

ST WERBURGHS  
NEIGHBOURHOOD  
ASSOCIATION **SWNA**

# **St WERBURGHS SAFER STREETS PROJECT**



**Research report and recommendations for action**

February 2003

# 1 Introduction

The purpose of the Safer Streets project has been to provide the research backing for a community safety action plan to make St Werburghs a safer neighbourhood in which to live, work and play. St Werburghs Neighbourhood Association aim to put the plan into action, with the support of the Council and the Police.

The work, undertaken in the past few months, has included the collection and analysis of crime statistics provided by Avon and Somerset police, consultation with representatives from various local organisations and a household survey of local residents. A team of experienced researchers from the University of the West of England worked in close collaboration with members of St Werburghs Neighbourhood Association who helped with some of the practical aspects of the research process.

Crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime stem from a complex set of interacting circumstances. Every neighbourhood has a unique combination of dynamics and needs. For these reasons, attempts to prevent neighbourhood crime, incivilities and associated fears are not amenable to off the peg solutions and solutions must be tailored to meet the demands of the local situation.

Local people and community based organisations know best what the problems and solutions are, which is why residents and other organisations were consulted during the study.

## 1.1 St. Werburghs Crime Profile

This section of the report starts with a 'Health Warning!' Information has been provided by the local police for the St. Werburghs police beat area. However, this has been analysed in isolation. Similarly demographic data is not available for the beat and whilst there is basic information in terms of number of crimes for Ashley (which is both the sector and the ward), Ashley contains five different areas (Montpelier, St. Pauls, Cotham, Kingsdown and St. Werburghs) and a population of nearly 15,000 so it would be difficult to assess how representative a comparison this would be. The Ashley ward profile produced by Bristol City Council states that the crime rate in the ward is above the city average but fear of crime is low.

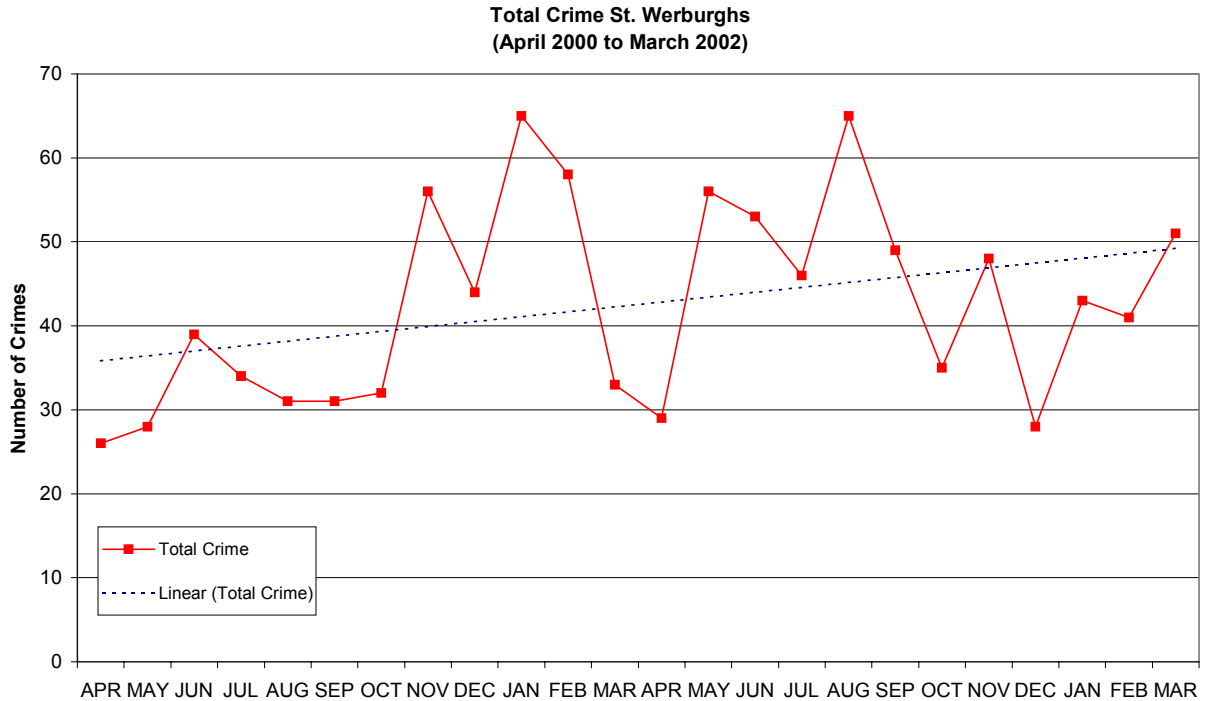
The statistics themselves need to be seen very much as a small part of a multi-faceted picture of crime and disorder in the area and their inclusion in this study is intended to compliment (or perhaps contrast) views of those who live, work or visit St. Werburghs. We wanted to assess whether the official view of crime in the area tallies with the problems and issues identified by those residents and other organisations we talked to and surveyed.

## 1.2 Brief Background

The St. Werburghs beat area is a mixture of residential addresses, small business premises and industrial units. The area is severed by a railway line and flanked on both sides by large open spaces and council owned allotments. The area contains a city farm and a former church which is now a centre of excellence for rock climbing.

## 1.3 Crime in St. Werburghs

During 2000/01 there were 477 recorded crimes for St. Werburghs and during 2001/02 544: an increase of 14%. The chart below shows the pattern monthly, highlighting higher crime levels from November 2000 to August 2001. From September 2001 onwards levels are



lower, although the current financial year figures would be needed to confirm whether the upward trend in the last month continues.

In terms of types of crime during 2001/02, 14.3% of all offences recorded were burglary dwelling and 12.1% other criminal damage. This is a change from the previous year when theft from motor vehicles made up the greatest proportion (17.2%).

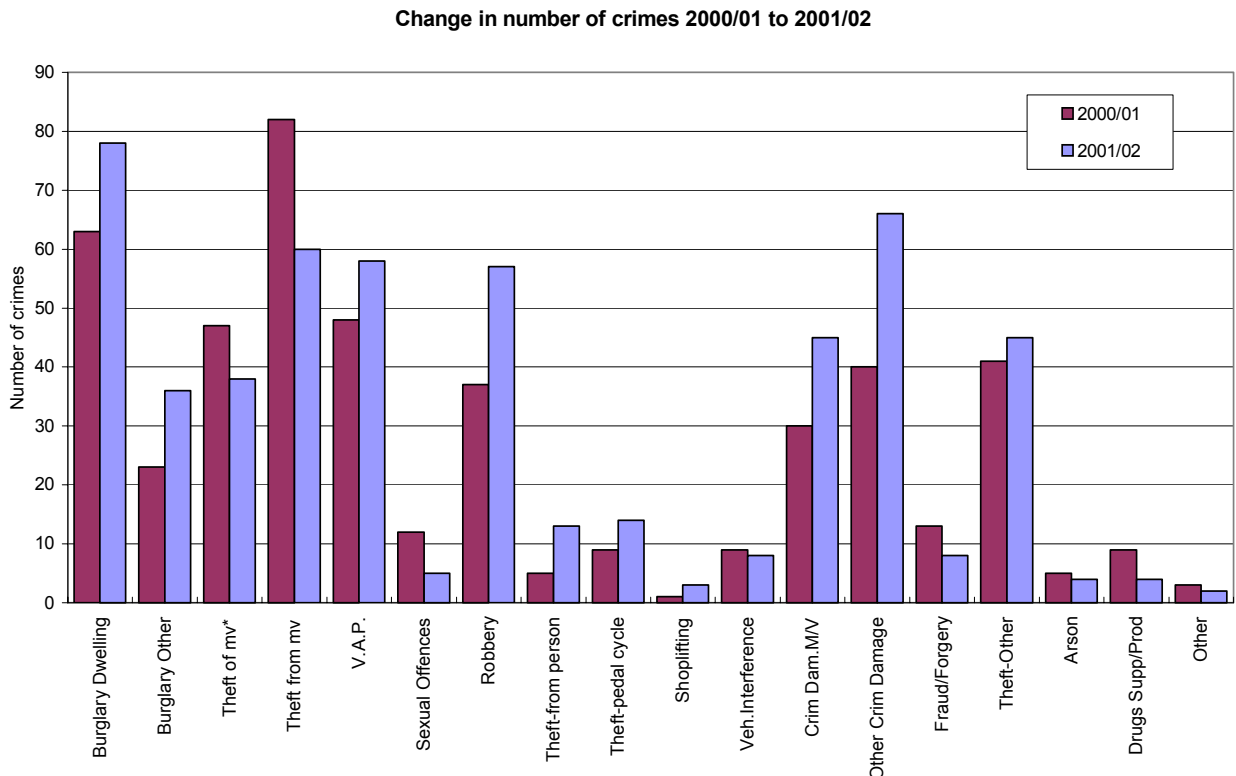
Top % Recorded Crime 2000/01	Top % Recorded Crime 2001/02
1. Theft from motor vehicle	1. Burglary dwelling
2. Burglary dwelling	2. Other criminal damage
3. Violence against the person	3. Theft from motor vehicles
4. Theft of motor vehicle	4. Violence against the person
5. Other criminal damage	5. Robbery

\*(figures include attempts)

The chart below shows the changes in terms of actual numbers.

