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Policing Partnerships: An Investigation into the Police Response to Partnership Working in the Wake of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act

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POLICING PARTNERSHIPS: AN INVESTIGATION INTO
THE POLICE RESPONSE TO PARTNERSHIP WORKING
IN THE WAKE OF THE 1998 CRIME AND DISORDER ACT

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PhD 2008

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**'Policing Partnerships: An Investigation into the Police
Response to Partnership Working in the Wake of the
1998 Crime and Disorder Act'**

by

Stuart David Lander

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

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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Dedication

*Dedicated to the memory of my father Christopher Lander for
being the foundation upon which so many good things have
been built.*

Acknowledgements

*To my family and friend's who have always provided
unwavering belief and support.*

*To Devon and Cornwall Constabulary for providing the
opportunity, and funding, to undertake this thesis.*

*Finally, to my supervisor Dr Daniel Gilling for going well
beyond the call of duty.*

Abstract

Stuart David Lander

Policing Partnerships: An Investigation into the Police Response to Partnership Working in the Wake of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act

This thesis is based upon empirical research, which explores how the police service in one Constabulary area has accommodated the mandate to work in crime prevention partnerships with other agencies, following the implementation of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act. The focus is specifically upon crime and disorder reduction partnerships (CDRPs). The research is based upon a multi-method research design. It draws most heavily upon data obtained from semi-structured interviews with police officers holding varying experiences of crime prevention partnership working across one Constabulary area. It also analyses official documents, and draws upon the results of a short survey combined with the author's own relevant experiences as a serving police officer engaged within the partnership arena.

The research is informed by a literature review, which examines the police service role in crime prevention alongside wider aspects of police reform and partnership working. The literature review suggests the police service has been drawn reluctantly into greater engagement with crime prevention, and that crime prevention competes, often unsuccessfully, against other aspects of policing, which have been promoted within the wider police reform agenda. It also suggests that partnership working in crime prevention has had a difficult and chequered history. Despite official efforts to encourage the adoption of 'critical success factors' in partnership working, such working has more usually encountered a range of obstacles, relating particularly to difficulties in inter-organisational relations, and the ambiguities

contradictions and tensions, which have been an inherent feature of policy making in this area.

The research upon which this thesis is based supports much of what is found in the literature, however, it also expands considerably upon the problems posed to partnership working by a range of 'intra'-organisational issues. In particular, certain features of the police organisational and occupational culture, which serve to undermine partnership working by treating it more as a symbolic, legitimacy-building function and by regarding it as out-of-place within a largely 'detectionist', 'here and now', dominant construction of policing. In addition, by introducing alternative 'lines of accountability' through to government offices, as well as to other agencies, partnership working, in the wake of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, provokes an internal organisational politics, which threatens to undermine the authority of police headquarters and has prompted a defensive internal response, which continues with the advent of Local Area Agreements (LAAs).

Despite or even because of these problems, the police have tended to dominate local CDRPs in the areas examined by the research. However, they have used such dominance largely to contain the threat to the culture and authority of the police, rather than to exploit the potential for genuine, proactive, problem-oriented partnership working.

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Introduction

Establishing the Aims and Scope of the Research

The author of this thesis is a serving police officer. He has been a serving officer throughout the duration of the research, which began with registration in September 2000, a year after the implementation of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act. The radical partnership working requirements of this important piece of legislation form the focus of this study.

Prior to registering for doctoral studies, the author had conducted a research project under the Home Office's Police Research Award Scheme, managed through the then Policing and Reducing Crime Unit (Lander and Booty, 2002). This earlier project had been conceived with the very practical aim of identifying the constituent elements of effective partnership working, and the subsequent dissemination of this knowledge to others in the form of good practice guidance. The need for such research and guidance had been identified by the author on the basis of his own work-related experiences, where partnership working had come to take on an increasingly significant role in operational policing. Partnership working was something the police service was being called upon to engage in, yet in the author's experience it was something the police, and other agencies, did not necessarily 'do' particularly well. The author subscribed to the view that partnership working was likely to play an essential part in the future development of the police service, and likely to be an essential ingredient in their future effectiveness. Consequently, the earlier project was conceived as a piece of applied research, which could contribute to improvements in practice and delivery.

The empirical research conducted for that project included the purposive sampling of practitioners from a range of different agencies who had been involved in partnerships of different kinds, and in different policy areas. These practitioners were interviewed in order to ascertain, from their experiences, what they considered to be the main ingredients of effective partnership working. These ingredients were separated out in an analytic framework within the final report (Lander and Booty, 2002), and used to construct a recipe for effective partnership working, which was nationally disseminated through that report on the Home Office website.

The research for this earlier project was being written up as the present study began, and particularly as the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act was being put into effect. The focus of the legislation centred on partnership working in the specific field of crime prevention, and its great significance was to make such partnership working mandatory, rather than voluntary, or at least non-mandatory, as had hitherto been the case. This was a momentous change, which the author

anticipated would significantly raise the profile of partnership working, placing it centre stage within local operational policing. It also increased the importance of generating credible guidance with regard to effective practice. The police needed to know how best to respond to the legislation and, notwithstanding, the various pieces of guidance which began to appear as the legislation was put into practice, the author recognised a need to update his earlier research into 'voluntary' partnership working. In essence, the 1998 Act had changed the rules of the game. Certain agencies now 'had to be' involved in local crime prevention partnerships, and the work of these partnerships 'had to be' integrated into local policing strategies. There were difficult and outstanding questions regarding which other agencies, beyond the responsible authorities, should be involved. It also raised issues in connection with capacity, and similarly, there were difficult outstanding questions centred on how the partnerships might meet their statutory obligations, particularly in terms of the production of audits and strategies. Notwithstanding the official guidance which was produced, the legislation quite deliberately left a lot of the detail to be determined at the local level, and thus, the author surmised that there was a case, as before, for identifying examples of effective partnership working, and for distilling these into some form of practical guidance.

At its very outset, therefore, this doctoral research project was premised upon similar practical motives to those, which informed the earlier research supported by the Police Research Award Scheme. The doctoral research was to be another piece of applied research, oriented towards the improvement of practice in the area of partnership working, specifically as related to crime prevention. However, as the author began his studies, so his understanding of the purpose of his intended research began to change. There were two main reasons for this changed understanding. Firstly, the author enrolled for his doctoral research on a part-time basis, which meant the background reading filled a wider period of time than it might otherwise have done had the research been conducted on a full-time basis. In the course of this background reading, which took up the first two years of registration, information came to light from a variety of sources, which indicated that the new crime and disorder reduction partnerships (CDRPs) were not making quite the 'splash' the author had expected, and there were signs that many were not working particularly well (The literature review section below provides a comprehensive review of this literature). Secondly, as a serving officer progressing his career within the police service, the author witnessed firsthand the lack of impact CDRPs were having on local operational policing and also, importantly, the 'politics' that their establishment had introduced both into, and beyond, the police service.

Literature the author consulted during this period of time, and subsequent to it (as despite the way research reports tend to be

written up, the literature review does not stop when the empirical research starts), suggested that the author's earlier focus regarding the purpose of his intended research was perhaps a little misdirected. This literature, reviewed over the pages to follow, suggested partnership working in crime prevention was being constrained by factors, which were more significant and more enduring than had previously been recognised. The earlier research identified certain 'barriers' to partnership working, however, implicit within the notion of a barrier is the idea that it can be overcome, for example through the deployment of the correct skills and qualities. The literature suggested, however, that the constraints facing CDRPs were not simple barriers, which could be stepped over or otherwise evaded, rather they were ingrained in the very fabric of the CDRPs and the domain they inhabited. Consequently, the idea that making partnership working mandatory would somehow open up the floodgates and create an environment which would be deeply receptive to guidance regarding effective partnership working was perhaps a little naïve. It appeared the whole concept was, in effect, trying to run before learning to walk.

As a result, rather than engaging in applied research seeking to identify and disseminate the principles of good practice in partnership working, it was apparent the author needed to attain a deeper understanding of the context surrounding partnership working, thus, in the context of the author's background reading and of unfolding developments in both policy and practice, the overarching aim or purpose of the research, which informs this thesis was reconceived as being the need to 'understand' the way that the partnership requirements of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act were being translated into organisational practice.

For a practically minded serving police officer, this revised aim is less precise and more vague than it ideally could be, however, this is necessarily so. It is still 'applied' research in the sense that such an understanding can lead to practical improvements, which might make partnership working more effective, but importantly, it recognises that partnership working is a complex phenomenon which cannot be as easily conceptualised and measured as the original purpose and focus had assumed. The original purpose 'assumed' partnership working required the application of a certain knowledge of 'what works' in order to be effective. The revised aim acknowledges the whole idea and concept of partnership working as being 'problematic'.

This revision in relation to the purpose for this doctoral research can be conceived in epistemological terms. The original purpose was premised upon a positivist understanding: partnership working was a 'thing out there' which could be categorised, and the causes of 'good' partnership working could be isolated, identified, measured, and disseminated as good practice. The revised purpose, however, represents more of an interpretivistic position. Partnership working,

according to such a position, is a constructed reality which can be constructed by different people in different ways at different times. Thus, rather than having an objective and timeless quality, 'partnership working' or 'the partnership approach' has, like other social phenomena, an essential ambiguity which provides space for it to be constructed differently, dependent upon a context that comprises, amongst other things, government policy making, prescription and advice, organisational routines and practices, individual interests or motives and situational exigencies.

This acceptance of an interpretivist epistemology does not necessarily mean the complete abandonment of an alternative positivist perspective. As many social research methodology textbooks point out (Denscombe, 2002), the debate between positivism and interpretivism has not been resolved and it is not necessary for a researcher, such as this author, to attempt a resolution every time they conduct research. This is more a task for philosophers of social science, who will be much better equipped for this task. As Denscombe (2002: 23) observes, "In practice, empirical social researchers have not been obsessed with the purity of their ontological or epistemological position." Rather, he suggests, researchers tend to be more pragmatic, finding practical ways to meet their research aims and to answer their research questions, without getting bogged down in these bigger, and highly complex, philosophical questions.

In the course of the background reading, the author encountered a number of other studies of partnership working (see Chapter 3). The presence of such studies, many of which attested to the complexity of partnership working and supported an interpretivist view of it, raised a danger that this study would merely 're-invent the wheel', reproducing what was already known about partnership working in crime prevention. This is a problem faced by many researchers, however, particularly perhaps by those researching policy areas, which are contemporary, and fast-moving. Seeking to reproduce existing knowledge is not a sufficient premise for doctoral research which is required to demonstrate a contribution to knowledge, and thus the author justifies the relevance and originality of his research on the following grounds.

Initially, the research examines partnership working in relation to crime prevention in the wake of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, thereby distinguishing itself from the volume of studies on partnership working, which examined the phenomenon prior to 1998. As noted earlier, in making partnership working mandatory for responsible authorities the Crime and Disorder Act changed the 'rules of the game', and this justifies a re-appraisal of existing knowledge. Secondly, while the author has a personal work-related interest in, and commitment to, partnership working the research is not merely a self-serving or indulgent exercise, disconnected from theoretical and

academic developments elsewhere. Thus, while on one level, the research is about the intrinsic difficulties and ambiguities of partnership working in crime prevention, on another level it is also about the problems raised for those imagining new ways of governing crime, which have been characterised by some as a shift from the 'government' of crime, to the 'governance' of crime or as a shift from policing to security governance (Johnston and Shearing, 2003). The research, therefore, engages with some of these 'bigger questions' regarding governing crime in conditions of late-modernity.

Thirdly, in contrast to other studies, which tend to adopt what might be called a multi-agency perspective on partnership working, this research focuses quite deliberately, and specifically, upon how the partnership working requirements of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act have been interpreted and accommodated by the police service. The author has been made aware of one other study, which has adopted a specific focus upon the police service role in partnership working (Fletcher, 2006), however, the specific police focus does endow this research with a degree of originality. The rationale for focusing exclusively upon the police service is not only that other research has adopted a more multi-agency focus, but also that the intra-agency dimension is a relatively neglected, yet important, contextual variable for understanding partnership working (Crawford, 1997). Furthermore, the author finds himself in a particularly good position, as a serving police officer, to explore the intra-agency dimension, from the police service's perspective.

From a positivist point of view, the author's position may be regarded as a problem as it lacks objectivity. From an interpretivist position, however, one might argue that this is less a problem and more of an opportunity. In particular, the author's immersion within the police organisation, and culture, affords a better opportunity to obtain an appreciative understanding of the partnership approach from a police perspective. This is not to suggest a monolithic view of police culture, but rather to acknowledge that a serving police officer is well placed to understand the variety in police responses regarding the mandate to work in partnership with other agencies, and to account for the reasons for this. Without assuming that all other police officers shared his enthusiasm for the partnership approach, the author nevertheless held that his position afforded an opportunity for a relatively distinct piece of research. This is not to deny that such a position did not raise other methodological concerns, and these are explored in more detail in the methodology chapter of this thesis, Chapter 4.

It is generally accepted that the broad aims of a research study need to be translated into a set of more specific research questions. In grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) there is an argument that such research questions are difficult to specify in advance of the

research, as the purpose of the research is to build theory from the data, rather than test the theory (that is usually explicit or implicit in research questions) against the data. The author has some sympathy with this grounded approach, which is particularly suitable for research topics where the focus is primarily descriptive, as it is in this case, given that the police service's response to the partnership requirements of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act is relatively under-explored, and therefore in need of documentation. However, the author is sceptical regarding the feasibility, or even necessarily the desirability, of a purely grounded approach mindful that research is generally prompted by concerns, which lead the researcher in one direction rather than another. Layder's (1998) notion of an adaptive approach, which sits somewhere between the hypothesis-testing of positivism and the openness and 'unstructuredness' of pure interpretivism, appears altogether more credible, with the literature and other research being used to guide the researcher in one direction or another. Consequently, the author recognises the utility of identifying research questions or issues through a literature review, which occupies the following three chapters.

In the case of this particular project there may be particularly good reasons for the utilisation of an adaptive approach. As stated above, the research was conducted on a part-time basis, effectively over a number of years as the author dipped in and out of the field. Over this period of time studies, which identified the problematic nature of partnership working were published and there were also a number of important policy changes affecting the work of CDRPs, to a greater or lesser extent. Although the focus upon the police service remained a constant throughout the research, the principal subject of the research, namely partnership working, became something of a moving target as new requirements, structures and so on were imposed upon CDRPs. An adaptive approach allowed the author to reflect upon and modify his research in the light of such changes and additions to knowledge. An excessively rigid set of research questions, or hypotheses, may quickly have become out of date, whereas an adaptive approach allowed these changes to become incorporated into the research, to some extent as data, but also as 'leads' prompting other avenues of exploration.

The Structure of the Thesis

Following on from this introduction, the thesis is divided along conventional lines into two sections. The first section comprises the literature review, and the second section comprises the research, the findings and the conclusions emerging from them.

The literature review comprises three chapters and, as noted above, it is important to recognise that these were 'living' chapters in the sense that the literature review was an on-going part of the research,

identifying relevant research findings and policy changes which themselves helped either to plot, or modify, the course of the empirical research informing this thesis.

The main focus of Chapter One is not partnership working, but crime prevention. The chapter reviews the development of crime prevention within the police service, from its position as a founding principle of nineteenth century permanent policing, to a position of relative obscurity and marginality. The marginalisation of crime prevention is due in part to the priority afforded to crime detection, or detectionism, both by the police organisation and culture, and by successive governments, particularly since the 1960s. Various attempts have been made to strengthen the role of crime prevention within the police service and outside of it, initially through the establishment of specialist crime prevention departments, by encouraging private citizens and non-police agencies to accept their responsibilities and latterly through the promotion of problem-oriented partnerships. However, problems regarding the marginality of crime prevention to the police organisation and to others, combined with the ambiguity of its meaning, have remained. This history of crime prevention is considered to be an important ingredient in aiding our understanding of partnership working, since it provides us with an understanding of the police service's interest in, and expectations regarding, this area of policy.

The chapter also provides an opportunity to document the policy developments, which have occurred subsequent to the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, thereby demonstrating that this is a fast moving policy area, subjected to instability and almost permanent revolution, making it difficult for CDRPs to anchor themselves in any kind of comfortable routine. Many of the policy changes have increased the influence of the centre, while simultaneously enhancing the capacity of localities to deliver effective practice. In other words, they have been about 'steering' and about 'rowing', to draw upon the widely-cited analogy of Osborne and Gaebler (1992).

Chapter Two sets the partnership approach to crime prevention within the wider canvas of police reform. That is to say crime prevention has not been the only reform pressure exerted upon the police service over the period of its historical development, and particularly over the period from the 1960s onwards, since which time police effectiveness has become an increasingly salient political issue. Thus, in addition to the external pressure to engage more proactively in crime prevention, the police service has been pressurised to engage in a variety of other models of effective practice, including unit beat policing, policing by objectives, problem-oriented policing, community policing, crime management, zero-tolerance policing, intelligence-led policing, reassurance policing and neighbourhood policing. At the same time, the police organisation has been forced along a decentralisation route

which, as with the recent post-1998 history of crime prevention, can be interpreted as a simultaneous effort to enhance the central capacity to steer, and the local capacity to row.

While many of the above-cited models of policing bare many similarities with one another, and while the police organisation has been able to absorb the differences within its departmentalised and specialised structures, the problem with such a plethora of models and initiatives is that it renders the essential role of the police service an ambiguous one. Is it about prevention or detection; is 'policing' police service-led or partnership-led; is the police role instrumental or symbolic; is the policing mandate determined from the bottom-up, or from the top-down? These questions have obvious salience for partnership working in crime prevention, and they inform the direction of much of the research on which this thesis is based. The ambiguity, which prompts such questions, also opens up space for seeking answers to the way these practice models are implemented and negotiated through the police organisation, and particularly through police occupational culture, which has thwarted reform ambitions in the past.

Chapter Three looks in more detail at the literature on partnership working. In its first part, it reviews the work which has been undertaken regarding crime prevention partnerships in the wake of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act. This indicates CDRPs have been weakened as the consequence of a status differential between responsible authorities and others; a lack of initial investment in infrastructure; the disincentive of performance management-imposed agency 'core business' and a non-negotiable 'top-down' Home Office policy-making style, particularly when set against the more localism-friendly approach of other central government departments, notably the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (now the Department for Communities and Local Government).

In the second part of Chapter Three the literature on partnership working is classified into two broad types. The first, predominantly official type seeks, rather like the original aims of this research project ('before' modification), to identify and disseminate the critical success factors for partnership working. It rests on a rather impoverished understanding of partnership working, which fails to recognise its complexity or its ambiguity, given the kinds of issues raised by the first part of the chapter. The second type of literature is more critical in its orientation, recognising the centrality of conflict, and particularly inter-professional conflict, to partnership working, though this is often well hidden in strategies of conflict avoidance or the 'smorgasbord tactic' (Crawford, 1997). This critique also extends to the role of government, whose own departmentalism and failures at 'joined-up government' set an unpromising context for effective local partnership working. Government's anxiety to be 'seen to be doing something'

about crime, even in the face of its own recognised limitations and limited aspirations, provides yet more turbulence for those charged with a responsibility for making local partnerships work more effectively, forcing them to survive in a climate of permanent revolution and 'initiativitis'.

The second section of the thesis is all about the research. It begins, in Chapter Four, with the methodology. This chapter sets out the general aim of the research, and the research questions which illuminate the aim. The research strategy, which is the means by which the author sought to answer the research questions, is then set out. It demonstrates that the strategy, which is a multi-method strategy relying mainly, but not exclusively, upon loose semi-structured interviews with key participants was selected, and is therefore defensible, on the basis of a range of pragmatic and 'scientific' considerations. These include questions of accessibility and resources, but also more 'weighty' considerations, such as reliability and validity. The research strategy, it is argued, is not a perfect one, but it is one, which is good enough for the matter in hand, and for the particular requirements of doctoral research.

Chapter Five presents the results of the research in one long narrative, illustrated with a liberal supply of quotes from the research participants, and a small amount of survey data and personal observations from the field. Although the research was guided by a number of specific research questions, the data is presented in accordance with the strongest themes to emerge from the analysis. Thus the data is not tied fast to the research questions, but is left more loosely to speak for itself, giving maximum opportunity for themes not anticipated by the research questions to emerge from the data. Most of the themes do connect relatively well with the research questions, which suggests that the research is relatively well built upon the foundations of existing knowledge from previous research.

Chapter Six is the final chapter of the thesis. It summarises the content of the thesis, and especially the research findings. Specifically, it returns to the research questions and seeks to provide answers to them. Then it diverts into a discussion of the wider significance of the research and its findings. There is a fairly widely held view that partnership working, which has increased not only in the domain of crime control but also in many other policy areas, signifies the emergence of a new way of governing. It is less about government, and more about governance. It is less about the dominance of bureau-professions, such as the police service, and more about 'co-production'. Yet the results of this research suggest that, while such tendencies may be in evidence, talk of any profound shift from government to governance may be premature. In place of this idea of a break from the past, or of discontinuity, there is in fact a fair degree of continuity. Crime prevention, and the partnership working

which goes along with it, remains relatively marginal to the police service, and in its guise as crime reduction it has become rather more police service-friendly than it once was, incorporated into familiar repertoires rather than being alien to them. Thus, while radical in its own way, the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act affected no revolution for the police service, and April 1 1999 cannot be regarded as marking any kind of 'year zero' for a fundamentally new approach to policing.

Chapter 1 - An Overview of the Development of Crime Prevention and Community Safety from a Police Service Perspective

Introduction

The focus of this thesis is primarily based upon the role of the police service, as relates to crime prevention and community safety. In the second part of the thesis this role is examined through empirical research, which explores the way a single police force has sought to accommodate the new expectations placed upon it, particularly in light of the landmark Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The purpose of this chapter, however, is to set the scene by providing a broad historical overview of the development of crime prevention and community safety as a distinct policy domain, through to the present. Most of this development has occurred in the relatively recent past, over the last twenty five years or so. Therefore, as we shall come to see, the development of crime prevention and community safety is deeply entwined within broader structural changes in the nature of governing late-modern societies in general and governing crime in particular. As this thesis shall explore later, some commentators have characterised these changes in terms of a shift from 'government' to 'governance', the former concept giving much more prominence to the role of the central state, than the latter, as relates to the business of governing.

There have been a number of other historical overviews regarding the emergence of crime prevention and community safety as relates to the police service (Hughes, 1998; Crawford, 1997 and 1998; Gilling, 1997; Koch, 1998). However, while this chapter will draw upon the work of such authors, it will also bring the discussion up to date, examining more recent policy developments that have had a particular bearing upon local practice, which were the subject of the empirical research undertaken for this thesis. It is not, therefore, necessary to explore the subject in significant detail, given that this has been done already.

In examining the development of crime prevention and community safety, from a police perspective, two particular dominant themes are highlighted. Firstly, crime prevention and community safety raise fundamental challenges for the police service in relation to 'what they do'. They imply, for example, a need for the police service to move more 'upstream', from detecting crime by apprehending offenders to preventing crime through deterrent or disruptive activities or through encouraging others to take a responsibility for preventing crime, for example, by acting as information brokers (Ericson and Haggerty, 1997) allowing others to adopt appropriate situational or social crime prevention measures. Finally by encouraging, and *cajoling*, private citizens to act as the *eyes and ears* of the police within their own community. While crime prevention and community safety raise such challenges, they do not necessarily resolve them. In part because

there remains contested politics over what is the most effective way of controlling or preventing crime and, in part, because the challenge posed by crime prevention and community safety remains ambiguous due to contradictory policy developments within policing, which serve to question how far they are really intended to divert the police service from their 'day job' of catching criminals. As a result, crime prevention and community safety continue to remain relatively marginal to the police mainstream (see Chapter 2).

