nearby base, and a perception that police officers walked a beat, appeared to play a part in the satisfaction of the public with their policing system. However, closure of local bases, the development of Unit Beat Policing, and a crime rate which continued to rise during the 1960s through to the 1990s provoked questioning of how effective the more reactive styles of policing actually were.

The movement away from small local bases was a relatively common phenomena across forces throughout the country, with Devon and Cornwall being no exception. In rural communities these 'stations' had often been little more than houses owned by the police authority and occupied by its officers who commonly did not have the right to purchase their own properties under local police regulations of the day. As this situation changed, and owner-occupation became a more accepted form of residence, so police-owned property began to be sold-off and officers moved to homes sometimes miles away from where they actually worked. Technological developments and increased availability of transport, also meant that responding to calls did not rely on police bases being as geographically close to communities as they once were, and pressure on police budgets made the sale of smaller police stations a financially sound proposition. It would be impossible to identify any one of these factors as having been overridingly responsible for the apparent fall in the confidence displayed by the public in the police's ability to provide a service. However, the extent to which the closure of *The Octagon*, as a local police base in Plymouth, was made reference to through the research, provided a microcosmic example of individual and community reaction.

Less observable, at local level, was the extent to which public perceptions of police effectiveness took account of less visible factors, such as inter-agency initiatives. Individual interpretations of community policing rarely displayed an understanding of the basis on which Alderson's model became established. Similarly, the minority of residents in *Stonehouse* indicated knowledge of local groups established to provide specific community services. However, an apparently wider belief that the local authority had a role to play in promoting a 'community spirit' in the area alongside the police was evident; a factor which, if taken to include a definition of 'community safety', signifies a positive aspect to developments during the 1990s where the Morgan Committee Report and Crime and Disorder Act became influential in directing future policy. This linkage between a visible police presence, inter-agency work, and wider responsibility for community safety, is one which has the potential for further research.

### *Crime prevention*

Policing has been intrinsically linked with the notion of prevention and detection of crime since the emergence of the 'modern' police in the nineteenth century. Crime prevention developed a more structured approach nationally in the 1960s, providing, alongside the changes which took place to police forces following the Royal Commission of 1964, a college to teach crime prevention officers, and the *Cornish Committee* which established the basis on which future crime prevention structures at national and local level were to be developed. It should not be surprising to note that both the commission and *Cornish Committee* report occurred at a time during which there were concerns with the structure of policing accountability and a rising crime rate. Although crime prevention had been a subject on the policing agenda since the last century, an overall perception that public confidence in the policing process generally needed reinforcing appeared to play a part in

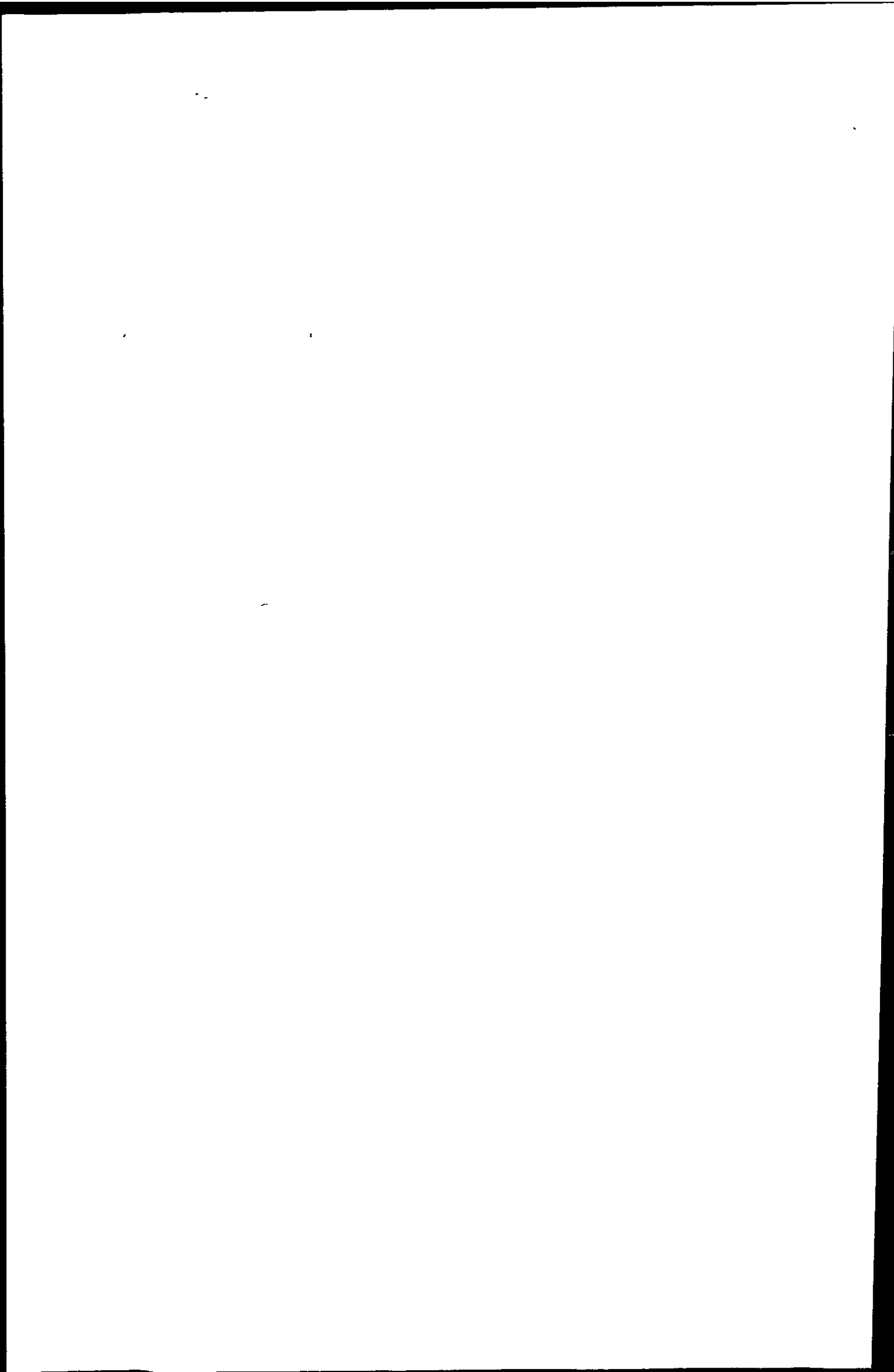
the decision to raise the public profile of crime prevention nationally. The effect of this enterprise was one which saw crime prevention departments become relatively quickly established as part of police forces' arsenals, with a wider-reaching interest in situational approaches to the issue developing during the 1970s. By the 1980s, the potential effects of involving agencies other than the police in this process had become more commonly accepted, alongside the need to consider rehabilitative measures which could prevent recidivism. During the 1990s, the opportunities to place wider ownership of the problem of community safety with other agencies became officially recognised in the Morgan Committee Report (Home Office, 1991a) and realised in the *Crime and Disorder Act 1998*.

If there was a conscious attempt to reinforce confidence amongst the public within the crime prevention process, it was one which appeared to commonly place the emphasis upon success far more with public actions than it did with the actions of the police or any other agency. Whereas relatively few police resources were devoted overtly to crime prevention as an issue, proportionately far greater emphasis was placed upon the role which the public needed to play in protecting themselves, by ensuring greater security of their property. Development of local policing strategies, which encompassed a wider disciplinary approach, took until the 1980s to become more generally established. Despite policies which had been relatively unsuccessful in encouraging individual citizens to take personal action in preventing crime, a new apparent appetite to become involved in aspects of 'self-preservation' was signified by the extent to which membership of neighbourhood watch schemes grew during the 1980s and 1990s. This growth was police, and not Government, led in the first instance, but as its popularity grew, the Home Office became more instrumental in promoting the perceived benefits of the scheme. The actual effectiveness of neighbourhood watch in crime prevention terms has tended to be difficult

to quantify and, where research has been conducted, mixed results have been noted. In many locations where it has been introduced, rates of criminal activity have been low and neighbourhood watch has been 'no more than a formalisation of the ongoing process of support to the police from the community' (Laycock and Tilley, 1995, p.20). Nevertheless, police forces continued promotion of neighbourhood watch (or similarly entitled 'watch' schemes) and became judged on their performance during the 1990s according to the number of homes in their areas which were covered, regardless of any success exhibited by these schemes.

The experience in Devon and Cornwall was one which developed in line with the pace being set nationally until the wider opportunities to develop a multi-agency approach was introduced by John Alderson with his Crime Prevention Support Unit during the latter half of the 1970s. Even though this initiative spawned community policing during the 1980s, the extent to which the conventional role of the crime prevention officer, and much of the work which was undertaken by way of giving advice and surveying property, changed, did not take place until much later. The indications gained from this study clearly point to a degree of frustration amongst some officers with the extent to which crime prevention strategies appeared to be taking a back-seat against the more reactive styles of policing which were being pursued during the 1980s and early 1990s. This secondary importance which was perceived as attached to the role of crime prevention officer was not one which was out of line with experiences elsewhere in the country in terms of the opportunities for crime prevention to become a minor specialism, rather than an all-pervading purpose of police activity; in fact it had specifically been warned against at the time of the Cornish Committee Report. The frustrations exhibited during the early 1990s, however, appeared to be ones where new opportunities which were emerging alongside partnerships with other





agencies, and the enthusiasm and drive exhibited by the police for the new enterprises, were not always shared to the same level of commitment by others in the process. Nevertheless, work which was conducted in Plymouth did develop constructively as the decade progressed, and structures such as the community safety strategy group became the model which other areas of the force followed.

### *Victims of crime*

Whereas the issue of victim services did not widely emerge on the policing agenda until the 1980s, the extent to which policework had naturally involved direct contact with this section of society, could not be ignored in the overall impact which it had on perceptions of police activity and effectiveness. The evidence of police involvement with victims, and their pivotal developmental role alongside the Victim Support structure during the 1980s and 1990s showed that the position of victims, and the level of importance given them in the hierarchy of policing activity, was one which emerged during a period in which wider public perceptions of how the police operated was under particular scrutiny. The 1980s, having begun with widespread inner-city disorder and criticism of police practice in evidence gathering and procedure, latterly led to more critical evaluation of the service against a more 'cost-centred' approach which the police responded to by attempting to move the agenda to one which was based upon the quality of work actually undertaken. Victims of crime figured more prominently on this new agenda than at any time in the past and, taken together with a clear indication that they now comprised a significant political place in the issue of law and order nationally (through the publication of a Victim's Charter), the need to regain confidence in the criminal justice system generally became a key strand of development for both the police service and Government.

Local evidence in Plymouth tended to indicate a perception amongst residents who had experience as victims that their direct contact with police officers formed an important benchmark against which they judged policing activity. Survey data from the 1990s also identified the extent to which the initial services provided by the first officer attending a crime influenced victims' opinions of how well their cases had been dealt with. Linkages between this, and the provision of a secondary voluntary support service provided by Victim Support, also signified how perceptions of police activity could be positively interpreted by victims of crime.

The linkage between what the police actually did in the course of recording and investigating crime, and the extent to which these activities were perceived as appropriate by victims themselves, appeared to have some interesting contrasts with how supervisory police officers interpreted the effectiveness of such actions. Whereas victims of burglary tended to report generally high satisfaction levels with police response, supervisory officers were regularly more critical about what could have been done during the course of investigation. Whether these findings had a wider overall effect upon victims' confidence in the police service generally is not clear. However, the expectations of a system which should provide a minimum level of support was more obviously displayed in the case of victims of violence. Here, victim satisfaction levels were commonly lower than those of burglary victims, and the extent to which high detection rate violence cases attracted a belief that the police would do more than in unsolved burglary cases, often showed that disappointed expectations led to dissatisfaction. Although not specifically forming part of this research, the tendency for detected cases to move into a different arena, vis-à-vis the court and Crown Prosecution systems, showed possibilities that responsibility for perceived shortfalls in service delivery became laid at the police's door, whether or not

they had a direct influence over that particular aspect of service. This, taken together with perceived 'unsatisfactory outcomes' of some detected cases, such as where offenders had been cautioned or received relatively low punishment on the tariff scale, could be interpreted as having had a negative effect on the confidence of victims and, correspondingly, on those with whom victims had conversed or formed an opinion from media portrayals of 'soft justice'.

Victims of crime have, therefore, played an important role in the overall development of policing during the latter half of the century. Although their emergence onto the national stage pre-dated specific police activity in support of their needs, until over twenty years after the death of their champion, Margery Fry, the extent to which the willingness of the police service to embrace and support the concept of Victim Support, provided much of the credibility associated with this particular organisation. The fact that this process emerged during a period when the police themselves were becoming more regular features of societal and media attack was more fortuitous, than it was intended. However, the development of policing activity in this particular arena provided a significant opportunity to provide evidence of a service which was more all-embracing of its 'customers' than one which concentrated purely upon catching offenders. The opportunities which exist to develop these services still further against the backdrop of the *Crime and Disorder Act 1998*, and the potential linkages with other agencies, still has to be evidenced. However, the examples already being set by several probation services, such as the one in Cornwall, whereby its service is publicly declared to be one which is acting on behalf of 'the community', and not solely on behalf of 'the offender', indicates the extent to which victims have become a more central platform of criminal justice policy at national and local level.

### *Quality of service*

The term 'quality' itself had always proved difficult to define in police circles. Review of how this term became interpreted at various points, and by different groups during the latter half of the century, clearly showed that a variety of attempts to put the term into action had not been without their problems. Of central importance to appreciating how the quality of service initiative played a part in moving policing forward during the last ten years has to be the perceived need of the leaders of the police to regain public confidence in its ability to provide levels of service which met with public expectations. Attempts by the police themselves, to regain the lost ground of public confidence in policing during the 1980s, became regarded as an intrinsic part of the police mission for the early 1990s.

The mission, under the umbrella of *quality of service*, grew in significance against a background of increasing government attention being paid to how cost effective the police were in providing core services. The Devon and Cornwall experience was one which never sought to alter the policing culture against templates such as those already prepared by other forces, or against ACPO's attempt at Total Quality Management theory in the form of 'Getting Things Right'. However, the pragmatic approach to activity monitoring within the force's Quality of Service Unit, saw a number of significant developments take place, not least of which was the work conducted as part of the quality assurance checks and surveys (both of which have subsequently been used to inform this study). Of interest in considering how the Devon and Cornwall experience compared with the national strategy was the determined attempt which was made by the force to avoid general public attitude surveys, seeking instead to concentrate attention on those specific groups who had experienced the policing service firsthand. Whilst not meeting with the approval of HMIC in the early stages of development, and subsequently moving to a process which also

included wider public attitude surveys, the experience was one which underpinned a belief that the way to improve was through better line management, minimum standards, and reparative action where necessary.

The extent to which scrutiny of the police by the Audit Commission became more stringent during the 1990s also underscored how the quality of service provided by the police, and latterly other groups through the development of community safety strategies, had become the focus of institutional effectiveness. In producing joint strategies during 1998/1999, in line with the *Crime and Disorder Act* requirements, attention became more focussed upon how the partnerships were working. The Audit Commission (in Devon and Cornwall through the District Audit Service) commenced detailed research to identify amongst district, county and unitary authorities, as well as the police and other agencies, how effective these new working arrangements were. Of particular interest within their research appeared to be the extent to which information was being shared, and how wide-reaching the audits which had been conducted were, in relation to the data-sets used to inform the strategies. Early informal information received tended to indicate that few areas in the country had succeeded in gaining the breadth of information in their audits which was required by the Act, and the extent to which minority groups had been identified, and data from a variety of non-police sources attained, was likely to be the subject of justifiable criticism. The findings, when released, are unlikely to be of surprise to those concerned. Whereas factors such as data protection legislation clearly impinge on certain aspects of this, opportunities for partners to share statistical information which can inform decisions and priorities, still has a fair way to go.

### *Conclusions*

The overall purpose of this study has been to provide an overview of how policing has developed in England and Wales between 1950 and the late 1990s, with particular attention being paid to how the various changes at national level have effected the way in which policing has developed in the south-west of the country. Within this, concentration upon the four key themes chosen, *community policing*, *crime prevention*, *victims of crime* and *quality of service*, can only provide a partial overview of policing activity. Clearly, the significance of each has different importance across the period of study, and has been influenced by a variety of factors. However, when considered against the wider perceptions of the public, and focusing in upon an atypical location within Devon and Cornwall (*Stonehouse*), the opportunity to make informed observations on policing becomes clearer. This has to be set against a raft of divergent interpretations which have accompanied academic discourses throughout the period and have illuminated the underlying principles of control and accountability within a State administered order-maintenance institution. However, this work has not sought to develop a detailed debate around theories of police, societal and political interactions, but to identify the extent to which a complex series of changes have become implemented and perceived at a local level.

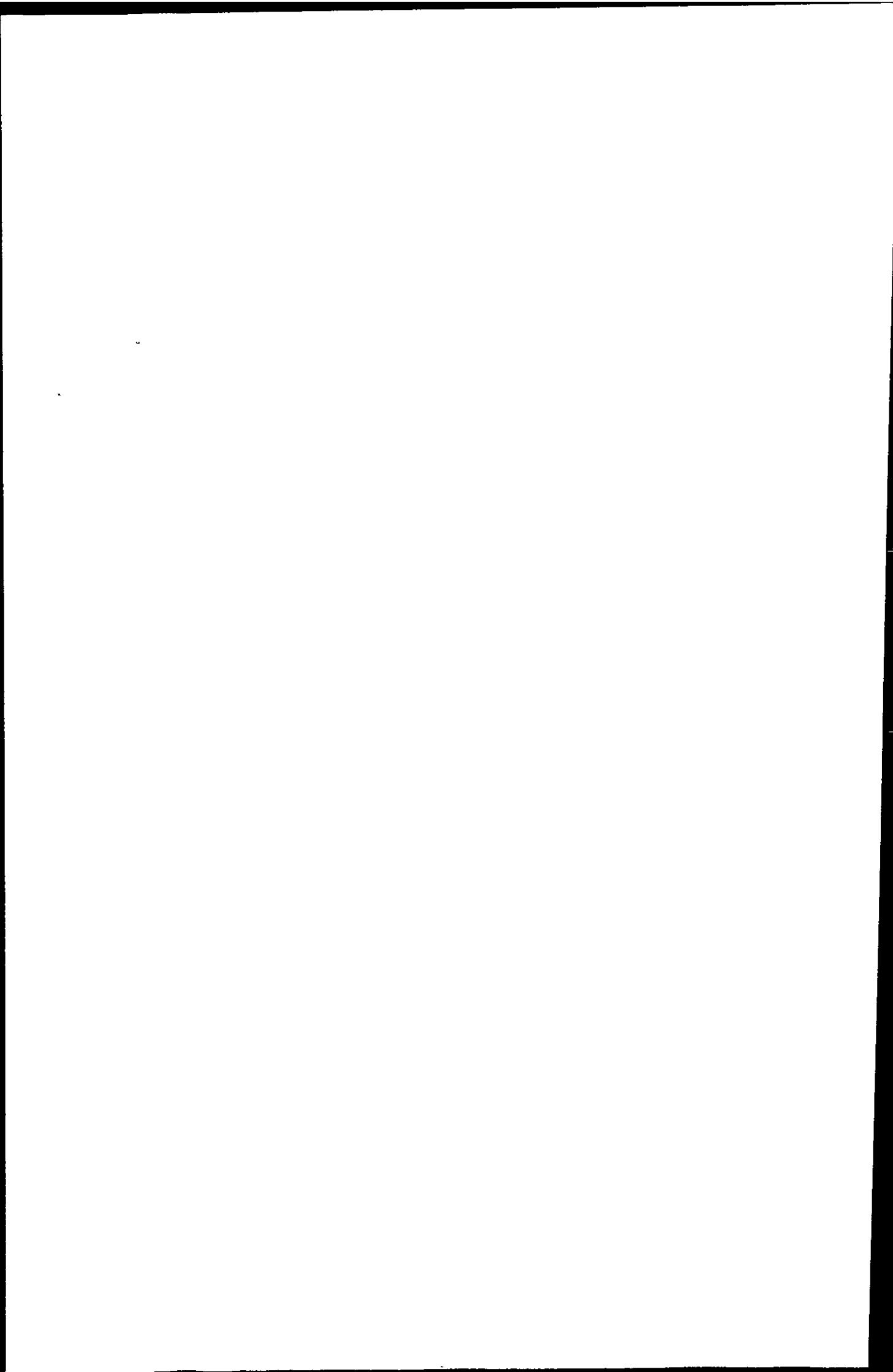
A number of conclusions can be drawn from this. Firstly, it is clear that the way in which policing developed has been one often inspired, not by major political or ideological change, but as a result of relatively localised factors which have, of themselves, been prominent enough to draw into question how confident both politicians and the public have been in policing structures and practices. Major national concerns over police impropriety led to the Royal Commission in 1964, and the *Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984*, whilst being part of a review of police evidence gathering processes, was informed by the

report of Lord Scarman into the inner-city riots of the early 1980s. Even so, these pieces of legislation were set against a backdrop of other changes to the policing environment, such as technological innovations, and police inspired initiatives such as community policing, which provided the opportunity for more wide-ranging reform.