There have been significant drops in vehicle crime, sexual offences and drug offences, although for the latter two the numbers are very small.

Big increases have occurred in robbery, and criminal damage both from motor vehicles and other. The Police Annual Report for Central Bristol notes that in Ashley sector there has been a 'significant rise in street crime due to drug abuse' and the police are continuing to focus

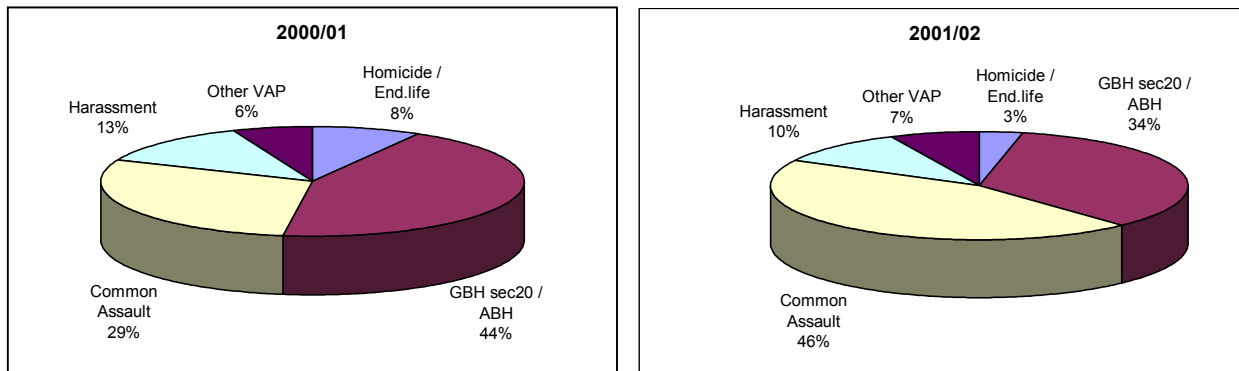


both on tackling local drug dealing and on an anti-robbery strategy. The increases in burglary dwelling and burglary other could also be linked to drugs issues in the area.

For Ashley sector 599 vehicle crime offences, 246 domestic burglaries and 664 offences of violent crime were recorded in 2000/01.

#### 1.4 Violent Crime

Violent crime comprises violence against the person (VAP), robbery and sexual offences. VAP has increased from 48 to 58 offences year on year and as the charts show, this is due to a 17% increase in common assault. VAP seems to be worse during the summer months whereas there is no obvious pattern with robbery.



Domestic violence has also risen from 14 recorded offences in 2000/01 to 19 in 2001/02: however an increase may be seen as positive as it could indicate people are more willing to report this type of offence to the police.

In terms of racially motivated crime only one offence of racially aggravated harassment was recorded in 2000/01 and one of racially aggravated assault in 2001/02. However recorded crime statistics are not the best source of data for these types of offence as there is significant underreporting.

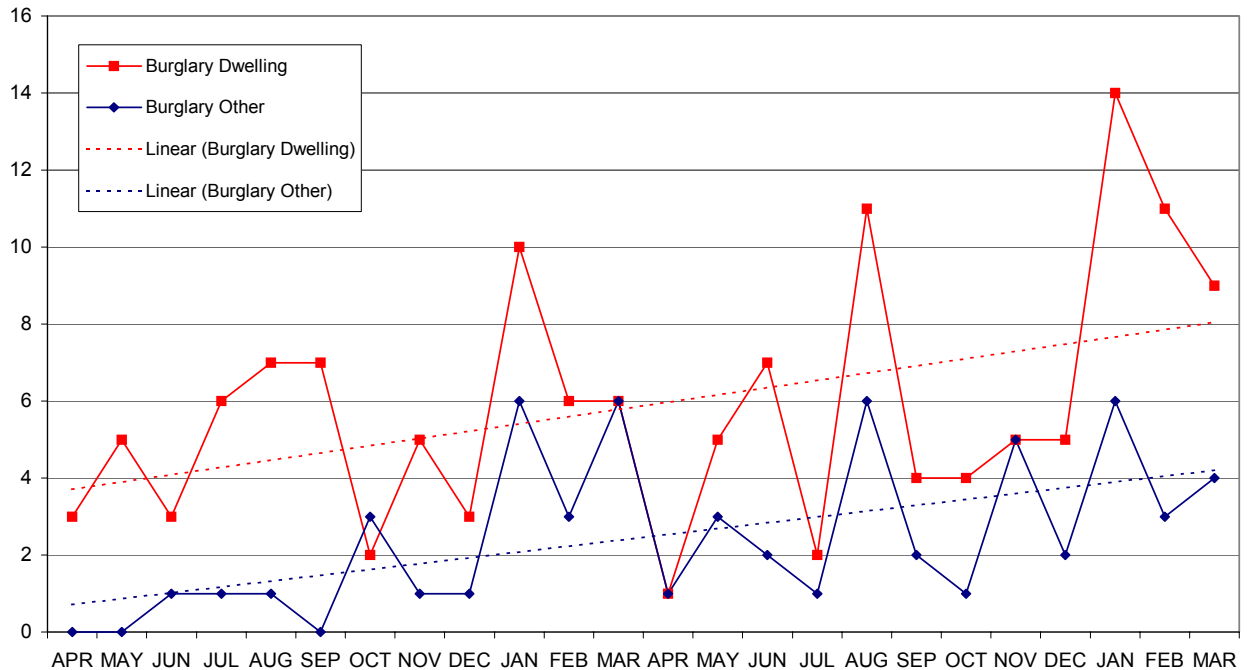
### 1.5 Burglary

Burglary has increased from 86 offences in St. Werburghs in 2000/01 to 114 in 2001/02: an increase of 32% spread equally between burglary dwelling and burglary other. For non-residential burglary there appears to have been a rise in those from office / industry.

Type of residence 2000/01	Type of residence 2001/02
1. Other (7)	1. Other (13)
=. Shed / garage (7)	2. Office / Industry (9)
3. School / college (4)	3. Shop (5)
4. Office / Industry (1)	4. Shed / garage (3)
	=. School / college (3)

As the chart overleaf shows, there is no clear seasonality pattern to offences, although for dwellings there are peaks in January 2001, August 2001 and January / February 2002. This could be partly due to post Christmas activity or linked to the release of a particular individual criminal.

**Burglary St. Werburghs  
(April 2000 - March 2002)**



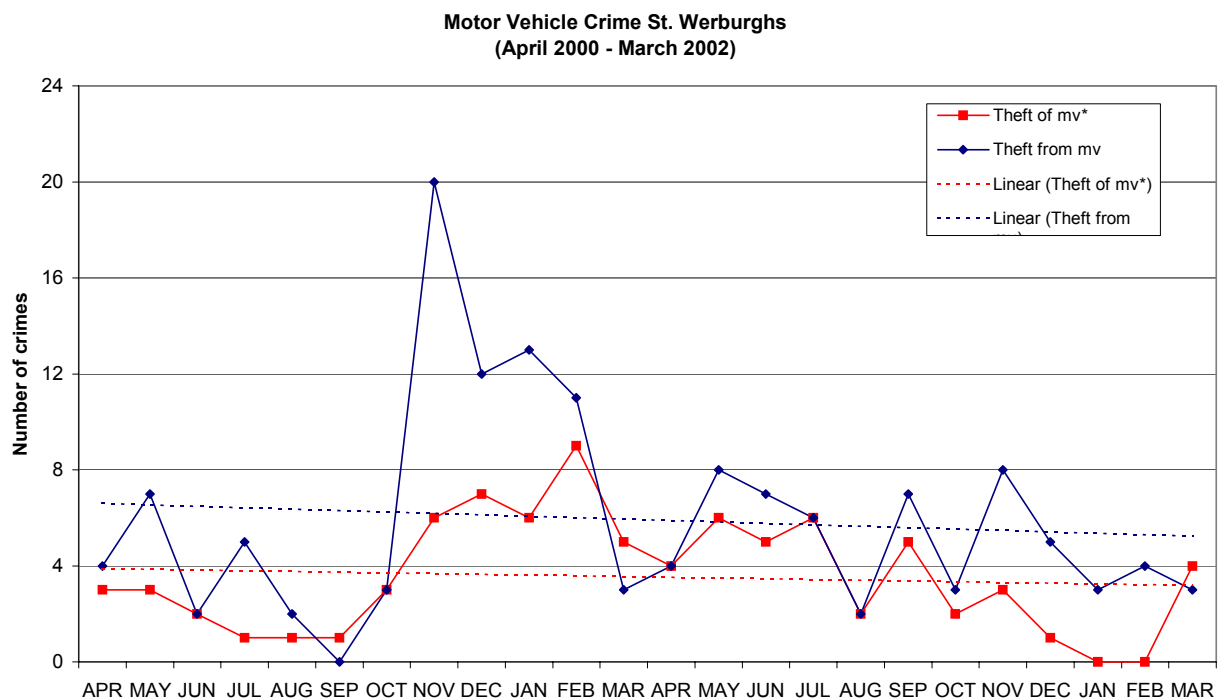
### 1.6 Vehicle crime

Both theft of and theft from a motor vehicle have dropped over the last year by 19% and 27% respectively, although criminal damage to motor vehicles has increased by a third. As the graph overleaf shows, the higher theft from motor vehicle figures in 2000/01 are largely due to a big increase in offences between November 2000 and February 2001. There has also been a reduction in attempts: from 7 to 0 year on year for attempted theft of vehicles and from 14 to 2 for attempted theft from. The smallest fall has been for vehicle interference from 9 to 8 offences but the figures are very small for both years.