Secondly, the development of crime prevention and community safety raises challenges for the police around 'how they do their job', and particularly how the tasks associated with crime prevention and community safety have been incorporated into the police's organisational map, culture and functional repertoire. This represents far more than just a bureaucratic or technical question. A dominant theme of policy development in this area has been partnership, a term that has been arrived at after brief flirtations with others, such as 'the multi-agency approach' (Gilling, 1994), 'the inter-agency approach' (Crawford and Jones, 1995) or 'the co-ordinated approach' (Home Office, 1984). The partnership approach potentially poses a radical challenge for the police service with regard to the way in which it conducts its business and the services relationship with other agencies. It challenges the traditional isolationism of the police, which some have identified as a key feature of the services occupational culture (Holdaway, 1983), and it also challenges the organisational and political tradition of Constabulary independence, particularly as partnership working draws the police service towards local authorities and into the 'challenging' minefield of local politics. Again, while partnership working issues a challenge, that challenge remains unresolved, in part because of the uncertainties of partnership working, which often leave a substantial gap between theory and practice and in part because, as a result of other policy developments, the extent to which the police service is supposed to throw itself into partnership working, as opposed to concentrating on its *core business*, remains fundamentally unclear.

The Early Beginnings

Although the prevention of crime was written in to the police service instructions, issued to the first permanent police force in the UK, the Metropolitan Police, in 1829 (Johnston, 2000), it is generally agreed that the concept of crime prevention, as it was then used, had a rather different meaning from its contemporary usage. Although, as the main crime prevention texts indicate, crime prevention remains, in many ways, an ambiguous and unsatisfactory term that has a 'catch all' quality to it (Gilling, 1997). Certainly if the police's early crime prevention role was that of what Reiner (1992) calls the 'scarecrow function' of preventive patrolling, then while they certainly inscribed this into the way territorial policing was organised into a series of beat

areas, the police service carried, in its early years, no broader understanding of a crime preventive mandate, and patrolling was largely perceived as a 'symbolic' function. In terms of the police service's professional aspirations and development, in this early period, detection usurped prevention. Perhaps prevention was reconceived by the more rewarding, more exciting and more *macho* role of detection.

Such a re-conception fitted a time when crime was relatively low, and barring the odd moral panic did not feature prominently on the political agenda. It also fitted a time when positivist Lombrosian criminology was dominant, seeing crime as a problem caused by relatively few 'criminal types' living amongst a population of generally law-abiding citizens, whom the police could readily catch so they could be taken out of circulation and subjected, as appropriate, to punishment and/or treatment. However, once established, detection became the dominant feature of the police's professional identity, however, not to everyone's satisfaction. Gilling (1997:73), for example, notes the criticisms made by the first secretary of what was later to become the Howard League, who likened the police to "rat-catchers" who required a continual supply of rats to justify their existence. It was mooted that police energies may have been better expended ploughing more into preventive efforts in terms of the kinds of moral reforms that might, to continue with the analogy, stop the rats from breeding in the first place.

It is no coincidence that the first movement in the direction of a new approach to crime prevention coincided with a noticeable increase in the crime rates after the Second World War. Much of this was due, in particular, to an increase in acquisitive crime (O'Malley and Hutchinson, 2007). Although pressure for change was not initially intense, significantly, it came from outside of government circles, specifically from the insurance industry, whose continued profitability was threatened by the losses incurred from insurance claims, especially for losses incurred from commercial premises. Just as in the nineteenth century, when it had pushed for changes in the philosophy of fire prevention, placing a much greater responsibility for such prevention into the hands of those seeking insurance cover (O'Malley and Hutchinson, 2007). However, the insurance industry sought ways of placing responsibility back on commercial businesses to prevent crime through their own actions, rather than leaving it all to the police. In part it achieved this by working with the Home Office to run a series of publicity campaigns, which sought to encourage greater security awareness, initially among commercial businesses, but also among the general population. Effectively, the insurance industry was playing a key part in seeking to change the way crime prevention was delivered, by encouraging businesses and others to engage in the sort of actuarial risk management, which commentators were later to

identify as a distinguishing feature of crime prevention in the last decade of the twentieth century (O'Malley and Hutchinson, 2007).

The police were encouraged to play their part in driving this new crime prevention message home at the local level, and providing security advice to those who needed it. Some police forces established Crime Prevention Departments for this purpose, supported by the establishment in 1963 of the Home Office National Crime Prevention centre. The use of police officers for such purposes was regarded as a model of good practice by the Home Office's Cornish Committee in the early-1960s and one of the recommendations of that committee was for police forces across the country to establish Crime Prevention Departments to achieve similar ends (Home Office, 1965).

In reality, the new crime prevention 'specialism' did not seem to threaten the dominance of detection as the main approaches to crime control. Indeed, as is often the case with specialisation, it was accompanied by a degree of 'ghettoisation' as the Crime Prevention Departments lay well outside of the police mainstream, leaving it generally untouched (Harvey et al., 1989). With the benefit of hindsight, however, it is possible to see how the interventions of the insurance industry set in motion a chain of events, which were eventually to undermine the sovereignty of the police service as the foremost institution of crime prevention. This could be seen as the start of a slide, which has taken the lead responsibility for crime prevention away from the police, and indeed away from the state, resulting in its dispersion more widely into civil society.

The recommendations of the Cornish Committee also led to the establishment of the Standing Committee on Crime Prevention which, once again, provided an opportunity for the insurance industry and the Home Office to exercise leverage over commerce to engage in their own crime prevention, conceived as future-oriented crime risk management. This resulted, for example, in industry-wide agreements for new security standards to be put in place on all new house-building and in the fitting of steering column locks to all new cars. Significantly, the focus of the Standing Committee was very much on acquisitive crime, reflecting the particular concerns of the insurance industry (O'Malley and Hutchinson, 2007).

The Cornish Committee also recommended the setting up of local crime prevention panels (CPPs) where representatives of local businesses, local authorities, voluntary organisations and the police could meet together and examine ways in which crime prevention defences could be enhanced, again by following the model of crime risk management. From the late-1960s onwards such CPPs came to be established, eventually in their hundreds, usually based on city and town boundaries, and they provided early examples of partnership bodies representing a blueprint for much more significant

developments in the 1980s and beyond. What was most significant about the CPPs, however, was probably the extent to which they managed 'not' to disturb the local crime control environment, which remained heavily dominated by the police service.

The recommendations of the Cornish Committee may well have "laid the foundations of a structure for crime prevention still visible today" (Laycock and Heal, 1989: 315), however, they certainly did not amount to a sea change in terms of what the police did, or how they did it. As the work of Harvey et al. (1989) regarding police crime prevention officers has demonstrated, such officers typically make up only a very small proportion of total establishment strength, they were often staffed by officers approaching retirement and they remain marginal to core business, both organisationally and occupationally. Furthermore, as Heal (1987: 9) says of this period of crime prevention, "the climate was against it. It was the period of fast developing technology and information systems and, for many people, these wonders seemed to be the answer to rising crime." In this regard, it is important to note that the Cornish Committee was established in 1960 as a committee on crime prevention 'and detection'.

The crime prevention developments, discussed above, may have emanated from the report's recommendations, however, so too did the much higher profile 'new system' of unit beat policing, where radio communications and cars were intertwined with patrolling officers to provide a much quicker response time to crime incidents and, it was thought, would significantly improve the police's effectiveness in terms of detection. At the time, 'official faith' was placed much more firmly in the potential of this technological innovation to *win the fight against crime*, than it was in the capacity of the seemingly much more mundane developments in crime prevention.

If the insurance industry had been responsible for helping to launch the first wave of crime prevention reforms in the 1960s then, notwithstanding the continued interest of that industry in the context of seemingly ever-increasing crime rates, by the mid-1970s the main thrust came from the Home Office. In its mid-decade review of criminal justice policy the Home Office committed itself to searching for solutions to crime, which lay beyond the reaches of the criminal justice system, and that drew upon new approaches within it (Home Office, 1977). It is plausible to suggest that the more instrumental role played by the Home Office was attributable in part to the presence of key players such as Ron Clarke, who has since played a major part in the global development of situational crime prevention and a rise in the UK of 'crime science'. It was probably also attributable to the growing politicisation of law and order, which Downes and Morgan (2007) trace to the end of the 1960s, however, was intensified through the 1970s, making it more difficult for central government 'not' to be seen to be doing something positive about the growing crime problem.

In the context of the early-1980s, a period Laycock and Heal (1989) suggest marked a 'renaissance' for crime prevention, it was certainly becoming more difficult for the Home Office not to be countenancing serious reforms in crime control policy, for a number of specific reasons. Firstly, officially-sponsored research into different sentencing alternatives (Brody, 1976) and into police patrolling and detection (Clarke and Hough, 1980) started to demonstrate such approaches were fundamentally limited in their effectiveness. In the case of police detection this was highly dependent upon the contribution of the public, in the same way crime prevention was. Secondly, as the fiscal crisis of the mid-1970s took hold, like other central government departments, the Home Office was faced with a reality that it could no longer simply invest in more of the same and needed to develop effective ways of working, which recognised the 'limitations' of the criminal justice system (Home Office, 1977).

Thirdly, and on a related point again, crime surveys which had been conducted in the 1970s, and particularly the Home Office's first British Crime Survey (Home Office, 1982), helped to compose a picture, which indicated that the vast majority of crime was either not reported, recorded or did not result in a conviction. Thus, if crime was going to be tackled effectively, it had to be from outside the criminal justice system. Fourthly, and perhaps fortuitously, as noted above, within the Home Office researchers were beginning to develop a conception of crime as opportunity (Mayhew et al., 1976), and a model of situational crime prevention that worked with such a conception (Gladstone, 1980). This offered a promising way forward for crime prevention, shifting it from the 'unfocused' (Gilling, 1997) form during the 1960s, to a problem-oriented form, which made it much easier, in theory, to ascertain its utility and effectiveness in specific circumstances. Early experience, moreover, suggested that it was indeed effective in such circumstances (Clarke and Mayhew, 1980), as a way of directing specific tailored measures at particular crime problems which, in reality, obviated the need for 'downstream' criminal justice responses.

The renaissance of crime prevention then, required the adoption of a problem-oriented, rationalistic situational model of crime prevention by agencies whose resources could be drawn upon to deploy such tailored measures against particular crime problems. As Croft (1980:v) noted in his foreword to Clarke and Mayhew's influential work on designing out crime, "the problem of preventing crime is not so much knowing what to do, but of persuading people to undertake the necessary action." This had also represented a problem in the 1960s, rendered more difficult by the fact that the crime risks required to be managed were prospective, abstract and not specific. However, following the logic of the situational model, the risks by the 1980s were more concrete, based upon specific crime problems that were known and, which could be analysed in order to identify specific solutions.

Conservative Crime Prevention Policy

The Home Office's chosen approach for 'persuading' people to undertake the necessary action depended upon two main measures. In 1982 the Home Office Crime Prevention Unit was established to continue gathering evidence of effective approaches to crime prevention. It was intended that these might form part of an evidence-based armoury for situational crime prevention and they publicised numerous research reports, which were widely disseminated. Then, in 1984, the Home Office issued Circular 8/84, addressed to the police service, the probation service and particularly local authorities with an uncompromising message articulated at its outset (Home Office, 1984: 1)

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

Circular 8/84 effectively called upon the public agencies, to which it was addressed, to take the lead in establishing local partnerships who could identify their local crime problems and subject them to the rigours of a problem-oriented situational approach. The Home Office sought to demonstrate what could be achieved and, in 1986, funded an experiment known as the Five Towns Initiative in which co-ordinators were employed in each of the five designated areas to bring together such local partnerships and to drive them towards the situational approach. In reality, the eighteen-month experiment proved to be a limited success (Home Office Crime Prevention Unit, 1988).

If one side of the crime prevention coin represented self help and 'persuading people to undertake necessary actions' to achieve this, the other side was persuading the police to 'give up some of their sovereignty'. This required the police service to be willing for others to take actions, which did not necessarily chime with their own occupational and organisational cultural preferences for a detection based approach.

Just as the Home Office came under pressure to change its approach between the mid-1970s and early-1980s, so similar pressure came to bare upon the police service. Firstly, 'unwelcome' research evidenced the ineffectiveness of patrolling and detection, which made it harder for the police to defend the status quo. Secondly, and relatedly (because of the importance of public co-operation to police effectiveness), police legitimacy had taken a knock, partly because of

corruption scandals, and partly because of the bad image gained by the police in their handling of the 1981 urban riots (Reiner, 1992). Thirdly, although this took longer to percolate through to the police service due to the political capital the Conservatives had sought to make out of investing heavily in the forces of law and order, in 1983 the police fell under the spotlight of the Financial Management Initiative (FMI) and pressure was placed upon them to demonstrate their efficiency and effectiveness.

The police response to Circular 114/83 (Home Office, 1983), which introduced the FMI to the police service, was to seek to roll out a model of 'policing by objectives', based upon Goldstein's (1979) idea of problem-oriented policing, which involved a certain degree of management decentralisation and a focus, as the terminology implies, upon established local problems, which could become the targets of measurable objectives. There were obvious parallels or synergies between this problem-oriented approach and the problem-oriented methodology of situational crime prevention although, significantly, they did not necessarily mean exactly the same kind of role for the police in each case.

A fourth pressure for change emanated from within the police service itself. It did not come from those involved in the crime prevention specialism who, as noted above, remained relatively marginal to the police organisation and their standard operating procedures. However, it did come from within the ACPO ranks, and particularly from the community policing philosophy of John Alderson, the former Chief Constable of the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary. Alderson's community policing philosophy, which we do not have the capacity to explore in depth, was one broadly in support of the Home Office's push in the direction of crime prevention;

"The prevention of crime can be achieved by proactive measures including education, social welfare, environmental planning and socialising influences of a multifarious kind. It can in part be achieved by police guarding, patrolling and scaring off; or by use of alarms and security technology; or by detection, conviction and penal measures and supervision. They are all important as a crime prevention and fear prevention strategy. Community policing is concerned mainly with the proactive." (Alderson, 1983; 3).

Although Alderson was ambiguous when it came to defining precisely what 'the proactive' was, and what the police's role should be within it, he did clearly separate it from detection and, as such, lent support to the Home Office's push for a stronger preventive orientation. As Weatheritt (1983) wryly observed, the promotion of community policing could be regarded as making a virtue out of necessity, since the need for a more preventive, collaborative approach was being very strongly espoused by the Home Office at this time.

Alderson has been thought of as something of a maverick within the police service, and his thinking was not necessarily always in-step with the perspectives of others within ACPO. However, at this particular juncture the idea of community policing was very much in vogue, and it was taken up with some enthusiasm at a Bramshill conference in 1982, organised by the Home Office. The conference provided an opportunity for the Home Office to *exert* pressure on the police service to accommodate the preventive paradigm being developed at this time, and it undoubtedly helped in the aftermath of the 1981 urban riots and the shaking of public confidence in the police. Clearly, the police service was immersed within an environment where there was a need for the police to be more open to ideas, in order to help and consolidate their legitimacy.

The idea of community policing, arguably, provided an acceptable lens through which the police could view their contribution to crime prevention without necessarily disturbing the emphasis given elsewhere within the organisation to detection. Significantly, this model was adopted by the new Commissioner for the Metropolitan Police, Sir Kenneth Newman, who spoke in particular of his intention for the Metropolitan Police to move in the direction of 'multi-agency policing', which meant "police collaboration with other agencies, 'social, economic, cultural and educational', to develop solutions which address the root cause rather than the symptoms of crime." (Newman, 1983: 8). Distilled into an action plan, this vision of multi-agency policing was broadly consistent with the orientation of the situational model of crime prevention (Weatheritt, 1986).

Despite Circular 8/84, it is apparent that progress in the development of crime prevention was painfully slow. In a stock-taking article regarding situational crime prevention towards the end of the 1980's, Heal and Laycock (1989: 322) said that "the notion that crime and its prevention is the responsibility of the police and the criminal justice system is entrenched; it is hardly going to be turned around overnight." Of course, their point applies as much to the police's unwillingness to let go of their monopolistic control of local crime control as it does to other agencies' preparedness to take up the mantle.

Slow progress in the development of crime prevention was one of the factors, which accounted for the announcement of the Safer Cities Programme in 1988. Effectively, Safer Cities was an extension of the Five Towns model across a larger number of areas (there were two phases of Safer Cities that brought it to 40 or more towns and cities across the UK by the mid-1990s), involving a longer time period and more in the way of resources. In addition, 1990 saw the Home Office issue another circular, Circular 44/90 (Home Office, 1990), which reiterated the message of Circular 8/84 and was accompanied by the booklet 'Partnership in Crime Prevention', which had been put together

by Crime Concern, a specialist crime prevention agency the Home Office had created in 1988 to provide a source of expertise, which would help to drive the crime prevention agenda forward. In order to lend it more weight, Circular 44/90 also obliged local authorities and the police, to respond to the Home Office with information regarding the crime prevention strategies they were undertaking.

The responses the Home Office received were clearly a disappointment, leading the Home Office to establish a specially convened committee of what had by now become the Standing Conference on Crime Prevention with a remit, "to consider and monitor the progress made in the local delivery of crime prevention by the multi-agency or partnership approach" (Home Office, 1991: 10). This committee, later to become known as the Morgan Committee, authored a landmark report regarding the development of crime prevention (1991). The fact of its establishment bares testimony to the on-going difficulties faced by the Home Office in seeking to translate its 'good idea' of crime prevention into reality, and more importantly, action at the local level, despite two circulars, a considerable amount of central funding and an equal quantity of official exhortation.

The Morgan Report provided its own diagnosis of the problems facing the local development of the partnership approach to crime prevention. The finer details of what it had to say will be considered later as seeking to understand the difficulties of the partnership approach, from a police perspective, is central to the aim of this thesis, and the Morgan Report's account is one of many, some from 'official' sources and some from more academic critiques, which will need to be considered in due course. For the present, since the purpose of this opening chapter is to set the scene, the important points to note are that the Morgan Report endorsed the partnership approach, but recommended that it should be put on a statutory footing, specifically for local authorities and the police, so crime prevention partnership working became obligatory, rather than discretionary as it had been until this point. The recommendation that partnership working should become statutory was clearly intended to address the problem hitherto encountered that while crime prevention seemed like a good idea, responses to the 1990 circular in particular suggested that partnerships were not being set up locally as the Home Office had hoped. The problem as Morgan saw it was that "crime prevention is a peripheral concern for all the agencies and a truly core activity for none of them" (Home Office, 1991: 15).

The Morgan Report also suggested that along with a statutory responsibility should come dedicated ring-fenced funding, thereby effectively saying that the project experiments developed in the 1980s – the Five Towns Initiative and the Safer Cities Programme – should be rolled out nationally and shifted from project status to permanent programmes of delivery. Finally, Morgan also suggested that local

partnerships could be made more meaningful if they were conceived not in terms of 'crime prevention', but in terms of 'community safety', a concept that in Morgan's view had a broader meaning. Crime prevention, it was believed, was too narrow a concept implying only situational measures of target hardening and so forth. Whereas community safety, while encompassing such measures, also involved more 'social' measures focused, for example, on developmental prevention and community development and on addressing the fear of crime. Therefore, community safety would appear to be relevant to a wider range of agencies, which might be included within local partnerships and therefore, by default, encourage wider participation:

From a police perspective, the idea of community safety resonated with Alderson's vision of community policing, or Newman's multi-agency policing, and therefore it did not represent a particularly contentious concept. It may have been more contentious for a Conservative government whose right-wing politics made it less open to 'social' assessments of the causes of crime, although as others (Nash and Savage, 1994) have noted, this was a period when the Home Office had entered a less right-wing 'age of reason' and when officials had encouraged ministers to draw their inspiration from more 'progressive' social models of crime prevention, such as those operating at the time in France (Jones at al., 1994).

What was potentially more problematic, for both the government and the police, was the local authority involvement in this philosophy. For the police there were concerns about being drawn into local politics, which would inevitably accompany statutory partnerships with local authorities and, for much of the rest of the decade, ACPO was distinctly 'lukewarm' regarding the idea of such partnerships. For the government, there was political hostility to a local authority sector who could not be 'trusted' with additional powers or resources, and this could explain the failure of the government to respond to the Morgan Report's recommendations.

While the Home Office continued to promote the partnership approach for the rest of the Conservatives period in office, the idea of statutory partnerships, while taken up by both of the main opposition parties, was never seriously entertained by the government. It did expand the Safer Cities Programme, and it continued to promote the partnership approach, for example by commissioning Crime Concern to produce a booklet entitled 'A Practical Guide to Crime Prevention for Local Partnerships' (Crime Concern, 1993). Significantly, this drew the following response from the outgoing president of ACPO's Crime Prevention committee (Owen, 1994: 7): "crime prevention activity needs core funding, not more glossy brochures endorsing the partnership approach."

Crime Prevention Policy under New Labour

When New Labour entered power in 1997 they made very clear it was their legislative intent to establish statutory partnerships in fact, their intent had been clear since at least 1993 when Tony Blair (1993) identified this as one of his key objectives whilst serving as Shadow Home Secretary. Before the passing of the Crime and Disorder Act in 1998 both ACPO and the local authority associations were involved in a certain amount of 'behind-the-scenes' lobbying. The Local Authority Associations were pushing for the lead statutory responsibility to be handed to them, whilst ACPO's position had softened to the extent that it was now prepared to 'accept' a joint responsibility with local authorities, although earlier (ACPO, 1996) it had been arguing that the police service occupied 'the most prominent place' amongst local agencies.

As a consequence, the legislators agreed that it should be a joint responsibility. However, as the statutory guidance (Home Office, 1998) made clear, while the police and local authorities were to be 'responsible authorities' as the terminology named them, neither was to be regarded as 'first among equals', and the whole point was the new Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs), which were required to be established, should be opened up to a wider constituency including, not only, the police and the local authority, but also any other local agencies from across the mixed economy who had a potential role to play in local crime prevention. The partnerships were intended to produce fully 'joined up' local strategies, premised upon the same problem-oriented approach, which the Home Office had been pushing for since 1984. They were to be based upon an analysis of local crime and disorder problems completed every three years and presented for local consultation as crime audits, much as Morgan had recommended.

In summation, New Labour put into effect all of Morgan's earlier recommendations, apart from the one proposing a local ring-fenced budget for community safety. Similar to their Conservative predecessors, New Labour argued that local partnerships could be self-financing because of the likely savings that were to accrue from successful local crime prevention, a fundamental issue, which was to later represent a significant inhibitor within some partnerships.

Since the passing of the Crime and Disorder Act in 1998, the structure of local crime prevention has remained broadly similar, with CDRPs continuing to be regarded as the main vehicles through which crime prevention should be delivered. These CDRPs have put in place three-yearly crime reduction strategies, beginning on the first of April in each of the years 1999, 2002, and 2005. It would be quite wrong to assume, however, that the last decade has been marked by any great degree of continuity and stability. Rather, it has been subjected to

what Crawford (2007) calls hyper-politicisation and hyper-innovation, as a constant succession of changes have been experienced. Some changes could be regarded as the adjustment or fine-tuning of policy in response to the experience of policy-makers and practitioners in what remains a relatively new departure in policy. Many such adjustments were necessary because crime prevention has become entwined in the broader movement of 'modernisation', pursued particularly through the avenues of police reform and local government reform (Gilling, 2007).

Some changes, however, may be more properly regarded as political reactions, sometimes of a 'knee-jerk' type, as New Labour has endeavoured to retain law and order as a political strength, rather than as a political liability, having worked so hard in the course of the 1990s to wrestle the issue from the Conservatives who had previously been regarded as the 'natural' party of law and order. Many of these policy changes were evidenced in the course of the research and have informed this thesis, having an important effect upon the nature of partnership working, as will be demonstrated in subsequent chapters. Limitations of space mean that it is not possible to explore these changes in great detail, so what follows is a summary of the key changes, which have occurred since 1998, and particularly those changes that may have had an important impact upon local partnership working.

A number of policy changes, which have occurred can be grouped under the general theme of 'centralisation'. Initially, CDRPs were established very much at arm's length from the Home Office, and under the presumption that their operation was to ostensibly reflect the principle of localism and, according to the rhetoric, CDRPs were established to find 'local solutions for local problems'. While this may have been the case, since 1998 a number of developments have occurred, which have served to increase the amount of central influence and direction over the activities of local CDRPs. Therefore, although CDRPs were initially provided with no additional funds, and produced their first set of strategies (in 1999) on the assumption that no such funds would be made available, the Home Office actually performed a U-turn on this issue and from 1999 through to the present, has made a bewildering array of funding streams available to CDRPs. Starting from 1999, CDRPs have been able to access funds from, amongst others, the Crime Reduction Programme, the Safer Communities Initiative, the Partnership Development Fund, Communities Against Drugs funding, the Building Safer Communities fund, the Basic Command Unit fund, and the Stronger and Safer Communities fund. While such funding may have been used to oil the cogs of local practice, enabling CDRPs to move from aspiration into action its effect has, in reality, been to extend central influence over the business of local CDRPs because, as one might expect, the central funding comes very much with significant 'strings' attached.