Secondly, although making legislative structural and procedural changes, alterations were arguably of a relatively cautious nature throughout this period, never intentionally seeking to undermine the public persona of the 'bobby on the beat' which had become synonymous with the 1950s *Dixon* era. If an attempt to move away from this image was observed, it was more often from within the police service itself, where continually rising crime appeared to be, by necessity, combated in a reactive way. Exceptions to this were obvious through initiatives which sought to maintain levels of personal contact, and reassurance. But the emerging wisdom, supported by academic study, showed the relative ineffectiveness of routine, untargeted, foot patrol; the visible presence of which was regularly shown to be of high priority to the public.

Thirdly, despite the politicisation of the police through central co-ordination and direction, especially during the miners' strike of 1984, the potential for a 'third-force' policing structure, able to respond in paramilitary style, was never seriously itemised on the national policing agenda. There remained, through times of national upheaval, an underlying tenet of policing philosophy which regarded the oft-quoted principle of 'policing by consent' as primary to whatever future direction policing might take. There is clearly no consensus over precisely what this term means, neither is there a supposition within this text which dismisses the potential capital which can be gained through its quotation as a simplistic ideology. Nevertheless, despite the wide-ranging nature of





changes which have taken place to the structure of policing over almost fifty years, certain principles have remained relatively unchallenged and 'policing by consent', together with a continuing emphasis re-emerging at various junctures, as to the issue of public confidence, form cornerstones against which developments can be considered.

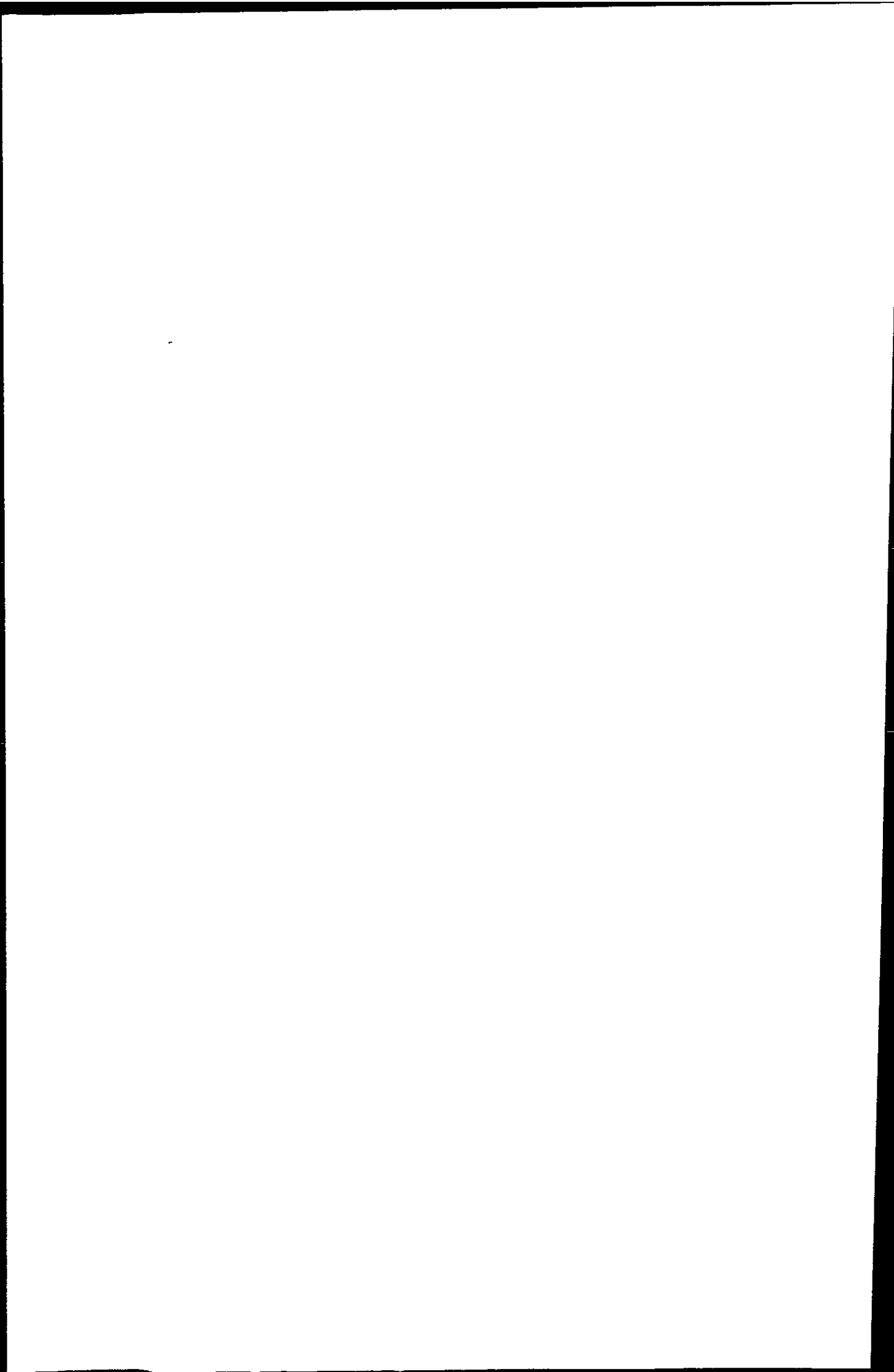
Fourthly, the research within Devon and Cornwall showed perspectives of policing which had been influenced by national trends, but which had not necessarily impacted on public perceptions as much as changing local factors when considered at the more localised, *Stonehouse*, level. Findings which identified a community wish to have an identifiable police presence, were set against visible signs of urban decay, and a series of household deprivation factors. It was at this local level which perceptions were gauged, rather than by reference to wider policing or social structures. Similarly, recollections of police officers whose beats covered the area, and whose periods of services spanned a period in excess of fifty years, related policing practice and procedure being influenced more by local factors than central direction. Whereas changing police culture showed a wider perspective being taken by officers charged with routine patrol of the area during the 1990s, there remained an affinity with the specific characteristics of the area, particularly amongst those who had a responsibility as community constables.

Finally, the extent to which central watchdogs of the police service (HMIC, Audit Commission) have become more ardent critics of management structures and processes, can be seen to have had a far more significant impact during the 1990s than at any time in the past. Their roles have not merely been reinforced through respective legislation and guidance, but the overall change away from the tri-partite structure (post-1994), has seen the position of chief constables in the process become increasingly reliant upon their police

authorities whose responsibilities now include consultation with the public and setting policing priorities. This increased level of accountability at chief officer level has correspondingly meant that other senior officers have begun to shoulder greater responsibility at local level. Within Devon and Cornwall this has manifested itself, through two reorganisations during the 1990s, into a structure which involves direct responsibility for producing results at local level resting with commanders of superintendent or chief inspector rank. Taken alongside the wider remit now given to local authorities through the *Crime and Disorder Act*, the localised nature of policing has, once again, become a more influential factor in determining priorities and procedures.

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## Groundrules for use of NASAP data recording

Notes to be made immediately after an incident or informal interview had taken place, or if not practicable, as soon as possible after the event, but not generally more than twenty four hours to have elapsed between the incident and note making.

For purposes of confidentiality notes to be referred to by means of date/time referencing and initials ascribed to officer making any comments. Initials to not be those of officer concerned but, to enable recollection by the author, these initials to be annotated against a short description of the person concerned by means of rank, service and particular factors of relevance to the individual.

The ethical consideration of the process needs to be paramount. It is not considered practical to advise each officer with whom the author had contact in his daily routine to be personally advised that 'anything which he said may be taken down', and neither is this particular issue seen as problematic.

*(Officers at Charles Cross were made aware that the author was conducting research into policing the Stonehouse area by way of formal memorandum from the deputy sub-divisional commander and the researcher himself briefed his section and community officers that part of his work entailed an analysis of how police officers were actually working the streets).*

No information gained for this study to be capable of being translated into a form which could identify any individual. *(However, officers who had dealings with the author would have been fully aware of his management position as an inspector and acted accordingly in the work environment. Any occurrences which caused the inspector to perform a normal supervisory role would always be dealt with 'by the book' and in no way compromise either his operational integrity or the accuracy of separate recording for purposes of the research. In the event this did not prove in any way problematic. No instances of a disciplinary nature were recorded, with the exception of one occurrence where the location and circumstances have been altered in re-telling to ensure no embarrassment could be caused.)*

Notes made, to refer as much as possible to the environment in which the data had been gained. As such, 'verbatim notes' (where consigned to a position in the NASAP note-books) would try to give a flavour of the situation in which comments were made.

## Semi-structured interview schedules used with Community constables and police officers

Semi-structured interview check list for police officers

1. Personal details
  - a. Male/female
  - b. Age now
  - c. Serving/retired
  - d. If retired when?
  - e. Rank on retirement
  - f. Rank(s) whilst serving
  - g. When joined force
  - h. How long in all at Octagon/present station
  - i. Where brought up
  
2. Changes during time in service
  - a. How police perceived
  - b. What regarded as most successful/unsuccessful part of policing strategy in recent years
  - c. Should there be more local police bases?
  - d. If so - what difference would it make?
  - e. Views on (if applicable):
    - UBP
    - Community Policing
    - Crime Prevention (and CPOs)
    - Victim Support
    - Other relevant issues
  
3. Community involvement
  - a. Current role and nature (reactive/community)
  - b. Extent of non-reactive patrol
  - c. Perceptions of Stonehouse as an area
  - d. Perceptions of residents of Stonehouse
  - e. Recollections of any community-based involvement
  - f. Perceptions of current policy
  
4. Other issues
  - a. Probe areas made current through other comments/interviews
  - b. Perceptions of the likely future direction of policing

## Draft letter used as introduction to retired police officers

(sent on police headed paper)

Dear Sir,

Your name and address have been given to me by Bert Riggs of NARPO, as being someone who may possibly be able and prepared to spend a short period of time discussing the policing of Plymouth some twenty to thirty years ago.

I am currently engaged on research concerning crime, fear of crime and inter-agency co-operation in the Stonehouse area of the city. As part of this, and with a view to developing the Police role in a historical as well as contemporary context, I wish to record the views of a few of the police officers who used to work, and have some control over policing from the Octagon Police Station.

It would be most useful therefore if you could spare some time over the next few weeks. I will contact you again in the hope of making more definite arrangements but in the meantime if you wish to speak to me concerning the project I can be found at Charles Cross, (701188) extension 405.

I look forward to the opportunity of meeting you in the future.

Yours faithfully,

Philip Bunt  
Inspector



**Interview schedule used with  
police officers who served at *The Octagon***

1. Personal details
  - a. Male/female
  - b. Age now
  - c. Serving/retired
  - d. If retired when?
  - e. Rank on retirement
  - f. Rank(s) whilst at Octagon
  - g. When joined force
  - h. How long in all at Octagon
  - i. Where brought up
  
2. When first stationed at Octagon...
  - a. Initial impressions of area
  - b. Work undertaken
  - c. Policy of policing area
  - d. Foot/car patrols
  - e. Contacts locally
  - f. Main types of calls
  - g. Crime - domestic/public order recollections
  
3. Changes during time at Octagon
  - a. How police seen
  - b. What regarded as most successful/unsuccessful part of policing from the Octagon?
  - c. Should police station be more local now?
  - d. If so, what difference would it make?
  - e. Views on policy changes - UBP/community policing/Victim services etc.
  - f. Aware of current policy and mode of policing area?
  
4. Community involvement
  - a. What contacts with community
  - b. Where did officers live?
  - c. Any community constables?
  - d. Officers allocated to specific problems/problem areas?
  
5. Other issues/favourite stories

## 'Cast list' of officers referred to in the research

(Initials do not reflect, in any way, the initials of those actually concerned)

- AB Retired sergeant. Joined Devon Constabulary in 1931 and transferred in 1939 to Plymouth City Police following the Plymouth Extension Act 1938. Served as constable at Octagon from 1944 to 1950 and as Sergeant there from 1954 to 1957.
- AQ Serving constable - joined Plymouth City Police in 1964, served within the city most of his career.
- BC About to retire constable joined in 1959, served in Plymouth all his career.
- BP Retired constable - joined Plymouth City Police 1946. Served at *The Octagon* 1952 to 1956. Retired 1978.
- BT Serving sergeant serving at main city centre station and responsible for shift policing which included *Stonehouse*.
- CD Serving police inspector now a superintendent. Previously served at Devonport.
- CG Serving constable who had been a community constable responsible for one of the two beats covering *Stonehouse* - at time of interview had not policed area for 18 months, being stationed elsewhere.
- CX Serving constable on response section at Charles Cross, Plymouth.
- DQ Retired constable. Joined Plymouth City Police in 1947. Born and raised in *Stonehouse* area. Stationed at Octagon between 1949 and 1960 as beat constable with 12 month period attached to CID.
- DV Retired superintendent. Joined Plymouth City Police in 1939. Served at Octagon from 1947-1949 as PC prior to being promoted to Detective Sergeant at Greenbank.
- ER Retired superintendent. Joined Plymouth City Police in 1935. Never stationed at Octagon but had responsibility for policing of area as Superintendent from Ker Street.
- GD Serving superintendent responsible for policing various areas in Plymouth, including *Stonehouse*, during his career.

- IA Retired sergeant. Joined Plymouth City Police in 1947. Served at Octagon from 1966 to 1968 as both constable and sergeant." (JB)
- IL Serving community constable responsible for one of the two beats covering *Stonehouse* - at time of interview still employed as such, having done that role for approx. 3 months.
- IV Serving constable joined police 1970, served at Crownhill and Plympton.
- JM Retired Chief Inspector. Joined Plymouth City Police in 1947. Served at Octagon from 1963 to 1966 as Sergeant.
- JW Serving sergeant at main city centre station and responsible for shift policing which included *Stonehouse*.
- JZ Serving CPO in the Plymouth division during 1990s.
- KN Serving constable who spent time as a CPO in Plymouth during 1980s.
- LG Serving community constable responsible for one of the two beats covering *Stonehouse* - at time of interview still employed as such.
- LV Serving superintendent based at force headquarters working in a department related to policy issues.
- MM Serving probationary constable working from Charles Cross, Plymouth.
- NR Serving constable - joined Devon and Cornwall in 1986 and served at Charles Cross and Crownhill during the period to present day.
- NS Recently retired community constable in the Plymouth area who left early in 1990.
- QC Retired constable. Joined Plymouth City police in 1944. Stationed throughout Plymouth including *The Octagon*. Retired 1974.
- RB Serving constable, involved in work as CPO during the 1970s in areas of the force other than Plymouth.
- RC Serving constable at main city centre station and involved in shift policing which included *Stonehouse*.
- RD Serving constable joined Plymouth City Police in 1961, served at *The Octagon* and other city stations in Plymouth.

**Supplementary interview schedule used for long-term  
resident-victims in *Stonehouse* (1991 and 1994)**

1. Why moved to area
2. Recollections of dealings with police in area
  - a. positive/negative
  - b. circumstances
  - c. interesting encounters
3. Awareness of community policing strategies
  - a. recollections of UBP
  - b. awareness of changes
  - c. opinion of what community policing is
4. Awareness of victim strategies
  - a. other involvements as victim
  - b. police/VSS contacts other than already recounted
5. Other matters of interest
6. Awareness of Quality of Service
  - a. what it means to victim
  - b. how police react to criticism
  - c. opinions on improvement opportunities

(6 above was added for the 1994 interviews, not being probed in this form during 1991)

## Personal interview schedule used in *Stonehouse* (1991)

### VICTIM - QUESTIONNAIRE

Identification Reference: \_\_\_\_\_

Date completed: \_\_\_\_\_

WOULD LIKE TO BEGIN BY ASKING YOU SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT THE TIME WHICH YOU REPORTED A FEW DAYS AGO.

What was the crime which was committed against you?

- a. Assault [ ]
- b. Burglary - dwelling (stealing or attempting to steal from your home by a trespasser) [ ]
- c. Burglary - other (stealing or attempting to steal from your place of work by a trespasser) [ ]
- d. Robbery (stealing or attempting to steal from you by using force against you) [ ]
- e. Theft of your motor vehicle [ ]
- f. Theft from your motor vehicle [ ]
- g. Damage to your motor vehicle [ ]
- h. Theft of any other type of property [ ]
- i. Damage to any other type of property [ ]
- j. Other offence [ ]

Can you describe for me exactly what happened please?

-----  
 -----  
 -----

(a) Exact location that crime took place \_\_\_\_\_

-----  
 -----

Where were you when the crime was committed?

a. At home - asleep    
- awake    
- uncertain

b. In the immediate vicinity of your home    
(eg: in the street or nearby)

c. In a nearby street or neighbourhood    
(Precisely where?)

-----

d. Away from the area altogether    
(Precisely where?)

-----

e. Other    
-----

f. Don't know/not sure

Were you aware of the crime being committed at that time?

Yes  No

IF 'YES' GO TO Q.6

When were you aware that the crime had been committed?  
(ie: how long after it had happened)

-----  
-----  
-----

How did you become aware of the crime having been committed?