### 1.7 Other crime

Figures have also been provided for a number of other crimes listed in the table below.

	2000/01	2001/02
Theft-pedal cycle	9	14
Shoplifting	1	3
Fraud / forgery	13	8
Arson	5	4
Drugs supply / production	9	4



### 1.8 Conclusions

Based solely on the above data the issues identified by the crime statistics are:

- burglary dwelling - this has increased year on year and also tends to be a source of concern for local people.
- criminal damage to motor vehicles – despite a decrease in theft of and theft from vehicles, this has increased significantly.
- robbery and common assault – both have shown increases.

However, as mentioned at the beginning of this summary report, crime statistics provide only a partial picture about the crime, disorder and fear of crime problems within an area. Crime may or may not be reported for a number of reasons. It should be noted that those crimes that have increased year on year, according to the crime statistics namely burglary dwelling and criminal damage to motor vehicles are those crimes that victims need a crime reference number in order to process an insurance claim and thus this fact might influence the levels of reporting of these particular types of crime.

The day to day problems of crime and fear of crime are best known by local residents and local agencies and organisations who live and work in that Area and accordingly the next section of the report discusses the findings of the residents survey and identifies where the issues raised by residents are reflected by other agencies or organisations based in or working in St Werburghs.

## 2 Residents' survey findings and consultations with other local actors

The members of the community safety and crime prevention programme team at UWE have previously undertaken this type of research both locally and nationally. What has been most striking about the response to the survey distributed to households in the St Werburghs area is the quality of the response, not only in terms of the number of responses but also in terms of the quality of the information provided. Two hundred and fifty nine surveys were returned from a sample of Fourteen hundred surveys that were distributed. The response of 18.5% represents a reply from approximately one household in five and for this type of survey is a high response. Previous experience undertaking Households surveys of this types suggests that a response of 10% or less is not uncommon. Many of the residents who replied to the questionnaire have obviously given the issues under consideration a great deal of thought and felt them to be very important, and this was reflected in the detailed nature of the replies received.

Whilst the research in St Werburghs has identified a clear set of problems which do have an effect of the perceived quality of life on residents in the area, it is not all bad news. As mentioned above, people are sufficiently concerned about the issues in the area and the impact that it has on their community to take the time to provide detailed responses to the survey questions. A strong sense of community was evident both in the survey replies from residents and when talking to people who live and work in the area. This sense of community is reflected in the commitment shown by members of St Werburghs' resident association who commissioned and assisted with this research.

The nature of the research of this kind, asking for information relating to crime, disorder and fear of crime inherently results in negative information being presented, after all, we are for information asking about the problems so that solutions can be developed. Tellingly, in St Werburghs survey respondents took the trouble to include positive comments about the area and its community. Comments included:

St Werburghs is a good community neighbourhood to live in

This is a good high quality area. We don't want St Werburghs to have a reputation like St Pauls, and Knowle

### 2.1 Respondent profile

The profile of the respondents in terms of age and gender is shown below.

#### Gender

Gender		
female	168	65%
male	87	34%
not stated	4	2%
	259	



**Age**

under 21	7	3%
21-59	222	86%
60+	27	10%
not stated	3	1%
	259	

**Age & gender**

Gender/age	21-59	60+	not stated	under 21	Grand Total
female	149	14	1	4	168
male	72	13		2	87
not stated	1		2	1	4
	222	27	3	7	259

Gender/age	21-59	60+	not stated	under 21	
female	58%	5%	0%	2%	65%
male	28%	5%	0%	1%	34%
not stated	0%	0%	1%	0%	2%
	86%	10%	1%	3%	100%

**Responses were received from residents living in a broad cross section of St Werburghs' streets. Residents in 56 different streets returned surveys:**

1 reply from respondents in each of the following roads (each representing 0.4% of responses)

Ashley Road	Heron Road
Ashley Street	Hopetown Road
Boucher Road	Lower Ashley Grove Rd
Briavels Road	Mercia Drive
Cleave Rd	Morley St
Dorset Grove	Muller Road
Durham Road	Seddon Rd
Harley Road	

2 replies from respondents in each of the following roads (each representing 0.8% of responses)

Boucher Place	Minto Road
Boyce Drive	Mogg St
Gordon Rd	Ryland Place
James St	Warminster St
Lancaster Road	Weedon Close.
Mary Carpenter Place	

3 replies from respondents in each of the following roads (each road representing 1.2% of responses)

Briavels Grove	John Street
Conduit Rd	Magdalene Place
Gatton Road	Southey St

Trentham Close

4 replies from respondents in each of the following roads (each road representing 1.6% of responses)

Glenfrome Rd, Hereford Rd, Norman Road,

5 replies from respondents in each of the following roads (each road representing 2% of responses) Cleave Street, Jubilee Rd, Lynmouth Road, Penfield Road, Warminster Road

6 replies from respondents in each of the following roads (each road representing 2.4% of responses) Sevier Street, Stafford Road, Tewkesbury Rd,

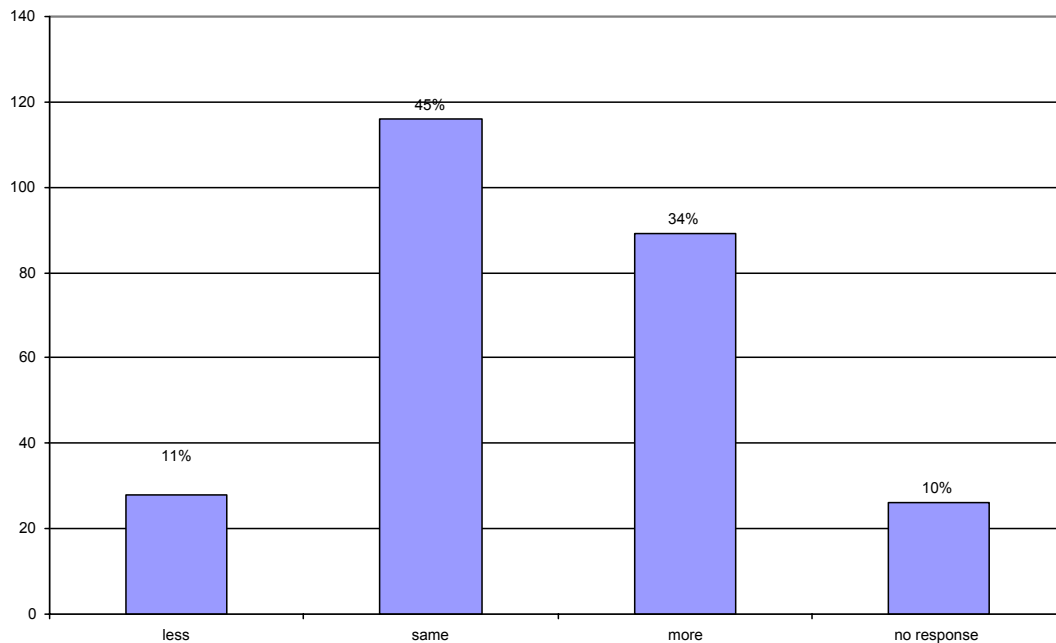
8 replies came from respondents in Tyne street (3.2%)

10 replies from Horley road (4%), 12 from Narrowways road (4.4%), 14 replies from respondents in Rosebery Avenue and Sandbed Road respectively each of the following roads (each road representing 5.6%)

15 replies came from Saxon road (6%) and St Werburghs park accounted for 20 replies (8%). The largest proportion of the response came from residents in mina road (27, 11%). Finally, 12 respondents (5%) did not state the road in which they lived.