Such strings have subsequently taken a variety of forms. Crime Reduction Programme funding, for example, was allocated on a competitive basis to localities who could demonstrate, in response to a list of central priority problems, that they had both a sufficiently serious problem and a credible 'evidence-based' solution to it. Conditions for the receipt of other funds have generally taken the form of asking CDRPs to set out plans in relation to how they would intend to spend funds, notionally allocated to them, asking that these plans address a set of central priorities, and requiring an account as to how the funds have been spent and how effective such spending has been.

Central priorities have been articulated, since 1999, through Home Office Public Service Agreements (PSA's), which constitute contractual agreements between the Treasury and the Home Office over what the latter will 'deliver' in return for funding allocated every three years through the Comprehensive Spending Review. These PSA's have been supported locally by an array of Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI's) against which the performance of individual CDRP's and police Basic Command Units (BCU's) can be measured. CDRP's, in other words, have had to respond to Home Office PSA's, with the effectiveness of their response being measured by the use of BVPI's, which sought to provide a 'common currency' for performance measurement across the country. This served to facilitate the production of performance 'league tables', the use of which has been enhanced by placing CDRP's into 'family' groups, the purpose, to enable a degree of 'like-against-like' comparison.

Centralisation has been assisted to a great extent by the establishment of what, in effect, amounts to a vicarious presence of the Home Office across the regions of England and Wales. From 2000 onwards, a Crime Reduction Directorate was placed in each of the 10 Regional Government Offices and Welsh Assembly. Amongst other functions, the Crime Reduction Director and their small teams of civil servants have been required to act as the regional conduits for Home Office funding. It is they who distribute the funds to the local CDRPs, and it is they who operate the Home Office's performance management regime requiring CDRPs to bid, and account, for central funding. They monitor the CDRPs' general performance against a continuous performance ethos of Best Value and a 'closing the gap' mentality, which particularly scrutinises those CDRPs who find themselves in the 'poorest performing' quartile, as measured by the highest rates of priority crimes in their family groupings.

Together the regime, which accompanies central funding and the performance management activities of the regional Crime Reduction Teams, constitute a means by which central government exerts its influence by effectively micro-managing the business of CDRPs. In part, this micro-management can be seen as the contemporary expression of the accountability relationship, which has always existed

between central and local governmental bodies. Local bodies have historically had to account for, at the very least, their probity in the use of public funds.

Clearly, however, this accountability relationship appears to have become more prescriptive from the centre. Perhaps in part this is due to the politicisation of law and order, which provides central government with a much greater 'stake' in the 'performance' of local bodies in an area that can, at extreme levels, serve to determine the 'political fate' of governments at election times. Also, perhaps this is because central government is mistrustful of CDRPs and such mistrust may be a corollary to the new public management, which has been well described as "the institutionalisation of mistrust" (Crawford, 2001). It may also be a response to evidence, which raises concerns regarding the capacity of local CDRPs that came from, amongst other sources, an early Home Office review of CDRP activities (Phillips et al., 2000 and 2002), and a review of the Crime Reduction Programme identifying a range of important 'implementation failures' (Hedderman & Williams, 2001; Tilley, 2004), many of which were laid at the feet of CDRPs.

Yet the mistrust may also represent the default position of a government who remain uncertain in relation to exactly how partnerships, and the new approach to governing that they represent, fit into traditional modernist structures of public administration. Whatever the cause of the mistrust, its presence has inserted a top-down 'pull' dynamic into the business of local partnership working, which has had important knock-on effects as will be explained later.

If one theme of policy change since 1998 has been centralisation, another theme has been a strengthening of local structures and capacity. Although arguably, this is linked to centralisation in so far as the underlying aim of such strengthening has been to facilitate the centre's ability to govern 'through' CDRPs. To some extent, of course, central funding has achieved this, providing some CDRPs with an opportunity to employ dedicated community safety officers (CSOs) or to employ analysts and other technological aids such as Geographical Information Systems (GIS), or MOSAIC which enhanced the technical capacity or competence of CDRPs. At the same time, the Home Office has pursued a general strategy of attempting to increase the expertise of local practitioners, for example, by providing them with a range of on-line crime reduction 'toolkits' and by providing access for CDRPs to the consultancy expertise of agencies such as NACRO and Crime Concern.

Although it has been a long time coming, the 2006 Police and Justice Act also served to strengthen local capacity by reforming the information-sharing provisions of the 1998 Act. Those provisions, it was originally believed, would open the door to an easy exchange of

aggregated data between agencies who were planning local crime reduction strategies. However, experience indicated that the provisions lacked 'teeth' enabling, but not requiring, the exchange of information and therefore not overcoming some of the traditional obstacles such as claims of confidentiality. The 2006 Act has imposed a positive duty on local agencies to exchange information which, it is thought, will help to overcome these sorts of obstacles.

Strengthening local structures has also been achieved by other means. Thus, for example, initially only the local police commander and the local authority chief executive were identified as the responsible authorities charged with establishing CDRPs and fulfilling the statutory mandate to produce audits and strategies. Following the Police Reform Act 2002, however, the list of responsible authorities was increased in April 2003 to include Police Authorities and Fire Authorities and, from April 2004, Primary Care Trusts. The same Act required either the merger of, or (particularly in two-tier areas) the establishment of closer working relationships between, CDRPs and Drug and Alcohol Action Teams (DAATs). Meanwhile, the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 endowed CDRPs with a central responsibility for developing local anti-social behaviour policy, with additional Home Office funding, allowing many to employ new anti-social behaviour co-ordinators to facilitate the pursuit of this task. All of these changes, it could be argued, were intended to establish CDRPs as more 'joined up' local bodies, and for the purposes of this research project it is particularly important to note the incorporation of local Police Authorities into CDRPs, as a means of streamlining CDRP crime reduction strategies and local policing plans.

The third theme of policy changes since 1998 is, given the first theme, somewhat paradoxical, as at the same time a number of developments have served to enhance centralisation, others have sought to increase the localism of CDRPs. The seeds of such localism were sown by the Audit Commission (2002) in a report, which was generally critical of the direction taken by previous Home Office policy.

Amongst other things (see Chapter 3), the Audit Commission suggested that local authorities needed to exert more of a 'steer' over the business of local crime prevention and, to this end, it recommended that a portfolio responsibility, for what the Audit Commission preferred to call community safety, should be lodged with a member of the local authority's new cabinet-style government structure. It also saw the business of CDRPs falling neatly within the domain of the new Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs), established under the Local Government Act 2000, to produce community strategies to address the social, economic and environmental well-being of their areas. The ultimate responsibility for producing such strategies, on this occasion, rested with the local authority in a newly conceived 'community leadership' role (Stoker, 2004).

The idea of enhancing the localism of CDRPs was taken up by the Home Office, particularly under the leadership of David Blunkett, who showed a strong personal commitment both to a 'new localism' (McLaughlin, 2007) and to the idea of civil renewal, in which it was imagined that citizens would play a much more integral role in the governance, and indeed the 'co-production', of local crime control.

Thus, at the same time as the neighbourhood policing agenda was being unfolded for the police service (see Chapter 2) so CDRPs were required, under the arrangements for the new Building Safer Communities fund in 2004, to spend some of those funds on enhancing community engagement. In the same year, the fund's name was changed to the Stronger and Safer Communities fund, and it was made into one of the four priority policy areas of the newly-announced Local Area Agreements (LAA's), which were to be operational in some areas by April 2005. The LAA's were intended to provide an opportunity for local areas to be more 'flexible' regarding the way they delivered key public service areas, like crime prevention, making them less vulnerable to central prescription and direction. Although, ironically, priority outcomes are still identified nationally through PSA's. The idea is that LAA's enable localities, and specifically LSP's for which LAA's serve as the delivery plans, and have more flexibility surrounding the way such outcomes will be achieved.

Finally, the process of enhancing localism was continued with the publication in January 2006 of the Home Office's (2006) long-awaited review into the workings of CDRP's and the passing of the 2006 Police and Justice Act, which subscribed to many of that Review's recommendations. In particular, the Act confirms the intention of embedding the business of CDRP's into LSP's by requiring that, in two-tier areas, the CDRP's should be split along operational and strategic lines so that strategic bodies could operate at the county level, the same level of operation as the LSP.

Although this strategic merging of CDRP's in two-tier areas may appear to run counter to the principle of localism, the subsequent embedding of them in LSP's, in theory, re-establishes and consolidates such localism providing opportunities for flexible local delivery which are not, in theory, so achievable by the lower tier district councils operating in two-tier areas. In terms of accountability arrangements, the 2006 Act places much greater emphasis upon local visibility, requiring CDRPs to make regular progress reports to local communities. It also requires them to hold 'face the people' sessions where senior members of the CDRP must make themselves available to the local community in a fashion not dissimilar to that utilised by police community liaison panels. It also empowers members of the community, operating via local councillors, to instigate a 'community call-to-action', whereby CDRPs are required to address issues, which they may have hitherto been shown to have neglected. Lastly, the

legislation places the business of CDRPs within the purview of local authority Overview and Scrutiny Committees, which perform a similar function to that performed at Westminster by select committees.

Many of the changes discussed above have either occurred recently, or are in the process of unfolding. Some fall outside of the temporal limits set down by this research project, although since many of the changes were either trailed in earlier documents (e.g. the idea of the community call-to-action had been mooted in a 2004 White Paper), or anticipated with some confidence quite possibly because of the odd 'leak' from the Whitehall machine, they hold some relevance for the research on which this thesis is based.

Chapter Summary and Discussion

This chapter has covered the development of crime prevention over the modern period, painted with a necessarily broad brush. In chronological order it has shown that although the police service was originally given a preventive mandate, in practice it has preferred to pursue its ends through a particular organisational emphasis upon detection. The development of crime prevention, conceived of as a more 'upstream' activity, was left initially to the insurance industry, inspired by its concerns about the negative effects of rising acquisitive crime on its continued profitability, latterly it has been addressed by the Home Office who has had to deal with the consequences of fiscal crisis and the crises of confidence and competence that have accompanied research evidence about the effectiveness of policing and sentencing and about the full extent of crime, which lies beyond the reach of the criminal justice system.

The model of crime prevention the Home Office has sought to develop has been a relatively consistent one since the mid-1970s, based upon the idea of a problem-oriented focus pursued through a partnership approach. Under the Conservatives, this model failed to make much headway, for reasons that will be explored in more detail in Chapter 3. Under New Labour, the model has been institutionalised in statutory CDRPs, however, despite becoming a feature of the policy landscape over the last decade, and into the foreseeable future, the partnerships have not thrived. Again, the reasons for this will be more fully explored later but this chapter has shown, in mitigation, CDRPs have been subjected to a range of contradictory pressures. While their capacity has been enhanced to address some of the 'structural instabilities' (Gilling, 2007), which were inscribed into their establishment in 1998 they have, in reality, sat uncomfortably between centralising and localising pressures and subsequent policy developments. On the one hand, the Home Office and the government offices have attempted to micro-manage the business of CDRPs, while on the other, more pressure has been placed upon local authorities to 'own' crime prevention and upon local communities to participate in its

'co-production'. CDRPs would be excused for not knowing which way to face.

In contrast to some of the more established histories of crime prevention (Gilling, 1997 etc.) some attempt has been made to offer a 'police reading' of this history. Without going into more detail on the different pressures to which the police service has been subjected in recent decades, it has proven difficult to facilitate this in anything other than a relatively cursory way. Hence, to deepen understanding, in Chapter 2 an attempt shall be made to contextualise the development of crime prevention within the broader and equally complex context of police reform. For the present, the police perspective demonstrates that, initially, the police service was able to manage crime prevention by ghettoising it within specialist departments. However, as crime prevention has evolved, its problem-oriented and partnership-oriented form has connected it with developments in community policing and problem-oriented policing, both of which began to take root in the police service during the early 1980s. As we shall see, these developments have their own parallel police histories and despite their 'elective affinity' with crime prevention, do not always connect with it in practice.

Returning to the question of the two challenges posed to the police service by the emergence of crime prevention, namely what the police service should be doing and how they should be doing it, the developments discussed in this chapter raise far more questions than answers.

Crime prevention policy under the Conservatives was initially premised upon a situational approach, which was criticised by the Morgan Report (Home Office, 1991) for its narrowness of perspective. However, while New Labour initially appeared to support Morgan's broader conception of community safety, most Home Office policy since 1997 has operated with the idea of crime reduction, which when translated seems to imply a mixture of 'upstream' situational approaches and more 'downstream' measures such as enforcement activity against prolific offenders and anti-social behaviour, delivered by means of tactical measures such as penalty notices for disorder. The tight confines under which CDRPs have operated, combined with time-limited funding and pressure to deliver short-term results, serve to constrain opportunities for more long-term 'social' crime prevention measures. Although it has to be highlighted that opportunities for these kinds of measures do exist elsewhere, beyond CDRPs, for example in the neighbourhood renewal activities of LSPs. Since CDRPs are increasingly connected into these LSPs, on which the police service is also represented, this raises the important question of through which bodies, and in which ways should the police's crime preventive role be pursued? The inclusion of 'downstream' enforcement activities in crime reduction, and indeed the further

inclusion of high visibility 'reassurance policing' (see Chapter 3) raises the possibility that the police's crime prevention mandate can continue to be pursued beyond the boundaries of the CDRP, potentially marginalising the latter, and once more incorporating prevention into detection, as the police service succeeded in doing during the nineteenth century.

Where the insurance industry's vision of crime prevention could be easily met, albeit somewhat unsatisfactorily, by the establishment of specialist crime prevention officers and departments, the ambiguity of central government's vision since 1997 makes it more difficult for the police to locate the 'new' crime prevention function. Does it belong with the crime prevention specialists, or does the 'responsible authority' status require a more strategic involvement of BCU or district commanders or their deputies? Or should their involvement be directed at the LSP? Should the police service second officers to the virtual partnership world of CDRPs, to work alongside local authority community safety officers and perhaps resources drawn from other responsible authorities? Or should the responsibility be pushed down the ranks, to those in the front line of neighbourhood policing? Conversely should it, perhaps, operate at all of these levels?

Alongside such difficult questions regarding where police involvement should be organisationally located sit others, which raise even more important issues. Should the police service occupy equal status with other responsible authorities, or should they occupy more of a leadership role, as envisaged in the models of community policing and problem-oriented policing that share much in common with the characteristic features of crime prevention? If the former, how much space should be afforded to local politics from which, one could argue, the police service has previously sought to remain aloof?

In the policy document 'Getting to Grips with Crime' (Home Office, 1997) New Labour had explicitly rejected the idea of local authority leadership of CDRPs on the grounds that a lead role for local authorities would give them undue influence over the resource deployments of other agencies such as the police. Yet, by the time of the 2006 Police and Justice Act they were prepared to put CDRPs under local authority overview and scrutiny committees, raising the possibility that police BCU Commanders might be answerable, at least in part, to local authority members for their services actions. Yet might not police polarised leadership roles reverse the problem, putting the police in a position of undue influence over local, democratically-controlled public services?

The important point is, nothing from the history of crime prevention covered in this chapter provides clear answers to any of these questions, and ambiguity lies at the heart of the development of local crime prevention under New Labour. Notwithstanding the future

potential role of overview and scrutiny committees, which lies outside the time limits of this research, answers to the questions posed above have to be worked out by the police.

The police service has been left, to a large extent, to read the leaves left behind in the Home Office's teacup. How they have done this, and with what consequences, is the subject of this thesis. However, before the empirical research, it is necessary to pick up further clues in relation to the police's response by examining more broadly the issue of police reform, which has served to push the police service in a number of directions and this may help to understand the pushes being exerted by crime prevention. Police reform is, therefore, the subject of Chapter 2.

Chapter 2 – Police Reform

Introduction

One of the inherent problems regarding tracing the developments of crime prevention policy (as articulated in Chapter 1) is that, in the process of doing so, the 'domain' of crime prevention results in being artificially separated from those other domains with which it interacts. In particular, there is a danger that crime prevention is segregated from other developments in policing policy.

Various policing policy has not stood still as developments in crime prevention have unfolded, and crime prevention is not therefore the only thing to have generated 'turbulence' in policing. Other developments, not necessarily in sympathy with those taking place in crime prevention, have had an equally important bearing upon the direction of policing policy and practice, sometimes making it difficult for practitioners to make sense of policy shifts, and thereby respond in a coherent way to such shifts.

Consequently, in this chapter, the aim is to contextualise the developments highlighted in the last chapter, within broader changes taking place in policing policy. Although the same time period will be considered, the distant past will be dealt with in a more cursory way, with most attention being paid to the succession of changes, which have occurred over the last two decades, as this has a particularly important bearing upon the empirical focus of this thesis. The title of the chapter reflects the reality that over this time period the dominant theme has been that of police reform, as was the case with crime prevention, where there have been a number of important changes. Crime prevention has been a part of this reform process, however, the direction of the changes have been neither unidirectional nor unambiguous. The purpose of this chapter, then, is to explore some of these ambiguities, and the dilemmas they generate for the police service as it is required to respond and react to developments in the crime prevention domain.

The Emergence of Permanent, Professional Policing

Although there is a tendency to assume, through modern eyes, that the police service must always have been with us, a permanent police service within England and Wales has a history of less than two centuries. The circumstances surrounding the establishment of the permanent police are well covered in the literature (Reiner, 2000), and there has been a broad division between those academic commentators who point to the 'new police' as a rational improvement upon the inefficient and inadequate policing arrangements, which existed before their arrival and those who implicate them in a strategy of class control and order maintenance, facilitating the dominance of

industrial capitalism. Whilst, as Reiner (2000) observes, the reality may well be something in-between, and locally more contingent, there exists more agreement regarding what particularly interests this work, which is the direction in which policing policy moved after their establishment, first of all in London, from 1829.

The new police, while endowed with a preventive mandate, accorded priority to the patrol function, particularly as a means of securing legitimacy from a sceptical public, composed of middle classes who suspected the police of being a 'continental-style' state spying agency, and a working class who resented the police's invasion of their 'street space' and culture. Moreover in the eyes of reformers, men like Colquhoun, Bentham, Peel and Chadwick, high-visibility patrolling also provided the police with the most efficient means by which they could fulfil their preventive mandate, thereby delivering the utilitarian end of 'the greatest good for the greatest number'.

While in theory the police were supposed to prioritise preventive patrolling, in practice, it was detection and investigation which came increasingly to the fore. Wright (2002) observes that since Common Law was not the King's Law, its enforcement was not initially regarded as an appropriate task for the King's sworn-in constables and it was, instead, a community matter left to an assortment of individuals, private 'thief-takers' and others such as traders who grouped themselves into 'associations for the prosecution of felons'. Yet despite this array, the first specialist unit of plainclothes detectives was established inside the Metropolitan Police in 1842, and by 1877 the Central Intelligence Department (CID) had been established, as a model, replicated across the country. The shift from the 'scarecrow function' of patrolling, to patrolling combined with investigation and detection may in part be due to the pressure exerted from central government, which from 1856 provided a central grant to all forces on the proviso that they demonstrated their efficiency in this regard (Gilling, 1997). In the absence of crime statistics, the sort which is now commonplace, the most manifest way for the police to demonstrate their efficiency was through prosecutions, which, therefore, required an effective detective function. This represents an early historical parallel to the more recent pressure exerted by the Home Office over the police service to demonstrate its effectiveness in such areas as 'crime reduction' or 'bringing offenders to justice'.

Conceivably, the police were not necessarily unwilling to place such an emphasis upon detection, as it provided a much more glamorous and 'macho' means by which the police could demonstrate their competence, and particularly their professional credentials (O'Malley and Hutchinson, 2007). Over most of the next century, this blend of patrolling and detection was sustained, with the latter being regarded as the more professional 'hard end' of policing, and a specialism that most new officers aspired to become a part of, even though the

cultural image of the police detective from the outside was often that of the bungling simpleton working in the shadow of their social superiors, the amateur sleuths of novelists such as Arthur Conan Doyle, Dorothy L. Sayers or Agatha Christie (McLaughlin, 2007).

Patrolling, meanwhile, still had a vitally important part to play in securing community consent, particularly through the iconic image of PC George Dixon, which was lent weight by early sociological ethnographers who demonstrated that most police activity was about 'peace-keeping', with police officers most frequently being called upon to help citizens in distress or to provide authoritative adjudication, and not necessarily to fight crime (McLaughlin, 2007).

However, despite such sociological revelations, crime control became more of an issue in the 1960s as a consequence of the rising crime, which had not abated, as some had predicted in the wake of growing post-war social stability. The tripartite agreement enacted by the 1964 Police Act, moreover, had given the Home Secretary a 'formal' interest in the efficiency of police forces, and although the meaning of efficiency was not clearly articulated at that point (Weatheritt, 1986), it is reasonable to suggest that much of this interest was likely to be directed at the police's ability to 'control' crime. Notwithstanding the contemporaneous concerns of the insurance industry, the establishment of the Cornish Committee to examine the issue of crime prevention 'and detection' might be seen in this light. Certainly the mid-1960s marks an important juncture in police history, when the Home Office started to take much more of an 'interest' in operational aspects of policing.

As discussed in Chapter 1, in terms of crime prevention, Cornish's recommendations led to the establishment of specialist police Crime Prevention Departments (CPDs). However, he was also keen to ensure that the creation of such specialist departments and officers did not lead to an abrogation of responsibility for crime prevention elsewhere within the police organisation. Hence, for example, it was anticipated that the main crime preventive responsibility would still rest with area beat officers (ABOs), and that officers working in CPDs would have an important role to play in training the ABOs to perform such a role. As events transpired, CPDs were absorbed into the police organisation as something of a "specialist backwater" (Weatheritt, 1986: 45), with CPDs accounting for no more than 0.5% of police establishment strength, attracting a reputation as the final staging post for officers approaching retirement, rather than for the appointment of "young turks".

According to Weatheritt (*ibid.*: 53), CPDs were like 'security ghettos' within the police service, interpreting the crime preventive roles as being almost exclusively concerned with developing a knowledge of appropriate security technologies, and communicating such knowledge

to the public through publicity materials, talks and the like. An ACPO working party at the end of the 1970s explicitly rejected any idea of integrating CPDs more closely with the work of preventive patrolling. CPDs were steered clear of any involvement with 'social' approaches to crime prevention, which were being developed in other parts of the police service (such as community relations departments and juvenile bureau's), and they were not regarded as the relevant locus for developing the new problem-oriented approach of situational crime prevention, which researchers within the Home Office Research and Planning Unit had developed, also by the end of the 1970s (Gladstone, 1980). These points are important as they foreshadow later developments in the 1990s and beyond, demonstrating that the question of what crime prevention is, and where it should be organisationally located, is one shrouded in definitional and organisational politics.

A further example of Home Office intervention in police operational matters can be found within the introduction of unit beat policing (UBP) which, like the establishment of CPDs, occurred in the 1960s. As Weatheritt (1986: 88) recounts, UBP was described by the Chief Inspector of Constabulary as "the biggest change in fundamental operational police methods since 1829", although given the intervening introduction of the police detection function, the Chief Inspector could understandably be accused of slight overstatement. Nevertheless, UBP was an important innovation, which sought an efficient solution to the problem of the unpopularity of, and staffing shortages in, foot patrol in the 1960s. Its take-up was advocated in a 1967 Home Office Circular, which also provided an incentive to Police Authorities in the form of central loans to pay for purchase of the necessary patrol cars and communications technology. The concept was to integrate foot patrol and mobile patrol officers with CID resources through an enhanced and more effective communications capacity, providing a stronger patrolling presence and an ability for fast response to incidents which, when combined with intelligence from CID sources, would lead to a more effective detection capacity.

Although UBP has subsequently been 'credited' with turning the police service into a 'fire-brigade' response service, which fundamentally politicised the relationship between the police and the public (Holdaway, 1977), it is important to remember that in its idealised concept, it was an early effort to integrate preventive patrolling with detection, thereby joining up the two sides of operational policing as they had evolved since 1829. Similarly, while it stands accused of having alienated police from the public, and serving to increase public dissatisfaction with the police, it was actually introduced, ironically in part, to address existing public dissatisfaction with foot patrols, and the 1967 Circular confidently predicted that UBP was very much going to give the public the service they wanted.