- a. You were a witness to it happening [ ]
- b. Heard/saw something whilst the crime was being committed which resulted in you discovering it then [ ]
- c. Discovered the crime personally, after it had occurred [ ]
- d. Told about it by another household member [ ]
- e. Told about it by someone from outside the household. (specify who) [ ]  
-----  
-----
- f. Other [ ]  
-----

Were you in company with anyone else at this time who was also aware of the incident having occurred?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

If 'Yes' to Q.7: Who were you with?

- a. Spouse or partner from your home address [ ]
- b. Person(s) under 16 yrs. from your home address [ ]
- c. Other person(s) normally resident at your home address [ ]
- d. Other person(s) who reside in the immediate vicinity of the incident [ ]

(Would you be prepared to name them in order that I may have the opportunity to see them if required?)  
-----

- . Other person(s) [ ]
- . Not applicable [ ]

SHOW A

Why did you decide to contact the police?

- a. You witnessed the offence [ ]
- b. You were injured [ ]
- c. You felt you needed help [ ]
- d. You felt the offence was very serious [ ]
- e. You wanted the offender(s) caught [ ]
- f. You wanted to make an insurance claim [ ]
- g. You wanted some sort of compensation [ ]
- h. You felt the police would want to be told [ ]
- i. You felt it was your 'duty' to report it [ ]
- j. You believed the police could catch the offender(s) [ ]
- i. Someone else persuaded you to contact the police [ ]
- j. Other [ ]

9.(i) Which of these was the most important reason?

How were the police contacted?

- a. Telephone (999) [ ]
- b. Telephone (other) [ ]
- c. Personal visit to Police Station [ ]
- d. Personal contact with officer on street. [ ]
- e. Other [ ]

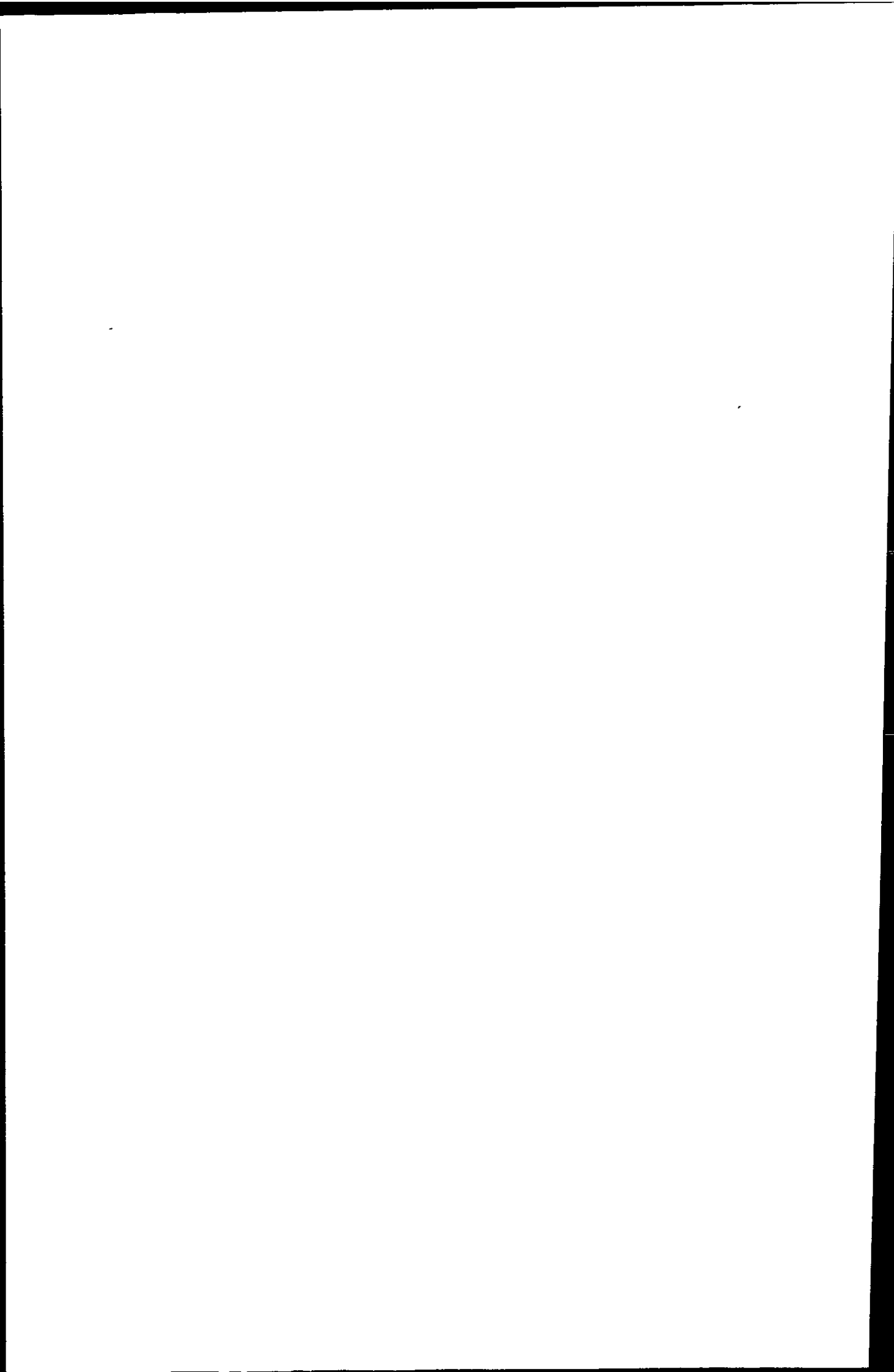
10.(i) Was it you who made this initial contact or someone else? (if someone else specify who)

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1. Do you know the identity of the first person from the police who you spoke to when you initially contacted them?

- a. Police Constable
- b. Police officer of other rank
- c. Community Constable
- d. Civilian employee
- e. Not sure

What would you describe as the most impressive feature of this first contact:

SHOW B

- a. Professional approach
- b. Helpful attitude
- c. Sympathetic attitude
- d. Attention to detail in taking information
- e. Giving you information about what the police would do next
- f. Reassuring you of a positive police response
- g. Prompt phone answering/attention at enq. desk
- h. Other impressive feature   
-----
- i. Not impressed with any aspect

3. What would you describe as the most unimpressive feature of this first contact: SHOW C
- a. Unprofessional approach [ ]
  - b. Unhelpful attitude [ ]
  - c. Unsympathetic attitude [ ]
  - d. Little information requested/recorded [ ]
  - e. Not told what police intended to do next [ ]
  - f. Given no reassurance of positive police response [ ]
  - g. Slow phone answering/attention at enq. desk [ ]
  - h. Other unimpressive feature [ ]  
-----
  - i. Not unimpressed with any aspect [ ]

- Were you given any indication of what the police would do next? SHOW D
- a. Yes - told they would send a police officer immediately [ ]
  - b. Yes - told a police officer would call as soon as possible [ ]
  - c. Yes - told a police officer would call when one was available [ ]
  - d. Yes - asked to come to a police station to provide further information [ ]
  - e. Yes - told that details had been noted and no one was going to call [ ]
  - f. Yes - told the matter would be passed to the Community Constable for his attention [ ]
  - g. No - no information of this nature was given [ ]
  - h. Cannot recall [ ]
  - i. Not applicable [ ]

Did you request any information which was not given?  
Yes [ ] No [ ]

If 'Yes' specify what:  
-----

6. Did a police officer attend the scene/come and see you?  
 Yes [ ] No [ ]

7. If 'Yes' to Q.16:  
 How long, after the initial contact with the police  
 did it take for an officer to arrive?

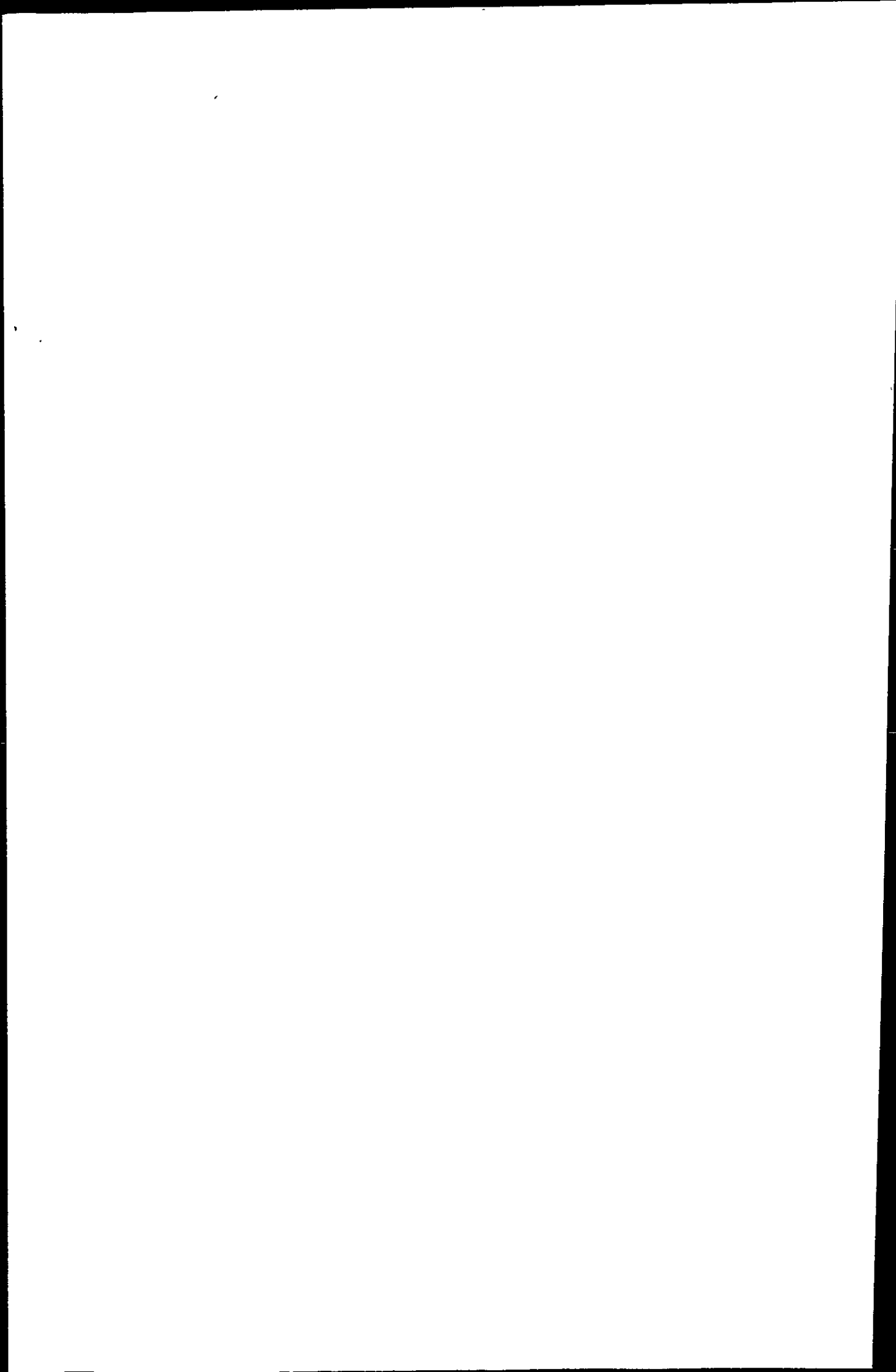
- a. Within 5 minutes [ ]
- b. 5 - 15 minutes [ ]
- c. 16 - 30 minutes [ ]
- d. 31 - 60 minutes [ ]
- e. 1 - 2 hours [ ]
- f. 2 - 4 hours [ ]
- g. 4 - 8 hours [ ]
- h. over 8 hours [ ]

Did anyone provide you with any of  
 the following information:

JHC ~ E

- a. His name and/or collar number/station [ ]
- b. A reference number of the crime report [ ]
- c. Verbal details about 'Victim Support' [ ]
- d. A leaflet about 'Victim Support' [ ]
- e. Verbal details about compensation [ ]
- f. Any leaflet about compensation [ ]
- g. Verbal or written details about any other  
 agencies/groups which may be able to help you [ ]
- h. Whether he or any other officer would contact  
 you again [ ]
- i. The likelihood of catching the offender(s) [ ]
- j. None of the above [ ]

18.(i) Who provided this information?



Was there any information you requested that was not provided?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

Please specify:

-----

Did you express any wish to be contacted again by the police?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

If 'Yes' to Q.20:

Why did you want to be contacted again?

a. To be advised of the result of the enquiry [ ]

b. To be given answers to specific queries [ ]  
Specify:

-----

c. To be advised of the return of any property [ ]

d. Other reason: [ ]  
-----

e. Not applicable [ ]

What would you describe as the most impressive feature of your contact with this officer:

SHOW F

a. Professional approach [ ]

b. Helpful attitude [ ]

c. Sympathetic attitude [ ]

d. Attention to detail in taking information [ ]

e. Giving you information about what the police would do next [ ]

f. Reassuring you of a positive police response [ ]

g. Prompt response [ ]

h. Other impressive feature [ ]  
Specify:

-----

i. Not impressed with any aspect [ ]

What would you describe as the most undesirable features of your contact with this officer: (SHOWCARD G)

- a. Unprofessional approach [ ]
- b. Unhelpful attitude [ ]
- c. Unsympathetic attitude [ ]
- d. Little information requested/recorded [ ]
- e. Not told what police intended to do next [ ]
- f. Given no reassurance of positive police response [ ]
- g. Slow response [ ]
- h. Other undesirable feature [ ]  
Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

i. No undesirable aspects [ ]

23.(i) Which was most undesirable \_\_\_\_\_

WOULD NOW LIKE TO ASK YOU SOME MORE GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT POLICE AND ANY PREVIOUS INVOLVEMENT YOU MAY HAVE HAD WITH

Do you have a relative or close friend who is a police officer?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you know any officer, who works in this area, well enough to call him by name if you meet him/her?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

How regularly, on average, do you see a police officer on foot patrol in this area? (SHOWCARD H)

- . Every day [ ]
- . At least once a week [ ]
- . At least once a month [ ]
- . Less than once a month [ ]
- . Never [ ]

How regularly, on average, do you see a police officer on mobile patrol in this area? (SHOWCARD H)

- a. Every day
- b. At least once a week
- c. At least once a month
- d. Less than once a month
- e. Never

Do you think this area receives more or less attention from the police than other areas of the city?

More  Less  About the same  Don't know

28.(i) Generally, do you think it is more effective in tackling the type of problems which occur in this area to have officers on foot or in motor vehicles?

Foot  M/Veh  Not sure  No opinion

28.(ii) Why?

-----

-----

When was the last time (prior to this incident) that you had any contact with the police? (SHOWCARD I)

- a. Less than 1 month ago
- b. 1 - 3 months ago
- c. 3 - 12 months ago
- d. Over a year ago
- e. Never any contact
- f. Can't recall/don't know

WERS 'e' or 'f' GO TO Q.32



10. What were the circumstances of this contact?
- a. As a victim of crime.
  - b. As a witness or as a person reporting a crime or other matter in which NOT a victim.
  - c. As a suspect of a crime
  - d. In relation to a road traffic matter
  - e. In relation to any other matter.
  - f. Cannot recall/not sure
  - g. Not applicable

30.(i) Circumstances as related by respondent:

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Can you recall how you felt about the way the police dealt with you on that occasion? (SHOWCARD J)

- a. Very satisfied
- b. Satisfied
- c. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- d. Dissatisfied
- e. Very dissatisfied
- f. Can't recall
- g. Not applicable

Can you give your opinion of how satisfied or otherwise you are with the way you have been dealt with overall by the police? (SHOWCARD J)

- a. Very satisfied [ ]
- b. Satisfied [ ]
- c. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied [ ]
- d. Dissatisfied [ ]
- e. Very dissatisfied [ ]

32.(i) Do you consider that your feelings about the police generally have changed or been influenced by the contact you have had with them?

-----

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-----

-----

-----

How long have you lived in this property?

- a. Less than 1 month [ ]
- b. 1 month - 6 months [ ]
- c. 6 months - 1 year [ ]
- d. 1 - 5 years [ ]
- e. 5 - 10 years [ ]
- f. 10 - 20 years [ ]
- g. Over 20 years [ ]

Specify: -----

33/34. Do you feel that the following incidents are more frequent, less frequent or about the same in this area as opposed to in the past?

SHOW ✓

33.

34.

1 yr ago:

5 yrs ago:

+ Same - N/K

+ Same - N/K

ASSAULTS

BURGLARY

ROBBERY

RAPE/SEX. ATTACKS

VANDALISM

THEFT OF VEHICLES

THEFT FROM VEHICLES

DRUNKENESS IN STREET

FIGHTING IN STREET

DRUG TAKING

DOMESTIC ARGUMENTS

NOISE/NUISANCE

(1) (2) (3) (4)

(1) (2) (3) (4)

SHOW ✓

36. Do you feel that the following incidents are more frequent, less frequent or about the same in this area as opposed to the rest of Plymouth overall?

35.

36.

This area

Rest of Plymouth

+ Same - N/K

+ Same - N/K

ASSAULTS				
BURGLARY				
ROBBERY				
RAPE/SEX. ATTACKS				
VANDALISM				
THEFT OF VEHICLES				
THEFT FROM VEHICLES				
DRUNKENESS IN STREET				
FIGHTING IN STREET				
DRUG TAKING				
DOMESTIC ARGUMENTS				
NOISE/NUISANCE				



(1) (2) (3) (4)

(1) (2) (3) (4)

SHOW

Thinking of the future, which of the following do you think might be most likely to happen to you in the next twelve months?

- a. Assault [ ]
- b. Burglary [ ]
- c. Robbery [ ]
- d. Sexual attack [ ]
- e. Damage [ ]
- f. Theft of/from vehicle [ ]
- g. Other theft [ ]
- h. Other [ ]
- 
- i. None [ ]

37(i) Which 1 are you most likely to become a victim of?

Do you feel the police do enough to prevent this type of offence being committed?

Yes [ ]      No [ ]      N/A [ ]

If 'No', specify:

-----

-----

-----

Do you feel that individuals could do more to protect themselves from becoming victims of this type of offence?

Yes [ ]      No [ ]      N/A [ ]

If 'Yes' specify:

-----

-----

-----

WOULD NOW LIKE TO ASK YOU SOME QUESTIONS ON YOUR VIEWS OF THE  
AREA IN WHICH YOU LIVE AND THE AGENCIES AND GROUPS WHICH  
OPERATE THERE:

How would you describe your feelings about the area in which you live? In terms of the pride you have in living where you do, would you say you were:

SHOW M

- a. Very proud of the area and its residents [ ]
- b. Fairly proud of the area and its residents [ ]
- c. Neither proud nor ashamed of the area or its residents [ ]
- d. Quite ashamed of the area and its residents [ ]
- e. Very ashamed of the area and its residents [ ]
- f. Don't know [ ]

You will have heard the term 'community spirit' used. What does this term mean to you?

-----

-----

41.(i) Thinking of the past, do you feel this has changed very much?