The questionnaire asked residents for their views about how safe St Werburghs feels, in comparison to the rest of the city, and whether feelings of safety have changed over the past three years. We asked residents to comment on whether St Werburghs has, more les, or about the small levels of crime when compared to the rest of the city as a whole

## 2.2 Levels of crime compared to Bristol as a Whole

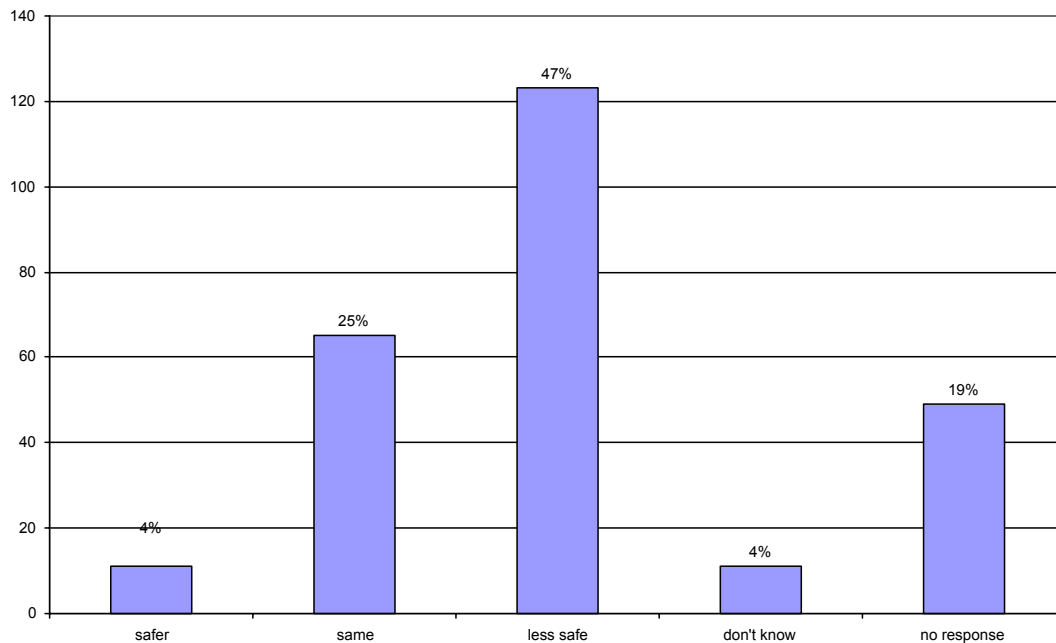


As the chart above illustrates, whilst just under half of all respondents (45%) believe St Werburghs to have the same amount of crime when compared to Bristol as a whole, approximately one third of respondents (34%) believe St Werburghs has more crime. Whilst approximately one tenth of respondents (11%) believe the area to be less safe when compared to Bristol as a whole, suggesting that as an area of Bristol some respondents felt St Werburghs suffers in relation to other parts of the city, the majority of respondents (79%) consider St Werburghs to be as safe or safer, when compared to the city as a whole.

## 2.3 Feelings of safety

Whilst it is useful to gauge how safe residents think the area is in comparison with the city as a whole, feelings of safety within St Werburghs and how they have changed over time are very important. Residents (who have lived in the area for 3 or more years) were asked how the situation in St Werburghs has changed in the last three years; in terms of whether the area has become more or less safe during that time. Unfortunately the information received is not quite so positive. As the table below illustrates, whilst (29%) think the situation has remained static or improved (4% and 25% respectively), 72% of respondents think that St Werburghs has not become any safer and almost half of respondents (47%) believe the area has become less safe.

**Respondents (who have lived in the area for more than 3 years) think that the area has become...**

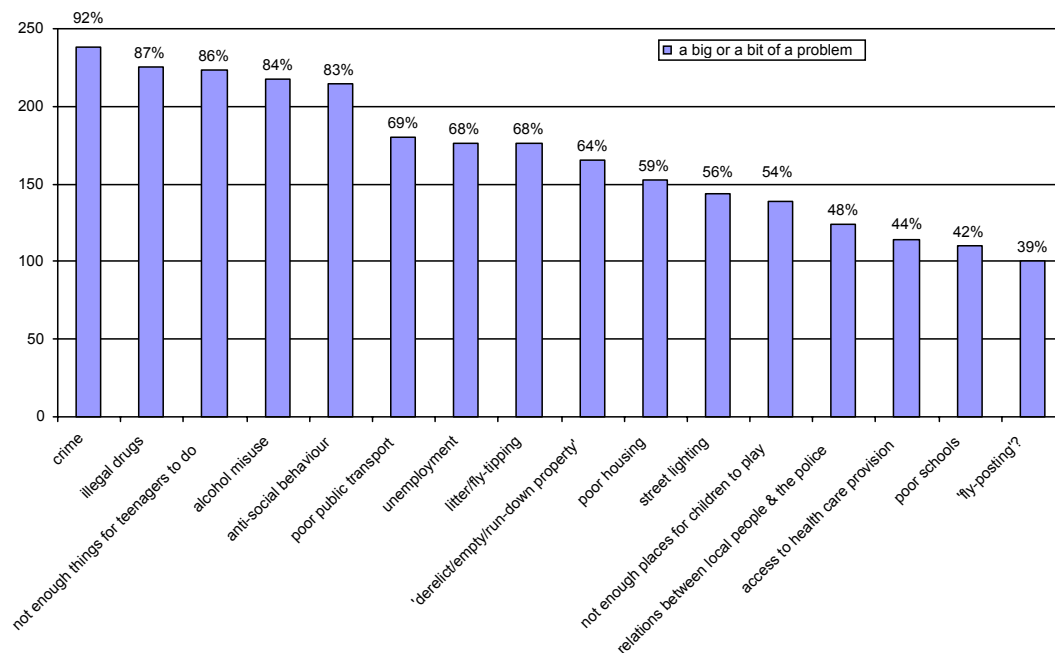


The survey data has shown that whilst the majority of respondents do not think St Werburghs fares badly in comparison with the city as a whole, in the last three years St Werburghs people do not on the whole feel safer than three years ago.

#### **2.4 Inner-city problems**

Many problems experienced by residents which can have a significant detrimental impact of resident's quality of life are not crime problems. The research sought to quantify the extent of these problems and to assess how big a problem crime is in relation of other problems that exist in the area. Residents were asked to give their opinion as to whether the issues listed below were a big problem a bit of a problem or not a problem in St Werburghs. The issues were:

- unemployment
- poor housing
- crime
- poor schools
- poor public transport
- relations between local people & the police
- street lighting
- anti-social behaviour
- not enough places for children to play
- not enough things for teenagers to do
- illegal drugs
- alcohol misuse
- access to health care provision
- 'derelict/empty/run-down property'
- 'fly-posting'?
- litter/fly-tipping



As the chart above shows crime is seen as the biggest problem in the area. 92% (238) of respondents believed crime to be a big or a slight problem. A more specific crime problem, illegal drugs was seen by the second highest proportion of respondents as a big or a bit of a problem (225, 87%). Many respondents believed illegal drugs to be the cause of other crime problems evident in the area, in particular muggings and burglary. Comments included:

Addiction is the root of a lot of crime and we have more than our fair share of addicts, what with the proximity of many hostels and the free availability of illegal drugs in this and surrounding areas.

Crime and illegal drugs are closely related. Solve the drug problem and the crime will take care of itself

Drug dealing and addicts are the greatest problem as this is the cause of theft, mugging, anti social behaviour - problems that concern everyone throughout the Bristol area.

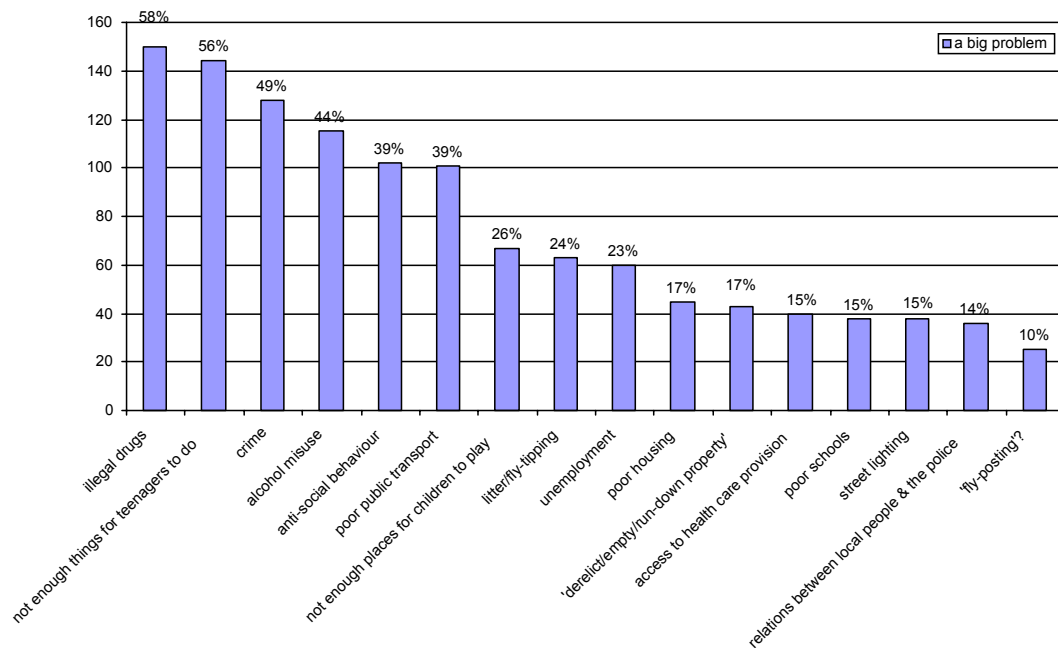
Illegal drugs are sold and used openly at times in the park, on Mina Road and by the footbridge near the community centre.

223 respondents (86%) felt 'teenagers not having enough to do' was a big or a bit of a problem. A number of respondents elaborated on this issue in their responses to this and other questions:

Bored school children. Need to be given recreation, to vent their anger and give them direction

Little youth provision in St Werburghs, so possible [cause of] anti-social behaviour, alcohol misuse because [they] have to go out of the area for activities - nothing else to do.