UBP is a very crucial example, which demonstrates a number of important issues of direct relevance for the research upon which this thesis is based. Firstly, it set down a model of Home Office intervention in operational policing matters subsequently to become increasingly commonplace, particularly since the 1980s with the emergence of a managerialist agenda (see below). As with the Cornish recommendation for establishing CPDs, it can be seen as having set the centralisation ball rolling. Secondly, as Weatheritt (1986) has observed, UBP was heavily promoted by the Home Office who made claims about its likely success, which simply were not warranted given the very limited and patchy quality of the research evidence available at that time.

In reality, the Home Office, it would seem, effectively sold UBP to the police. The fact that it turned out to be little short of a disaster, in the sense that it did not demonstrably improve police effectiveness, it appears to have worsened police-public relations and may well have served to engender a degree of cynicism about this, and future, Home Office interventions into operational policing matters. In essence, the police service, effectively, had had their fingers burnt by the whole experience.

Thirdly, however, while UBP was a failure, the failure was in part due to implementation problems which the Home Office might not necessarily have foreseen. The CID remained largely on the outside of this process and upon reflection this lack of integration may have been a determinant to later isolationist operations and functions. In some areas UBP was introduced without ABOs, and once in the cars, officers seemed reluctant to get outside of them with the enhanced opportunity for quick responses playing into the hands of the 'action-oriented' police occupational culture, with detrimental consequences.

Thus, whatever Home Office-led interventions may have been intended to achieve, it is important to remember that they had to negotiate a police organisation, like any other organisation, which is littered with obstacles and banana skins that make the realisation of rational goals much harder to achieve than is often appreciated. Indeed, this problem reared its head again in a demonstration project targeting school vandalism (Hope and Murphy, 1983), through which the Home Office sought to promote the situational crime prevention approach in the 1980s.

'Modernisations' such as the establishment of CPDs or the introduction of UBP did not have a demonstrable impact upon the crime problem, and research conducted by the Home Office in the 1970s (Clarke and Hough, 1980) reached the pessimistic conclusion that the two mainstays of operational crime control policing, namely patrolling and detection, were of limited effectiveness. This was the policing equivalent of a 'nothing works' crisis, which touched

sentencing policy at much the same time (Brody, 1976). If this research heralded a crisis of competence for the police, then revelations in the media and elsewhere about police malpractice, particularly in the activities of specialist squads, regarding the (mis)use of police investigative powers and in heavy-handed order maintenance tactics, heralded an accompanying crisis of confidence, which came to a head particularly in the urban riots of the early 1980s (Reiner, 2000).

Weatheritt (1986) suggests that the aftermath of those riots provided the Home Office with a rationale for intervening in matters of operational policing, although another motivation she identifies is the changing economic climate, which led the government to demand greater value for money from its public services. Given the initially favourable treatment that they obtained from the Conservatives in 1979, this pressure came belatedly to the police, in the form of Home Office Circular 114/83, which brought to bare the requirements of central government's Financial Management Initiative (FMI).

In the 1980s there were further operational interventions from the Home Office, which sought to push the police service in a particular preferred direction. Although the concept notoriously lacks precision, much of the pressure was in the direction of community policing (Sharp, 2005). Thus, for example Lord Scarman's (1981) proposal, in the wake of the Brixton riots, that the police should strengthen mechanisms for community consultation became enshrined in Section 106 of the 1984 Police and Criminal Evidence Act. Although, models of community policing envisaged that foot patrol officers would also make stringent efforts to engage with and work alongside 'the community'.

The concept that community police officers might work closely with other local agencies to develop more 'social' solutions to crime problems, meanwhile, was always implicit in Alderson's vision of community policing. This was manifest in the Exeter-based Community Policing Consultative Group initiative (Moore and Brown, 1981), though such an approach had been encouraged more widely in Home Office Circulars addressing responses to youth crime in 1978 and 1980 (Weatheritt, 1986). Furthermore, as noted in Chapter 1, there was also a strong overlap between community policing and the Home Office's promotion of a situational approach to crime prevention in Circular 8/84 and beyond, in so far as, both required a partnership approach in the search for more creative solutions to crime problems, which lay beyond the narrow and largely reactive reaches of the criminal justice system.

Meanwhile, in terms of the deployment of police resources, in parts of the Metropolitan Police and Surrey Constabulary a programme of neighbourhood policing was implemented. Geographical responsibility

was allocated to small groups of officers who were expected to consult with their community and organise duty rosters in line with demand for their presence in each area, supported by the resources from the wider police organisation when required. Where the neighbourhood policing experiment was not fully implemented, variations on the theme were found within the roles of area beat, or permanent beat, officers widely deployed in other parts of the country, again as a response to the general push towards community policing. Many of these initiatives foundered on a number of key issues including, the inability of beat officers to engage with more than a tiny proportion of the community they were supposed to police, on their limited capacity to identify local problems and on a frequent abstraction of officers to fill temporary gaps in service provision elsewhere within the police organisation (list of refs – include Chatterton & Rogers, Irving et al, etc.). In addition, as had been the case with UBP, foot patrol and *soft* community policing lacked any great resonance with the action-orientation of the dominant police occupational culture of that time.

Yet none of these problems really halted the drift towards community policing in one form or another, prompted in part by the consumerism that came to infuse government policy, particularly following John Major's launch of the Citizen's Charter, which served to sensitise the police and other public agencies to delivering their services in a way orientated to meet 'consumer' expectations. Although such a concept, in reality, remains problematic in respect of potentially coercive services such as policing.

However, while one string to the managerialist bow may be consumerism, another is the requirement for greater value for money, which in turn exerted pressure on the police to pay closer attention to what they do, and how well they do it. According to Sharp (2005), the imposition of Circular 114/83 was accompanied by strong ministerial support for the idea, imported from the USA, of policing by objectives, which required senior police managers to set out their mission statements from the top of the organisation while those at the 'delivery end' were required to formulate and implement action plans, which would meet the requirements of such mission statements (Weatheritt, 1986). However, as Sharp suggests, it proved difficult to implement in the police service because "it required senior police officers to move from the highly structured and hierarchical command management model with which they were familiar to one based on teamwork and participation." (2005: 453).

Newburn (2003: 97) more cryptically notes that policing by objectives failed to make much headway in the face of hostility from both ACPO and the Police Federation "because of the potential consequences for the terms and conditions of employment", presumably through concern that officers might become individually accountable for performance against stated objectives. In other words, a Home Office-

backed measure of police reform once again met with significant barriers to successful implementation, in this case, a resistance to change caused by the fact that the police service was traditionally a top-down hierarchical organisation, which could not easily accommodate new 'bottom-up' ways of working and, in which it found difficulty envisaging a more direct form of accountability. Again, this problem foreshadows issues that were to arise in the empirical research upon which this thesis is based.

Circular 114/83 marked a turning point in policing for a number of reasons. As mentioned above, the constitutional tripartite agreement enshrined in the 1964 Police Act gave the Home Secretary an interest in promoting the efficiency of the police, though the meaning of this concept was not clearly articulated. As Weatheritt (1986) records, in practice, from the 1960s through to the beginning of the 1980s the decision as to whether or not a force was effective or efficient was left to the annual report of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) and, in practice, HMIC treated efficiency as a technical consideration, based very broadly on the fact that police forces continued to operate in the same way as they had in the previous year, and that nothing untoward had occurred during the intervening time period. This is why, according to Weatheritt, the HMIC reports of this period read in the same "bland" way as annual Chief Constable's reports. From 1983, however, the imposition of the FMI carried a threat that inefficient forces would have their requests for additional human resources declined. The 'teeth' to back up this threat came in the guise of a new requirement that HMIC should now start to scrutinise force activities more closely, obliging Chief Constables to recognise that in conditions of resource scarcity they should be much more careful in 'justifying' their deployment of resources against robust objectives. In other words, they had to think more carefully about what policing was all about – what was its purpose? Sharp (2005) reminds us, on this point, that this purpose had never been clearly detailed, while Weatheritt (1986: 9) observes;

"Until quite recently, the usefulness of these activities [patrolling and detection] in achieving their intended effects has been more or less taken for granted."

During the 1980s, Home Secretaries may have been unwilling to push the point too far, perhaps mindful of the limits of their own powers over Chief Constables, which were more persuasive than coercive; and perhaps mindful of the controversy that had surrounded the 1984-85 miners' strike, the policing of which looked like it had been co-ordinated from the centre, much to the alarm of some Police Authorities. Thus, although the logic of Circular 114/83 implied a re-think of the purposes, priorities and objectives of public policing, there was a reluctance to push this too far, and to specify from the centre what these should be:

In addition to such reluctance, there was limited technical capability in the police's analytic capacity to scrutinise its own performance. Similarly there existed limited ability for HMIC, both to scrutinise police performance and to identify and disseminate good practice (Weatheritt, 1986). Consequently, as Weatheritt (*ibid*: 110) observed of the period

"Scepticism about the possibilities of devising overall performance measures is ... apparent in the Home Office's expressed intention to continue to rely on the professional judgement of HMIs in reaching conclusions about the efficiency of police forces."

While this may well have been the case when Weatheritt conducted the research upon which her book was based in the 1990s, there was about to be dramatic change.

Despite Circular 114/83, and in the absence of strong central direction, the police service still remained in a relatively strong position with regard to determining its own agenda. As was discussed in Chapter 1, the police service was put under pressure to move more in the direction of a strategic, problem-oriented, partnership approach to crime prevention by Circular 8/84 and through its involvement in initiatives such as the Five Towns Initiative and the Safer Cities Programme. What is interesting about the police response to this pressure is firstly, where the response was positive, it did not generally involve specialists from the CPDs (Weatheritt, 1986). Evidently, the strategic partnership approach to crime prevention was different to the kind of crime prevention being undertaken in CPDs, and was considered to belong to another part of the police organisation.

Secondly, while there were cases of a positive response by the police to the crime prevention 'call-to-arms' of Circular 8/84, more usually the response was not so positive, indicating why the Home Office was sufficiently frustrated by the lack of local progress to bring out another Circular (Circular 44/90) to address the issue again. A reason for the lack of a more positive response may have lain, in part, in the lack of resources for the police to envisage developing a more strategic role in crime prevention. However, it also lay, probably more so, in ideological opposition to the idea of shifting the police service away from its 'detectionist' mentality, which remained dominant in the 1980s (Morgan and Newburn, 1997), much as it had done for most of the public police's short history (see above). Morgan and Newburn (*ibid*.: 72) make the point that, "the emphasis during the 1980s on two aspects of policing – crime prevention and crime detection – pulled the police in quite different directions, outwards and inwards." In theory they may be right, as crime prevention created a need for more resilience in outside expertise and partners, while detection required a much stronger focus on their own internal expertise. However, in

practice it seems clear that, at least in the 1980s, the orientation of the police service faced a predominantly inward focus.

The police service was clearly mindful of the consumerist and managerialist pressures under which it was placed towards the end of the 1980s. In particular it was mindful of the need to respond to the problem of declining public confidence and rising crime, which continued almost unabated through until the mid-1990s. Seen in this light, ACPO's (1990) 'Strategic Policy Document' and the joint 'Operational Policing Review' can be regarded as an attempt to set the agenda for police reform in the 1990s, with both documents aspiring to emphasise the 'service role' of the police, thereby attempt to temper the police's own preferred crime-controlling and detectionist self-image. However beyond the symbolic emphasis on service, the ACPO document in particular, is notable for setting down what it regarded as the police's five main operational service areas, which as they termed them, included 'community policing'; 'reassurance/order maintenance' and 'crime management'.

The significance of this specification is these service areas became the main performance themes as far as the Home Office was concerned (Morgan and Newburn, 1997). Community policing could be seen, to some extent, as incorporating the Home Office's expectation that the police should be working more closely with other agencies in local preventive partnerships, although its meaning is also obviously wider than that. Reassurance, meanwhile, picks up on the symbolic importance of patrolling and a visible police presence which, drawing upon the highly influential 'broken windows' theory (Wilson and Kelling, 1982), justifies it as a means both of addressing the fear of crime and preventing crime by halting the spiral of decline that unchecked broken windows are otherwise likely to produce.

Crime management, meanwhile, is more than just another word for detection and investigation, rather, it also supplements these with a focus also upon crime reduction (which could be achieved by detections, but equally could be achieved by other problem-oriented approaches, such as high-visibility saturation patrols, or the disruption of criminal networks), and better victim support.

The specification of these service areas in ACPO's 'Strategic Policy Document' can be seen as the articulation of a new, more proactive and risk-oriented approach to policing (Johnston, 2000) and, as such, it offers a 'modernised' view of policing and a bold attempt by ACPO to provide an answer to the question of 'what public policing is all about'. As a number of criminologists have pointed out, such an articulation does not do justice to the 'reality' of policing, particularly the importance of its peace-keeping role (Newburn, 2003). One consequence of this is, it sets down a rather instrumentalist view of policing, which fits the much more 'business-like' managerialist

concerns of central government and, perhaps, not surprisingly when confronted with this articulation the Home Office seized the opportunity to emphasise this instrumentalist view.

ACPO's 'modernised' view of crime management found favour with the Audit Commission, the public body responsible for scrutinising the '3Es' (effective, efficient, economic) of local public services who had been 'let loose' on the police service from the mid-1980s onwards, to complement and supplement the managerialist pressure, starting to be exerted by HMIC. The Audit Commission's (1993) influential report 'Helping With Enquiries' provided an endorsement of crime management as something that was proactive, intelligence-led and better integrated with mainstream policing (Morgan and Newburn, 1997), targeting prolific offenders in particular (Johnston, 2000). In many ways, this model of crime management could be seen as an instrumental evolution of the 1960s UBP model of integrated patrol and detection. Its emphasis upon crime control very much found favour with the new Home Secretary Kenneth Clarke who had been brought into office, in part, to re-assert the crime control credentials of the Conservative government in the face of a resurgent New Labour opposition. New Labour was laying claim to the politically vital issue of 'law and order' through the person of Tony Blair, the then Shadow Home Secretary, with the infamous 'tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime' sound bite.

Under Clarke's leadership the Police Reform White Paper stated boldly that the police's main task was to catch criminals, and the 1994 Police and Magistrates' Courts Act was intended broadly to facilitate this task by reforming Police Authorities into more 'business-like' local bodies and by empowering the Home Secretary to set national objectives for the police service, in order its 'collective mind' could be focused on catching criminals. The 1994 Act represented a defining moment in the historical development of public policing. Firstly, in the face of conflicting research evidence regarding what the police actually did, the Home Office set itself the task of decisively answering the question of what the police were there to do, thereby doing something that Home Secretaries in the 1980s has fought shy of, despite their original introduction of a managerialist ethos into public policing.

Secondly, this re-assertion of the police's role in catching criminals appeared to contradict the underlying message communicated by developments in areas such as community policing and crime prevention policy, that message being controlling crime was something that the police service could not achieve in isolation. It served to restore faith in detection (albeit as a more integrated form of crime management) at a time when the dominance of detection as the police's primary modus operandi was being seriously questioned, both from inside and outside the service. In addition, it re-asserted the police's sovereignty as the primary local crime control agency.

With reference to Chapter 1, it must be remembered that this time, around 1993 and 1994, was also the aftermath of the Morgan Report (Home Office, 1991) when the primary recommendation had been that crime prevention, or rather community safety, needed to become a statutory responsibility of local authorities to work in partnership with the police service. In the wake of Morgan, many localities, including those in Devon and Cornwall, had either not waited for the Home Office's response, or had gone ahead anyway and set up local community safety partnerships (Local Government Management Board, 1996). In many ways the 1994 Police and Magistrates' Courts Act could be seen to have undermined such developments pushing the police, in Morgan and Newman's (1997) terms, to become more inward than outward-looking, and ensuring that the lead for local policing priorities would come not from these local partnerships, but from the Home Secretary's national objectives, thus marking a decisive shift towards the centralisation of policing policy.

Among others, Newburn (2003) suggests that experience of the first few years of national objectives demonstrated that fears about excessive centralisation were unfounded, as the objectives were drawn so broadly that they did not undermine local priorities, which fitted quite comfortably within them. Nevertheless, the existence of national objectives always raised the possibility that they 'might' undermine local priorities, and the operational emphasis upon crime management, at the very least resulting in confusion for the police service, made them unsure of whether to turn outwards or inwards in pursuit of its crime control mandate.

In a prescient moment, Weatheritt (1986) argues that innovations in policing, which in this instance might include crime management, tend to be introduced on the back of evangelical and unsubstantiated claims about their likely success. This is far better than the alternative, which would be acknowledging what Morgan and Newburn (1997) suggest, in that, the police can do relatively little by themselves to impact upon the problem of crime, raising fundamental questions about the legitimacy of policing, which are better glossed over. For reasons of electoral politics and organisational survival, it is arguably not in the interests of neither the Home Office nor the police, to expose themselves to a potential legitimacy crisis. However, the cost of this may have been chasing false trails in pursuit of the elusive goal of police effectiveness.

Police Reform under New Labour

With the exception of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, discussed in Chapter 1, there were no fundamental changes in policing policy during New Labour's first term of office (Savage and Charman, 2002). In theory, this Act should have made the police service more outward-looking, encouraging them to establish partnerships with other

agencies for the purpose of local crime and disorder reduction. In practice, however, such a theoretical outcome had to compete with other pressures which, if anything, were driving the police in the opposite direction. To begin with, the 1998 Act needs to be seen in the context of the 'threats' to the police service experienced over the preceding five years, beginning with the Sheehy Report, and later, the Home Office's review of core and ancillary tasks. Although these threats did not result in substantial policy changes, they did challenge 'taken-for-granted' assumptions about the police's sovereignty in the field of local crime control. Combined with growth occurring in the private policing sector (Johnston, 1992 and 2000), and in other forms of non-police patrolling, the result was a much more competitive environment (Lister, 2006) in which the police service had to demonstrate their worth. One way to circumvent this 'competition' was to assert that the police service was after all, and despite research evidence to the contrary, an effective crime-fighting force. The emphasis given to crime management from the mid-1990s could be seen very much in this light, and so could the emergence of the very 'hard line' of 'zero-tolerance' policing (ZTP).

ZTP was strongly advocated as an operational strategy by New Labour politicians, such as Jack Straw, who found themselves travelling across the Atlantic to witness firsthand the 'New York miracle', where William Bratton's policing experiment had been associated with an impressive fall in crime rates, transforming the reputation of New York City in the process. As with crime management, zero-tolerance policing suggested the police could achieve positive results in terms of crime control and it is no coincidence that one name, used for the adaptation of zero-tolerance policing in the UK, was 'confident policing' (Dennis and Mallon, 1997). At precisely the time that they were being expected to establish CDRPs and to move more in the direction of crime prevention, here was a police service marketing that, with sufficient resources, it could 'do the job' by itself.

The reassertion of the police's primacy in crime control, represented by crime management and ZTP can be attributed, in part, to the police service's desire to reposition itself in what had now become a more competitive policing environment. It can also be attributed to a parallel central governmental desire to be seen to be taking decisive, authoritative action against crime (Garland, 2001). Arguably, both sets of interests also coalesced over the deliberate re-naming of the business of local partnerships as crime (and disorder) reduction rather than community safety partnerships. As it will be remembered from Chapter 1, community safety was the term preferred by the Morgan Report in its promotion of statutory partnerships in 1991, and it had been assumed by most that when New Labour came to power, given its backing for Morgan's recommendations, community safety would be the chosen nomenclature to describe the new partnership bodies. However, the choice of crime reduction rather than community safety

can be interpreted, in the light of the above, as an attempt to give the new partnerships a particular police-led steer. In the same vein, it is notable that the ACPO sub-committee dealing with this policy domain deliberately chose the title of crime reduction rather than community safety and that the Home Office Crime Prevention Centre's name was changed to the Crime Reduction Centre at much the same time. For the police, as ACPO (1990) had previously made clear, crime reduction was a part of crime management and, therefore, a part of police core business.

However, the emphasis placed upon crime reduction should not be taken to mean that an attempt was being made to absorb pressure for change into existing approaches to policing and thereby leading, in effect, to no change. Rather, it represented a push in the direction of crime reduction, which was supported not only by the 1998 Act but also by HMIC (1998) in its publication 'Beating Crime', and by the Home Office's sister document 'Getting the Grease to the Squeak' (Tilley and Hough, 1998). It could be interpreted that this was in fact an attempt to manoeuvre the police service into a more modernised, proactive direction, in pursuit of a more risk-oriented approach (Johnston, 2000). The key question, for the purposes of this thesis, is how this more proactive approach could be realised.

The strongest message to come through from 'Beating Crime' and 'Getting the Grease to the Squeak' was the police service needed to adopt a problem-solving approach, which was implicitly proactive, as a means of finding local solutions to local problems. Both publications backed the instrumental, bottom-up model of problem-oriented policing (Goldstein, 1979) which had been influential in the USA and was becoming increasingly influential in the UK and both documents saw this model as being highly applicable to the business of CDRPs. However, although they supported a partnership approach to problem-solving and, although, the 1998 Act put pressure on the police service to follow such an approach, it was not a foregone conclusion that this indeed represented what was going to happen on the ground.

There are two main reasons for this. Firstly as these publications and many others both, before and after, have recognised there are many impediments and barriers to partnership working, which make it difficult for the police service to pursue an effective, joined-up problem-solving approach with other agencies. These barriers, and the wider issues surrounding them, are the subject of the next chapter. Secondly, particularly in the context of their new-found confidence in their capacity to fight crime (HMIC [1997: 9] had remarked upon a "growing confidence within the police service as a whole that crime can be successfully confronted"), it was possible for the police service to pursue a problem-oriented approach 'without' the involvement of other agencies. One indication that this may already have been happening can be found in HMIC's (1997) survey detailing

that 70% of police forces were already, before the implementation of the 1998 Act, setting themselves annual crime reduction targets and roughly the same proportion had integrated crime reduction within their crime management processes. Such processes, operating through Basic Command Unit (BCU) -level tasking and co-ordination groups, were at this time unlikely to have had an input from other agencies.

Therefore, it was perceived crime management could incorporate a problem-oriented approach without recourse to partnership working and despite the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act further developments in policing, if anything, made this more rather than less, likely. One of these developments was intelligence-led policing (ILP), which as Sharp (2005:155) observes is "the refinement and reinforcement of something that has been practised by the police for over 100 years." Sharp acknowledges that ILP is new, in so far, it affords a more proactive approach to policing, however, he is also correct in his observation that it reinforces existing police practice. It achieves this by placing the emphasis mainly upon enforcement as a natural corollary of the use of intelligence, most of which is based upon information in respect of offenders. In other words, problem-oriented approaches depend very much upon the information, which frames the problem. If primarily information is about the activities of known offenders, as is the case with ILP and the National Intelligence Model (NIM) which was derived from it, then it is likely, to encourage 'detectionist' responses that mark a 'point of continuity' with the past, as Sharp's observation acknowledges.

In the absence of good intelligence regarding the activities of known offenders, another standard police response is high-visibility patrolling. To some extent ZTP breathed a new lease of life into this approach, justifying it by linking with the idea of order maintenance, as deployed in broken windows theory (Wilson and Kelling, 1982). However, high-visibility patrolling has also become an integral part of the reassurance policing agenda, which Sharp (2005: 156) calls "not a strategy in itself but rather a description of a number of different initiatives intended to impact upon the linked problems of fear of crime and lack of public support for the police." This may be a slightly cynical view if it is taken to imply that reassurance policing is a purely symbolic exercise, as it is apparent much of the emphasis of reassurance policing focuses upon addressing those local 'signal crimes' (Innes, 2005) which generate much fear and anxiety within local communities. It may achieve this by pushing problem-solving down to very localised levels, as Innes recommends, and this could well involve some kind of partnership action. However, equally it could mean little more than increasing the visibility of the police, something that in recent years has been achieved through the widespread use of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), as introduced by the 2002 Police Reform Act.