-----

-----

In terms of any 'community spirit' which is observable in the area in which you live, would you describe it as:

SHOW N

- a. Very strong community spirit involving the majority of residents [ ]
- b. Fairly strong community spirit amongst some of the residents [ ]
- c. Uncertain of whether any community spirit exists or not [ ]
- d. Lacking any community spirit [ ]
- e. Don't know [ ]

Show 0

3. How strong do you feel your personal commitment to any community spirit is?

- a. Very strong [ ]
- b. Fairly strong [ ]
- c. Not particularly strong [ ]
- d. Not strong at all [ ]
- e. There is no community spirit [ ]
- f. Don't know [ ]

43.(i) Are there any examples you could give of your, or other people's commitment to any community spirit in the area?

-----

-----

-----

How much of a commitment should the police have towards encouraging community spirit and pride in this area:

Show P

- a. A lot [ ]
- b. Some commitment [ ]
- c. Very little commitment [ ]
- d. None - it's not their business [ ]
- e. Not sure [ ]

44.(i) Are there any examples of how you feel the police do, or should encourage community spirit in this area?

-----

-----

-----

SHOW A.

How much of a commitment should the local authority have in encouraging community spirit and pride in this area:

- a. A lot [ ]
- b. Some commitment [ ]
- c. Very little commitment [ ]
- d. None - it's not their business [ ]
- e. Not sure [ ]

45.(i) Are there any examples of how you feel the local authority do, or should encourage community spirit and pride in the area?

-----

-----

-----

-----

Are there any groups, organisations, teams etc. which are based in this area which you belong to?

-----

-----

-----

5.(i) Any outside the area?

-----

-----

-----



**Draft letter used as introduction to victims of crime  
in Stonehouse (1991)**

(sent on police headed paper)

Dear

I understand that you were recently the victim of a crime in or near your home.

I am a Police Inspector at Charles Cross Police Station in Plymouth and am currently engaged in research in conjunction with Polytechnic South West into crime, fear of crime and inter-agency response in your area.

It would be most beneficial to me, and hopefully of interest to you, if you could spare a short period of time to discuss this particular case with me. It would be my hope to visit you during the week of ..... and will endeavour to contact you beforehand to arrange a definite time. If you would prefer me not to call upon you at all you can leave a message to his effect at Charles Cross Police Station for my attention. (Plymouth 711188 xt. 405 or 502)

I would emphasise that our discussion would be in the strictest confidence and I would not be in uniform when I called. Hopefully I will have the opportunity to meet you soon.

Yours faithfully,

Philip Bunt  
Inspector



# DEVON AND CORNWALL CONST QUALITY OF SERVICE REVI

Appendix 'I'

I WOULD BE GRATEFUL IF YOU WOULD COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE AND RETURN IT IN THE FREEPOST ENVELOPE PROVIDED

PLEASE PLACE A TICK (✓)  
IN THE APPROPRIATE BOX

Ref.: **BURGLARY**  
XSY519 26/3/93

### How were the police made aware of this crime?

- I telephoned 999/emergency phone
- I telephoned (non-999)
- Someone else contacted them
- The police discovered the crime
- I attended a Police station
- Not sure
- Other

} GO TO QUESTION 5

[Please specify.....]

### Would you say that the time it took the police to answer your call was acceptable? (if you dialled 999 you would have first spoken to a BT Operator)

- Acceptable
- Not acceptable - too long
- Unsure
- Cannot recall
- Other [please specify .....

### Were you told whether a police officer would attend the scene?

- Told an officer WOULD ATTEND
- Told an officer WOULD NOT ATTEND
- NOT TOLD whether an officer would attend
- Unsure/Cannot recall

### Were you told how long it would be before an officer would attend?

- Given an estimated time
- Told "As soon as possible" or similar
- Not given any indication
- Unsure/Cannot recall
- Mutuaily convenient time arranged

### Did you think that the time it took for the police to attend the scene was satisfactory?

- Satisfactory
- Unsatisfactory - too long
- Unsure if satisfactory or not
- Cannot recall

No one has attended GO TO QUESTION 7 358

**Did the first officer who visited you give you any of the follow**

*Appendix 'I'*

	YES	NO	
His/Her name or shoulder number?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A reference number of the crime?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A telephone number should you have any queries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inform you about the services of Victim Support?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Give you a leaflet with information for victims of crime?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Explain what further action the police would take?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Since the officer first visited you have you been contacted by anyone else about THIS MATTER, either in person, by telephone, or by letter?**

*In person or By Telephone:*

Further visit by the officer who first attended

Uniformed Officer(s) [rank if known.....]

C.I.D. Officer(s) [rank if known.....]

Scenes of Crime Officer (ie: Fingerprints/Photographs)

Victim Support Volunteer

Other Agency [please specify.....]

Other Police [please specify.....]

*By Letter/Postal Leaflet:*

Police

Victim Support

Other Agency

What information did this letter/leaflet give?.....

**Have the police advised you of the result of their enquiries?**

Yes

No

Insure/Cannot recall. Please write any comments below:.....

**Do you feel there is anything else which the police could do or could have done?**

Yes - could do or could have done something else

No - nothing else could have been done

Insure. Please write any comments below:.....

**Do you expect to be contacted again by the police?**

Yes - in any event

No - only if there is something positive to tell me

No - do not expect any further contact

Insure

**Why do you expect this?**

[please tick all appropriate boxes]

- Told so by an officer
- Told so in a letter/leaflet
- Assumed this is normal procedure
- Because the police cannot be bothered
- Because I had asked them to tell me
- Other [Please specify.....]
- Not sure

**Would you say you were generally satisfied or dissatisfied with the way in which this matter was dealt with?**

- Satisfied - all aspects
- Generally satisfied - some areas of dissatisfaction
- Generally dissatisfied - some areas of satisfaction
- Dissatisfied - all aspects

} Please comment if desired:

**Other than this matter, during the past 12 months have you had any contact with the police?**

- No. GO TO QUESTION 15  Three or More
- Once  Unsure
- Twice  Cannot recall

**What was/were the reason(s) for the contact?**

[please tick all appropriate boxes]

- Victim of Crime  To Express an Opinion
- Suspicious Incident  Professional Capacity
- Noise/Disturbance/Nuisance  To Sign a Bail Form
- Lost/Found Property/Animal  Witness to an Incident
- Missing Person  As an Offender
- Crime Prevention Advice  Cannot recall
- Ask Advice (other)  Other [Please specify below: .....
- Road Traffic Accident .....
- Sudden Death .....
- As a Motorist (not Road Traffic Accident) .....

**Do you believe that the amount of time which the police spend on routine foot patrol in the area you live in is satisfactory?**

- Satisfactory - right amount  Unsure
- Not satisfactory - too little  Other.....
- Not satisfactory - too much Police presence .....

**Do you believe that the amount of time the police spend patrolling in cars in your area is satisfactory?**

- Satisfactory - about right
- Not satisfactory - too little patrolling in cars
- Not satisfactory - too many police in cars and not enough walking
- Not satisfactory - too much patrolling of the area generally
- Unsure
- Other [Please specify.....]



If you have recently attended an Enquiry Office at a Police Station to this or any other matter please complete the following:

Appendix 'T'

IF NOT GO TO QUESTION 22

Which Police Station did you attend most recently?.....  
What was the approximate date of your visit?.....

When you went to the Police Station did you have to wait to be seen, if so, what was the reason for the wait?

Did NOT have to wait GO TO QUESTION 20

Had to wait because of:

Persons being served/waiting to be served

Clerk/Officer busy on telephone

No one in attendance at desk

Clerk/Officer busy with other matters

Other reason(s) [Please specify.....]

Do you consider the time you had to wait was:

Reasonable

Unsure

Unreasonable

Cannot recall

Would you say that the person who dealt with you:

YES

NO

UNSURE

Was polite

Was of smart appearance

Answered your questions satisfactorily

N/A

Gave a good impression of the Police

Would you say that you were generally satisfied or dissatisfied with the service you received at this Police Station?

Satisfied - all aspects

Generally satisfied - some areas of dissatisfaction

Generally dissatisfied - some areas of satisfaction

Dissatisfied - all aspects



Please comment if desired

Are there any ways you feel that the Devon and Cornwall Police could improve their service to the public?

GENERAL: The area in which the offence occurred (Town/Village).....

Your age:

Your sex:

MALE

FEMALE

Your replies and comments will be treated in confidence. If you have no objection to us knowing who completed this form please enter your details below:-

The Devon and Cornwall Constabulary thank you for your help.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

Tel. No.....



# DEVON AND CORNWALL CONSTABULARY *Appendix 'I'*

## QUALITY OF SERVICE REVIEW

***I would be grateful if you would complete this questionnaire and return it in the freepost envelope provided***

*Please place a tick (✓) in the appropriate box*

**Ref:**

**Violent Crime**

***1. How were the police made aware of this crime?***

- I telephone 999/emergency phone
- I telephone (*non 999*)
- Someone else contacted them
- The police discovered the crime
- I attended a police station
- Not sure
- Other (*please specify*): .....

***} Go to question 5***

***Would you say that the time it took the police to answer your telephone call was acceptable? (If you dialled 999 you would have first spoken to a BT Operator)***

- Acceptable
- Not acceptable - too long
- Unsure
- Cannot recall
- Other (*please specify*): .....

***Were you told whether a police officer would attend the scene?***

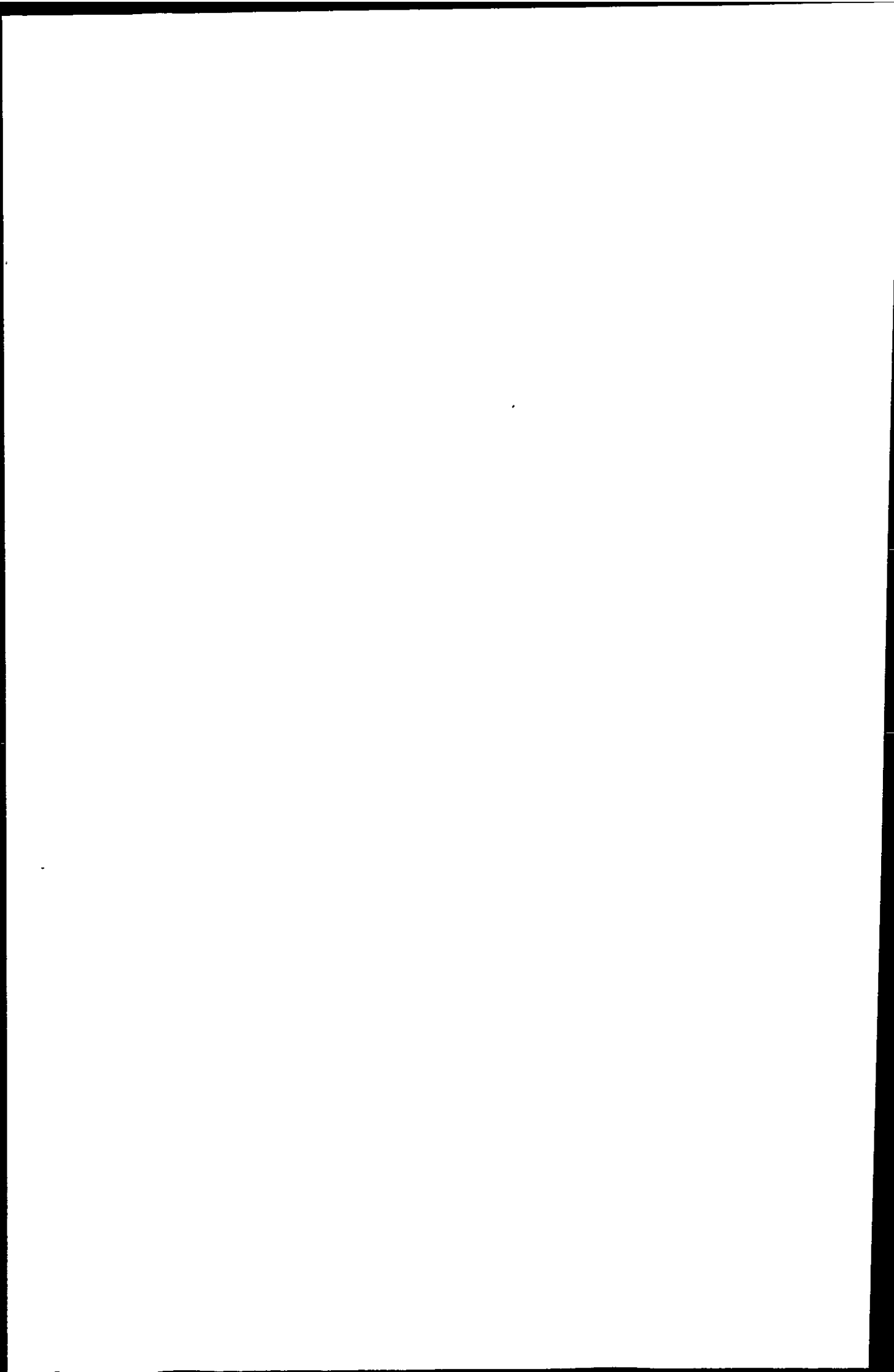
- Told an officer WOULD ATTEND
- Told an officer WOULD NOT ATTEND
- NOT TOLD whether an officer would attend
- Unsure/cannot recall

***Were you told how long it would be before an officer would attend?***

- Give an estimated time
- Told 'As soon as possible' or similar
- Not given any indication
- Unsure/cannot recall
- Mutually convenient time arranged

***Did you think that the time it took for the police to attend the scene was satisfactory?***

- Satisfactory
- Unsatisfactory - too long
- Unsure if satisfactory or not
- Cannot recall
- No one has attended





6. Did the first officer who dealt with this matter give you any of the following information:-

	Yes	No	Unsure
His/her name or shoulder number?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A reference number of the crime?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A telephone number should you have any queries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inform you about the service of Victim Support?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Give you a leaflet with information for victims of crime?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Were you told what further police action was going to be taken? If so, who told you?

- Not told
- Unsure/cannot recall
- Told the following: .....
- .....
- .....
- .....
- Told by: .....

Was a written statement taken from you? (You would have been asked to sign this).

- Yes
- No (Go to question 9)
- Unsure

8. Were you given, or sent a form entitled 'Witness Information ' A' explaining what would happen now you had made a statement?

- Yes - given
- Yes - sent
- Yes - other
- No
- Unsure

Since the officer first visited you have you been contacted by anyone else about this matter, either in person, by telephone, or by letter?

**In person or by telephone**

- Further visit by the officer who first attended
- Uniformed officer(s) (rank if known): .....
- CID officer(s) (rank if known): .....
- Scenes of Crime officer (i.e. fingerprints/photographs)
- Victim Support volunteer
- Other agency (please specify): .....
- Other police (please specify): .....

**By letter/postal leaflet**

- Police
- Victim Support
- Other agency
- What information did this letter/leaflet give?: .....

Have the police advised you of the result of their enquiries?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure/cannot recall. Please write any comments below: .....
- .....
- .....
- .....

11. Do you feel there is anything else which the police could do or could have done?  
.....  
.....  
.....

12. Do you expect to be contacted again by the police?  
 Yes - in any event                       Only if there is something positive to tell me  
 No - do not expect any further contact       Unsure

13. Why do you expect/not expect to be contacted?  
.....  
.....  
.....

14. Would you say you were generally satisfied or dissatisfied with the way in which this matter was dealt with?  
 Satisfied - all aspects  
 Generally satisfied - some areas of dissatisfaction  
 Generally dissatisfied - some areas of satisfaction  
 Dissatisfied - all aspects } Please comment  
.....  
.....  
.....

5. Other than this matter, during the past 12 months have you had any contact with the police?  
 No (Go to question 17)       Once       Twice       Three or more  
 Unsure                               Cannot recall

6. What was/were the reason(s) for the contact?  
.....

7. Do you believe that the amount of time which the police spend on routine foot patrol in the area you live in is satisfactory?  
 Satisfactory - right amount                       Not satisfactory - too little  
 Not satisfactory - too much police presence       Unsure  
 Other (please specify): .....

8. Do you believe that the amount of time the police spend patrolling in cars in your area is satisfactory?  
 Satisfactory - about right  
 Not satisfactory - too little patrolling in cars  
 Not satisfactory - too many police in cars and not enough walking  
 Not satisfactory - too much patrolling of the area generally  
 Unsure  
 Other (please specify): .....

19. If you have recently attended an enquiry office at a police station in relation to any other matter please complete the following. If not go to question 20. Appendix 'T'

Which police station did you attend most recently?:  
What was the approximate date of your visit?:

20. When you went to the police station did you have to wait to be seen, if so, what was the reason for the wait?

Did not have to wait (Go to question 22)

Had to wait because of:-

- Persons being served/waiting to be served
- Clerk/officer busy on telephone
- No one in attendance at desk
- Clerk/officer busy with other matters
- Other reason(s) (please specify):

1. Do you consider the time you had to wait was?:

- Reasonable
- Unreasonable
- Unsure
- Cannot recall

2. Would you say that the person who dealt with you:

	Yes	No	Unsure	N/A
was polite?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
was of smart appearance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
answered your questions satisfactorily?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
gave a good impression of the police?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Would you say that you were generally satisfied or dissatisfied with the service you received at this police station?

- Satisfied - all aspects
  - Generally satisfied - some areas of dissatisfaction
  - Generally dissatisfied - some areas of satisfaction
  - Dissatisfied - all aspects
- } Please comment

Are there any ways you feel that the Devon and Cornwall Police could improve their service to the public?

.....  
.....  
.....

**General**

The area in which the offence occurred (town/village):  
Your age: Your sex: male  female

Your replies and comments will be treated in confidence. If you have no objection to use knowing who completed this form please enter your details below:-

Name:  
Address:  
Tel. No.:

The Devon and Cornwall Constabulary thank you for your help.



**DEVON & CORNWALL**  
**CONSTABULARY**

## QUALITY OF SERVICE

A STRATEGY  
FOR  
QUALITY ASSURANCE  
CHECKING

1 QUALITY ASSURANCE CHECKING

1.1 Purpose

1.1.1 Quality assurance checking is a mechanism by which supervisors have an opportunity to re-examine the actions of their officers and to evaluate the quality of response or investigation. It is important to examine the actual task undertaken and to see if it meets with the expectations and satisfactions of

- (a) the public, and
- (b) the standards set by the organisation.

1.1.2 It is a means of not only examining and assessing the quality of the service delivered by the original officer, but also an opportunity to examine other areas involved in the process which would normally be outside that officer's control.