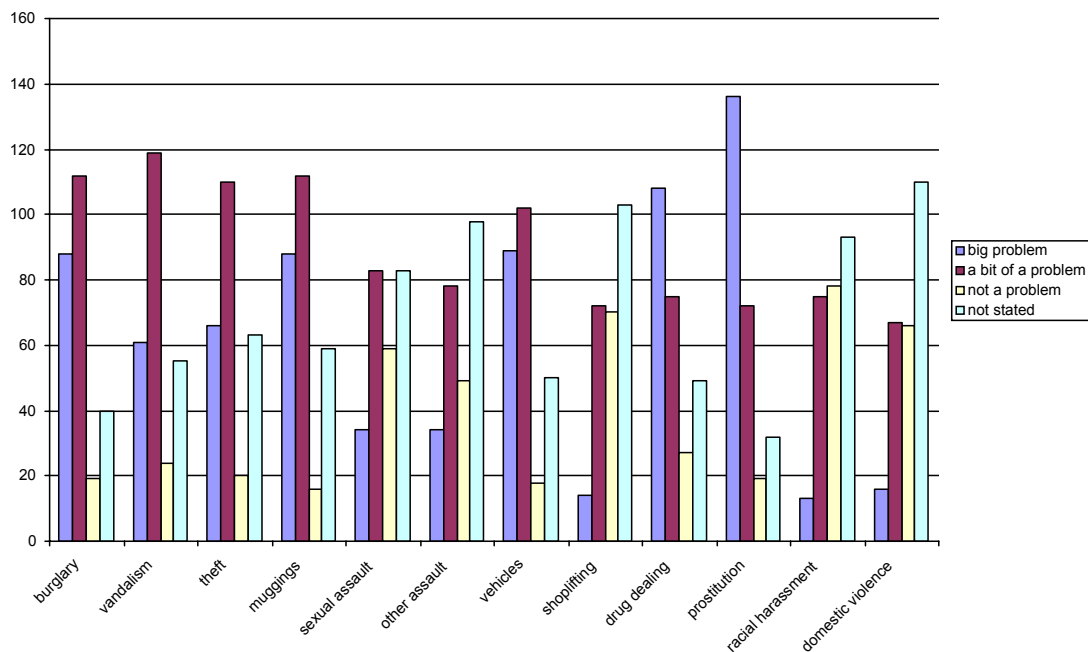
Looking at the situation simply in terms of those issues considered to be a big problem it is a similar overall picture:



Crime, drugs, and teenagers as still perceived to be the three main problems (58%, 56% and 49% respectively) but in this ranking drugs is the problem with the highest proportion of respondents thinking it is a big problem.

Crime is a big problem for victims - including the need for security and worry about possessions etc. Most crime in St Werburghs is quite petty, but there are occasional serious attacks.

Having considered where crime sits in terms of the range of problems experienced in St Werburghs, respondents were asked to give their opinion on whether the following crimes were a big problem, a bit of a problem, or not a problem.



As the chart above illustrates, prostitution is the main concern, with 53% (136 residents) of respondents considering this to be a big problem and 80% (208) believing this to be a big or a bit of a problem.

Prostitution, burglary, muggings, vehicle crime and drug dealing are the top five categories both in terms of being perceived as a 'big problem' and 'a bit of a problem', (although the ranked order is slightly different under the two levels of response):

	big or slight problem	
1	Prostitution	208 80%
2	Burglary	200 77%
3	Muggings	200 77%
4	Vehicles	191 74%
5	Drug dealing	183 71%
6	Vandalism	180 69%
7	Theft	176 68%
8	Sexual assault	117 45%
9	Other assault	112 43%
10	Racial harassment	88 34%
11	Shoplifting	86 33%
12	Domestic violence	83 32%

		<b>Big problem</b>	
1	Prostitution	136	53%
2	Drug dealing	108	42%
3	Vehicles	89	34%
4	Burglary	88	34%
5	Muggings	88	34%
6	theft	66	25%
7	vandalism	61	24%
8	sexual assault	34	13%
9	other assault	34	13%
10	domestic violence	16	6%
11	shoplifting	14	5%
12	racial harassment	13	5%

The crimes perceived by residents to be the main problems do reflect those crimes identified from the crime statistics as being the main issues within the area, namely burglary dwelling, criminal damage to motor vehicles (although the crime figures demonstrate a decrease in theft of and theft from vehicles), and robbery and common assault. The research then sought to assess whether residents concerns about crime result from them being the victims of these types of crime.

## **2.5 Experience of crime**

Respondents stated that they had experienced 517 crimes within the last 3 years in St Werburghs. To put this figure into perspective this equates to an average of just under one crime per respondent (0.94). One hundred and sixty of the 259 respondents (61%) had experienced crime. Of those 160 people this equates to an average of 1.71 crimes experienced per person. Ninety-nine people (39%) had not been victimised during the last 3 years.

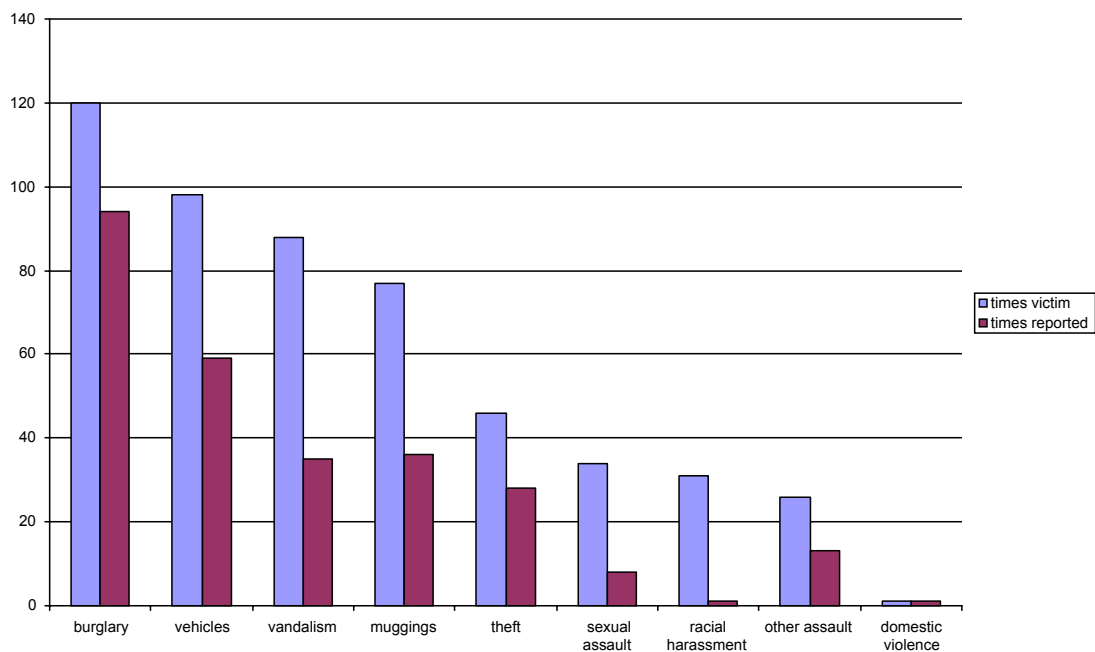
The number of incidents experienced by respondents varied significantly. As the table below shows the highest proportion of respondents had been the victims of crime once (52 people, 20%) with 16%, (41 people) have been victimised twice in the last 3 years. A small number of people had benne repeat victims a number of times:

One person victimised 24 times reported 20 cases of racial assault and another victimised 20 times reported 10 cases of sexual assault.



no of times victimised	no of people	
1	52	20%
2	41	16%
3	18	7%
4	18	7%
5	10	4%
6	9	3%
7	3	1%
9	1	0.4%
10	1	0.4%
11	2	1%
12	1	0.4%
16	1	0.4%
19	1	0.4%
20	1	0.4%
24	1	0.4%

As the graph below shows, burglary, vehicle crime, vandalism and muggings were the crimes that respondents had experienced most in St Werburghs, and reflect residents concerns about the problems in the area and also reflect the problems identified in the crime statistics assessed previously.



The levels of reporting of each different type of crime varied a great deal. 36 respondents (14%) reported none of the incidents that they experienced regardless of the number or type of offences

**levels of reporting**

by % of offences reported			
	% of offences reported	Number of incidents	times reported
domestic violence	100%	1	1
burglary	78%	120	94
theft	61%	46	28
vehicles	60%	98	59
other assault	50%	26	13
muggings	47%	77	36
vandalism	40%	88	35
sexual assault	24%	34	8
racial harassment	3%	31	1

The levels of reporting of each different type of crime varied a great deal, as the table above shows. Whilst domestic violence has a 100% reporting record it should be noted that only one case was identified. The crime categories with the highest proportion of reporting by victims are those which require a crime reference number from the police to enable an insurance claim (burglary, theft, vehicle crime). Other types of crime demonstrated strong levels of under-reporting. Less than half the crimes against the person acknowledged by respondents were reported to the police, and only one quarter of the sexual assault crimes were reported. Of 31 racial harassment crimes only 1 was reported. Fourteen per cent (36 respondents) did not report any of the incidents that they experienced regardless of the number or type of offences they experienced. The most commonly cited reasons for not reporting were either that the crime was deemed too insignificant to waste police time in light of the existing pressures on their resources. Comments included:

Small crime with no chance of catching those responsible

Didn't think assault was serious enough and wouldn't have recognised person again

Things stolen from our car will never be found; any stuff stolen will never be found; no point wasting police time on small crime

Would not be deemed a serious offence, therefore pointless to report

Some residents thought that there was little they could do in practical terms to catch those responsible or that the crime type was not a police priority and action would not be taken:

Didn't think there would be any hope of a positive outcome.