While the first few years of the New Labour government were relatively quiet in relation to further police reform, the pace of change increased markedly into the new millennium. McLaughlin (2007) suggests that David Blunkett was brought in to the Home Office as a 'big hitter' to take on the forces of conservatism within the police service, which threatened to derail the government's reform agenda, and under Blunkett's leadership the process of centralisation (Newburn, 2003) continued. Although HMIC (1998, 2000) had noted improvements in the police's cultural adoption of a more instrumental problem-solving approach, there were also signs of frustration which suggested, for example, that ACPO remained less than totally convinced about the place of crime reduction in crime management, or about the merits of decentralising more responsibility for local policing to the BCU level. The 2002 Police Reform Act addressed such problems by imposing stronger central control (Long, 2003), making further adjustments to the tripartite structure of police accountability, such as changing the role of Chief Constables from one of 'operational independence' to one of operational responsibility (McLaughlin, 2007). The same Act also enabled the Home Secretary to draw up a national plan, which specified how national objectives would be delivered, and how they would be measured. In addition, it introduced the Police Standards Unit to scrutinise the performance of BCUs (Newburn, 2003) and with a power to intervene in forces, deemed to be failing by the new police performance assessment framework.

Under the Best Value regime introduced in the 1999 Local Government Act a more rigorous set of performance indicators had been introduced, many of them focusing upon the measurement of progress towards crime reduction targets specified in the key national objectives, which preceded the 2002 Act. Performance statistics, furthermore, had been produced at BCU level from 2000 onwards, and from 2001 the HMI inspection regime had complemented force inspections with inspections at BCU level (Long, 2003). With the addition of provisions within the 2002 Police Reform Act, McLaughlin (2007) appears to be justified in his claim that the resultant effect was a situation, which allowed the Home Office to micro-manage the police service.

It must be remembered, as discussed in Chapter 1, that all this occurred at much the same time that CDRPs were being promoted in government policy. Indeed, once central funding became available for CDRPs, after the launch of the Crime Reduction Strategy in 1999, the same Best Value performance management regime was applied to CDRPs. Increasing pressure was applied to the CDRPs to respond to national objectives in their 2002 strategies and beyond. In the process, this turned the original blueprint of 'local solutions for local problems' into more and more of a fiction. Long (2003) suggests that this performance management agenda is incompatible with the idea of partnership working and Crawford (2007: 898) concurs, arguing that

“the myopic implications of performance measurement afford scant regard to the complex process of negotiating shared purposes.”

The claim here is although the police service is being called upon to work in partnership with other agencies in pursuit of local crime and disorder reduction, the use of performance indicators encourages a narrow focus upon the core business of individual agencies, a phenomenon that Crawford (1997) had noted much earlier in a critique of new public management in general. This encourages an intra-agency rather than an inter-agency orientation. It may be argued that the use of the ‘same’ performance indicators for different agencies, as employed under the Best Value regime, mitigates such problems. However, this neglects a possibility that, while the police and local authorities may both be required to demonstrate their performance in terms of crime reduction, there still remains considerable scope for debate regarding ‘how’ crime reduction might be achieved, the problem of ‘negotiating shared purpose’ identified by Crawford in the above quote. As HMIC (1998, 2000) had pointed out, there are many different ways to reduce crime, some short-term, others long-term, some targeting offenders, others targeting social or environmental causes. Because crime reduction was becoming increasingly embedded in the police’s operational strategy of crime management, it was lending itself more to short-term police solutions via the targeting of offenders, as John and Maguire’s (2003) research into the police’s use of the NIM in tasking and co-ordination groups demonstrated. Although as these authors note, there is no reason, in principle, why the NIM cannot be used for approaches to crime reduction other than just delivering detection and enforcement.

While the work of Crawford and others suggest that performance management hampers partnership working and forces crime reduction down a narrow police-led path, it is important to recognise that this view is not shared by all commentators. Byrne and Pease (2003: 288), for example, argue quite to the contrary, in a sense, within the police service crime reduction “has begun to escape from its peripheral position, only to be subsumed in a partnership with agencies outside the [police] organisation.” In particular, they suggest crime reduction partnerships are ‘vulnerable to capture’ by a government office agenda’s, which are oriented much more to matters of economic and community development than it is to matters of situational crime prevention. Moreover, they suggest (ibid: 296-7) that “there is a danger of the crime reduction enterprise being shaped by the preferences and prejudices of those most eager to be engaged in partnership working.”

What is meant by this, in particular, is local authority input into local partnerships is dominated by departments who have little interest in questions of physical design, which would be of most relevance to situational crime prevention. They suggest, rather, that partnerships

are dominated by 'social' interests, inclined to address more remote social causes of crime rather than the more immediate situational ones, which Byrne and Pease evidently believe should be the focus of crime reductive effort. The existence of this difference in opinion serves to demonstrate the possibility that different processes may be at work in different contexts, and thus the importance of conducting empirical inquiry.

Following the 2002 Police Reform Act, a number of commentators have drawn attention to a change of emphasis in Home Office thinking. As Newburn and Reiner (2007) point out, since 1993 the main policy thrust had been one of centralisation, in effect forcing the police service to become better at their 'core business' of catching criminals. In McLaughlin's (2007: 184) words, the intent was to transform the police "from a public service into a crime control business." However, the employment of new public management techniques to achieve this end had the effect of "breeding cynicism among the public, who viewed professionals and practitioners as responding not to their needs but to the auditors and inspectors of the managerial state." (McLaughlin, *ibid*: 187). The most visible symptom of this cynicism was the 'reassurance gap' whereby, despite falling crime rates, the public perception was that crime was continuing to rise, and that they continued to be unprotected, thus feeling insecure, resulting from a largely invisible police service and community safety infrastructure.

The government response to this 'public concern' was delivered under the banner of a 'new localism'. A 2003 consultation document entitled 'Building Safer Communities Together' had David Blunkett arguing that "we must transcend our traditional notions of policing by consent, and establish a new principle of policing through co-operation" (Home Office, 2003). In the document, it was made abundantly clear that local partnerships had to be strengthened, and this meant generating changes both to local policing, and to CDRPs. With regard to policing, the White Paper 'Building Communities, Beating Crime' (Home Office, 2004) set out expectations for the national roll-out of what was to be called 'neighbourhood policing', predicated upon small teams of geographically-based police officers. According to the principles outlined in the White Paper, these officers would spend more of their time engaging with the community, including other agencies, thereby becoming more accountable to local communities, better placed to solve community problems and, thereby, enhancing their effectiveness as well.

Importantly, the White Paper also announced there was to be a formal review of CDRPs, making the point;

"some CDRPs are demonstrably less effective than others. For example, partnerships sometimes struggle to maintain a full contribution from key agencies. Lack of clarity about roles and

responsibilities and blurred lines of accountability can lead to some agencies abrogating their responsibility for crime reduction. Furthermore, under present arrangements, CDRPs are neither fully visible nor properly accountable to the communities they serve, nor are they fully embedded in the local democratic framework. These issues lie at the heart of the Government's reform programme." ((Home Office, *ibid*: 158)

The outcome of the review, in the 2006 Police and Justice Act, has been described in Chapter 1. Here it is sufficient to note that it also complies with the broad thrust of New Labour's 'new localism' and, for the purposes of this chapter, the important issue raised is the question of impact of this new localism upon crime prevention partnerships. McLaughlin (2007: 195) suggests, "serious questions have to be posed about whether there is genuine central government commitment to support localised, post-managerial forms of police accountability", particularly because, even with the implied localism of neighbourhood policing and Local Area Agreements, central government's performance management framework is still largely in place. As discussed above, this framework can cast a shadow over operational policing, which impacts upon the police service's capacity to contribute to partnerships.

Under managerialist pressures it may be more straightforward for the police service to incorporate crime prevention as crime reduction into a crime management process which sustains short-term, enforcement-oriented police solutions to crime problems. Johnston (2000) suggests that partnership working is often put forward as a putative solution to a governmental problem of establishing coherence within policy domains, which are increasingly characterised by complexity and fragmentation. The assumption, he says, is partnerships will work by allowing common interests to prevail. However, the problem as it has been explored here is such common interests are not necessarily allowed to surface in the context of prescriptive performance management frameworks and processes, which encourage an intra-agency, focus and thus inhibit partnership working. In brief, the paradox of partnerships is well captured in Crawford's (2001) observation that they may be 'joined up but fragmented'.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, an attempt has been made to steer a course through the complex and murky waters of policing policy. No claim is made regarding comprehensiveness, as far more has happened than could ever be satisfactorily documented in a chapter such as this. However, the purpose of this journey has been to demonstrate that the domain of public policing has been a constantly evolving, complex and confusing one, with the pace of change having quickened noticeably in the last two to three decades. Having been established as primarily a

preventive agency the police organisation, over the next century or so, built its professional service orthodoxy around the twin pillars of detection and preventive patrolling, the former premised more on its putative effectiveness and sub-cultural appeal, and the latter on its legitimacy-building function. This orthodoxy experienced pressure for change in the 1960s, with such pressure having become increasingly instrumentalist since the 1980s, under a managerialist mantra of value for money. Although most recently, the pressure has also reflected concerns about legitimacy and the accountability of the public police to local communities in the context of increasingly pluralised policing provision.

This pressure for change has resulted in a host of strategic and operational policing innovations and experiments. Those covered in this chapter include unit beat policing; the establishment of crime prevention departments; community policing; zero-tolerance policing; intelligence-led policing; reassurance policing; neighbourhood policing; policing by objectives; problem-oriented policing; crime reduction; crime management, and the national intelligence model. What remains important regarding all of these innovations and experiments is that they all share an essential ambiguity i.e. they do not provide a clear statement about what public policing is all about. While most are instrumentalist in their orientation, they generally do not completely shake off the more symbolic side of policing and some, such as reassurance policing, give this a much higher profile. Some provide more of a priority to detection and crime-fighting, while others emphasise a more preventive role. Some are more top-down, while others are more bottom-up. Amongst those that are more bottom-up, some are oriented more to BCUs, others more to 'sectors' and 'neighbourhoods', some rely more on efforts taken by the police service alone, while others carry stronger expectations about partnership working.

Although initiatives, such as unit beat policing, have passed out of fashion, at least in terms of their terminology, these innovations are often overlain on one another. Rarely is it the case that the star of one rises as the star of another fades, so innovations in policing are not a zero-sum game. Most of these innovations have been imposed upon the police service from outside, from influencers such as the Home Office, the Audit Commission and HMIC. However, it should not be assumed that they all necessarily sing from the same hymn sheet. Police representative bodies such as ACPO have played a greater or lesser role in some of these innovations, and again it should not be assumed that ACPO sings from the same hymn sheet as these external bodies, or other police-related bodies. All of these innovations, moreover, have had to be 'negotiated' through the body of the police service, whose organisational culture is predominantly top-down and militaristic, whose dominant occupational culture remains an action-oriented, detectionist one and whose professional competence is often

limited by the general lack of an analytic orientation and by the lack of training in certain areas. These all serve as obstacles, which ensure there is no straightforward translation between the drawing board theory, which informs these innovations, and their eventual manifestation in police practice.

How is one, therefore, to make sense of the pressure to engage in crime prevention partnerships in the context of all of the factors above? It is an empirical issue for this research, representing a fundamental question to be considered by the thesis. However, on the basis of what has been covered in this chapter, it is reasonable to speculate that the pressure to engage in crime prevention partnerships has to be seen as yet another pressure amongst the many described here, and that it is ambiguous in terms of the demands it places upon the police service, and in terms of the way those demands are interpreted through the various obstacles, which comprise the police organisation. In particular, it can be seen as contributing to a number of important strategic dilemmas, notably:

- What should be the balance between prevention, detection and a symbolic police role?
- What should be the balance between police leadership, partnership working, and an intra-organisational focus?
- What should be the balance between top-down and bottom-up approaches, or between force, BCU and neighbourhood levels of operation?

These strategic dilemmas, and police attempts to resolve them, will loom large in the research, which follows. However, the literature review is not yet complete.

Although the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act provided a watershed moment by making partnership working a statutory requirement for the police service, it is important to remember that partnership working in crime prevention is not a new concept for the police service. There is a considerable literature, which examines partnership working in crime prevention, much of it preceding the 1998 Act. Some of this has been alluded to briefly in passing during this chapter and in Chapter 1, although it has not formed a central analytic focus of either. Consequently, this literature is to be the subject of the next chapter, the last of the literature review chapters. The purpose of the next chapter will be to examine this literature in order to uncover 'leads' which may assist in both planning and making sense of the empirical research upon, which this thesis is based.

Chapter 3 - 'A Review of the Literature on Crime Prevention Partnerships'

Introduction

The aim of this last chapter in the literature review section of this thesis is to explore the literature on partnership working, specifically as it relates to crime prevention, as a distinct domain. There is extensive literature on partnership working in other criminal justice-related areas which involve the police service, such as child protection (Barton, 2002) or domestic violence (Hague, 2000), however, while this literature may address some similar issues and concerns, it lies outside the immediate focus of this present study and, for this reason, is excluded from consideration here. The chapter will begin with an overview of the operation of the partnership approach to crime prevention following, as with the previous chapters, a chronological account from the inception of the partnership approach.

The date of this inception is taken to be the period following the issuing of the landmark Home Office Circular 8/84. As discussed in Chapter 1, elements of a partnership approach preceded this date, however, the significant issue about Circular 8/84 is it set down the model for a strategic, problem-oriented partnership approach which has since become institutionalised, since 1998, in the shape of CDRPs. The model may not have been widely adopted in the immediate aftermath of the circular, nevertheless it is still the paradigm that has been adhered to since.

Following the chronological account, which examines how partnerships have evolved, sometimes as a response to criticisms of their ineffective operation and sometimes in response to external changes, the chapter will move on to examine the two dominant themes within the partnership literature in this area. The first theme is predominantly a pragmatic one, concerned with making partnerships work more effectively, usually through the recommendation of particular models of good practice or of 'critical success factors' that partnerships should adopt. Much of the literature in this theme originates from official sources and it reflects a concern with the internal workings of partnerships and with the competence (the knowledge, skills and values) of those who constitute their membership. Gilling (2005) refers to this as the 'what makes a good partnership' tradition of partnership research, which usually reflects the managerial and governmental concerns of those who have a stake in promoting the partnership approach.

The second theme in the partnership literature is one that has a more critical orientation. It tends to place partnerships in their broader social context rather than separating them from it, as the others do. Consequently, it is more interested, for example, in the power relations

between those agencies involved in partnership working and the influences generated in respect of what is done and not done in the name of those partnerships and in the different ways they frame crime problems and solutions. It is also interested in those external influences which affect the fate of partnerships, such as inter-agency 'baggage' agencies bring to the partnership table. In addition, the tensions that arise as traditionally vertical lines of public accountability, which trace policy-making 'silos' from local public services up to central government 'parent' departments and are crossed and flattened in pursuit of the more 'horizontal' way of working, implicit in the partnership approach. This theme tends to be found more in the work of independent academic commentators.

Although two thematic traditions can be identified in the quite extensive literature on partnership working in crime prevention, it is important that these traditions are regarded as an ideal typical distinction as, in reality, there may be more common ground between them. Thus, for example, the critical academic literature is often underpinned by a desire on the part of its authors to see partnerships work more effectively, even if it does raise uncomfortable issues. To this extent, this literature reflects the 'correctional bias' of criminology (Cohen, 1988) as its authors subscribe to the view that crime prevention partnerships represent a fruitful way of addressing crime, if only their limitations may be overcome. From the other side much of the official literature, despite its pragmatic preoccupations, does engage with more critical issues, such as the problems encountered as central government fails to live up to its aspiration for 'joined-up' government (Clark, 2002).

Finally, before turning to an overview of partnership working, it is important to note that most of the literature is predominantly oriented toward examining partnership working between public sector statutory agencies. In part this is likely to reflect the interests of those government agencies who sponsor the production of the literature, who are concerned with how well 'their' local agencies undertake partnership working. It may also reflect the political concerns of academics regarding what is done with the considerable powers bestowed upon public agencies to act in the public interest in an area as politically sensitive as crime control. However, it also reflects the relative lack of control or influence those who promote the partnership approach can exercise over private, voluntary and community organisations who might be considered appropriate members of local partnerships. Since this thesis is concerned with the role of a statutory public sector organisation, i.e. the police service, this bias or gap in the literature is not necessarily a problem. However, it is important to acknowledge it as an issue of some relevance, particularly as there is a growing recognition of the need to 'de-centre' the state from our analysis, an aspect Johnston and Shearing (2003) deliberately call security governance rather than policing. There is a

growing interest in how these other sectors of the mixed economy fit into the local governance of crime, however, it is not a focus of this thesis.

Tracing the Development of the Partnership Approach to Crime Prevention

The Home Office's promotion of a partnership approach was premised upon two essential 'truths'. The first of these was that the criminal justice system, including the police service (Morgan and Newburn, 1997), could do little by itself to address the causes of crime and, whether immediate or distant, lie beyond its direct control. The second truth, related to the first, is that since such causes lie elsewhere, for example in communities and in the design decisions of architects and planners, then others beyond the traditional criminal justice system need to be encouraged to play their part in addressing these causes, thereby, preventing crime. On the basis of these 'apparent truths', the Home Office's deductive logic is, therefore, that a partnership provides the best institutional means for bringing together the necessary constituent elements for a more effective approach to preventing crime. In reality, this represents a compelling logic, though far from an unproblematic one, since it requires those who once had a primary responsibility for crime control to accept, possibly against their professional pride, that this is no longer a job they can do by themselves and it requires those who may not necessarily regard crime as being their responsibility or interest to suddenly make it so. One can understand, in practical terms, why a partnership approach may be the appropriate way to proceed, as it is likely to be a great deal less complicated or controversial than redesigning a new approach to crime control from scratch. Despite its logical attraction as a good idea, one should not neglect, however, possible problems.

Home Office Circular 8/84 encouraged the establishment of a co-ordinated approach where, at a strategic level, agencies should work together to analyse local crime problems (by combining data sources, thus not relying solely on police statistics) and then identify and implement preventive solutions, drawing upon the combined resources of partner agencies prior to monitoring and evaluating the impact of these solutions. This problem-oriented approach, stitched together through the specifically appointed co-ordinator, was adopted in the Five Towns Initiative and the Safer Cities Programme, two flagship Home Office initiatives that were intended to showcase the partnership approach as a means to encourage wider adoption. However, as will be recollected from Chapter 1, there was no widespread adoption of the partnership approach after 1984, despite the official exhortation and the guidance produced by bodies such as Crime Concern, who sought to demonstrate how a partnership approach could be achieved.

This eventually prompted a Home Office inquiry, which delivered its findings via the Morgan Report (Home Office, 1991). Morgan's 'big idea' was partnerships would be more likely to take root if their business was conceived, not narrowly as crime prevention, but more expansively as community safety, and if local authorities were to be given a statutory responsibility which compelled them to do it, underpinned by a dedicated budget to realise this responsibility. Morgan also outlined a number of critical success factors partnerships would be wise to adopt, as did other Home Office-sponsored research published a little later (Liddle and Gelsthorpe, 1994a, 1994b, and 1994c). However, much of this was overshadowed by the political unacceptability of Morgan's big idea, which meant that further development of the partnership approach from the centre, more or less, ground to a halt after 1991.

Ironically, Morgan's big idea found favour at the local level, and prompted the establishment of community safety partnerships in a number of localities (McLaughlin, 1994; Local Government Management Board, 1996), though obviously they were not on a statutory basis and they often lacked much in the way of funding, although the Single Regeneration Budget was an important source of funding for some, particularly in urban areas.

In opposition New Labour appeared to lend its support to Morgan's headline recommendations and when in office their policy proposals (Home Office, 1997), and subsequent legislative action in the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, demonstrated their commitment to give local authorities a statutory responsibility. Importantly, however, while the term 'crime prevention' was dropped it was replaced, not by 'community safety', but by 'crime reduction' and thus the name of the partnerships was to be crime and disorder reduction partnerships (CDRPs), although interestingly in Wales they were to be called Community Safety Partnerships. Subsequent to the legislation it should be noted that many local partnerships have held on to the title 'community safety', or some variant on it, rather than 'crime reduction'. However, the Home Office's choice of terminology is nevertheless significant.

The 1998 Act also deviated from Morgan in not providing any additional resources for the partnerships, with the government initially preferring the argument that successfully prevented crime generates its own resources through a virtuous circle of savings which could be ploughed back into further preventive action, more savings, and so on. Predictably, this argument survived no longer than it was politically necessary for the new government to satisfy itself that it had convinced the public of its fiscal prudence. As soon as additional governmental resources became available, following the 1999 Comprehensive Spending Review and the subsequent launch of the Crime Reduction Strategy (CRS), additional funding started to be directed towards

CDRPs, initially to further the cause of evidence-based policy through the Crime Reduction Programme.

It is worth dwelling for a while on the finer details of CDRPs as set down in statute by the 1998 Act. According to the legislation, partnerships were to be formed in order to conduct local audits of crime, to consult locally on the findings of the audit and to produce a re-viewable crime reduction strategy, the whole process being repeated every three years. The responsibility for the formation of such partnerships, and thus also for the activities of them, rested with what the legislation referred to as the responsible authorities, namely the local police commander (not chief constable), and the district-level local authority chief executive.

The Home Office issued extensive guidance to these responsible authorities, mindful of the fact for many local authorities this was an entirely new development. This guidance, and official documents produced in its wake (Hough and Tilley, 1998; HMIC, 1998; Audit Commission, 1999) repeated much of the accumulated stock of knowledge on good practice in partnership working. However, the guidance also made it clear the partnerships should not become bogged down in bureaucratic detail as the priority for the partnerships was the 'delivery' of crime reduction.

With the benefit of hindsight, such guidance could be regarded as cavalier in nature. Initially, the buck effectively stopped with the two responsible authorities providing other agencies with an opportunity to evade direct responsibility themselves. The legislation did introduce two further 'classes' of agency, namely those [statutory agencies] required to co-operate with the responsible authorities, and those others invited to participate. However, since participation was not obligatory for these other classes it would be wrong to presume the Act fundamentally altered the partnership working landscape for 'all' agencies. Secondly, by placing the responsibility for partnership working not on the police force but upon the local police commander, the legislation has to be seen in the context of the drive for decentralisation, which had been encouraged particularly by the Audit Commission since the mid-1990s. Despite the Audit Commission's support for decentralisation this did not necessarily sit comfortably with the way policing was delivered locally. 'Beating Crime' (HMIC, 1998) for example revealed that decision making, in many police forces, still remained heavily over-centralised in the hands of chief constables and headquarters. The clash between centralised pressure for uniformity and localised pressure for flexibility and territorial variation was a potentially serious one.

Thirdly, in a similar vein, within two tier areas responsible authorities status rested primarily with district councils, which meant that upper tier county councils, responsible for important service areas such as

education and social services, were likely to come under pressure to respond to the differential demands of the lower tier authorities. In theory, such variation may have been anticipated due to the variation in the location and intensity of local crime and disorder problems. In practice this raised political questions regarding equitable provision and territorial justice, which were unlikely to be easily resolved. Fourthly, in view of the above, there was every possibility that the partnerships, established by the 1998 Act, were going to be virtual partnerships, existing more in the paper documentation (e.g. the audits and strategies) created in their name, than in the 'flesh', although this does beg the fundamental question of what a 'real' partnership looks like. The Home Office's statutory guidance made it clear the responsible authorities should not be regarded in any way as being 'first among equals' within the local partnerships. However, with no compulsion for others to join in, it is difficult to see it in any other way, as Gilling (1999) suggests.

Research conducted into the early operation of CDRPs by and for the Home Office (Phillips et al., 2002) does suggest that CDRPs did, in practice, rely disproportionately upon the contribution from the two responsible authorities. That does not mean that CDRPs were not able to construct large inter-agency forums, however, as previous research indicated (e.g. Crawford, 1997), such forums often failed to progress beyond 'talking shops'. In addition, Crime Audits relied disproportionately upon data provided by the police, and particularly their crime statistics (Tierney, 2001), and voluntary, private and community bodies either sat on the sidelines or out of the picture altogether, as the impression remained that CDRP business was largely statutory sector business. Policy changes after 1999, notably the Crime Reduction Strategy with its release of central funding and the new 'Best Value' performance management framework, did little to change such an impression. In the case of funding it was the statutory agencies who had to bid for Crime Reduction Programme funding, and subsequent programme funds from the Safer Communities Initiative onwards, have been channelled down through regional government offices to, usually, the local authorities. Additionally, as the performance of the CDRPs came to be assessed, so inspection regimes in the shape of Best Value reviews and HMIC BCU inspections were also directed at the two main responsible authorities.