2.1 Methodology

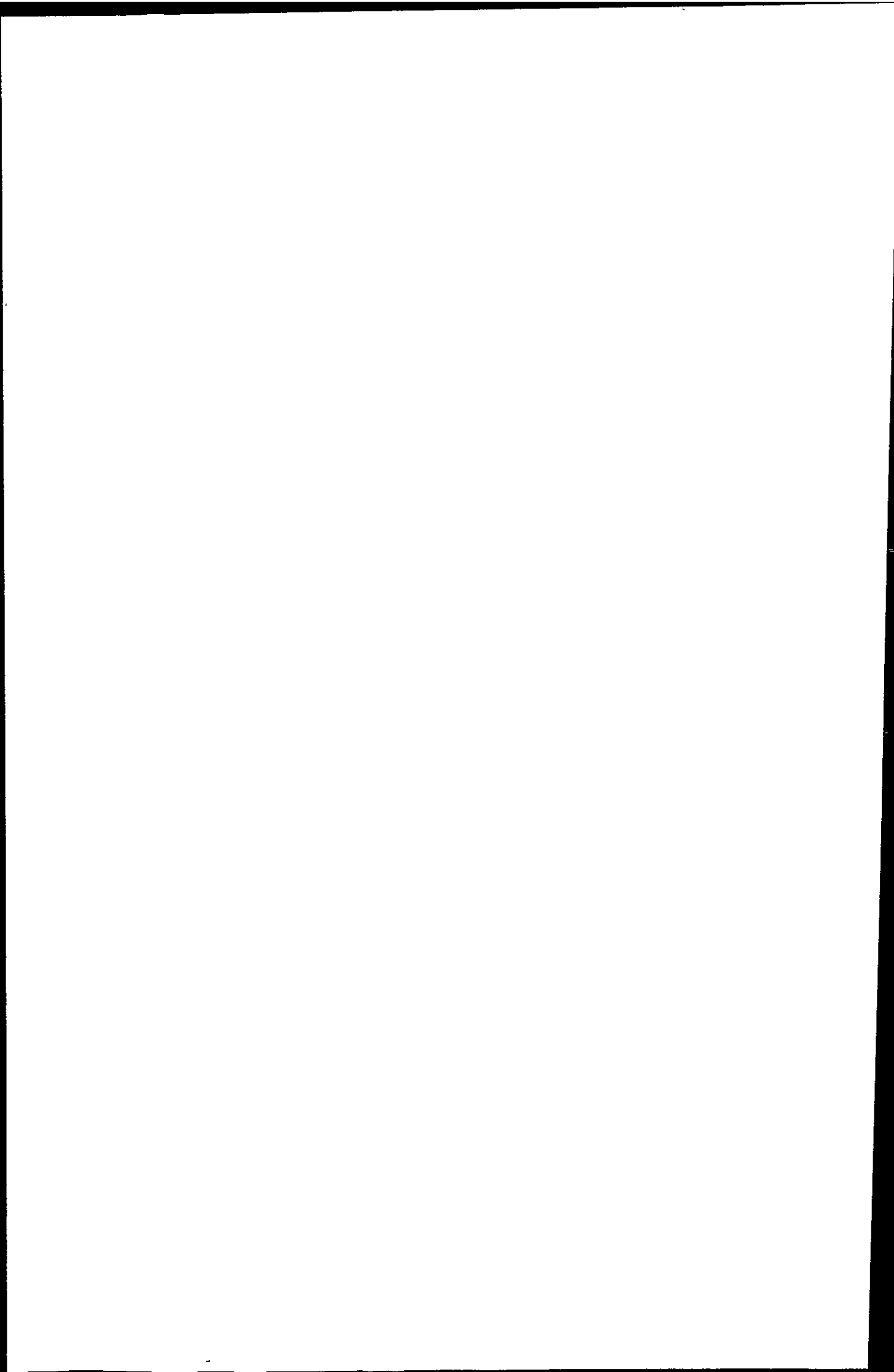
2.1 The sub-divisional commander will have the prime responsibility for administering the quality assurance checking programme. The subject and number of cases to be checked will be determined by the Quality of Service Unit.

- 2 -

The sub-divisional commander may use his discretion as to which cases he chooses to have examined but it is suggested that, as a guide, 50% of those chosen should be selected randomly and that the remaining 50% reflect a targeted quota of cases specifically of interest to the sub-divisional commander concerned.

- 2.2 Each file and, if necessary, Falcon log should be allocated to a named supervisor together with the Template and Re-examination Report pro-forma (Appendices A and B).
- 2.3 The officer conducting the quality assurance check should make contact with the victim or member of public, by telephone if possible, to make a suitable appointment for a personal visit. He should explain the reason is to examine the quality of service delivered and not necessarily to re-investigate the case or to give any further information regarding its progress.
- 2.4 On arrival by appointment the supervisor should introduce himself and explain in detail the purpose of his visit.
- 2.5 He should go through the case papers examining in detail the action taken to test its veracity and comment on the scope of the enquiry and professional competence of the investigation.
- 2.6 He should seek the person's view as to satisfaction with the service provided.

2319C



- 2.7 He should submit the report to the sub-divisional commander with any relevant comments.
- 2.8 An important part of the quality assurance checking mechanism involves the officer who has been tasked with examining the case discussing with the investigating officer (and any other officer involved) the views of the member of public and the standard of the investigation).
- 2.9 In cases where members of the public have been left with a poor impression of the action taken, sub-divisional commanders should ensure that they are given appropriate feedback as to what remedial action (if appropriate) has been taken.
- 2.10 Sub-divisional commanders should submit the completed forms together with their own views and any remedial action taken to the Quality of Service Unit through their own divisional chief superintendents who should comment on the inspection process.

3 Feedback

- 3.1 The examining officers should discuss with the original officer areas of concern and take remedial action as appropriate.
- 3.2 Matters affecting sub-divisional policy or tactics should be documented and discussed with the sub-divisional commander.



3.4 Issues of wider significance, such as matters affecting Force policy, should be considered and commented on by the sub-divisional commander in his submission to his divisional commander.

3.5 The divisional commander will consider the significance of these recommendations and either take appropriate action or submit a paper to the Quality of Service Unit for further evaluation.

#### 4 Resource Implications

4.1 It is suggested that the programme has no additional resource implications. It is a function of supervisors to supervise and there is nothing in the quality assurance checking programme which contravenes this basic principle.

#### 5 Costings

5.1 Manpower costings need not be considered for the reasons given above. Administrative costs will be minimal and confined to photocopying and some mileage of both private and police vehicles.

6 Timetable

6.1 Every two months each Sub-Division will conduct a quality assurance checking programme on a given subject. The first month will be devoted to the checks themselves and to reporting the results.

6.2 The second month will be devoted to analysis and feedback of the results and the implementation as necessary of remedial action programmes.

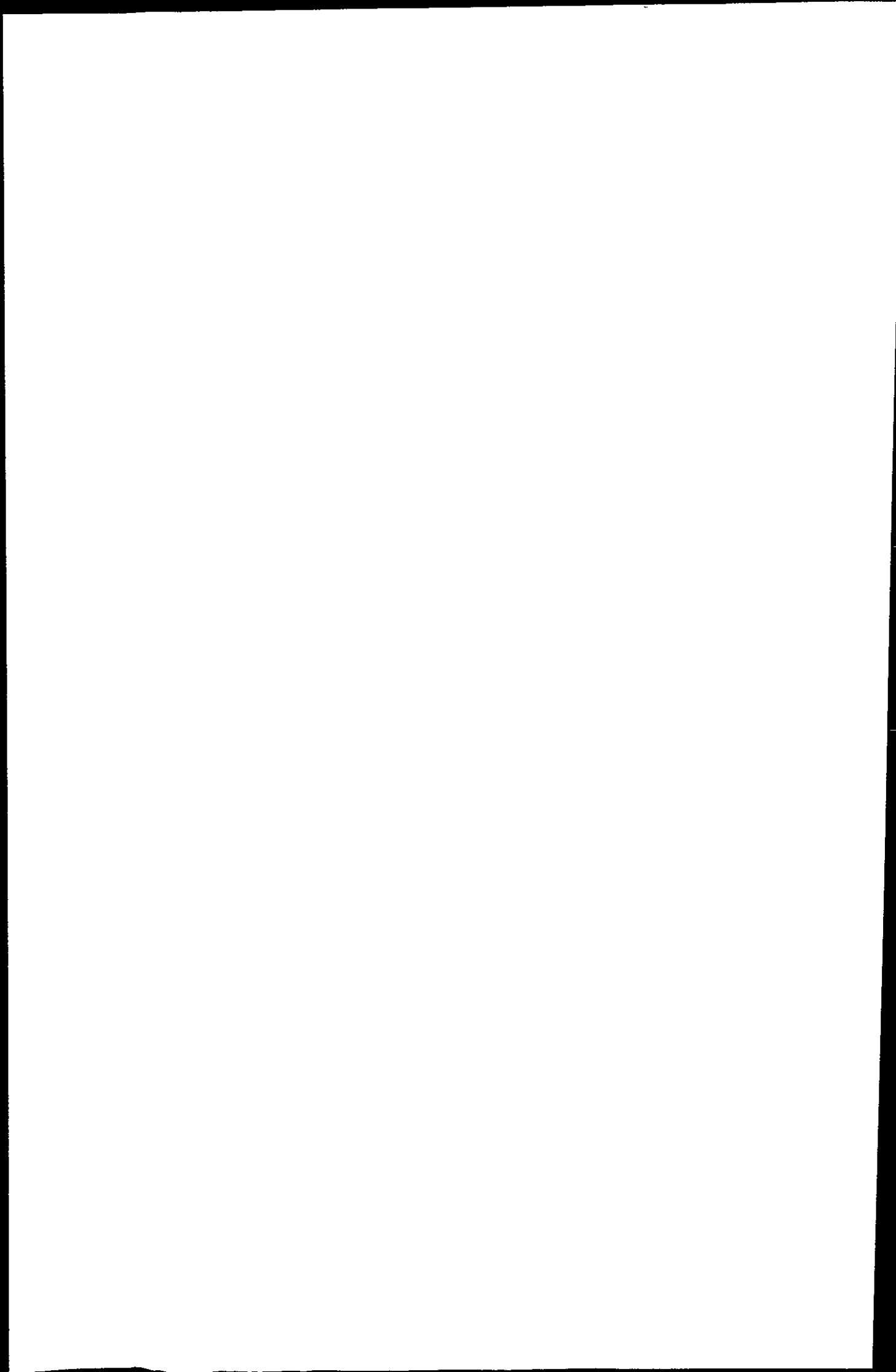
7 Monitoring

7.1 The Quality of Service Unit will receive all reports from divisional and sub-divisional commanders. It will examine and evaluate any areas of concern and decide if issues raised have local or Force implications.

7.2 In the case of the former it will discuss with divisional and sub-divisional commanders areas of best practice or suggested solutions.

7.3 In the case of the latter, the Unit will evaluate and prepare a monthly synopsis for presentation to the Deputy Chief Constable.

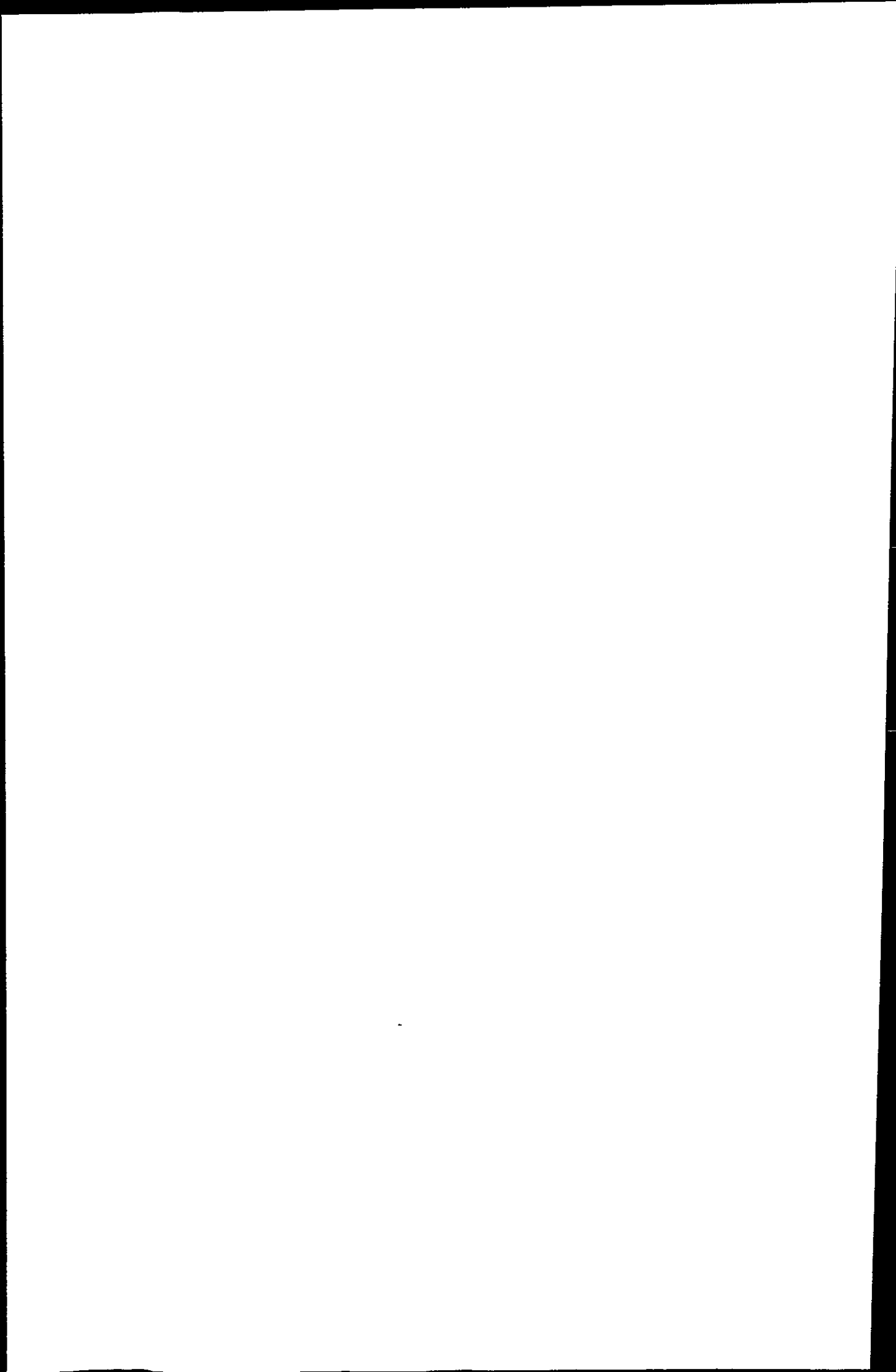
- 7.4 Each year, on the back of the Inspectorate examination of the Force, quality of service issues will be raised by the Deputy Chief Constable in his discussions with divisional chief superintendents and their senior staff.



APPENDIX A

OFFICER/CLERK RECEIVING REPORT

- 1 On initial report, interview aggrieved person fully.
- 2 If report is in person and the criteria is met, obtain statement.
- 3 Inform the Divisional Operations Room for initial response (see later) if appropriate.
- 4 Inform immediate supervisory officer, in order that responsibilities at (see later) may be carried out.
- 5 Complete all crime recording/report forms and submit promptly.



DIVISIONAL OPERATIONS ROOM

- 1 On receipt of information, ensure prompt attendance at scene.
- 2 Consider activation of:
  - (a) Checkpoint Scheme
  - (b) Early Warning Alert Scheme
  - (c) Neighbourhood Watch and other Watch Schemes
- 3 Call specialist support as appropriate:
  - (a) Dog Handler
  - (b) Scenes of Crime
  - (c) Optical Evidence Gatherer
  - (d) Other specialists
- 4 Consider liaison with Crime Management Bureau for suspect vehicle check and possible link of crime, etc.
- 5 If burglary in progress, consider containment and instructions re mode of approach.
- 6 Obtain debrief from all officers in the initial investigation and:
  - (a) Complete Falcon Log
  - (b) Ensure all information is available to investigating officer.
- 7 Consider informing the victim of the result to date.

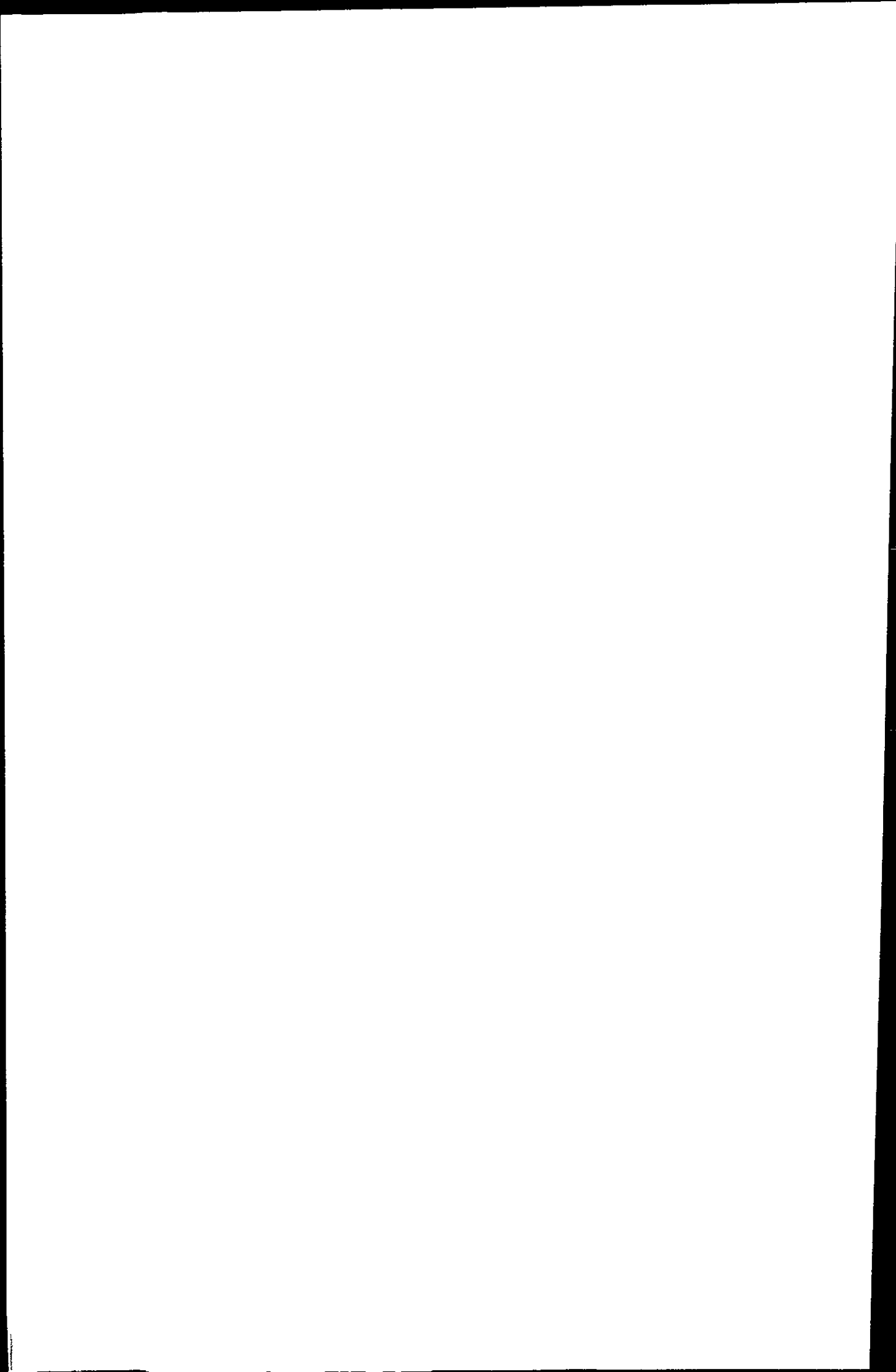
FIRST OFFICER AT SCENE

- 1 Attend the scene as soon as possible
- 2 Preserve the scene as appropriate.
- 3 Provide early situation report to Divisional Operations Room for consideration of action.
- 4 Interview aggrieved person and obtain witness statements if required. (Refer to Standing Order B1)
- 5 Complete local enquiries, which may include:
  - (a) house to house (leave details at those houses where no one is in and check those premises for similar break-ins).
  - (b) tradesmen
  - (c) nearby workmen
  - (d) identified regular users of the road/street/area
  - (e) enquiries about stolen property.
- 6 Inform supervisory officer via Divisional Operations Room in order that he/she may attend or provide appropriate support.
- 7 Arrange for duty CID officer to be informed and appraised of the full circumstances (where appropriate).
- 8 Consider the victim's welfare and support requirements, contacting Victim Support if appropriate.
- 9 Make contact or arrange for same with neighbourhood watch co-ordinator, who may assist wider house to house enquiries.
- 10 Liaise with the Community Constable, acquainting him with the circumstances, in order that he may:
  - (a) make local enquiries and speak with contacts
  - (b) provide crime prevention advice
  - (c) consider local publicity.
- 11 Ensure crime report is sent to Crime Management Bureau as soon as possible.