Because nothing happens when incidents are reported - police generally are disinterested, even when they've been informed of local knowledge about perpetrators.

Motor crime is very low on the list - unless you need a crime reference it's a waste of time reporting it - nothing will be done and it wastes my time

Not really worth it in my experience/not seemingly considered priority by police (even though I had a broken nose/cheek bone) Most people I know who have been mugged; haven't done so and consider the occasional "toll" to cross M32 (don't take valuables, only money needed and give it up if confronted by knives)

It was a waste of time, They are simply not interested in petty crime and do nothing about it -great value for money!

No point. It would go down on paper and that would be the end of it

They don't care - too common incidents

Because there is absolutely no point, as it happens to so many people living here. The police do not have the resources to deal with it. Also they make reporting such a complicated and time consuming process, it hardly seems worth it when you know they won't be able to find the people involved

More hassle to report something and have nothing done

No belief in police service to effect any change. They seem invisible. A friend was attacked by a 10 year old with a blade, she reported it that night, the police never even showed up to see her. Is there anything preventative being done or is it all in reaction to it?

A small but vociferous number of residents reported a lack of interest or action on the part of the police when reporting crime and they stated that after having received a poor level of service when they would not or report crimes in future or had not when being a victim of crime again.

Have called in past re drug dealing, but no, or 'irritated' response, so don't bother now

When handing in a stolen bike once, officer was abrupt and rude – [this] deters people

15 year old son mugged 3 times; nothing taken first 2 times; third time bike phone stolen, physically injured with a screwdriver. Police took 2 hours to attend

It is very difficult to actually reach an effective police person who will actually come

Know you won't get a response.

Because I am not completely satisfied with the help I received the last time

We were victims of crime - intimidation and assault on our property - and the police did not even come out when we dialled 999 although on the phone they said they were on the way. We probably wouldn't bother reporting any crimes we witnessed now.

### **3 Issues of concern in St Werburghs**

The research has identified a number of specific issues or places that residents are concerned about. There are a number of locations that residents feel are particularly unsafe in terms of crime or fear of crime.

The M32 underpass and footbridge are perceived by residents as areas that are particularly unsafe in terms of crime cited by one hundred and five respondents (representing 40% of respondents), and the footbridge over the M32 was cited by 52 respondents (20%) as an unsafe area. Concerns include fear of muggings and drug dealing, evident in the underpass and the approaches to the underpass. The concerns about drug dealing arise as a result of respondents witnessing the dealing occurring. Concerns about mugging arise partly because of the isolated and barren natures of the crossings and their environs and thus the fear of crime is increased. People are also worried either as a result of being victims themselves or knowing someone who has been a victim in the past. Previous research shows that a limited number of crimes occurring in the same area can have a significant and potentially disproportionate effect on the fear of crime

Mina Road and, in particular, the park and its environs is also perceived to be a significant problem. Whilst the park has in recent years benefited greatly from efforts to improve the amenity of the area as a green space, this work has concerned on the horticultural amenity aspects of the park and not on the community safety issues that the park presents and thus the park itself and its environs are not perceived by many residents as a safe place, particularly at night.

Other unsafe areas include Mary Carpenter Place which is regarded as a place for drug dealing. Sevier Street was also suggested as an unsafe place but the respondents concerned did not state the reasons for this.

Whilst the routes to surrounding areas present problems in terms of actual crime and also fear of crime, respondents also reported concern that in terms of the problems experienced in St Werburghs they are as a result of the overspill or displacement of problems from the surrounding areas. It is not simply a problem of a lack of attempts to tackle the problems allowing them to expand and develop, but is seen to be as a result of strategies to tackle crime in the surrounding areas resulting in problems such as prostitution and drug dealing being displaced into the St Werburghs area.

#### **Crime concerns:**

As the tables below illustrate residents key concerns are:

- Burglary
- Muggings
- Motor vehicle crime

Additionally Motor scooter/motorcycle crime is a concern, in particular 'joy-riding' on roads and pavements, as are speeding vehicles using St Werburghs as rat run, a situation possibly worsened by Ikea's location.

**Perceptions of problems:**

**burglary**

big problem	88	34%
bit of a problem	108	42%
not a problem	19	7%
not stated	44	17%
	259	

**vandalism**

big problem	58	22%
bit of a problem	115	44%
not a problem	24	9%
not stated	61	24%
	258	

**theft**

big problem	65	25%
bit of a problem	107	41%
not a problem	20	8%
not stated	67	26%
	259	

**muggings**

big problem	129	50%
bit of a problem	70	27%
not a problem	16	6%
not stated	44	17%
	259	

**sexual assault**

big problem	34	13%
bit of a problem	8	3%
not a problem	58	22%
not stated	85	33%
	185	

**other assault**

big problem	34	13%
bit of a problem	77	30%
not a problem	47	18%
not stated	101	39%
	259	

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**vehicles**

big problem	87	34%
bit of a problem	99	38%
not a problem	18	7%
not stated	55	21%
	259	

**shoplifting**

big problem	14	5%
bit of a problem	70	27%
not a problem	68	26%
not stated	107	41%
	259	

**drug dealing**

big problem	105	41%
bit of a problem	74	29%
not a problem	26	10%
not stated	54	21%
	259	

**prostitution**

big problem	133	51%
bit of a problem	72	28%
not a problem	18	7%
not stated	36	14%
	259	

**racial harassment**

big problem	13	5%
bit of a problem	74	29%
not a problem	75	29%
not stated	97	37%
	259	

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**domestic violence**

big problem	15	6%
bit of a problem	65	25%
not a problem	66	25%
not stated	113	44%
	259	

**% of respondents who think each crime is a big problem or a bit of a problem (ranked)**

prostitution	79%	205
muggings	77%	199
burglary	76%	196
vehicles	72%	186
drug dealing	69%	179
vandalism	67%	173
theft	66%	172
other assault	43%	111
racial harassment	34%	87
shoplifting	32%	84
domestic violence	31%	80
sexual assault	16%	42

The city farm reported problems in terms of access and low level nuisance caused by traveller's vehicles parking there and PC White discussed the historic nature of this problem.

There are concerns about drug problems fuelling the muggings and burglary offences that occur.

There is a perception that drug problems are partially responsible for the visible drug dealing and prostitution in the area.

Mary Carpenter Place and the M32 underpass were cited as areas where visible drug dealing was thought to occur.

The prostitution is thought to be becoming more visible within the community and occurring within a wider area. Additionally kerb crawling is reported as a problem throughout the day, experienced for example by a mother waking her children to school. Respondents also cited a need to tackle the prostitution problem in terms of targeting the pimps who are perceived as the root of the problem rather than the prostitutes themselves.

#### **4 Policing & measures to tackle crime in the area**

The local Beat officer for the area is well regarded by those who have dealt with him. His role is predominantly reactive, dealing with issues as they arise. A number of respondents took the opportunity to comment on the issues relating to the existing beat officer's seemingly high workload, for example:

Current community policeman does his best but can't do it on his own

Understandably, the demands placed on his time means that he has little opportunity for proactive or more strategic work, for example, publicising what is happening in policing terms locally. It is evident that residents are not fully aware of the policing initiative and approaches that are used in the area. For example, residents reported a lack of police

response to the joy riding motorcycle/scooter problem. Avon and Somerset police have a policy of not to forcefully pursue in such situations to reduce the risk of injury; however this policy decision has not fed through to residents and is perceived as a lack of action. Respondents were asked how satisfied they were with current measures to prevent crime in the area. The table below shows the response.

**Satisfaction with current measures to prevent crime in the area**

neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	99	38%
satisfied	25	10%
dissatisfied	89	34%
very dissatisfied	37	14%
no response	9	3%
	259	

Just over one third of respondents were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with attempts to tackle crime in the area, and almost half of respondents (48%, 114) were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. As the table below shows, the majority of respondents (95%) felt that it is very important or important to have a named police officer with specific responsibilities for St Werburghs..

**Importance of having a named police officer with responsibility for St Werburghs**

important	61	24%
not important	14	5%
very important	183	71%
no response	1	0.4%
	259	

**5 Measures to tackle crime**

Respondents were asked to select which of 26 stated measures they would choose in an effort to reduce crime in St Werburghs. The measures listed were:

- training & employment schemes targeted at specific “at risk” groups of young people.
- improved victim support service.
- secure night-time transport service for women.
- home security improvements.
- free property-marking scheme to make household items less “stealable
- more “neighbourhood watch” schemes.
- information handbook about crime prevention for all households & local tradespeople
- extra youth facilities for specific groups of young people.
- mediation scheme where neighbour disputes can be settled without going to court
- improved street lighting.
- quick removal of graffiti
- more secure parking areas.
- more local people actively involved in crime prevention in St Werburghs
- the development of crime prevention education & community safety project work in local schools



- improved facilities and services for victims of domestic violence.
- mother-&-toddler groups and family centres to ease stress on families with young children
- self-defence classes
- extra community policing
- closed circuit television to monitor security “hot spots”
- special home insurance schemes for people who are unable to afford or secure insurance
- intensive work with “high risk” young people to prevent them re-offending
- more action to tackle anti-social behaviour by neighbours
- more drugs prevention work
- help for people to come off drugs or reduce the harm caused by their use of drugs
- support for people affected by drug users
- your own suggestions

Given the option to choose only one of the measures the three most popular choices were:

31% (79) extra community policing

14% (35) CCTV to monitor security 'hot spots'

8% (22) help for people to come of drugs or reduce the harm caused by drugs.