The survey of local authority community safety managers conducted by Gilling and Hughes (2002) confirmed this picture of responsible authority dominance, as respondents confirmed that health authorities and the probation service had been hard to engage, and there was also concern regarding the contribution of upper tier local authority service areas, such as education and social services. This may have been attributable to their upper tier status, thereby, confirming the problems encountered by partnerships operating in two tier areas. However, equally, it could have been attributable to the

possibility that some 'social' agencies did not see where they fitted in to the Home Office's narrow conception of crime reduction, in contrast to the more accommodating notion of community safety. This was an issue, which had been raised previously in the Morgan Report (Home Office, 1991), but unresolved by the terminological shift from crime prevention to crime reduction.

Despite the Home Office's anxiety to see questions of delivery prioritised over questions of bureaucracy the local government lobby, and specifically the Local Government Association (LGA), made it clear to the Home Office that the bureaucratic requirements of the legislation, and the accompanying performance and funding regimes, were imposing a considerable administrative burden on CDRPs, many of whom did not have the resources to cope. In particular, the auditing process represented a notable burden as CDRPs lacked the resources to consult widely (Newburn and Jones, 2002) and the competitive bidding process of the CRP forced many to doubt whether a bid, with only a remote prospect of success, was worth the requisite investment of time, energy and resources. For those who did receive CRP funding, however, the picture was not much rosier.

Hedderman and Williams's (2001) analysis of the Reducing Burglary Initiative, a cornerstone of the CRP, demonstrated that a substantial proportion of successful bids had failed effectively to get off the ground, even a year into having received the funding. In part the authors attribute this to capacity issues, and particularly the lack of necessary project management skills, although in part, they also attribute it to a supervisory gap between the 'strategic' CDRP and the operational end of delivery teams who were being left to manage themselves, resulting in such implementation problems with the CRP being laid bare within a more substantial Home Office report (Homel et al., 2005). Furthermore, Gilling and Hughes's (2002) survey research indicated that community safety practitioners were spending a disproportionate amount of their time attempting to keep their CDRP structures afloat, rather than honing such 'technical' skills as auditing and crime pattern analysis. Evidence supports the idea expressed above, in so far as partnership bodies, CDRPs were more 'virtual' than real and certainly a long way from being the sort of stable and cohesive partnership bodies envisaged in governmental guidance.

In addition to what has been discussed thus far, three further sources of evidence suggested that CDRPs were far from thriving. Firstly, there was a Home Office pathfinder report (Home Office, 1999) which examined the early experiences of 12 different CDRPs from auditing through to the production of their first three-year strategies in April 1999. The report suggested that the auditing experience had proven to be much more burdensome in two-tier local authority areas, not least due to the demands placed upon agencies operating at the upper tier, such as the police and county councils. It also identified a problem

with leadership. In some cases, the strategy-setting process had been left almost entirely in the hands of community safety officers, whose lack of executive authority made it difficult for them to exercise leverage to secure agency contributions from those beyond the responsible authorities. Health and education bodies were found to be particularly reluctant to collaborate, in part because they did not see the relevance of CDRPs to their core business, however, in part also because their territorial scale of operation presented them with the same difficulties encountered by the upper tier authorities yet, in real terms, none of the compulsion. Finally, and perhaps inevitably, despite the enabling provisions of the 1998 Act, there was a problem in some areas with the lack of effective information exchange.

The second source of evidence was HMIC's (2000) follow up to 'Beating Crime', entitled 'Calling Time on Crime'. Based upon a thematic inspection conducted between November 1999 and March 2000, when partnerships were in the process of implementing their three-year strategies, this report confirmed the pathfinder study's observations by noting that;

"agencies other than the two responsible authorities often appear not to be wholly committed to partnership work." (2000: 23).

The problem was attributed in part to the proliferation of plans and initiatives at central government level, which meant that agencies beyond the two responsible authorities had other 'core business' ensuring that crime prevention was unlikely to be seen by them as a priority. One potential solution, suggested by HMIC, was for section 17 of the 1998 Act to be applied to central government as well as to local government so that the minds of 'all' agencies were more focused upon crime prevention. More generally, HMIC also noted the limited engagement of elected councillors, the private and voluntary sectors and the community.

HMIC (2000) also confirmed the pathfinder report's observations regarding the tendency in some areas for the responsibility for crime prevention to be abdicated to community safety officers, making them the de facto CDRPs. One inevitable consequence of such a tendency was a resultant lack of leadership which made it even more unlikely that other agencies would 'come on board'. Although HMIC evidenced a stated commitment to partnership working during its inspections, there remained a suspicion that this was mainly rhetorical. One problem arising from this was that it made it more unlikely that CDRPs would connect into more holistic or joined-up approaches to addressing crime. Thus, for example, HMIC found a lack of connection between CDRPs and drug and alcohol action teams (DAATs), despite their obvious 'coincidence of interest'. Similarly, there was a noted lack of connection between CDRP strategies and police authority plans in places where they were territorially linked.

The HMIC report highlighted a considerable amount of local disquiet at the Home Office's policy-making style, particularly following the announcement of its Crime Reduction Strategy. The Home Office, it was thought, had been insufficiently consultative in 'imposing', rather than 'negotiating over', the strategic priorities of the CRS. This instilled a sense that crime prevention priorities were being largely steered from the centre. This may help to explain the lack of local leadership in some places, as the requisite commitment was replaced with a certain amount of fatalism. HMIC made some other points in relation to effective partnership working, which will be addressed later in this chapter.

The final source of evidence, which questioned the efficiency of CDRPs was the Audit Commission's report of 2002, controversially entitled 'Community Safety Partnerships' and was based upon a number of local inspections and the results of a Local Government Association survey in 2001. The Commission's boldly stated view that "local partnerships have not made an obvious impact on community safety" serves as an indictment of local practice. At one level, the Commission attributes the problem to a lack of local capacity for partnership working, and its findings here echo the findings of other reports and its practical recommendations cover similar ground (see below). On another level, however, the Commission provides a more critical reading of CDRPs, and particularly the constraining role of central government policy. It should be remembered that the Audit Commission has a particular interest in the operation of local government, and it is significant that in the report it is critical of "the lack of a clear national policy that includes the important role of non-police agencies in community safety." (2002: 22).

In its report, it insists on using the terminology of 'community safety partnership' rather than of 'CDRP', crucially, it notes the disjuncture between the Home Office's crime reduction agenda and the more expansive community safety perspective, held by local authority practitioners. The implication of this analysis reveals that the Home Office is attempting to force CDRPs down a narrow crime reduction path that is really the same path along which the police service is being forced. Local authority resistance to this situation explains why partnership working has proven to be to a large extent ineffective, and the impression is of CDRPs being used as one arm of a pincer movement intended to create a more compliant police service. Chapter 2, it will be remembered, reviewed the pressures exerted upon the police service to adopt a crime management approach within which crime reduction played an integral part.

In their different ways, HMIC and the Audit Commission were both critical of central government policy and its negative impact upon partnership working. How receptive the Home Office was to such criticism is a moot point, and judging by its subsequent policy

responses it found the criticisms about local capacity rather more palatable than those about the detrimental effects of 'central steering'. The 2002 Police Reform Act could be seen as a response to these reports as it increased the number of responsible authorities to include, from April 2003, Police Authorities and Fire Authorities and from April 2004, Primary Care Trusts (PCTs), although, such changes arrived too late to have an impact upon the formation of the second round of three year strategies, from 2002 to 2005. The Act also required closer working relationships between CDRPs and DAATs, favouring, but not compelling, merger in unitary areas. As noted in Chapter 1, the Home Office also established regional Crime Reduction Directorates, with a specific brief to work more closely with CDRPs in pursuit of national objectives. The regional directorates were to distribute and account for the spending of new funding streams such as the Safer Communities Initiative (SCI), and this gave them an opportunity to performance manage CDRPs in a way that the Home Office would have found more difficult working from the centre.

In response to local government concerns regarding limited resources, the Home Office also established the new partnership development fund (PDF), in which £20 million was made available over each of three years to assist CDRPs in building capacity, for example through investment in information technology to enhance local crime analysis, or through the employment of community safety officers, particularly in areas that lacked the funds to make such appointments. In this regard, the Audit Commission (2002) had noted some 10% of CDRPs lacked a dedicated community safety officer, and in many areas the community safety responsibility was 'bolted on' to the 'day jobs' of other local government roles. Finally, in recognition of the difficulties that many CDRPs had had in developing initiatives based upon the principle of 'evidence-based practice' (HMIC, 1998 and 2000) which the Crime Reduction Strategy had heavily promoted, the Home Office restructured its crime reduction website to include a number of 'toolkits' intended as repositories of evidence-based good practice upon which local practitioners could access advice and guidance for implementing their strategies.

The 'tinkerings' of the 2002 Police Reform Act were not sufficient to resolve all the problems that CDRPs faced, in terms of engaging agencies beyond the public services, nor were they likely to be. The reality is, legislation cannot compel non-statutory agencies to engage in partnerships, for such agencies, contribution to the process will always represent a voluntary engagement. In terms of getting CDRPs to work effectively, the problems of a local capacity deficit and a heavy-handed steer from the centre both remained unaddressed. With regard to the former, for example, the Home Office's official report into the less than impressive operation of the Crime Reduction Programme (Homel et al., 2005) revealed a series of weaknesses in CDRPs around issues such as project management. In its joint review into the Street

Crime Initiative, moreover, HMIC (2003: 44) noted very critically that "the largely ineffective nature of Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) was, once more, highlighted." The National Audit Office (NAO) (2004), meanwhile, was critical that a fair proportion of CDRP initiatives lacked careful project management, with their targets often not being clearly expressed and their rationales not always well connected with existing knowledge bases.

With regard to the latter point, as relates to central steering, HMIC (2003: 44) highlighted the tensions arising from this, and observed;

"In some areas, the introduction of SCI was perceived by partners as 'enforced', working against locally-consulted priorities and ... displacing effort intended for existing or fully endorsed local activities."

The NAO (2004), with its greater focus upon value for money, recognised complex funding and accounting arrangements, from a myriad of different central funding pots, imposed an excessive administrative burden which diverted the meagre resources of CDRPs, creating within them, what Crawford (2007) refers to, as a 'compliance mentality'. The NAO also realised that Home Office funding settlements, which were often short-term and delayed, had knock-on effects at the local level, leading to project implementation delays due to financial uncertainty and the practical problems of both recruiting and retaining staff for such projects. Importantly, in view of subsequent developments, the NAO recommended smaller CDRPs should be merged in order to reduce administrative costs and it also supported the simplification of funding arrangements, which the Home Office was already taking steps to facilitate, in light of the shift to Local Area Agreements (LAAs – see Chapter 1).

Despite the changes made by the 2002 Police Reform Act, as early as 2003 the Home Office consultation paper 'Building Safer Communities Together' recognised the need to strengthen partnership arrangements. In the 2004 White Paper 'Building Communities, Beating Crime' the Home Office committed itself to a formal review of CDRPs, making the point that;

"Some CDRPs are demonstrably less effective than others. For example, some partnerships struggle to maintain a full contribution from key agencies. Lack of clarity about roles and responsibilities and blurred lines of accountability can lead to some agencies abrogating their responsibility for crime reduction. Furthermore, under present arrangements CDRPs are neither fully visible nor properly accountable to the communities they serve, nor are they fully embedded in the local democratic framework. These issues lie at the heart of the Government's reform programme." (Home Office, 2004: 158).

This review of CDRPs betrays a governmental attempt to merge the Home Office's narrow crime reduction agenda with the local government reform agenda of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM, now the Department for Communities and Local Government [DCLG]), hence the particular emphasis given to local visibility and accountability. Importantly, the very same agenda was exerting pressure, as seen in Chapter 2, on the police service to orientate its service in the direction of neighbourhood policing, with a much greater emphasis upon localism and community engagement. In the case of CDRPs, engagement with the local government reform agenda implied a simultaneous shift 'upwards' to the strategic, authority-wide focus of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), described by Keith (2004) as the local 'über-partnership'; and 'downward' to neighbourhood management.

The results of the review of CDRPs were published in January 2006 (Home Office, 2006). In the light of the emergence of LAAs with their 'safer and stronger communities' theme, the review recognised the need for CDRPs to 'fit into' the LSP structure and, while straightforward in unitary areas, became deeply problematic in two-tier authorities as the LSPs were situated at the upper tier county level. The review's proposed solution was not to merge district-level CDRPs at the county level (unless there was strong local pressure for this), but rather to effect a strategic/operational split, so district CDRPs effectively became the delivery arms of strategic plans, generated at LSP level. This preserved the 'independence' of district-level CDRPs, whilst accommodating the need for CDRPs to engage more effectively with upper tier agencies such as the police, the county council and DAATs, thus addressing a problem which had originally been identified by HMIC (2000) and others. Localism was to be preserved, under such arrangements, by engaging district councillors with the community safety portfolio, together, under the LSP umbrella.

The review also recognised that the three-year audit-to-strategy cycle had not proved a success, absorbing resources which may have been placed, more profitably, into delivery. It recommended this 'cycle' should be amended, not by abolishing the three year plans, but rather by making them 'rolling plans' subjected to annual revision in the light of six monthly strategic assessments, conducted under the methodology of the National Intelligence Model (NIM). Significantly, such recommendation ties CDRPs much more closely into the business of local policing, given that the NIM has become the vehicle through which the police service delivers crime management. The implication is that the tasking and co-ordination groups (TCGs) through which the NIM operates at BCU level should take on more of a multi-agency focus as a result of the incorporation of CDRP business.

Finally (although the review covered a lot of other ground that is not directly relevant to this section), the review also recognised the

problems with information exchange, an issue CDRPs had faced since inception. If CDRPs were to fit into the NIM, then more had to be achieved to unblock the flow of information and intelligence, and thus the review recommended a revision to section 115 of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, so information-sharing was not just 'permissive' but rather a positive duty of responsible authorities, whose number (the review also recommended) the Home Secretary should be empowered to add to, as deemed necessary.

These, and other recommendations of the review of CDRPs, were incorporated into the 2006 Police and Justice Act, with a view to them becoming operational by the summer of 2007, a period of time which lies outside of the direct empirical focus of this thesis. It is nevertheless important to recognise the review and the changes that are to be made in its wake, as it demonstrates the problematic status that CDRPs have experienced since their inception combined with the almost permanent revolution to which they have been subjected, resulting from the constant succession of policy changes affecting both their structure and operation. It would appear, in summary, that CDRPs have been blighted by problems of limited capacity, and by the distraction of a strong steer from the Home Office. The changes introduced in 2006 complement the Home Office steer with one from the DCLG. However, while at a structural level they serve to ensure that CDRPs are better 'joined up' both with LSPs and with local policing, they do not necessarily remove the difficulties that central steering generate for local partnership working. Similarly, local capacity may be improved by a less unpredictable funding regime instituted under LAAs, and by the new duty on responsible authorities to share information, yet it is by no means clear that all the capacity problems have been addressed by the policy changes.

Critical Success Factors in Partnership Working

As stated at the beginning of this chapter, since the inception of the partnership approach to crime prevention there has been a steady stream of literature, most of it from official sources, oriented towards imparting knowledge of effective partnership working. The presence of this literature, which generally takes the form of guidance, some of it premised upon a critique of existing practice, is indicative of a general understanding that partnership working is new, and potentially difficult. It is a deviation from the standard operating procedures of agencies more used to working by themselves than in partnership with others more used to independence than the inter-dependence factors upon which partnership approaches are generally premised (Hudson, 1987).

At the risk of over-generalisation, this literature is generally prescriptive. It demonstrates a normative commitment to partnership working and seeks to uncover and impart the essential elements of

good or effective partnership working. It often achieves this by criticising arrangements which fall short of the normative ideal, and providing case studies regarding instances of effective practice from which others can learn through emulation. These instances tend to be assembled into recipes or blueprints for success. Such blueprints tend to disconnect partnership working from its broader context, although that is not to say that the literature neglects this context and much of it, for example, carries implicit or explicit critiques of government policy. Notwithstanding such critiques and contextual understanding, however, the literature is guided by the pragmatic purpose of imparting a message of guidance to practitioners about how to 'do' effective partnership working.

The purpose of this section is not to provide an exhaustive account of this guidance as there is not the space to do this. Again at the risk of over-generalisation, the purpose here is to document what amounts to a general orthodoxy in this literature as relates to what constitutes good partnership working in crime prevention. The literature emanates from a variety of sources. Although, such guidance preceded the Morgan Report (Home Office, 1991), this watershed document is taken as our starting point. Subsequently, we take into account the contribution of Home Office-sponsored research (Liddle and Gelsthorpe, 1994a, 1994b and 1994c; Sutton, 1996; Tilley and Hough, 1998), the Audit Commission (1998, 1999 and 2002), and HMIC (1998, 2000), although it is acknowledged that many other sources may have been drawn upon.

This literature offers a general composite image of what a good partnership looks like. The partnership should be fit for purpose in the sense that its membership profile is determined by what it is there to do. If the purpose is crime prevention, the membership should constitute service areas which impact in one way or another on crime prevention. Membership should be guided by the principle that smaller partnerships can be more business-like, whereas larger partnerships are less so and run the risk of becoming, in effect, 'talking shops'.

There is widespread agreement there needs to be a split between the strategic and operational or tactical parts of the partnership. The strategic part of the partnership should be responsible for the vision and for the plan or strategy, intended to bring about that vision. It needs to be populated by representatives who hold senior positions within their agencies, whose seniority signals the commitment of their 'parent' agency (hence representatives from different agencies should hold similar levels of seniority), and allows them to make decisions and commit resources on behalf of that agency. Strategic partnerships have a particular role to play in agreeing information-sharing protocols and in ensuring data compatibility, since the collection and analysis of information plays a key part in the crime prevention process. The

need for compatible data sources provides one rationale for the argument that the agencies sitting on the strategic partnership should have coterminous boundaries, though another rationale resides in the fact that coterminosity gives agencies a united purpose averting the possibility, for example, that agencies may have to contribute to more than one crime prevention partnership.

There should be continuity in representation to facilitate familiarity and trust-building, however, also to ensure that agency contributions are followed-up and reviewed. There should be a process which guides the strategic body, for example through routine meetings set to develop, implement and review the strategy. This ensures the focus of the partnership is not lost in the event of personnel changes and, therefore, the partnership does not become over-dependent upon the contribution of individuals. There should also be a process linking the business of the strategic partnership to each 'parent' agency so the contribution of each agency is routinely supported and reviewed by that agency, rather than being dependent on the goodwill or interest of individual representatives.

Between the strategic and operational aspects of the partnership there should be a co-ordinator role. Recognising that the administrative and bureaucratic functions of the strategic partnership exist outside of the 'day jobs' of the senior agency representatives requiring, not only the formulation of the strategy, but also the on-going review of its implementation. The co-ordinator role (typically performed after 1998 by a community safety manager) is more or less a functional necessity.

Many of the attributes identified above are also relevant to the operational part of the partnership. Thus, it too should be process-focused and, as far as possible, have continuity of agency representation. Operational parts of partnerships are likely to focus upon specific crime problems or geographical areas. The process they should follow is a problem-oriented process, geared towards the development of joint operations to address known crime and disorder problems. Since the problem-oriented process is iterative and adaptive, the partnership structure at this level is likely to be more fluid and flexible and there is less need for the formal structures, likely to exist at the strategic level. This lesser need for formal structures, however, should be balanced against the need to ensure that operational parts of the partnership adopt a medium to long-term perspective, alongside a more flexible short-term one. The need for both flexibility and a longer-term vision attests to the importance of having a leadership or 'champion' role at this level. Named individuals should be responsible for this leadership role and there should be a good line of communication and accountability running from such individuals back to the strategic partnerships, to account for progress and to seek assistance in unblocking 'implementation inertia' and so forth.

As the operational parts of the partnership should be engaged in the problem-oriented process they clearly need the requisite skills to conduct this effectively. They require, in particular, good analytical skills to deal with the information and intelligence on which crime prevention projects are based. They require good project management skills to ensure projects are put into practice when needed and effectively monitored. They also require evaluation skills in order to determine the outcome effectiveness of implemented projects. Ensuring these skills are represented at the operational level and that those agencies who have a role to play in addressing the crime problems that fall within the ambit of the operational part of the partnership are involved, in turn, ensures that this level of partnership is 'fit for purpose'.

Finally, good practice guidance tends to recognise that good partnerships do not appear overnight. They take time to develop as agencies must become familiar with one another on an individual level, with trust being regarded as a vital partnership commodity. Building trust may also require acquiring a familiarity with different professional and organisational cultures, as well as overcoming aspects of those cultures that may provide barriers to joint working. This process can be facilitated, it is suggested, by looking for early 'quick wins' for the partnership, as well as through the role of 'champions' who carry a particular enthusiasm for partnership working.

Critical Perspectives on Partnership Working

While, as noted above, the guidance literature on partnership working does not neglect some of the more critical issues in relation to partnership working, its basic flaw is that it is predisposed to assume what Challis et al. (1988) refer to as an "optimistic model" of policy. It does this because of its status as guidance. The optimistic model betrays the reasonable expectation that partnerships indeed can be shaped to deliver the outputs and outcomes expected of them by their architects and this expectation, in turn, rests upon a 'benevolent model' of collaboration (Sampson et al., 1988), which assumes that agencies will be drawn into partnership working through a desire they describe as one of "paternalistic corporatism". In other words, agencies will work together in pursuit of the greater good, recognising that they will provide a better service to the public by working in partnership, rather than working in relative isolation. It is hardly surprising that this guidance carries such underpinning assumptions, otherwise there would be no motivation to provide the guidance in the first place.

There is an extensive literature available, however, which carries no such underpinning assumptions although the truth may lie somewhere in between. The authors cited above also identify

pessimistic (Challis et al., 1988) and conspiratorial (Sampson et al., 1988) models, where partnership working becomes a much more problematic phenomenon. In this section, the main themes and issues raised by this more critical literature will be reviewed. In view of its relevance to the research upon which this thesis is based, the literature focused upon here will be that which concentrates specifically upon the partnership approach to crime prevention. However, it should be acknowledged there is a wider literature drawn from other policy domains and reflecting other issues of governance, on which this literature sometimes draws.

Inevitably, this critical literature on crime prevention partnerships follows policy developments, so it first began to appear in the 1980s, the decade when the multi-agency or co-ordinated approach to crime prevention was initially promoted by government. There is limited space for this literature to be covered in great detail, yet it is important to recognise that the themes explored in the literature have changed over time. When the partnership approach represented a relatively new policy departure in the 1980s, the literature focused particularly on inter-professional dynamics and ideological conflicts, partly reflecting the fact relations between the police and other agencies were often quite strained during this period. More recently, as partnerships have become a more familiar part of the policy landscape, and as the partnership approach has been driven from the centre as a part of a deliberate policy to modernise, join up, restructure or even reinvent the business of governing, so the focus of the literature has tended to shift from the inter-professional to the inter-governmental, examining in particular the relationship between central and local government.

The conspiratorial model (Sampson et al., 1988) presents partnership as an opportunity for the police's 'colonisation' (Kinsey et al., 1986) of other agencies. According to the model, the police effectively take over the partnership agenda, using other agencies to further their own ends, such as intelligence-gathering and the offloading of 'rubbish work'. This conspiratorial model reflects the tone of much critical writing in relation to the police in the 1980s, with an implicit concern that the lack of local democratic accountability made the police service a difficult agency to 'control', combined with a presumed disregard for matters such as civil liberties. Without democratic accountability, and with a structural position which endowed them with primacy over matters of local crime control by virtue of their historical mandate, the concern reflected was that the police service was always going to be the dominant partner. In reality, the research Sampson et al. (1988) conducted into a range of different instances of partnership working indicated that neither benevolent nor conspiratorial models provided adequate accounts of what they found to be much more variable forms of partnership working.

Their research demonstrated, as one might expect, that different agencies framed crime problems, and their putative solutions, in different ways according to their different organisational and professional ideologies. Yet this difference did not necessarily result in the presence of conflict in partnership forums. Conflict was more likely if there was competition over scarce resources, however, at other times conflict remained latent because some 'framings' of problem and solution carried more weight than others. In particular, there was a tendency for partnerships to prioritise problems, which figured prominently in police statistics and approaches to resolve those problems that had a 'common sense' appeal. This often mitigated against 'social' approaches because of their more distant or tendentious link with crime problems. This might have privileged police priorities and situational, or enforcement-oriented solutions, yet it did so in an indirect way.