THE FIRST SUPERVISOR

- 1        Ensure that the officer at the scene receives the appropriate level of support.
- 2        Attend the scene if available and appropriate.
- 3        Ensure that all immediate enquiries and actions are completed.
- 4        Ensure that CID support is available.
- 5        Ensure that the appropriate initial investigation is correct and complete.
- 6        Ensure that all papers are checked and expeditiously routed to Crime Management Bureau (CMB) for instructions and to indicate whether further enquiries are necessary and give advice re appointment of investigating officer (CID enquiry, uniform enquiry, etc)



SCENES OF CRIME OFFICER

- 1 Attend the scene and complete the necessary scientific examination.
- 2 Liaise with the initial investigator and/or the investigating officer.
- 3 Complete the scientific report and ensure it is submitted to the CMB as soon as possible and, in any case, before the end of the tour of duty.
- 4 Preserve and deal with the exhibits as appropriate, making contact with the Forensic Science Laboratory and Force Fingerprint Bureau.
- 5 Liaise with CMB and assist in linking crimes through scientific examination of the scene (foot marks, instrument marks, MO, etc)

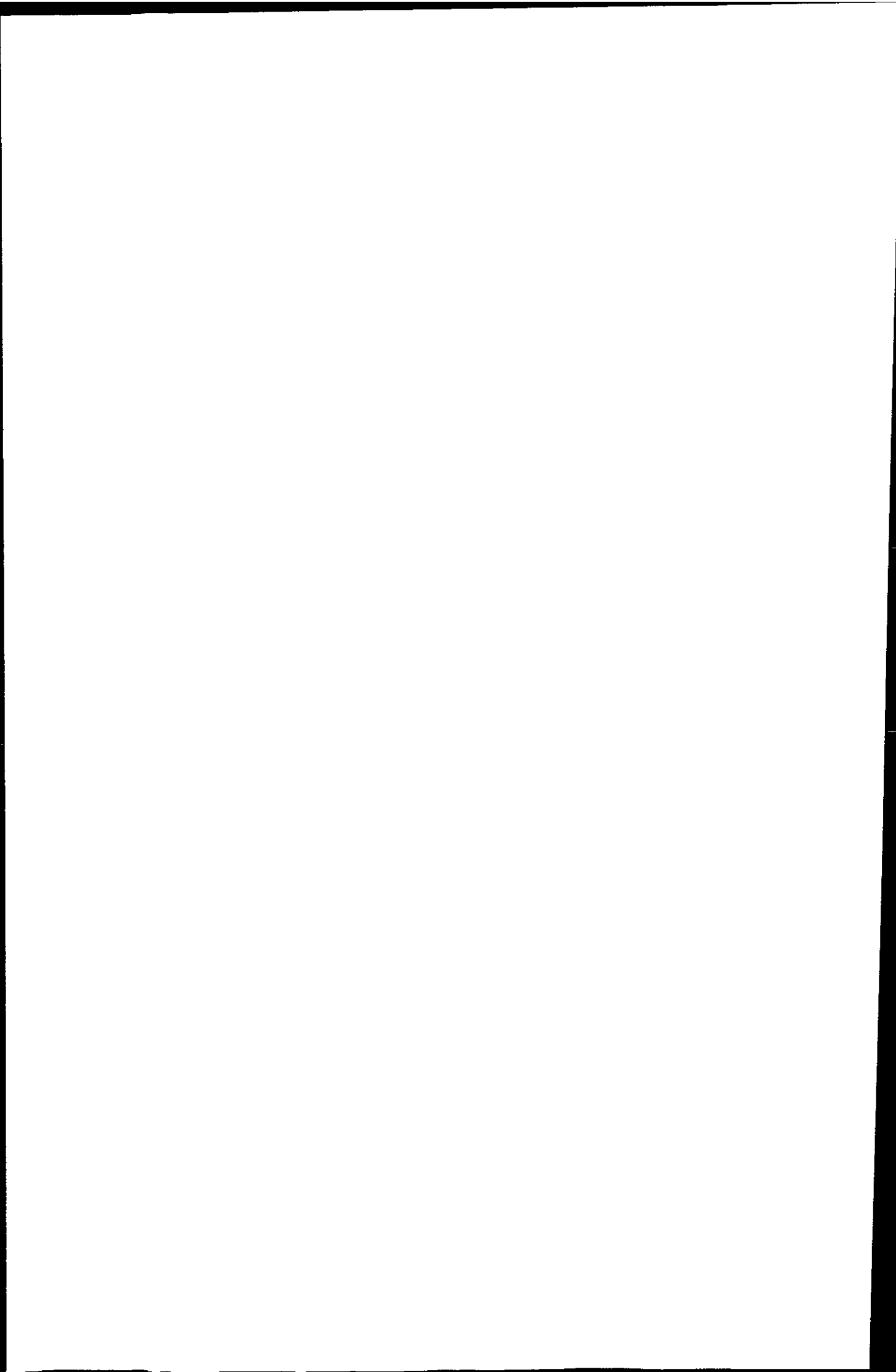
CRIME DESK

- 1 Receive all reports of crime from initial investigator through supervisor.
- 2 Check that the initial investigation is complete.
- 3 Give advice on the continuation and direction of the further investigation and level of response (CID enquiry etc)
- 4 Ensure prompt return of offence reports for further investigation to designated sergeants with instructions.
- 5 Ensure that the scene of crime report is attached to the offence report and the result of the scientific examination is taken into account when giving advice to investigators.
- 6 Examine the data on reported crimes to identify crime patterns and trends, with a view to:
  - (a) advising the LIO for identification of suspects.
  - (b) advising the Detective Superintendent.
  - (c) advising Sub-Divisional Officers and Sub-Divisional Supervisors.
- 7 Check that investigating officers have submitted all crime intelligence in respect of their enquiries.
- 8 Report any failures in the crime investigation system to the Divisional Head of CID.
- 9 Ensure victims of crime are updated at conclusion of the investigation.

INVESTIGATING OFFICER

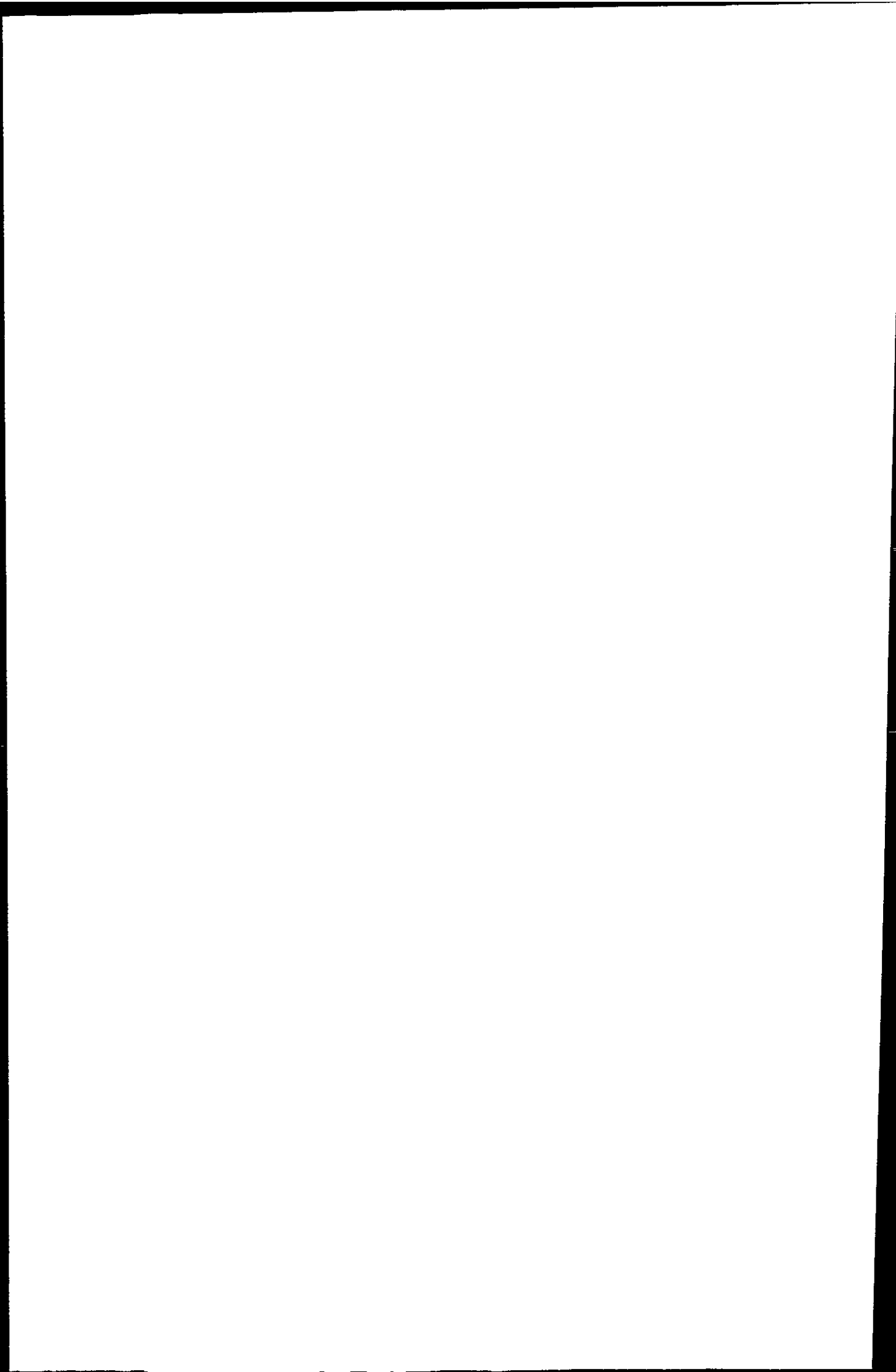
- 1 Co-ordinate and direct the whole investigation.
- 2 Ensure:
  - (a) All action in the initial investigation is complete.
  - (b) Carry out the instructions from the Crime Management Bureau, developing where necessary.
- 3 Continue liaison with:
  - (a) The Crime Management Bureau,
  - (b) The Local Intelligence Officer.

to identify linked crimes and possible suspects, for example if premises have been previously burgled ensure a review of the previous file.
- 4 Maximise the use of informants, acting on information as appropriate.
- 5 Ensure that all officers are acquainted with developments through briefing parades.
- 6 Identify and interview, where appropriate, prisoners with similar MOs or descriptions coming into custody.
- 7 Where prisoners come into custody, ensure post arrest searches are complete for:
  - (a) stolen property.
  - (b) scenes of crime evidence,
  - (c) financial investigation documentation.
- 8 Update and amend all documentation for CIS record.
- 9 Complete:
  - (a) Crime prosecution file or
  - (b) Undetected report as appropriate.
- 10 In the case of 9(a), ensure:
  - (a) The 41d is complete, particularly with the MO.
  - (b) A crime intelligence debrief report is submitted for CIS Update.
- 11 Ensure contact is made with the victim and the principal witnesses during the course of the investigation.



**SUB-DIVISIONAL COMMANDER**

- 1        Ensure that a high standard of:
  - (a)    response to reports of crime
  - (b)    investigation
  - (c)    supervisionis maintained.
- 2        Prepare and staff operations to combat identified series and serious crimes.
- 3        Ensure a proper level of investigation and supervision is maintained.
- 4        Monitor the quality of the investigation and supervision by checking from time to time individual investigation reports and attending the scene of crime.





APPENDIX BQUALITY OF SERVICE  
RE-EXAMINATION REPORT

Sgt/Insp/Ch Insp/Supt

Sub-Division/Section

Date:

Crime Complaint No  
FALCON Log Ref  
Other Source Ref:

Victim/Complainant

Name  
Address

Tel No:

Quality Check List  
ReportingComment

- 1 How was it reported?  
eg '999'/telephone/personal
- 2 Was there any difficulty in reporting?  
Yes/No
- 3 If yes, explain.
- 4 Was the person given an indication of  
when an officer would arrive?
- 5 Was the police response prompt or as  
promised?
- 6 Does the victim/complainant feel the  
time taken to respond reasonable/  
unreasonable?
- 7 What is the examining officer's view  
of the response time?



StatementsComment

- 8
- a) Did the officer take a statement?
  - b) Was it required under Standing Orders (B1)?
  - c) Did it contain all the necessary information?
  - d) Was it accurate?
  - e) What was the quality of the statement overall?
- 

Property

- 9
- a) Was all property accurately recorded?
  - b) Was it correctly circulated?
  - c) Was it promptly circulated?
- 

Enquiries

- 10
- a) Were house-to-house enquiries completed?  
If no, why not?  
  
If yes, was the area covered adequate/inadequate.?
  - b) Was there any information forthcoming as a result of the enquiries?
  - c) Were any follow-up enquiries completed where there was no reply initially? eg by letter/card or by attendance from resident beat officer or another officer?
  - d) What other enquiries were made?
  - e) Were any other lines of enquiry necessary?
- 

Scenes of Crime Attendance

- 11
- a) Were scenes of crime requested?
  - b) Did they attend?
  - c) Was information given to the victim as to the estimated time of arrival?
  - d) Did they arrive at the stated time?
  - e) What information or advice was given to the victim concerning the scene prior to the scenes of crime attendance?
  - f) Did scenes of crime obtain any intelligence or any other information?

- g) Were the results passed to the investigating officer.  
If so, when?

Comment

Level of Supervision

- 12 What was the supervision?
- a) At the scene, at the time of the incident?
  - b) Prior to screening?
  - c) During the course of the investigation?
  - d) Prior to final submission of the case papers?

What was the level of supervision overall?

Victim's View

- 13
- a) Was the victim satisfied or dissatisfied with the police investigation.
  - b) What was the victim's view of the attitude of the officers with which he came into contact? (ie caring, professional, concerned, etc)
  - c) Was there personal contact by the investigating officer, if not the original officer?
  - d) Was the victim informed of progress, and if so, how often?
  - e) Was the victim informed of the result, if so, when?

Summary of Inspection

Reporting Officer      Date

Noted Sub-Divisional Commander

Date

Comments

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Noted Divisional Commander

Date

Comments

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Noted Quality of Service Unit

Date

Comments

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Victims surveyed in *Stonehouse* by personal interview during 1991 and 1994  
(‘Long-term’ residents sown in italics)

Offence	Location of residence	Age	Gender	Reference No.
Assault	Stonehall Flats	27	M	4/1991
	North Road West	47	F	29/1991
	<i>Rendle Street</i>	50	M	2/1994
Burglary (dwelling) <i>includes 'theft in dwelling' offences</i>	Wolsdon Street	44	F	6/1991
	Wolsdon Street	39	M	42/1991
	Wolsdon Street	26	M	52/1991
	Eton Place	24	M	17/1991
	Eton Place	34	F	21/1991
	King Street	30	F	34/1991
	<i>King Street</i>	68	M	33/1991
	<i>King Street</i>	48	F	4/1994
	<i>High Street</i>	52	M	1/1994
	Hastings Terrace	19	F	40/1991
	Patna Place	44	M	35/1991
	Wyndham Square	40	M	55/1991
	Wyndham Square	24	F	24/1991
	North Road West	20	M	56/1991
	<i>North Road West</i>	55	M	6/1994
	<i>Archer Terrace</i>	69	F	23/1991
	<i>Cecil Street</i>	52	F	3/1994
Dumford Street	46	F	59/1991	
Francis Street	41	M	48/1991	
<i>Francis Street</i>	55	M	5/1994	
Auto-crime <i>includes theft of and from but not damage to vehicles</i>	Hastings Terrace	30	M	39/1991
	Bayswater Road	45	M	54/1991
	<i>Well Gardens</i>	67	M	5/1991
	North Road West	19	M	14/1991
	North Road West	30	M	49/1991
	North Road West	32	F	28/1991
	Dumford Street	29	M	13/1991
	Dumford Street	29	M	37/1991
	<i>King Street</i>	49	M	11/1991
	King Street	44	F	18/1991
	King Street	32	M	27/1991
	Union Street	26	F	30/1991
	Union Street	27	M	15/1991
	Eton Terrace	27	M	53/1991
	Archer Place	19	M	41/1991
	Cecil Street	24	F	19/1991
	Wyndham Street	21	M	20/1991
	Wolsdon Street	30	M	10/1991
	Sidney Street	41	M	43/1991
	Gloucester Court	29	F	22/1991
Francis Street	22	F	32/1991	
Barrack Place	26	M	9/1991	
Caroline Place	35	M	44/1991	
Damage	<i>Bayswater Road</i>	64	F	2/1991
	Melbourne Street	30	M	8/1991
	North Road West	46	F	38/1991
	North Road West	33	M	47/1991
	North Road West	39	F	1/1991
	<i>Carlton Terrace</i>	59	M	7/1991
	King Street	50	M	51/1991
	Oxford Terrace	34	M	26/1991
	Stoke Road	28	M	57/1991
	Dumford Street	39	M	58/1991
	Union Street	22	M	45/1991
	<i>High Street</i>	49	F	31/1991
Other offences	Dumford Street	22	F	12/1991
	Hastings Terrace	31	F	36/1991
	Wolsdon Street	20	F	3/1991
	Gloucester Court	41	M	25/1991
	Melbourne Street	24	M	60/1991
	Manor Street	18	F	50/1991
	Admiralty Street	24	M	46/1991
Emma Place	46	F	16/1991	

## Selection of data from personal interviews with Stonehouse victims (1991)

Q1 What was the crime committed against you? (n=60)

Theft from vehicle	Theft (other)	Burglary (dwelling)	Theft of vehicle	Damage to vehicle	Damage (other)	Assault
14	13	12	8	6	5	2

Q3 Where were you when the crime was committed? (n=60)

Home asleep	Home awake	Home uncertain	Immediate vicinity	In neighbourhood	Away from area	Other	Not known or unsure
5	6	22	2	6	14	0	5

Q4 Were you aware of the offence being committed? (n=60)

4 were aware, in 2 cases this was because they were assaulted

Q5 When were you aware it had been committed? (n=60)

Unable to say	Within 8 hours	Within last 5 mins	More than 8 hours	Immediate
21	17	6	12	4

Q6 How did you become aware of it being committed? (n=60)

Discovered personally	Witnessed/assaulted	Heard or saw something	Told by another in household	Told by neighbour/friend	Other means
42	2	2	3	6	5

Q7/8 Were you accompanied? (n=60)

Unaccompanied	With partner	Person under 16	16+ from household	Neighbour	Employer	Other
32	14	4	4	2	1	3

Q9 Why contact police? (most important reason) (n=60)

Needed help	2	Duty to report it	10
Thought matter serious	4	Belief in police catching	3
Wanted offender caught	15	Someone persuaded	4
Insurance claim	8	Unaware reported	1
Compensation	10	Because previous victim	3

Q10 How police contacted? (n=60)

999 call by victim	999 call by other	Telephone by victim	Telephone by other	Attended police station	Other attend police station	Unsure how contacted
4	5	20	7	20	1	2

Q11 Who spoken to on first reporting? (n=50)

Police constable	Other police rank	Community PC	Civilian	Not sure
13	3	0	12	22

Q12 Most impressive aspect about first encounter? (n=50)

Professional	7	Giving information	1
Helpful	19	Reassuring	5
Sympathetic	2	Prompt at desk or phone	1
Attention to detail	5	Nothing pleasing	10

## Q13 Most unimpressive aspect about first encounter? (n=50)

Unprofessional	1	No reassurance	0
Unhelpful	2	Slow at desk or phone	11
Unsympathetic	0	Other	2
Lack of attention to detail	0	Nothing unimpressive	32
Little or no information	2		

## Q14 Told what police would do next? (n=51\*)

Send someone immedtly	1	Told no one would call	13
Send ASAP	15	Pass info to Com'nty PC	1
Call when available	5	Other info given	5
Asked to come to P/stn	10	No info given	4

\* 1 victim who did not report the matter personally was appraised by a friend of what the police had said.