Given the opportunity to provide 5 choices, in addition to the three choices listed above additional youth provision and intensive work with ‘high risk’ young people to prevent them re-offending were also popular.

Other suggestions from residents included:

Decriminalising prostitution so the industry can be regulated

Money to pay local people to clear litter hotspots

Help for people with alcohol related problems

Locally accessible counselling schemes for young people and others

Better accountability controls within police force; monitoring of police efficiency

Effort to reduce crack and heroin use

The initiative of removing abandoned cars before they are further vandalised works well to keep environment

During 90% of my cycle rides to town I witness illegal activity - truant children youths on stolen mopeds drugs etc. How about occasional undercover police patrols on that route - Mina park, St Pauls roundabout cyclepath, not to mention the muggings and other threats.

Fear of crime is probably a much bigger issue here than crime itself. Visible prostitutes, drug dealers and gangs of youths hanging around need to be removed to make people feel safer

Small business support (local shops play important role in the community. BCC Support for local community development projects which are really bottom up and not just short term

More police presence

CCTV on bridge over M32 and or underpass underneath St Pauls roundabout to make it safer to walk around the local area and over to Easton

There should be high profile policing of the area. I do not feel safe anywhere in the area.

How can the subway to Easton be made safe - it is a nightmare

Removal of prostitutes from residential areas - green light area in non residential parts of the city

Frequent public transport for all including late night routes to isolated streets/areas

## **6 Other issues**

A number of other issues have been identified, Whilst not strictly community safety or crime prevention issues they are closely linked to the perceived well being of an area, and can have a strong impact of the quality of life of local residents.

Public transport provision was strongly criticised and in particular the unreliable service, inappropriate routes, and the expensive ticket prices.

Public transport expensive, unreliable, dirty, infrequent

Poor public transport - it is almost impossible to use public transport to get anywhere into town as it is completely unreliable & there is not enough of it.

The perceived failings of the public transport provision in the area are linked to issues relating to the underpasses. As one resident commented: 'there are no safe ways, unless you have a car, which I have not, to get over to Easton.'

You can't get a bus to Easton unless you go into town first

Fly tipping, litter and abandoned vehicles thought to be left too long before being cleared up. Discarded condoms (resulting from the activities of prostitutes in the area) were cited as a problem by a few residents and consultations with the Farm has identified that the standard street cleaning service is not effective and the farm staff have to collect them themselves. They do not however report any problems with abandoned drug paraphernalia such as needles

The area is perceived as suffering from a lack of health and youth provision. The problems caused by the lack of a health centre in the area is worsened by the public transport problems discussed previously. The lack of youth provision in the area is seen as the cause of lower level nuisance problems, anti-social behaviour problems, alcohol misuse and a simply fear of crime resulting from young people hanging out in the streets.

There is a view from some residents that St Werburghs is a 'poor relation' when compared to other areas of the city both in terms of 'worse' areas which have received more assistance to tackle their larger problems or receiving help or 'better' areas which have better mechanisms in place for maintaining their status.

Litter - very poor level of street cleaning and refuse collectors leave a whole lot of mess - would this happen in Clifton?

Slow to clear [stolen] cars burnt out or crashed - if it was Clifton they'd disappear quick!

**Other comments included:**

Every individual resident should make crime prevention a personal duty (be your brother or sister's keeper). With team effort, St Werburghs can be made a crime-free, peaceful and beautiful place to live

St Werburghs requires a mix of long term strategies and short term fixes to make residents feel more confident in confronting crime and in some cases (me at least) walking down the street after dark.

Ultimately we need to address the root of the problem and help prevent it at source

If there were more opportunities/ places for communication between residents/ visitors in St W's, that might improve understanding/ tolerance, and lead to greater cooperation in tackling a range of problems by encouraging participation in a sense of ownership in the community

Children who commit offences against the community should be brought face to face with the members of the community so that they learn and hopefully consequently think about the consequences of their actions

It seems that what tends to happen is when crime prevention measures are implemented, it just moves the problem to an adjacent area rather than actually resolving the problems. Also, public policy (housing allocation etc) often contributes to the creation of problem 'hotspots' rather than all areas sharing the same burden.

Make the girls come off the streets

Whilst a study such as this inherently deals with negative aspects of life in the area as mentioned in the introduction to this report, the analysis of the survey response also highlighted the more positive aspects of living in the area. Recent improvements to the street lighting in parts of the area were acknowledged by respondents, the horticultural improvements made to the park and the sense of community evident in the area were also recognised and acknowledged.

## 7 Recommendations

The research has identified a specific set of problems that exist in the area, and the recommendations outlined below are designed to help address these problems.

The findings of this research and the recommendations outlined below should enable residents to form task groups targeting specific areas and apply for funding where appropriate.

The problems identified are:

- Prostitution
- Drug dealing and drug (mis)use
- Burglary dwelling
- Fear and risk of Mugging
- Fear and risk of crime arising from built environment problems - M32 crossings and park
- Low level nuisance and fear of crime caused by young people
- Speeding cars  
stolen motorcycles and scooters
- rubbish dumping

### 7.1 Overview of crime and incivility problems

The prostitution problem and the drug problem in the area are perceived to have become more visible, seemingly as a result of police operations in surroundings areas displacing the problem in the St Werburghs area.

The prostitution and drug problems reported by residents are difficult problems to tackle at the neighbourhood level. They are symptoms of broader social problems and policing responses to tackle them are often labour intensive and frequently only have short term results. The UWE team believes that preventative work, harm reduction, drug treatment and withdrawal programmes and providing more positive alternatives to intoxication, are the best long-term approaches. By reducing or removing the customers, the level of dealing will reduce. Merely trying to suppress the supply without reducing the demand for drugs leads to some of the problems of displacement that St Werburghs is suffering from.

The prostitutes themselves, their pimps or their clients can all be the target of police operations and the prostitutes can benefit from assistance to help them escape the sex industry. Previous research is inconclusive in terms of the best approach, but the supply and demand equation is similar to that with drugs mentioned above. A city wide approach is needed to minimise the harm and offence caused by prostitution, but St Werburghs representatives should be actively consulted and involved by the relevant police and health sections. The prostitution problem also has an impact in terms of refuse, particularly used condoms left in the area. Targeted additional street cleaning would lessen this aspect of the impact of the sex trade in the area.

Many of the problems within the area result from St Werburghs' location in Bristol, both as a result of the physical location/environment and policy approaches in the surrounding areas. It is a pleasant area that sometimes suffers as a result of its location,

in particular the M32 and the surrounding disadvantaged areas. St Werburghs representatives could gain much from liaising with agencies and representatives in surrounding neighbourhoods, possibly as part of an east inner-city consortium. Otherwise there could be just a shunting around of problems from one neighbourhood to another, as appeared to happen in the 1980s and 90s, when as huge investments were made in St Paul's, parts of Easton and Barton Hill began to deteriorate.

The responses needed to tackle fear of crime are not the same as responses to tackle crime itself.

## **7.2 M32 crossings.**

The extremely poor physical environment of the M32 crossings is a major contributor to fear of crime in the area. UWE planning students are currently working on proposals to improve the area and will be able to present their ideas in the late Spring. Activity generators in the approaches to the underpass could be used to reduce fear of crime and opportunities for crime to occur by increasing natural surveillance. For example, the concrete and barren nature of the approaches to the crossings makes the area ideal for use by skateboarders, and whilst some members of the community may not wish to seek to increase this kind of activity their presence could have a positive impact. Unfortunately the existing attempts to green the area have been detrimental in increasing the screening for offenders and fear of entrapment.

As an interim measure, "capable guardians" (the equivalent of "Lollipop" persons at school crossings) could escort people through the subway/over the bridge. Ideally any such scheme would have a team of staff rather than one individual lollipop person, for example two at the end of the crossing. The lollipop staff could be in radio contact with the emergency or local authority services. The St Paul's Community Links (community wardens) scheme could be expanded to undertake this role and/or escort people home, effectively providing a pedestrian taxi service or volunteers (initially through the NA) and subject to the relevant police checks could be used to escort people home. Such a guardian scheme could also provide more "eyes on the street" at other vulnerable locations (such as Mina Park) and at times of perceived vulnerability (after dark).