Conflict could also be 'managed away' by taking informal action outside of, and thus beyond the scrutiny of, partnership forums. This made partnership working more effective, however, also less visible and accountable. Conflict could also be managed away by subverting the purpose of partnership forums, so they became occasions for networking, particularly between senior managers, rather than occasions for seriously addressing local crime problems through joint action. The joint action effectively was represented by the partnership forum, a 'talking shop' rather than a site for purposive decision-making and action.

Crawford and Jones (1995) also researched local crime prevention partnerships, finding that the nature of partnership working was more variable than might be expected from any deterministic model. Like Sampson et al. (1988) they found despite very different perspectives, conflict between agencies was an infrequent feature of partnership forums, mainly due to the way it was managed out by various tactics of 'conflict avoidance' being employed. This included the use of informal agreements or deals beyond the gaze of the partnership forum. However, it was also by the use of what they called a 'smorgasbord tactic' by which partnerships tried to accommodate all interests and perspectives in their decision-making, so that no particular perspective was excluded at the expense of others.

The capacity to deliver a smorgasbord approach to crime prevention, which is indicative of the more inclusive or all-embracing community safety approach, may depend upon the availability of sufficient resources. In Hope and Murphy's (1983) investigation into the implementation of the Manchester schools vandalism project, which provided a testing ground for the problem-oriented methodology of the situational approach, there was evidently a difference of opinion over how the problem should be tackled, with some favouring situational measures, and others, favouring social measures. In the main it

appears a smorgasbord approach was effectively squeezed out by the two dominant agencies, the police and school buildings department, who were able to use their claims as 'experts' to ensure that their preferred situational ideas were prioritised. Claims to expertise, then, may be seen as a way of avoiding or resolving potential points of conflict. In a similar way, Gilling's (1993) single case study research showed that the potential conflict between social and situational advocates was resolved through 'objective' claims, which privileged situational measures resulting from their basis in 'hard' rather than 'soft' data.

In his overview of partnership working in crime prevention, which incorporates this analytic shift, referred to above, from inter-professional to inter-governmental relations, Gilling (2005) stresses the importance of examining partnership working in terms of the interplay between three levels of analysis. These are the macro or environmental level, the meso or organisational level and the micro or interpersonal level. The macro frames the other two, and the meso frames the micro, however, each is also relatively autonomous, so the relationship between the three levels are not deterministic or even unidirectional as, for example, micro level actions can come to shape organisational practices. A good example of this is the way a lot of partnership measures originate in the innovative 'experiments' of local practitioners.

Gilling's work drew upon that of others (e.g. Davidson, 1976; Hudson, 1987), which examined partnership working in other domains. He is critical of the 'what makes a good partnership' approach of the guidance literature as it serves to abstract partnerships from the complex context of these interacting levels of analysis, as if partnership working is only a meso level phenomenon. His purpose, rather, is to show that partnership working is influenced by these different levels. Thus, for example, the capacity of CDRPs to develop into effective partnerships depends upon conducive structural conditions, particularly through government policy but also through the wider social, economic, political and ideological context to which government policy is itself a response.

This wider context includes the impact of globalisation on the business of governing (Pierre and Peters, 2000). In its broadest sense, globalisation has had the effect of shortening the reach of government, requiring it to work with and, to 'enable' others in, the 'co-production' of crime control. The shift from welfare liberalism to neoliberalism, which has accompanied globalisation requires a modification in governmental aspirations, not only in terms of what it can be expected to do by itself (hence the phenomenon of 'responsibilisation' (Garland, 1996)), but also in terms of how it does it. With regard to how it acts, government has been affected by general cynicism regarding its own capacity, typified in the idea that 'nothing works', but also by concerns

in relation to the lack of accountability of criminal justice agencies and with other problems, such as, the abuse of powers and corruption. In part, because of this cynicism, there has been a shift in the nature of crime control from reaction to proactivity, as part of a new risk-oriented approach to crime problems. The aims of this risk-oriented approach are less geared to the elimination or 'cure' of crime, and more geared to the effective management and containment of crime. As many commentators have noted (e.g. O'Malley, 1992), the emergence of crime prevention especially situational crime prevention, but also crime reduction, can be seen very much in this light.

At this broad level, the modification of governmental business, perceived by some as more (late-modern) governance than (modern) government, is associated with, and frames, the rise of the partnership approach to crime prevention. Yet such a modification is not unproblematic as government struggles with its own modified ambitions. While it acknowledges its limitations, government simultaneously recognises the importance of crime control to its sovereign authority and legitimacy and to the electoral fortunes of the political party that leads it. This creates a dilemma Garland (2001) describes as a 'sovereignty predicament'. The predicament is manifested in contradictory policy developments, notably a simultaneous preventive and punitive 'turn'. There may be more crime prevention, evidenced particularly by the establishment of CDRPs and the widespread use of preventive technologies such as CCTV, however, there is simultaneously more penalty, evidenced particularly by a growing prison population, but also by more punitive measures such as zero-tolerance policing (Stenson, 2000).

What does all of this mean for partnership working, or in other words how does the macro frame the meso? This dilemma, it would seem, creates ambiguity in government policy, as has been well summarised by Crawford (2001). Although CDRPs were supposed to epitomise 'local solutions for local problems', they have been subjected to an increasingly centralised and managerialised agenda as government has sought to enhance its crime control credentials through the attainment of various crime reduction targets. Furthermore, although CDRPs were initially given free rein to develop holistic approaches to the problem of crime, they have since been tied down to a much narrower conception of crime reduction which, as Chapter 2 discussed, is consistent with more conventional police approaches to crime management.

The ambiguity government expresses in its sovereignty predicament bears down upon, but is also replayed within, the meso level. Agencies such as the police pick up mixed messages from government, such as the injunction to establish CDRPs, and also a policy emphasis that stresses the police's 'core business' through various national policing plans that do not necessarily take account of the police's contribution

to partnerships. The police also have their own predicament in the sense of an expectation that they should work in partnership with others, which is in conflict against their own claims for professional competence expressed in a relatively new-found confidence in areas such as crime management, endorsed by the recent introduction of the NIM and measures such as zero-tolerance policing. This ambiguity then percolates down to practitioners, who may be uncertain about the priority which should be accorded to partnership working when set against other developments and demands.

The sovereignty predicament has other ramifications, which may help to make sense of some of the other empirical findings of studies of CDRPs after 1998, although one should not neglect the part played simply by bad policy-making. The government's desire to be 'seen to be in control of crime' manifests itself in 'performance pressure' on those to whom it can be applied (the responsible authorities), with the pressure having been intensified since the advent of crime reduction teams in the government offices with their capacity for a much closer steer of CDRP business. Yet this may have had the effect of freezing out those beyond the responsible authorities, thus helping to explain the relatively minimal involvement of agencies from the private and voluntary sectors. The pressure has also been applied in a way that squeezes timescales. The first round of audits and strategies had to be completed before partnerships had time to properly form and funding regimes, when they did emerge after 1999, initially only provided resources for one year's implementation. Under such time constraints, as Gilling (2005) observes, it was difficult for the key commodity of trust, the main lubricator of partnership working at the interpersonal level, to develop.

A further complication noted by Gilling (2005), which does not at first sight fit Garland's idea of a sovereignty predicament, is caused by the intervention of other central government departments who have sought to shape the business of CDRPs at this macro level. The actions of the Home Office might fit the aspiration to re-assert sovereign authority through the police as the gateway to the penal system, however, the ODPM and now the DCLG would appear to offer an older, welfare liberal approach to crime prevention which locates the causes of crime in factors such as community breakdown and economic decline. Thus, through the body of the LSP and the 'safer and stronger' stream of the LAA, CDRPs are connected with welfare liberal themes such as civil and neighbourhood renewal, which do not appear to belong to this concept of the re-assertion of state sovereignty. However, on closer inspection, if we look at how themes such as civil and neighbourhood renewal have played out, then in practice much of it has been translated into a 'politics of behaviour' which equates renewal with the enforcement of standards of civility, industry, good parenting and good behaviour ultimately with back-up sanctions such as ASBOs and parenting orders (Gilling, 2007). CDRPs have been given an

instrumental role in this politics of behaviour, leaving the police to focus on more serious crime and as such a politics does, after all look more like the reassertion of sovereignty that Garland sees as one part of the sovereignty predicament.

The role of CDRPs in this politics of behaviour is, however, a controversial one. Some of the agencies working within or alongside CDRPs, typically the more 'social' ones, have reservations regarding what is seen by some as the 'criminalisation of social policy', where the emphasis is upon enforcement, not welfare. This controversy is not dissimilar to the ideological conflict seen to exist in the 1980s between advocates of social and situational approaches to crime prevention.

At the meso level, the major problems the guidance literature has tended to gloss over were originally conceived as those of incompatible organisational cultures and power differences, which made partnership relationships asymmetrical. These problems have not necessarily disappeared. Although, as noted above, power differences rarely express themselves in overt conflict and power relations may express themselves in more subtle ways. It appears, for example, that the 'rules of the game' for CDRPs may be devised in such a way as to favour particular approaches to crime prevention, and thus, those agencies with which they are associated. As many have recognised, and whether they wish it or not, the police service's status comprising its historical mandate, its custodianship of crime statistics and intelligence and its possession of mainstream resources for analysing and responding to local crime problems, puts it in a position whereby other agencies may be inclined to accede authority to the police service as 'the expert' with local crime control being 'its bag'.

Further to this, the time constraints under which CDRPs must operate, the targets they must work to and the data they must use to identify priorities and measure performance may all serve to favour narrow crime reduction over community safety as the core business of CDRPs (Gilling, 2005). Crime reduction falls more within the domain of the police than with any other agency. This is debatable, however, an alternative perspective is provided by Byrne and Pease (2003) who argue that CDRPs have tended to draw in 'social' agencies whose interests are more in community safety than crime reduction and who tend to focus upon the remote causes of crime, generating measures which are justified by their 'worthiness' and 'reflected glory' rather than by any crime reductive outcomes. As they say;

"There is a danger of the crime reduction enterprise being shaped by the preferences and prejudices of those most eager to be engaged in partnership working." (2003: 296-7)

The point that the power to shape CDRP agendas depends upon the constitution and dynamics of the individual CDRP is a good one, which

counsels against any simple assumption that the police perspective is necessarily always the dominant one.

In terms of organisational cultures, it is still likely to be the case that different organisations have different languages, different timescales, different ways of seeing and so forth. While the guidance literature sometimes recognises these problems, its general orientation is to assume that such problems may be overcome by greater familiarity, so that they are recognised as differences which can be accommodated, rather than becoming barriers. To some extent this is plausible, particularly as such differences are perhaps less than they once were. Gilling (2005) observes, as public sector agencies have become increasingly managerialised and, in the process, de-professionalised so there has been a degree of practical, yet not necessarily functional isomorphism. Agencies are increasingly used to objective-setting, national priorities, auditing, inspections and the other paraphernalia of managerialism, including the pressure to engage in partnership working (HMIC 2000, noted disapprovingly that some police forces used the number of partnerships joined as a quantitative performance measure). Thus, whatever the differences between agencies, they are bound together by familiar managerialist repertoires, which make it relatively easy for them to 'go through the motions', thereby, producing 'products' such as audits and strategies without really having to confront their differences. Power's (1997) point regarding the tendency of 'the audit culture' to colonise agency business (cited by Gilling and Barton, 2004) is relevant here, as is Smith's (2000) point in relation to the ideology of unity, which encourages partnerships to present themselves to the outside world as united and consensual. The 'show' of partnership may be a part of the compliance mentality Crawford (2007) finds to be present amongst the local agencies mandated to work together in CDRPs. However, it may be more show than substance, as the Home Office's reform agenda implicitly recognises.

Behind the presentational side of CDRPs, the meso level differences may persist when making it hard for them to work effectively with one another. In a point demonstrating the importance of examining the interaction of different levels of analysis when considering partnership working, Crawford (2007) emphasises that a continued problem for CDRPs has been the lack of 'joined-up government' at the central government level. This has meant that, just as local agencies have been pushed into partnerships, so central government departments make different and potentially contradictory demands of local agencies which drive them back into their separate policy 'silos'. Crawford (2007) suggests that the National Community Safety Plan (2004-2007) was a rather limited attempt to address this persistent problem.

Chapter Summary

The purpose of this chapter has been to examine the literature relating to partnership working in crime prevention. Some of this literature has focused specifically upon developments in partnership working after the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, which is of particular relevance to the empirical focus of this thesis. It has demonstrated that such partnership working has proven to be problematic for a number of different reasons, many of which relate to difficulties in the nature of government policy making.

In the second part of the chapter, two different 'schools' of literature regarding partnership working were reviewed. The first school was the official, practical literature which seeks to identify the 'critical success' factors in partnership working. This literature often has the purpose of guidance, seeking to encourage those involved in partnership working to adopt such critical success factors, though often there is a lack of clarity in relation to precisely how these success factors can be replicated. The second school of literature was more critical in orientation, examining the way partnership working is often hampered by inter-organisational and intra-organisational factors, as well as by environmental conditions, which include the context in which government policy is made. This literature suggests any idea that partnerships can be made to work simply by emulating certain critical success factors is misleading, as the capacity to emulate such factors is constrained by the environmental, inter-organisational and intra-organisational context in which partnerships must operate. Such a point demonstrates the importance of first seeking to understand the context in which partnerships operate, thereby, informing the orientation of the empirical research and the methodological foundations, which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

Chapter 4 – Methodology

Introduction

The main purpose of this chapter is to describe, and justify, the research strategy. The research strategy is the means by which answers are sought to the research questions raised through the literature review and these questions, in turn, relate to the general aims of this research project, articulated in the Introduction. The research questions translate the aims of the research project into a more specific set of relevant issues derived from existing knowledge in relation to the chosen area of study, in this case partnership working in crime prevention. Being based upon existing knowledge, and intended to build upon such knowledge, these research questions provide the research project with an 'evidence-based' orientation, which helps to justify the focus of the project. Prior to the articulation of the research strategy, therefore, this chapter will commence with a statement of the research questions.

The Research Questions

The general aim of this thesis is to explore the police service's accommodation of a mandate to engage in partnership working, as laid down under the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act. The literature review, conducted during the last three chapters, has sought to 'unpack' this general aim through the examination of relevant literature, and the subsequent themes and issues raised therein. This examination has enabled the author to be in a position to highlight a number of research questions, to guide the research project, and to inform the research strategy set out in the main body of this chapter.

The three chapters of the literature review cover similar ground, albeit with a different emphasis, or focus, within each of them. Consequently, they touch upon a number of similar themes and issues, thus, many of the research questions set out below arise from issues covered in different chapters, though some may relate more to issues raised only in a single chapter.

The background context to this thesis lies in the much-documented observation that, prior to the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, the partnership approach to crime prevention failed to establish a strong foothold in local practice, despite all the official support which underpinned it, and despite the apparent enthusiasm displayed for it by many practitioners. Consequently, a general research question, perhaps better seen as a clarification of the research aim which then translates into a series of more specific questions, is 'whether partnership working in crime prevention now exists on a firmer footing as a result of the implementation of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act'. More specifically, given what is known about established police

'barriers' such as isolationism, a cultural preference for 'detectionism' and an inclination to regard the call for partnership working as part of the 'competitive threat' which accompanies the shift to 'policing', something which challenges the police's sovereignty as the primary agency of local crime control, it is important to establish 'whether partnership working has occurred at all'. The existence of CDRPs in themselves should not be mistaken as evidence for partnership working as CDRPs are 'institutional structures', not necessarily modes or philosophies of working as such.

Assuming, as all of the literature about the implementation of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act does, that partnership working has occurred in the wake of the 1998 Act, a number of more specific questions follow. These are listed as follows:

1. 'How is the police contribution organised?' - considering evidence regarding the relative non-involvement and 'security ghettoisation' of police crime prevention departments and given the ambiguity created by, inter alia, the shift to neighbourhood policing and the generalised adoption of crime management within operational policing.
2. 'To what extent does partnership working through CDRPs reflect, and contribute, to the decentralisation of police service delivery through the body of police BCUs?' - particularly given evidence that the policy of decentralisation is opposed by a police tradition of corporate centralisation?
3. 'How far does the police service take cognisance of, or attempt to spread knowledge of, guidance on 'critical success factors' in partnership working?' - issued by those such as the Home Office and the Audit Commission, particularly in relation to evidence that evaluations of partnership working continue to identify limitations in local capacity?
4. 'What position does the police service adopt within the CDRPs?' - evidence of police 'colonisation' or dominance of partnership agendas sits alongside evidence that the police service and local authority, by virtue of their responsible authority status, effectively act as 'joint leaders'. There is also evidence other agencies do not participate in partnerships, either because they are diverted by their 'core business', or because they regard themselves as non-experts in the field of crime prevention.
5. Finally, 'is the agenda of partnerships locally or nationally set, and what is the consequence of this for partnership working?' - given evidence that nationally led performance management undermines the potential for locally negotiated purpose?

Developing the Research Strategy

Having established the research questions the author is now in a position to develop the research strategy, which is the means by which the research questions are to be answered. In developing such a strategy, a range of considerations confronts the researcher and this chapter begins with the practical and ethical considerations, which framed the research project.

Practical Considerations

Any researcher is likely to be constrained by resource considerations. A researcher may well have an idea regarding what they would like to do in order to research their chosen topic, however, they must also recognise the ideal needs to be squared with the feasible. This project is an unfunded research project, which means the author is not in a position to have others assist him with the task of collecting, writing up or analysing the data. The author does have access to some organisational resources such as the use of internal e-mail or postal services, and limited photocopying of things such as official documents or questionnaires. However, these are strictly limited and thus the principal resources at the author's disposal are his own self, and his time.

The fact the research has been conducted on a part-time basis, fitted around a full-time job, which, in practice, has often absorbed more hours than a full-time job conventionally, would do resulting in limited time available for the author to conduct the research. This has placed considerable demands upon the author's paid leave, and has also required the research to be conducted over a much longer period of time. In one sense this may be regarded as a weakness of the research, as during the period covered by this research the 'issues' under study have rarely stood still due to intense legislative and policy activity, bringing with it a host of changes to the role and functioning of CDRPs and indeed the police, which had a considerable bearing upon partnership working. Furthermore, the intensity of this policy activity made it difficult for the author to decide exactly when to leave the field, particularly as part of the data collection (see below) involved drawing upon the autobiographical experiences of the author as a serving police officer, sometimes personally engaged with the issues surrounding partnership working. However, such experiences served as a constant check regarding the validity of the data, collected at earlier points in the research.

From another perspective, the enforced longitudinal nature of the research could be regarded as a strength as the context of constant adaptation to policy changes provided a more 'realistic' backdrop for understanding the police's accommodation of the mandate to engage in partnership working, in turn because such policy change have been,

at least since the early 1990s, a recurrent feature of the police experience. A one-off 'snapshot' of partnership working would have run the risk of providing an impression of coherence and solidity to the concept of partnership working possibly more than, in reality, it actually merited.

Another resource is the researcher's expertise, and there are two aspects to this. Firstly, the author had previously obtained an undergraduate social science degree and a postgraduate degree in social research, both obtained whilst still a serving police officer. The experience of obtaining these degrees, whilst still in full time work, provided the author with confidence that doctoral research was not beyond his capability, both in terms of fitting it around the 'day job', and in terms of endowing him with the background knowledge and understanding of various aspects of social science and social research.

Presumably, like those who admitted him to the University of Plymouth to engage in doctoral research, the author had some confidence in his basic competence as a social science researcher. Furthermore, such competence was further developed through the background reading, which informed the literature review and allowed the development of more specific research questions, which helped to guide the author's research endeavours. In effect, the questions served not only as questions, but also as 'clues' regarding where to search for answers. The author's academic supervisor also provided a further 'reality check' on the author's developing knowledge.

Secondly, the author is a serving police officer. On the positive side, this provided him with an immersion into the world of policing, which gave him a certain 'insight' and an ability to understand partnership working from a police point of view. It also gave him easier access to the data, in terms of his own relevant experiences, and in terms of his ability to make contact with, and obtain responses from, other police officers. Each of these positives, however, also brings with it a potential negative. There is a possibility the insight gained from being a police officer could lead to a 'police bias', which would undermine the objectivity and validity of the research.

The author was very conscious of the issue of possible bias, although, as seems inevitable in social science, this issue is more complex than first appears to be the case. Thus, while objectivity may be a worthy end to pursue, there is widespread agreement that pure objectivity and value-freedom is impossible in social science and, not even necessarily desirable, if it leads to a situation where any criticism of the status quo is effectively muted (Gouldner, 1962). If the pursuit of objectivity is abandoned, however, the logical alternative of pure relativism is certainly no more desirable, leading to a situation where no account can be judged as being better than any other. Thus, for social research to be 'worth the effort', it is important for the researcher to be

as open-minded and as detached as possible (Denscombe, 2002) and, in this regard, the author's position as a serving police officer represents a potential problem.

There is a danger, for example, of 'taking sides', particularly in an organisation, which places such cultural importance on loyalty to colleagues and to the uniform (Reiner, 2000). This is exacerbated as a result of the author's doctoral research fees being paid by the police organisation, which may incur a moral obligation to put the police service in a 'good light', especially as the author's interest in obtaining a PhD is not entirely disconnected from aspirations for future career development. However throughout the project the author was conscious of Cresswell's (1994: 153) injunction to the researcher to "be open to possibilities and see contrary or alternative explanation for the findings."

In reality, there is no straightforward resolution to this problem. The researcher needs to acknowledge the 'possibility' of bias, which is exactly what the author has done at this point in the thesis and the researcher needs to be self-critical in relation to his value position in this regard. The author drew upon the knowledge and experience of his academic supervisor to minimise the risk of bias creeping into his own understanding of the data he collected and analysed. In addition, he also deliberately sought to view himself as an 'outsider' (Schutz, 1964), thereby treating the interpretations of his respondents as problematic and 'not taken-for-granted'. To some extent he was assisted in adopting this role by the fact that, through much of the period of the research, he held a position at police headquarters and thus to those on the territorial BCUs, who were the main subjects of this research, he was to some extent indeed an outsider. The author also decided to exclude from the research those officers with whom he had previously served, and those who served on the BCUs where he had obtained most of his operational experience of partnership working. While mitigating the issue it certainly did not eliminate the problem of bias.

The author is aware, however, that the idea of a singular 'police' point of view is an over-simplification. More recent writings on police culture, for example, show this culture is not as monolithic as is sometimes assumed (Foster, 2003). It can vary by rank, gender, experience, specialism and so on. The author recognises the possibility of bias, however, this may be less about him possessing a 'police' point of view, and more about his enthusiasm for the partnership approach. As noted in the Introduction, the author genuinely believes that the police service can make a more effective contribution to public safety by working in partnership with other agencies and he is mindful such a viewpoint is by no means shared by all of his colleagues. Consequently, and this justifies his exclusion of those individuals and areas with which he was most familiar, his

concern was to be careful and not impose his normative support for partnership working on others who may see matters rather differently.

As previously stated, there is no magical solution to the potential problem of bias in social research, stemming from the impossibility of objectivity and value-freedom. The best that can be done is to recognise the possibility and to take such steps as are possible to overcome it. On balance the author believes that the possible benefits to be gained from his position as a serving police officer significantly outweigh the likely dis-benefits which can, to some extent, be managed through careful and thoughtful research design and execution.

Ethical Considerations

“The word ‘ethics’ often suggests a set of standards by which a particular group or community decides to regulate its behaviour – to distinguish what is legitimate or acceptable in pursuit of their aims from what is not. Hence we talk of ‘business ethics’ or ‘medical ethics’.” (Flew 1984:112)

Although the author’s position as a serving police officer may place him in a better position to access research participants and to persuade them to participate in his research, such a fact does not render ethical considerations any less relevant. If anything, they become more enhanced. Ethics is largely a matter of principle, however, it is also a practical matter in a sense that good ethical research helps to consolidate trust and receptiveness to future research projects. Therefore, ethics “arise when we try to decide between one course of action and another not in terms of expediency or efficiency but by reference to standards of what is morally right or wrong.” (Barnes 1979: 16)

By contrast, the reverse scenario of unethical research may produce bad experiences, which make participants far less likely to want to participate in future research projects. The researcher, therefore, has a duty to the social research community to maintain high ethical standards.