## Q15 Request any information which wasn't given? (n=50)

4 victims did not feel that they had been given satisfactory answers to their queries.

## Q16 Did a police officer attend? (n=60)

Whereas 40 victims had further contact with the police only 29 had an officer attend in direct response to their initial contact.

## Q17 Within what period of time the police arrived (n=29)

5 minutes	15 minutes	30 minutes	60 minutes	2 hours	8 hours	After 8 hours
1	8	5	3	4	3	5

## Q18 Information/service provided at anytime? (n=60)

Officers name or number	23	Leaflet: compensation	3
Reference number	38	Made aware other help	0
Told of Victim Support	9	Told of further contacts	9
Leaflet: Victim Support	10	Told of likely success	25
Told of compensation	3	Told none of these	5

## Q19 Information requested that was not provided by officer attending (n=29)

2 victims said they had asked for information which had not been provided.

Q20/21 17 victims said that they had expressed a wish to the officer to be kept updated, 14 wanted to be advised of the result or any enquiries, 2 about return of property and 1 with a separate query (n=29)

## Q22 Most impressive aspect about this encounter? (n=29)

Professional	5	Giving information	3
Helpful	10	Reassuring	1
Sympathetic	3	Prompt attendance	3
Attention to detail	3	Nothing impressive	1

## Q23 Most unimpressive aspect about first encounter? (n=29)

Unprofessional	0	Lack of reassurance	3
Unhelpful	1	Slow attendance	3
Unsympathetic	1	Other	2
Lack of attention to detail	1	Nothing unimpressive	17
Lack of information	1		



Q24 Relative or close friend is a police officer (n=60)  
20 said they either had a relative or someone they knew well enough to describe as a friend who was a police officer.

Q25 Local officer known by name (n=60)  
17 victims knew a local officer by name, 6 of these referred to the community constable by name.

Q26 How regularly see officer on foot patrol in area? (n=60)

Every day	Once a week	Once a month	Less than once a month	Never
2	1	9	13	35

Q27 How regularly see officer on mobile patrol in area? (n=60)

Every day	Once a week	Once a month	Less than once a month	Never
9	20	20	6	5

Q28 Does this area receive more or less attention from police than elsewhere in city generally? (n=60)

More	Less	Same	Unsure
9	16	5	30

Q28 (i)/(ii) 38 victims felt foot patrols in their area would be more effective than cars and 4 felt mobile patrol would be better. 18 were uncertain. The most commonly cited reason for foot patrol was the perceived likelihood of an officer coming across some wrong-doing (n=60)

Q29 When last had contact with police before this? (n=60)

Less than 1 month ago	1 - 3 months ago	3 - 12 months ago	Over 1 year ago	Never	Unsure
6	6	14	21	10	3

Q30 What were circumstances of (last) contact? (n=47)

Victim of crime	Witness to incident	Suspected of offence	Road traffic matter	Personal matter	Professionally	Other non-criminal
24	8	3	4	2	2	4

Q31 Satisfaction with previous encounters with police (n=47)

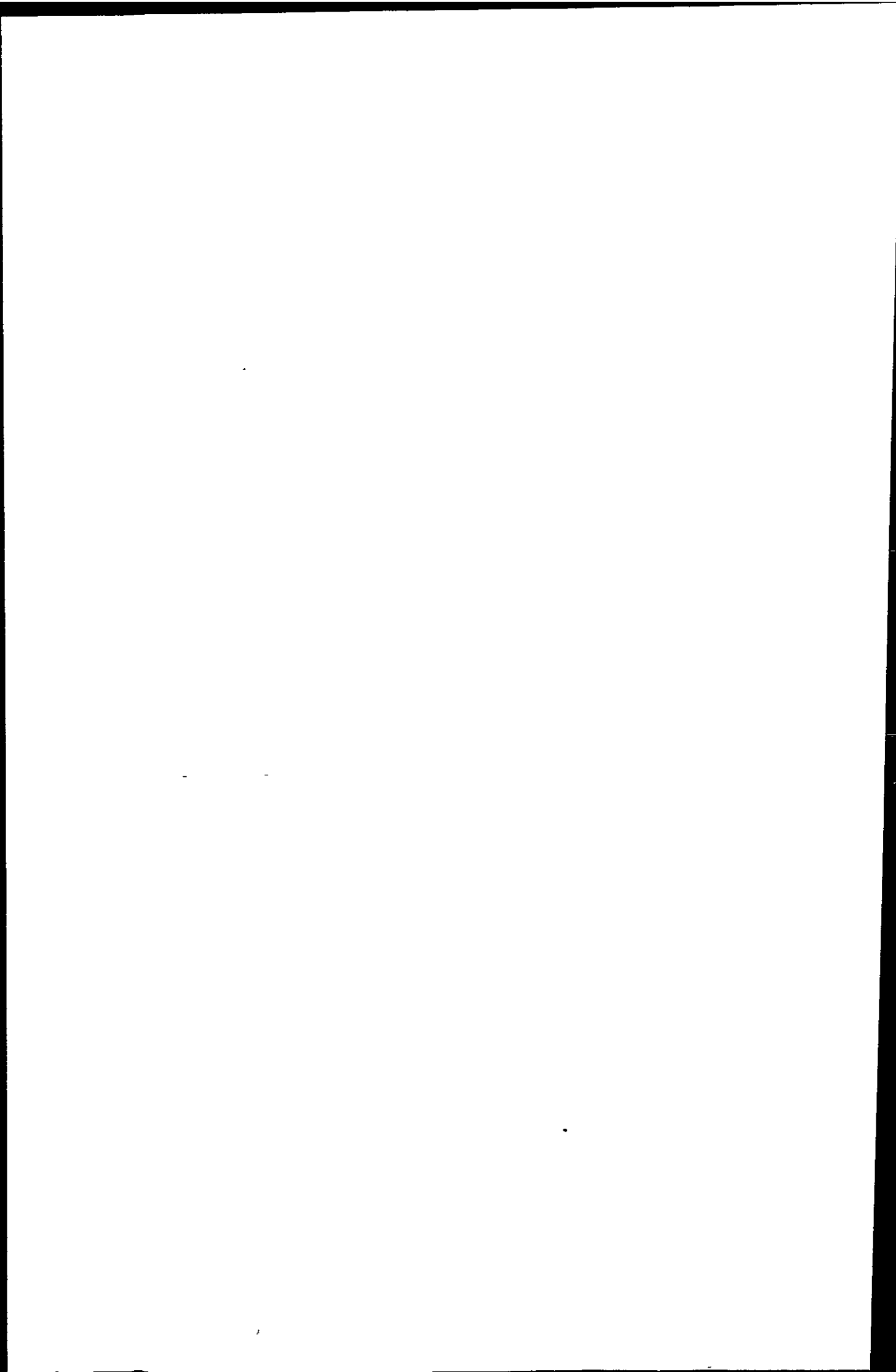
Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither	Dissatisfied	V. dissatisfied	Can't recall
8	21	7	8	1	2

Q32 Satisfaction with the way dealt with overall by police (n=60)

Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither	Dissatisfied	V. dissatisfied	Unsure
12	36	7	3	0	2

Q33 How long lived in property/area? (n=60)

Under 1 month	1 - 6 months	6 - 12 months	1 - 5 years	5 - 10 years	10 - 20 years	Over 20 years
1	3	6	19	24	5	2



Q33/34 Are offences more or less frequent than 5 years ago? (n=60)

	More frequent	Less frequent	Same as before	Don't know
Assaults	5	5	32	18
Burglary	23	0	19	18
Robbery	5	3	34	18
Rape/sex attacks	5	0	37	18
Vandalism	19	2	21	18
Theft of vehicles	16	0	26	18
Theft from vehicles	22	0	20	18
Street drunkenness	12	2	28	18
Street fighting	8	5	29	18
Drug taking	14	2	26	18
Domestic argument	6	3	33	18
Noise/nuisance	11	1	30	18

Q35/36 Are offences more or less frequent in this area as opposed to the rest of Plymouth overall? (n=60)

	More frequent	Less frequent	Same as elsewhere	Don't know
Assaults	7	0	36	17
Burglary	20	0	23	17
Robbery	4	1	38	17
Rape/sex attacks	7	1	35	17
Vandalism	15	0	28	17
Theft of vehicles	13	0	30	17
Theft from vehicles	21	0	22	17
Street drunkenness	16	0	27	17
Street fighting	11	1	31	17
Drug taking	13	0	30	17
Domestic argument	3	2	38	17
Noise/nuisance	14	1	28	17

Q37 Offence felt most likely to be a victim of in next 12 months (n=60)

Assault	Burglary	Robbery	Sex attack	Damage	Auto-theft	Other theft	Other
2	14	0	1	12	23	5	8

Q38 Do police do enough to prevent this type of crime happening? (n=60)  
28 felt the police did not do enough and 25 felt they did. 7 were unsure.

Q39 Could individual members of the public do more to prevent this type of crime? (n=60)  
42 felt individuals could do more and 14 felt they couldn't. 4 were unsure.

Q40 How proud are you with the area you live in? (n=60)

Very proud	Fairly proud	Neither	Quite ashamed	Very ashamed	Unsure
6	18	23	6	4	3

Q42 What level of 'community spirit' observable in area? (n=60)

Very strong	Fairly strong	Uncertain whether any exists	Lacks community spirit	Unsure
7	26	13	14	0

Q43 What personal commitment victim has to 'community spirit' (n=60)

Very strong	Fairly strong	Not particularly strong	Not strong at all	There is no 'community spirit'	Unsure
9	12	21	8	9	1

Q44 What commitment should police have towards encouraging 'community spirit'? (n=60)

A lot	Some	Very little	None	Not sure
32	19	3	0	6

Q45 What commitment should local authority have towards encouraging 'community spirit'? (n=60)

A lot	Some	Very little	None	Not sure
27	20	1	1	11

## Selected data from Devon and Cornwall Constabulary *Quality of Service* surveys of burglary and violent crime victims

### Burglary victims' satisfaction ratings across three areas of Devon and Cornwall

	Stonehouse	Rest of Plymouth	Rest of force	Overall
Satisfied with all aspects	102 (61.5%)	171 (66.9%)	737 (72.4%)	1010 (70.2%)
Generally satisfied	49 (29.5%)	62 (24.2%)	214 (21%)	325 (22.5%)
Generally dissatisfied	9 (5.2%)	9 (3.3%)	51 (5%)	69 (4.7%)
Dissatisfied with all aspects	6 (3.8%)	14 (5.6%)	16 (1.6%)	36 (2.6%)
Total	166	256	1,018	1,440

### Violence victims' satisfaction ratings across three areas of Devon and Cornwall

	Stonehouse	Rest of Plymouth	Rest of force	Overall
Satisfied with all aspects	46 (41.1%)	56 (47.6%)	277 (52%)	379 (49.7%)
Generally satisfied	39 (34.8%)	41 (34.3%)	162 (30.4%)	242 (31.6%)
Generally dissatisfied	19 (17%)	12 (10.5%)	58 (10.8%)	89 (11.7%)
Dissatisfied with all aspects	8 (7.1%)	9 (7.6%)	36 (6.8%)	53 (7%)
Total	112	118	533	763

### Number of initial services\* given to victims of burglary by the officer attending

	Stonehouse	Rest of Plymouth	Rest of force	Overall
Given 5 or 6 of services	92 (55.4%)	144 (56.3%)	518 (50.9%)	754 (52.4%)
Given 3 or 4 of services	38 (22.9%)	90 (35.2%)	314 (30.9%)	442 (30.7%)
Given less than 3 of services	36 (21.6%)	22 (8.6%)	186 (18.3%)	244 (17%)
Total	166	256	1018	1,440

### Number of initial services\* given to victims of violence by the officer dealing initially

	Stonehouse	Rest of Plymouth	Rest of force	Overall
Given 5 or 6 of services	48 (42.9%)	39 (33.1%)	141 (26.5%)	228 (29.9%)
Given 3 or 4 of services	32 (28.6%)	34 (28.8%)	173 (32.5%)	239 (31.3%)
Given less than 3 of services	32 (26.6%)	45 (38.1%)	219 (41.1%)	296 (38.8%)
Total	112	118	533	763

\* Services are as defined in the text above, i.e. giving name/shoulder number, a reference number for the crime, telephone number, advising about what the police will do, details of Victim Support and giving a 'Victim of Crime' Leaflet.

## Comparison of services given at initial visit with burglary victims' overall satisfaction

	Given less than 3 services	Given 3 or 4 services	Given 5 or 6 services	Total*
Satisfied - all aspects	138 (66.9%)	286 (66.5%)	542 (73.2%)	966 (70.2%)
Generally satisfied	42 (20.4%)	106 (24.7%)	162 (21.9%)	310 (22.5%)
Generally dissatisfied	18 (8.7%)	20 (4.7%)	26 (3.5%)	64 (4.7%)
Dissatisfied - all aspects	8 (3.9%)	18 (4.2%)	10 (1.4%)	36 (2.6%)
Total	206	430	740	1,376

\* 64 cases missing due to either inaccurate completion or small number of computer software problems encountered in one survey.

## Comparison of services given at initial visit with violence victims' overall satisfaction

	Given less than 3 services	Given 3 or 4 services	Given 5 or 6 services	Total*
Satisfied - all aspects	102 (37.5%)	116 (52%)	137 (62.3%)	355 (49.7%)
Generally satisfied	94 (34.6%)	67 (30%)	65 (29.5%)	226 (31.6%)
Generally dissatisfied	38 (13.9%)	30 (13.5%)	16 (7.2%)	84 (11.8%)
Dissatisfied - all aspects	38 (13.9%)	10 (4.5%)	2 (0.9%)	50 (6.9%)
Total	272	223	220	715

\* 48 cases missing due to either inaccurate completion or small number of computer software problems encountered in one survey.

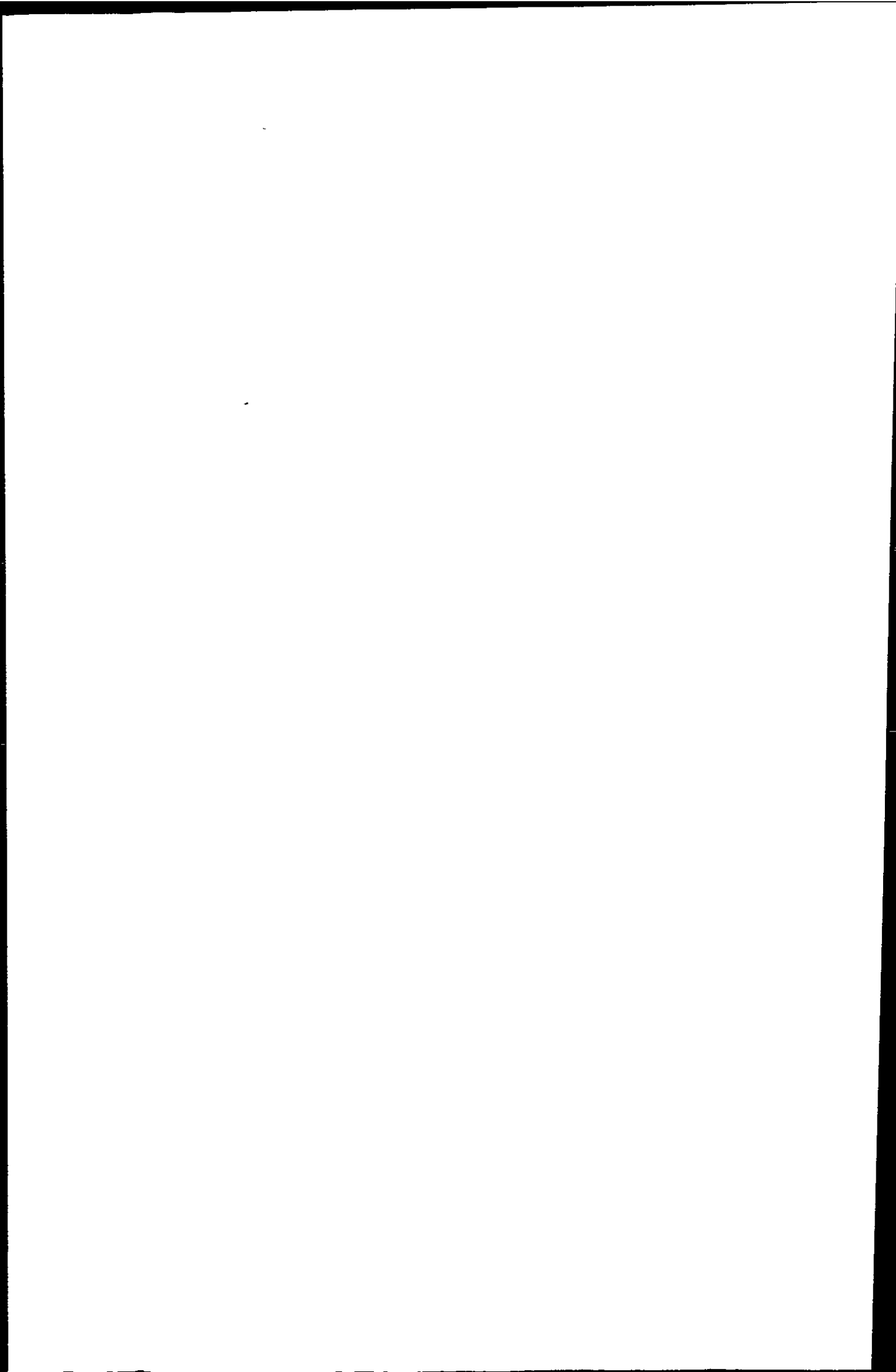
## Whether victims of burglary received further contact from the police

	Stonehouse	Rest of Plymouth	Rest of Force	Total*
No further contact	54 (34.6%)	66 (26.6%)	192 (19.8%)	312 (22.7%)
1 further contact	60 (38.5%)	102 (41.1%)	340 (35%)	502 (36.5%)
More than 1 further contact	42 (26.9%)	80 (32.3%)	440 (45.3%)	562 (39.8%)
Total	156	248	972	1,376

\* a number of telephone surveys had revealed interviewers failing to ask certain question in a small number of cases thereby reducing the total victims who had responded to this and two other questions. The error was found to be in the computer programme at an early stage and easily rectified for the remainder.