A more radical solution (suggested in a "Friends of Baptist Mills" consultation) would be to end the motorway regulations on the M32 after the Eastville flyover so that the speed limit could be reduced to 30 m.p.h. with the introduction of surface level pedestrian crossings. This would be an entirely feasible possibility, as the motorway already terminates only a few hundred metres further along towards the centre of Bristol, so it would merely be a matter of slowing down the traffic slightly sooner. A successful example is in Birmingham where the speed limit on the inner ring road was reduced to 30 miles per hour and the below ground level crossings were replaced with surface crossings. Whilst this is a radical approach, it could be argued that such a scheme would not be allowed if it was a current proposal for development, so it is wrong to expect residents of the area to live with the problems it creates.

## **7.3 "Safe Houses"**

"Safe houses" schemes have been used abroad with some success. One or two houses in each road are designated as safe houses where people walking by can go if they feel unsafe or at risk of being a victim of crime. The residents of the house are police checked and trained to ensure that they are not the victims of distraction burglary. This can be a difficult scheme to get right. Ideally the householder who volunteers to be a

safe house must not be put at risk from people abusing the scheme. With the drug problems that are reported in the area it is suggested that the scheme could be run initially using business and community premises, ideally those with a separate reception area where someone can wait in safety, with no risk to the staff of the premises while the police or other agencies or transport provider are called. The scheme can be publicised with a window sticker advertising the fact that people can ask for assistance at that address. Alternatively the addresses could be made known only to residents of St Werburghs with, perhaps a subtle symbol or code to identify the building. Such a scheme would extend the sense of community already evident in the area.

Burglary - Avon & Somerset repeat victimisation approach (whereby victims of burglary are given crime prevention advice and the services of a physical security fitter to prevent repeat victimisation) follows current national good practice in terms of allocation of resources. Homes are not equally at risk from burglary – their location in a street, visibility on all sides and juxtaposition to back alleys and public grounds are all factors that make some homes more at risk than others. A proper security audit could be undertaken, using police crime mapping data and a design/ security consultant. Remedial or preventative action could then be undertaken, either by individual householders or as part of a neighbourhood package.

Finally, the park and environs need a street lighting and planting assessment from a crime/fear of crime viewpoint

## **8 Comments on residents' top four preferred measures to make the area safer.**

### **1. Community Policing**

The survey revealed that there was an overwhelming demand from local residents, not only for more visible policing, but for having a named dedicated police officer for the neighbourhood, who would be a consistent and permanent presence in St Werburghs. Presently the community beat officer for the neighbourhood is highly regarded, but is constantly at risk of being pulled off his community duties, to deal with other “priorities”. Based on previous experience there is also the concern that, just as he has established local credibility, community intelligence and strong neighbourhood communications, he will be moved out of the area under the police tenure system.

“Ring fencing” the community beat manager (subject to resources) to ensure that he is not taken away from his community role when other operation demands are high is important for achieving durable crime reductions and improvements to community safety. This is difficult to achieve under current police policy, but perhaps St Werburghs could be a pilot area for a more stable approach to community policing. Long-term dedicated community policing has happened elsewhere ( In New Deal areas, on the Pepys Estate in South London and on housing estates in Denmark, for example).

More communication by the police (at a higher level) with the population to inform about approaches and successes in the area and in neighbouring areas is important. For example the non pursuit of stolen motorcycles/scooter is perceived as a lack of action because of a lack of awareness of the policy.

Additional visible policing on the streets is not necessarily effective for crime reduction but will assist in reducing the fear of crime and might lower the profile of some criminal activities in the area, such as drugs and prostitution. Given the other persistent demands on the resources of Avon and Somerset Constabulary, it is unlikely that visible policing could be increased in St Werburghs to a sufficient extent that would make any noticeable difference. A more viable alternative would be an extension to the patrolling area of the St Paul's Community Links wardens, with the added benefit that they can not only keep an eye on potential crime problems and incivilities, but can also deal with environmental and management issues (eg: getting street lights repaired, removing dumped cars and rubbish).

The solution to the area's crime problems is not simply about policing but is also reliant on multi agency responses, for example the police and council working in partnership.

## **2. CCTV to monitor security hotspots.**

Closed Circuit television has been oversold as a solution to crime problems. The problem is that there is very little evidence to demonstrate significant reduction in the types of street crimes that worry people, when CCTV has been installed (For example crime *increased* during the first year of CCTV operation in Broadmead). This is partly to do with displacement but is also to do with a whole range of technological, management and response problems.

Nevertheless, if used appropriately in particular locations, CCTV *can* play a useful role in extending the reach and sight of capable guardians, such as concierge and security staff on duty.

Assuming that the substantial capital and ongoing revenue costs could be met, targeted CCTV cameras could be used at some of the most vulnerable locations in and around St Werburghs. However, the success of any CCTV scheme relies on the quality of the system's monitoring and the potential for an immediate response. Cameras could be used that provide an audible alarm to the monitoring staff when a person passes the camera, so that the area is only monitored when it needs to be.

Refuge points (rather like the help points on London underground or the video sentries used in Hackney and Doncaster) could also be used, ideally in conjunction with cameras. These are well lit safety points where citizens can speak to and be seen by a capable guardian. Although most CCTV in Bristol is routed to the Council's central monitoring station, a better option might be to link St Werburghs and M32 crossing cameras to the 24 hour Concierge/ security station at Lansdown Court in Easton Way, which is only a few hundred metres away.

Unstaffed suburban stations in Newcastle have successfully played piped classical music through speakers to provide a reassuring ambience and deter troublemakers from loitering. If linked to cameras and with the facility for monitoring staff to speak to people spotted on the CCTV screen, this could be a worthwhile, if somewhat quirky initiative for the pedestrian routes away from housing.

### **3. Help for people to come off drugs or reduce the harm caused by drugs.**

The problem of drug misuse and addiction is widespread throughout the country. The only special factor that may affect levels of drug use in St Werburghs is the fact that it is adjacent to what is reputedly one of the principal drug supply markets in the South West (St Paul's). But as mentioned earlier, demand is as much a problem as supply. Reducing demand requires work with individuals to wean them from illegal intoxicants and preferably, drugs prevention work. Some of this can be linked to local education and youth provision (see below). As this is a city-wide and indeed national problem, organisations such as the Bristol Drugs Project and the various NHS initiatives may be the most appropriate referral points for St Werburghs residents with addiction problems. However, there are some very good locally based peer support initiatives, that may have the potential for replication in St Werburghs and its neighbouring communities. The Southmead (Drugs) Project, run by well trained local people may be worth looking at as a model of good practice, particularly as it feeds into a re-employment project for ex-addicts.

### **4. Additional Youth Provision and intensive work with “high risk” young people, to prevent them re-offending.**

Young people are the principal perpetrators of certain crimes, notably most of the ones causing concern to St Werburghs residents, such as burglary, car crime, vandalism and some muggings. Young people are often cited as the cause of much anti-social behaviour and can generate heightened levels of fear when they congregate in groups. It should also be pointed out that young people are also one of the highest “at-risk” groups for being victims of crime. For all these reasons, appropriate youth provision and targeted work with vulnerable young people will pay huge dividends for the safety of the community as a whole. Youth involvement and provision is an area where local people can play a significant role, through a range of schemes such as mentoring, outreach work and staffing of facilities. The important thing is to involve young people in providing what they want, when and where they want it, rather than laying on a standard off-the-peg youth facility and then wondering why few young people use it. Young people often just want safe places to meet and “hang out”, but such a venue needs to be accessible during all their free time, not just from 6 to 9 p.m. on Thursdays, for example. It is also important to recognise that in St Werburghs there will be several cliques of young people, each with their own needs and interests. The good news is that there are various funding possibilities for such youth centred initiatives (through the Princes Trust and the Sports Foundation, for example). Sustained and intensive investment in youth provision and support actually saves money and distress in the long-term, through reduced costs of crime, damage and fear.

## **9 Final words.**

In the grand scale of Bristol neighbourhoods, St Werburghs is by no means a major problem area. This is good news in one respect – it is a fine place to live; but it does mean that St Werburghs misses out on some of the major resources for additional services and regeneration. St Werburghs undoubtedly experiences a displacement overspill from neighbouring areas where intensive interventions have been put in place. This should not be a reason for putting the barriers up, but on the contrary, it should highlight the importance of St Werburghs workers and residents’ representatives working more closely with people in the neighbouring communities. Although some crime



problems (such as burglary, vandalism and domestic violence) are very localised in terms of offender/victim geography, other crimes and incivilities that St Werburghs residents are concerned about, most notably drug misuse/dealing and prostitution cannot be effectively tackled purely at the immediate neighbourhood level.

The really good news about St Werburghs is the huge interest by local residents in safeguarding the neighbourhood's future (as evidenced in the substantial and detailed response to this survey.) Local organisations, such as St Werburghs Neighbourhood Association demonstrate that there is also a commitment by local people to put direct effort into achieving improvements. This means that St Werburghs has a very real chance of not only remaining a good place to live, but of getting better and sorting out some of its social problems. The main barrier to improvement in many areas that the UWE team has researched, is not so much the lack of fiscal resources, but the shortage of "people power" to implement and sustain change. Our research (and that of others) has found that the neighbourhoods most resistant to crime are those where there is a stable population, where people trust and support each other through formal and informal networks of all sorts and where residents are prepared to intervene and take action to safeguard their communities. "People power" appears to exist in abundance in St Werburghs, suggesting very healthy prospects for the future.

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