## Comparison of further contacts by the police with burglary victims' overall satisfaction

	No further contact	One further contact	More than one further contact	Total
Satisfied - all aspects	212 (67.9%)	340 (67.7%)	414 (73.7%)	966 (70.2%)
Generally satisfied	66 (21.2%)	128 (25.5%)	116 (20.6%)	310 (22.5%)
Generally dissatisfied	20 (6.4%)	20 (4%)	24 (4.2%)	64 (4.7%)
Dissatisfied - all aspects	14 (4.5%)	14 (2.8%)	8 (1.4%)	36 (2.6%)
Total	312	502	562	1,376



**Whether victims of violence received further contact from the police**

	Stonehouse	Rest of Plymouth	Rest of Force	Total*
No further contact	28 (25%)	40 (38.1%)	178 (35.7%)	246 (34.4%)
1 further contact	57 (50.9%)	50 (47.6%)	225 (45.2%)	332 (46.4%)
More than 1 further contact	27 (24.1%)	15 (14.3%)	95 (19.1%)	137 (19.2%)
Total	112	105	498	715

\* a number of telephone surveys had revealed interviewers failing to ask certain question in a small number of cases thereby reducing the total victims who had responded to this and two other questions. The error was found to be in the computer programme at an early stage and easily rectified for the remainder.

**Comparison of further contacts by the police with violence victims' overall satisfaction**

	No further contact	One further contact	More than one further contact	Total
Satisfied - all aspects	92 (37.3%)	174 (52.4%)	89 (64.9%)	355 (49.7%)
Generally satisfied	88 (35.7%)	103 (31%)	35 (25.6%)	226 (31.6%)
Generally dissatisfied	33 (13.4%)	41 (12.4%)	10 (7.3%)	84 (11.8%)
Dissatisfied - all aspects	33 (13.4%)	14 (4.2%)	3 (2.1%)	50 (6.9%)
Total	246	332	137	715

**Whether victims of burglary received further contact from Victim Support**

	Stonehouse	Rest of Plymouth	Rest of Force	Total
No contact*	62 (37.4%)	110 (41.9%)	450 (44.5%)	622 (43.2%)
Personal visit	36 (21.7%)	46 (17.6%)	138 (13.6%)	220 (15.3%)
Telephone call	8 (4.8%)	12 (4.6%)	168 (16.6%)	188 (13.1%)
Other form of contact**	60 (36.1%)	94 (35.9%)	256 (25.3%)	410 (28.5%)
Total	166	262	1012	1,440

\*\* Commonly a letter or leaflet either posted or put through the door when a victim was not at home

**Whether victims of violence received further contact from Victim Support**

	Stonehouse	Rest of Plymouth	Rest of Force	Total
No contact	88 (78.6%)	88 (74.6%)	374 (70.2%)	550 (72.1%)
Personal visit	0 (0%)	4 (3.4%)	26 (4.9%)	30 (3.9%)
Telephone call	5 (4.5%)	11 (9.3%)	61 (11.4%)	77 (10.1%)
Other form of contact*	19 (16.9%)	15 (12.7%)	72 (13.5%)	106 (13.9%)
Total	112	118	533	763

\* Don't know/unsure included as 'No contact'



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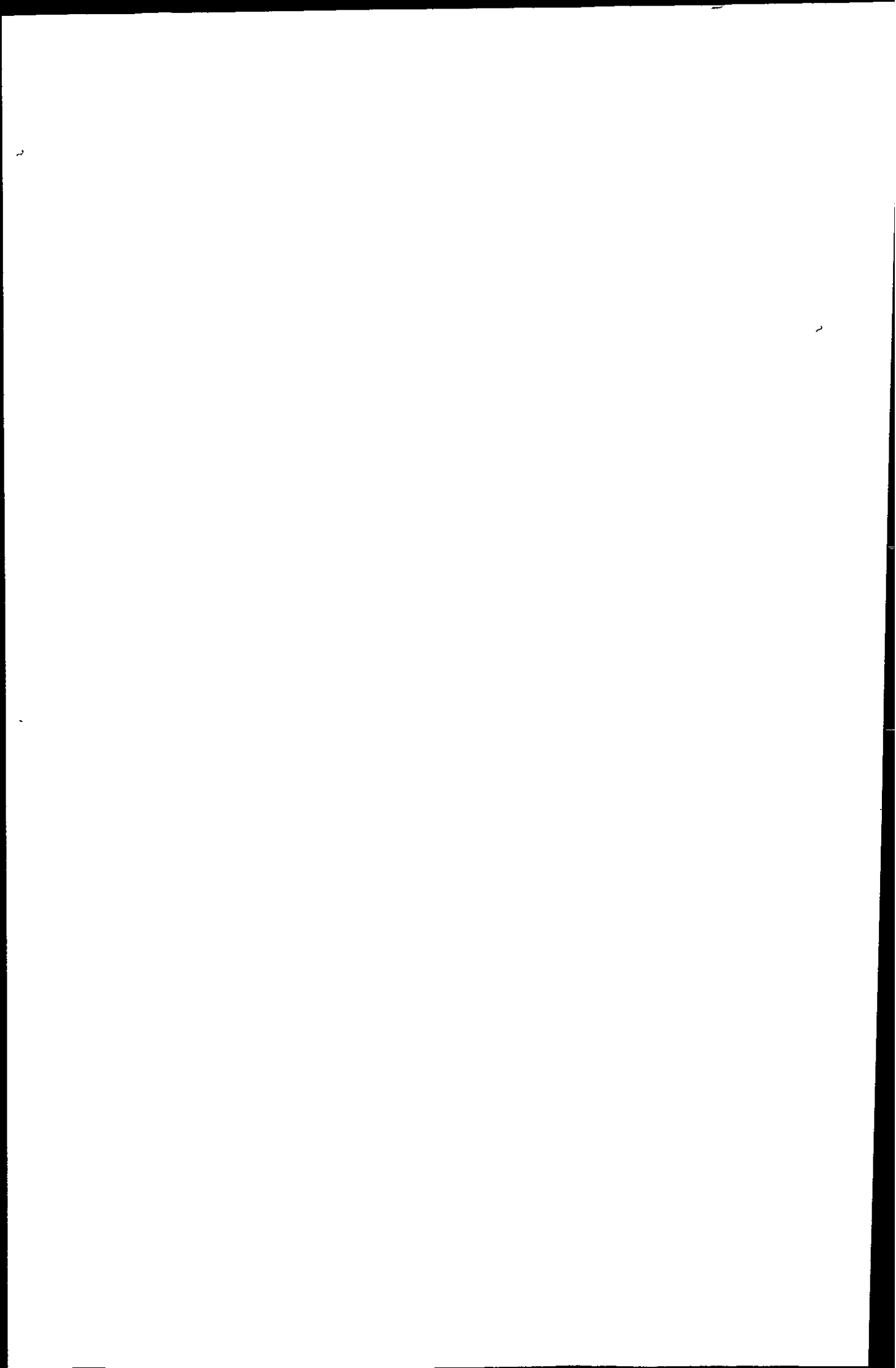
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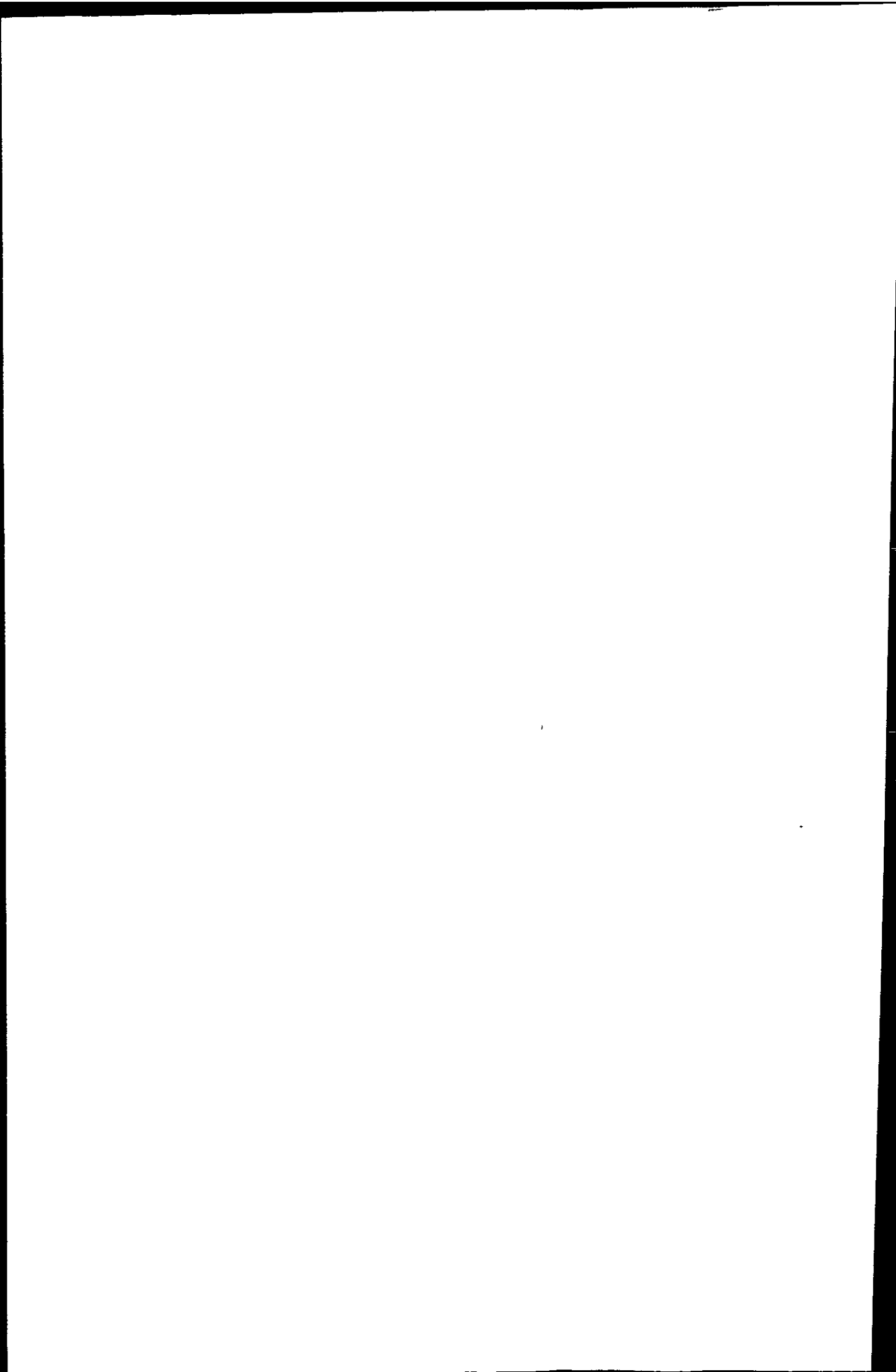
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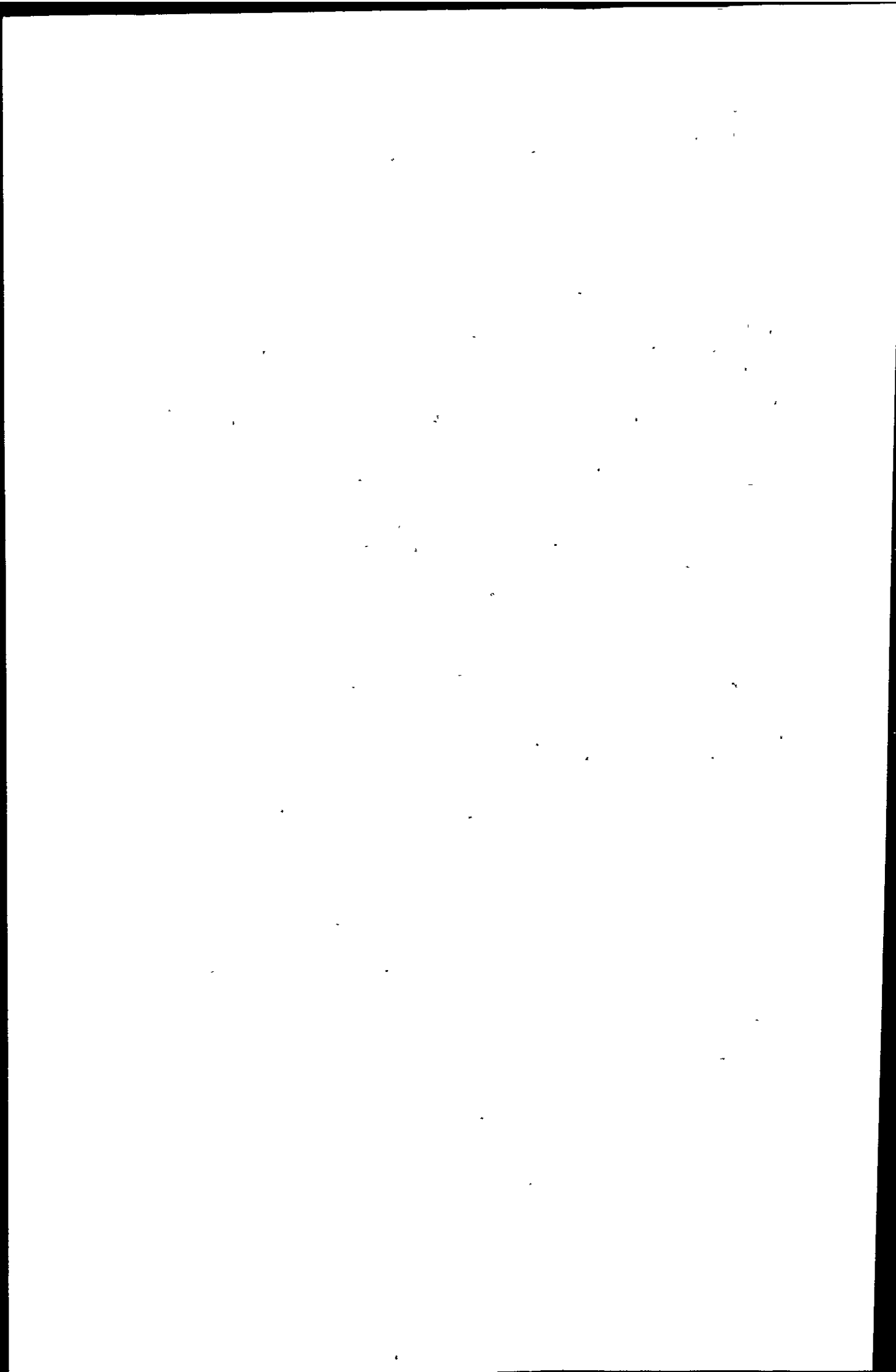
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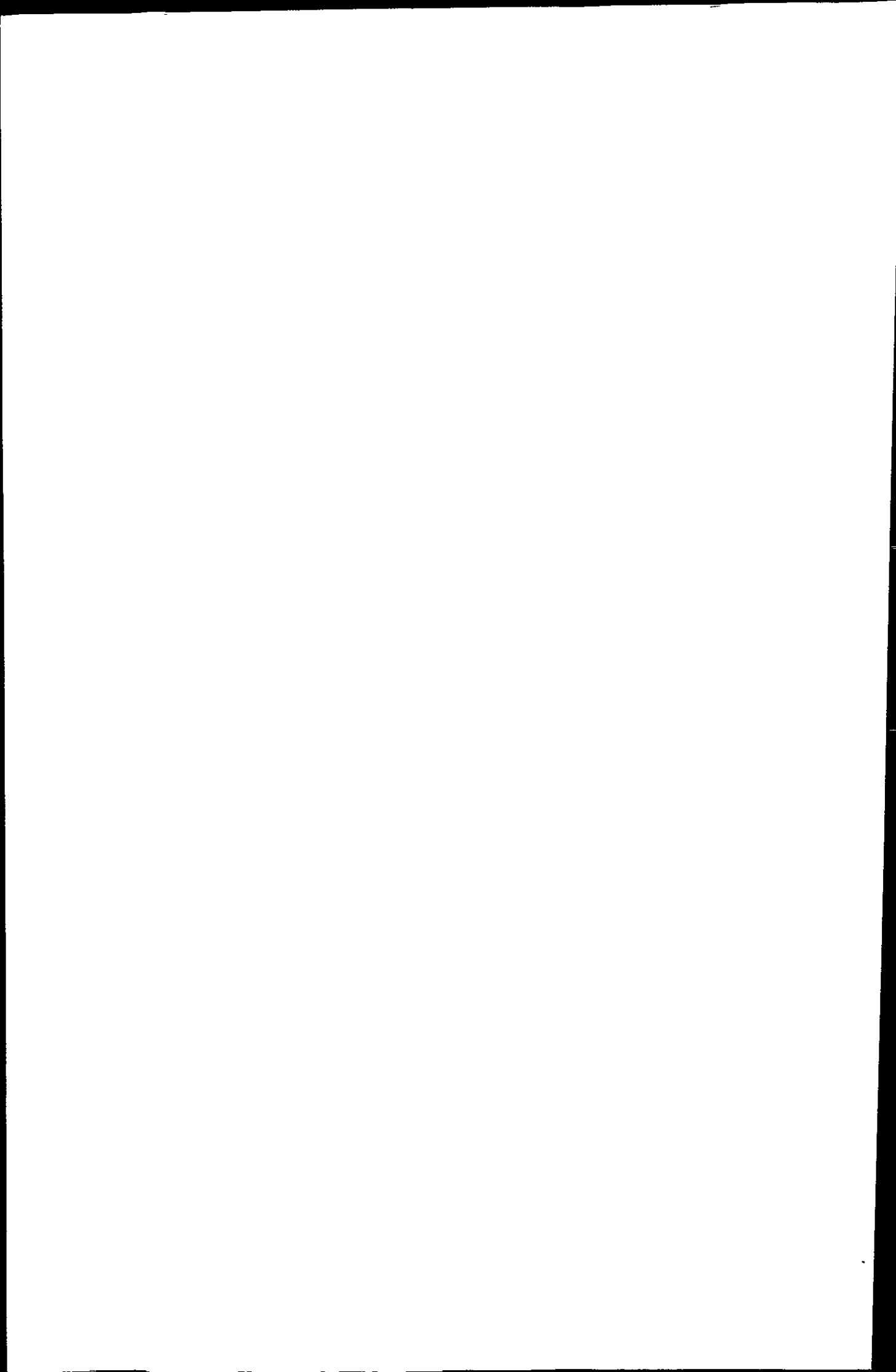




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