The majority of ethical considerations relate to the way the researcher deals with research participants, and the key principle is, participant’s rights should not be infringed and they should suffer no harm as a result of the research process. Lee Ellis (1994) notes, “If subjects are given only general, but still accurate, information about the purpose of the study and there is no significant risk of emotional or physical harm, the study would not be considered unethical, especially if subjects are de briefed at the end of this participation.” (281)

Ethical guidance is derived from codes of ethics issued by bodies such as the British Sociological Association or the British Society of

Criminology. In addition, the University of Plymouth operates a policy of requiring ethical clearance for research projects involving human participants, drawing upon the codes issued by such bodies. As Denscombe (2002) points out, these are "codes" and not "rules", highlighting principles that should normally be adhered to unless there are particularly strong, justifiable grounds for not so doing. This research has embedded ethical principles in the following ways:

Integrity

The principle of integrity requires that research participants should not be deceived regarding the purposes of the research and the researcher should provide an honest account of what the research is about. In a sense this is acknowledged in the work of Mackie (1997) when noting the following:

"Each person's special values will help to determine his morality in the broad sense; his actions will be guided not simply by what he wants but also, to some extent, by the endeavour to realise in some degree whatever he sees as good." (151).

In this project, the author was able to clarify the purpose of the research in a written preamble to the questionnaire (see below), and in a verbal introduction to the semi-structured interviews (see below). However, as is acknowledged, there are limits to how far the purposes of the research can be communicated to the more unwitting participants whose actions constituted and informed the authors own observed experiences from the 'field'.

At available opportunities the author let it be known he was conducting doctoral research, however, such information did not necessarily percolate through to everyone. The potential limitation of this was offset by the relatively 'harmless' nature of this research, by other ethical safeguards around issues of anonymity and confidentiality (see below) and by the advantage that limited information about the research allowed the author to research the police response to partnership working in its 'natural' setting, with the researcher's presence causing minimal disruption to actions which may otherwise be modified in the researcher's more visible and manifest presence. This did not make the research covert as such, but merely provided limited information about it and, as Denscombe (2002) observes, researchers rarely offer a clear account to participants of what they are 'really' looking for anyway for fear that such absolute honesty may compromise the validity of the data subsequently gained.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

As noted above, one of the factors, which limits the 'harm' of situations where respondents or subjects are not fully apprised of the purposes of

the research is confidentiality and anonymity. Initially, then, this research endorses a basic premise identified by Ellis (1994: 280): "Subjects who agree to participate in a social science study have a fundamental right to assume that they will not be tricked, humiliated or emotionally traumatised".

The assurance of confidentiality means ensuring that data will not 'leak out' to others and this was an assurance the author felt it necessary to robustly give, particularly given his role as a serving police officer. In order to ascertain candid responses the author needed to gain respondents trust, and there was a chance such trust would be denied if it was thought that the author would pass on information, which might damage participants career prospects, whether they were senior or junior to the authors own rank. Without trust, participants may be more inclined to offer the 'party line' on partnership working, telling the author what they think he ought to know, rather than what they really think and do. Assuring participants the data would only be used for the purpose of writing up a thesis and that the data would be kept secure in a locked filing cabinet to be destroyed on completion of the research was a way of trying to gain trust, but of course no guarantee of it. A further guarantee of anonymity was no individual could be identified from the written up research due to the judicious use of pseudonyms, which may also have helped. The promise of anonymity comes at a cost, however, as it reduces the opportunity for others to check the validity of the research findings.

In this project, the importance attributed to anonymity led the author to focus his data collection across a number of different geographical locations within the police force area, thereby sacrificing the depth which might have been achieved from exploring experiences of partnership working in a single BCU or district area. Yet the approach adopted was thought to be a necessary sacrifice, as participants in a single BCU area would have been more easily identified, no matter how well it was 'disguised' through anonymity. Thought was also given to anonymising the police force area, as many studies have previously done. However, due to the history of Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, and its strong association with early developments in community policing, not to mention the author's own employment within the force and his use and analysis of documents (see below) which are in the public domain, the anonymisation of the police force area was thought to be largely unnecessary for the purpose of this thesis.

Informed Consent

It is one thing to tell participants what the research is about, however, this is not sufficient for achieving the principle of informed consent, as Digwall states, "...ethical fieldwork turns on the moral sense and

integrity of the researcher negotiating the social contract which leads his subject to expose their lives." (1980: 885). This requires the participant to recognise they have a right to refuse to participate, or to withdraw at any point should they decide to do so. This was even more critical as the author is a ranked officer within the Constabulary and as such could be perceived as having an organisational seniority over a large number of the research subjects.

In some cases participants are asked to formally indicate their consent by signing a document, however, this was considered unnecessary and even possibly counterproductive because it provided a formal record of participant's roles, which may represent a potential perceived threat to their anonymous participation. Rather than providing a formal document, therefore, the author reminded participants of their rights on the questionnaire (see below) and in the semi-structured interviews (see below), and the author provided them with his contact details to underpin this. In the event, nobody made use of this opportunity to withdraw, though not everybody who was contacted agreed to participate in the research. The robustness of this approach was intended to negate threats to social research articulated by Warwick's concerns that "social research involving deception and manipulation ultimately helps produce a society of cynics, liars and manipulators and undermines the trust, which is essential to a just social order." (1982: 58)

Selecting the Research Methods

There is a wide range of research methods in the social sciences, which may be drawn upon by the would-be researcher in developing their research strategy. The choice of methods is partly dependent upon the sorts of practical and ethical considerations discussed above, however, it is also the case that there is, or should be, a fit between problem and method. This is to say some methods are better designed to fit particular kinds of research problems and research purposes.

Although some research has been conducted into the nature of partnership working in the wake of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, much of this was produced after the author started this research project, and the author is not aware of research which has taken an explicit 'police angle' on the issue. Consequently, while the author knew from the literature that partnership working prior to the 1998 Act was problematic, it was not evident whether it continued to be afterwards. The very different conditions established by the Act meant there was a strong exploratory orientation to the research.

In addition, the author was dealing with a relatively intangible phenomenon, namely 'partnership working'. As the literature demonstrates, partnership working can take very different forms, and it cannot easily be measured or even observed, particularly as the

result of previously identified phenomena such as 'conflict avoidance', which points to a gap between appearance and reality i.e. what on the surface can appear to be consensual is not once one scratches beneath it. Crawford's (2007) point, hinted at by others, in relation to the compliance mentality of CDRPs suggested moreover the need to go beyond surface appearance. Whilst CDRPs might exist as institutional structures where agencies meet up every so often and attach their corporate identity, as a CDRP, to 'products' such as an audit or a strategy, these do not amount in themselves to partnership working beyond a superficial level at which point compliance is about fulfilling (minimally) the letter, and not necessarily the spirit of the law. All these things suggested the need to use methods, which were adaptive and flexible, capable of teasing out issues, which existed more at an informal level, rather than in formal representations.

With specific regard to the research questions, the intention in seeking to establish whether partnership working really happens at all is to go beyond manifest appearances, as is the intention to explore the position of the police service within partnerships, whether as a 'leader' or genuine partner. The questions of how partnership working fits the decentralisation of policing through BCUs, and whether partnership working reflects local or national agendas, are both political, 'sensitive' questions which are unlikely to be amenable to more 'formal' methods such as questionnaires or structured interviews, where the problem of social desirability is most likely to rear its head as participants respond with what they think they should say, rather than with what they really think. On the other hand, the question of how the police contribution to partnership working is organised is more of a 'factual' question, unlikely to be controversial, and more likely to be open to exploration through more formal methods, as well as through the consultation of more factual sources such as official documents.

Therefore, the research is broadly of an exploratory nature, oriented towards describing the nature of partnership working from the police service's position. Some of this involves 'factual' description, in terms of who is involved, in what capacity and in what ways. Whilst some involves probing at the way the partnership working mandate has been interpreted by the police, particularly in the context of other influences or pressures on policing, in the form of government policy and the decentralisation of police service delivery. It requires looking at the way partnership working may be represented to the outside world, but it also means exploring what 'really' happens, informally and beneath the surface from the police perspective. This need to 'understand' partnership working suggests a strong interpretivist orientation to the research and thus the suitability of more ethnographic methods, including semi-structured interviewing and observation.

In view of this characterisation of the research problem, the author selected the following research methods:

Firstly, the analysis of official documents pertaining to the police service's role in crime prevention partnerships, paying particular attention to the way that such partnership working is represented. Secondly, the use of semi-structured interviews with representatives of the police service with varying experiences of partnership working in crime prevention and in the wake of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, with a view to understanding their interpretation of the partnership mandate. This method for accessing opinion is a preferred option over structured interviews because "questions are normally specified, but the interviewer is more free to probe beyond the answers in a manner, which would appear prejudicial to the aims of standardisation and comparability." (May, 1997: 111) Thirdly, the use of personal observation in the role of participant-as-observer (Gold, 1958), where the author had been in a position to observe partnership working, and police responses to it at first hand in the course of his occupational duties. Fourthly, the administration of a questionnaire survey in order to ascertain 'factual' information regarding police officer involvement in partnership working, their preparation for it and their attitudes towards it.

However, this multi-method approach was not implemented concurrently. The documentary analysis was conducted initially, and sought to establish how partnership working was represented by the police service, as well as establishing some factual details about police policy (on paper if not in practice) towards crime prevention partnerships. The semi-structured interviews provided an opportunity to ask practitioners about their experiences and opinions of partnership working, and was informed by issues identified in the literature review and were conducted over the course of the project, with those interviewed in the latter stages receiving more probing and better-informed interviews than those interviewed at the beginning. The author's own observations occurred both at the beginning and end of the period covered by the research, when he was in operational positions in territorial BCUs, however, not when serving at headquarters. The questionnaire survey, finally, was administered in the latter part of the research project, informed by some of the issues uncovered by the earlier research methods, and used to explore these issues across a slightly wider canvas.

The use of research methods gives the researcher an opportunity to collect data, the analysis of which will assist in the answering of the research questions. This ensures that the research will be based upon more than just anecdotal evidence or common sense, yet in order for the research to have credibility, the methods have to be used with due regard to certain 'scientific' considerations or principles. As noted in the Introduction, and above, the aim of this research is one which lends itself mostly to an interpretivist epistemology, particularly as it deals with such an intangible phenomenon as 'partnership working', which does not exist as an easily measurable 'thing out there'.

Although, as also noted above, there are certain aspects to partnership working that is more 'factual' and measurable.

Interpretivism is often presented as an antidote to the scientific 'pretensions' of positivism, which perceives the world as knowable and governable through theoretical laws, in the same way that the natural world is thought to be. This may be taken to imply that research, which does not follow strict positivistic lines, does not need to be 'scientific' as such. However, the benefits accruing from this approach are that "categories emerge from informants, rather than [being] identified a priori by the researcher. This emergence provides rich 'text bound' information leading to patterns or theories that help explain phenomenon." (Cresswell, 1994: 156)

However, such an implication risks throwing out the (scientific) baby with the (positivistic) bath water. Put another way, one does not have to be a positivist to acknowledge the importance of certain scientific principles, even if such principles are sometimes hard to attain. The scientific principles of greatest importance are reliability, validity and generalisability. In what follows, consideration is given to the way such principles have been built in to, or considered, by the research design and selection of research methods.

Reliability

A research method, or instrument, is reliable if consistent and capable of producing the same results when measuring the same phenomenon in the same situation. Self-evidently, reliability is a valued quality in social research as, in theory, another researcher should be able to follow the same methods the author has used in this study, and arrive at the same results, all other things being equal. Reliability, however, is more represented as a quality of quantitative methods of social research than that of qualitative methods, as quantitative methods tend to be formally set down, pre-determined and open to replication. Whereas qualitative approaches, typically, are less likely to be clearly set down and are more adaptive following the bottom-up approach, for example, grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Quantitative methods, in themselves, are less reliable requiring them to be well designed as the research subject is not able to ask for further clarification, although this may be somewhat mitigated through the appropriate wording of questions in order they are unambiguous and incapable of being misinterpreted. Piloting obviously has an important part to play here.

Piloting played a crucial role in the development of the questionnaire for this project and a cross section of staff were selected to pilot this data collecting tool to ensure the questions delivered the requisite clarity and pertinent data could be retrieved. Feedback in this regard was positive. However, many recipients in the pilot believed the

document was too long requiring a significant time to complete. This, I was advised, would affect people's willingness to complete the questionnaire accurately. In addition, the organisation at this time was consulting on a significant range of issues and there was a danger of staff receiving this being subject to survey overload. For this reason the questionnaire length was reduced and some of the more qualitative sections removed.

Two of the methods utilised in this multi-method design are more likely to be reliable than the others. The documentary analysis, for example, entails an examination of official reports in order to identify aspects where partnership working is referred to, either through use of the term partnership or through reference to statutory obligations incurred by the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act. It would not be difficult for another researcher to replicate this approach, though it was not deemed necessary in this research to undertake this in such a formal way that it resulted in some formal, quantitative content analysis. The interest, rather, was in how partnership working was represented in such documents, and this is more open to interpretation, and thus somewhat less open to reliable replication. The survey questionnaire was pre-determined in the sense that it was testing or exploring issues which had been identified in other parts of the research, and this made it more reliable as a method.

However, reliability is not guaranteed in the social world due to the unpredictability of the social world. It is one thing, for example, to weigh a piece of rock several times and arrive at the same weight each time, however, it is quite another to ask a police officer about their training in partnership working e.g. they may grow bored of answering the same question in the same way. Also, it is quite unrealistic to expect, as the criterion of reliability generally does, that a measuring instrument will yield the same measurement when used in different but similar contexts, as social contexts always vary. This is supported by May (1997: 130) when he suggests that "data derived from interviews are not simply 'accurate' or 'distorted' pieces of information, but provide the researcher with a means of analysing the ways in which people consider events and relationships and the reasons they offer for doing so." (130)

In this research project, for example, it was very apparent that the phenomenon under investigation, namely partnership working, was constantly changing as the mandate was translated into experience and as the mandate changed as the result of new policy developments. If one took 'snapshots' of each of the dates when three-year audits were produced, on the first of April 1999, 2002 and 2005, in each instance the character of partnership working was quite different and any measuring instrument would have to deal with such difference, which would have had nothing to do with the reliability, or otherwise, of the research instrument. Foster (2006) makes much the same point

when he says that possible checks on reliability, such as ethnographic re-studies of the same institution undertaken at a different time, are unlikely to be conclusive because of the likelihood of changes having occurred in some aspect of the institution's environment.

The other two research instruments, namely the semi-structured interviews and observation, are not reliable in the positivistic sense. Another researcher observing the same contexts would, doubtless, have identified different phenomena to the author, while the drift of a semi-structured interview conversation would inevitably have been different if undertaken by a different researcher. However, this bias of personal interest is one, which must be acknowledged whenever an 'interpretation' of data is undertaken and as Bryman et al. (1994: 224) note; "The determining factor often seems to be the frequency with which something is observed or is said in interviews and the fieldworker's conceptual elaboration of the phenomenon."

The author was very aware of his own biases as a strong advocate of partnership working, a philosophy not necessarily shared by all police officers.

Acknowledgement of such a bias led him to be extremely mindful with regard to the over inclusion of observed data within the final thesis. As a serving police officer, the author was able to observe police officers undertaking or talking about partnership working in their day-to-day working lives. Mindful that he himself was an open advocate of partnership working it was important that personal bias did not affect observed behaviour or dialogue to fully exploit the opportunity of observing subjects in a naturalistic setting. While ethically the author was comfortable with accessing data via this method, it was not over utilised. However, it did serve to provide a degree of confidence regarding data being drawn from other data sources and the subsequent conclusions. By not including observed data, to a great degree, in the thesis it would be difficult to suggest personal observation data was skewed by any inherent belief systems of the author.

The researcher, therefore, has to acknowledge such methods, as they are relatively unstructured, are therefore less reliable, however, that does not necessarily make them of less use.

Their use is justified by reference to the aims and objectives of the intended research and, in this case, since a number of these objectives necessitates the author seeking to identify the police's understandings of and, meanings attributed to, partnership working. As a result the selected methods must be necessarily unstructured, and thus unreliable, however, attempts can nevertheless be made to maximise reliability. As Denscombe (2002) points out, as the reliability of unstructured methods is threatened by the interpretative biases of the

researcher, researchers need to use what he calls "low inference indicators" when describing their data, so the data is as faithfully reported as possible, with the minimum amount of interpretation. In a similar way, Wilson and Sapsford (2006) suggest those employing naturalistic methods need to provide a reflexive account of the context in which the research was conducted, and the procedures followed, though this is as much an issue for validity of which reliability is an aspect anyway (Foster, 2006).

Validity

Validity is perhaps the most important scientific criterion against which research is judged. Valid research is research, which is essentially true, describing the subject matter of the research as it is, rather than, as the researcher might prefer to see it, or as it might appear in 'common sense'. For interpretivists who subscribe to the view that reality is socially constructed, the idea of truth or validity is problematic, however, as Denscombe (2002) points out, this does not necessitate the abandonment of the principle. Rather, for interpretivists the task is to 'infer' validity, rather than ever to 'prove' it. There are elements of this research project, although not necessarily all of it, which very much fit this idea of inference rather than absolute proof.

A starting point in the pursuit of validity is the need to collect the correct indicators of the phenomena under investigation. Glaser and Strauss (1967) note that "one of the major goals of qualitative research is the generation of concepts that can form the building blocks of theory. Initially, concepts are likely to be little more than extensions of codes; at a later stage more abstract conceptualisation is likely to be possible."

In this research project, the main phenomenon is partnership working, which is not in itself measurable as a 'thing'. The researcher, therefore, has to rely upon indirect indicators such as police officer understandings and experiences of, and attitudes towards, partnership working and its wider impact and significance. Generally speaking, research is more likely to be valid if phenomena are researched in their natural setting yet, as noted above, there are obvious practical limits to being able to access partnership working in its natural setting, even if the researcher were to know what that was. Partnership working is often equated with inter-agency forums, however, as Crawford (1998) has made clear there is also an informal element to partnership working which makes it very dangerous, conceptually speaking, to reduce partnership working to the bureaucratic procedures of such forums, particularly when the same author therein identifies strategies of conflict avoidance suggesting that many of the 'true' aspects of partnership working remain hidden from them. There are also ethical considerations, which as noted

above, make it unwise for the author as a serving police officer to research individual CDRPs in specific detail.

Researching partnership working in its natural setting is interpreted by the author as using naturalistic research methods, capable of penetrating the nuanced politics of partnership working which are unlikely to reveal themselves in more formal, structured methods where there is a high likelihood of procedural reactivity (Wilson and Sapsford, 2006) and, specifically, a likelihood participants may seek to conceal their 'true' understandings of partnership working. For the author, this meant using relatively loose, semi-structured interviews which, as far as possible, approximated conversations about partnership working which the author, nevertheless, sought to control the direction of to ensure the issues covered by the literature, and underpinning the various research questions, were to a greater or lesser extent covered in the conversation.

While the author was mindful of the possible bias which could exist because of his status as a police officer, he was of the opinion that his status as a police officer was also an advantage, as it enhanced the naturalism of the research context. As May tells us "quite simply, it may not be appropriate for a grey suited person more familiar with the deviants of the financial world to interview hells angels about their beliefs and actions." (1997: 115) The interviews were, from this point of view, conversations between colleagues in familiar work surroundings, albeit ones where the participants knew the author was simultaneously acting as a researcher. Although this was obviously more likely to be the case with the limited participant observation undertaken towards the end of the research project, the author was to some extent able to 'blend into the background', thereby reducing (but certainly never eliminating) the amount of personal reactivity (Wilson and Sapsford, 2006) which tends to accompany less structured naturalistic methods.

For much of what was sought for this research project, then, naturalistic methods were believed to provide the most appropriate means of accessing the best indicators of the phenomena under investigation. For more 'factual' elements, for example identifying the amount of training participants had received in partnership working, more structured methods, specifically a questionnaire survey, were considered appropriate, although this carries the concern of procedural reactivity, for example 'survey fatigue' which may reduce, and thus bias, response rates as well as encouraging less 'honest' answers.

The questionnaire survey element of this research was introduced in order to establish the wider applicability of findings emerging from the interview research, particularly about the apparent lack of training for partnership working disclosed by interview subjects. While

acknowledging that this positivist approach may not be the most appropriate method to gain 'in-depth' data, it did provide a method to sample more factual data of this kind across a much wider cross section of the police organisation.

The questionnaire (see Appendix 1) was designed primarily as a 'tick-box' style to try and negate recipient 'survey fatigue'. Following its construction it was piloted on some colleagues, and following minor adjustments that reduced its overall length it was then distributed to a sample of officers. Distribution was guided by a random stratified sampling technique, with stratification by rank. Utilising personnel staffing lists it was possible to randomly select officers, and in the end 145 questionnaires were distributed. It was somewhat gratifying to record a 55% return rate of around 80 completed papers.

Although a significant amount of the material from the questionnaire has not been displayed within this thesis, the author believes that this is justifiable on the grounds that the data strongly confirmed what was being ascertained from the interview data. As such, it was felt recording 'supportive' questionnaire data within the thesis would not necessarily add any more weight to the emerging findings. What it did serve to achieve, however, was to enable the author to be far more confident about the validity and generalisability of the interview data along with the conclusions drawn from the final analysis.

Another means of inferring data validity is via triangulation (Denzin, 1970), described by Denscombe (2002: 104) as "coming at the same thing from a different angle". In this research project, an element of method triangulation was introduced. For example, the interview data could be compared with the observational data to establish whether the issues emanating from the interviews were being experienced by, or observed by, the author in his own autobiographical observations. Similarly, interview data regarding police training and preparation for partnership working could be compared with similar data derived from the questionnaire survey. Where similar findings emerge from the use of these different methods, one can be more confident in relation to inferring validity, although never certain of doing so, particularly from an interpretivist perspective.

Data may also be considered more likely to be valid if regularities are identified, not only across different methods, but also within methods. Thus, if a proportion of the 30 interview participants make similar points or observations regarding partnership working then the data may be more valid, although of course this could be the consequence of the (unreliable) method. Relatively unprompted regularities from relatively unstructured methods, however, give the researcher a certain 'proof' and confidence in relation to valid data, even if it is not beyond dispute.

The identification of regularities in research findings takes the researcher into the domain of data analysis. How does the researcher know the analysis of the data is valid? Denscombe (2002) suggests a number of approaches. 'Criterion validity' involves comparing the data against external benchmarks, which presumably includes existing knowledge. This may be less feasible for this research project as such knowledge of partnership working in the wake of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act is very limited, although, it may be that issues identified before 1998, such as the idea of police colonisation may still be mapped onto the present context. 'Member validity' involves checking the data with 'informed others', to check whether the findings square with their own understanding of, in this case, partnership working. The author was able to infer member validity by discussing his emergent research findings with police colleagues who had some experience of partnership working, yet, who were not themselves participants in the research and he found widespread agreement with his findings in such discussions. This kind of 'reality check' was also a feature of the interview method, where the author was able to reflect back his understanding of the participants' understandings of partnership working, to ensure he had grasped the salient features.

Generalisability

It is conceivable for research findings to be valid yet not generalisable. One may gain a valid account of partnership working, as it relates to participants in this research project, however, it may bare little relation to partnership working as it appertains to other police officers serving elsewhere within the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, or elsewhere in England and Wales, where the partnership working requirements of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act apply. Yet it remains highly desirable for research findings to be generalisable. One strong reason for undertaking research is to obtain knowledge which could be applied in other contexts, to be able to say that the way partnership working operates in this research site is similar to the way it works elsewhere, and thus that one's theories are more widely applicable.

The established way of seeking generalisability is to ensure the research site is representative of the population to which one would wish to generalise and this is largely an issue of sampling. In this project, this issue was complicated by the ambiguity surrounding, not only what the research site was, but also what the population was. This research project was not, strictly speaking, a case study as responses were sought from police officers who had had partnership working experience 'across a number' of CDRPs within the police force area and the idea of researching a single CDRP was explicitly rejected for reasons already stated. However, in so far as the research took place within a single Constabulary area, the research could be seen as a case study of partnership working from the police's point of view, the

case being the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary. Yet the officers sought for the interviews were those with experience of CDRPs, and they were accessed through the technique of snowball sampling. This sampling technique was employed with a single premise in mind, that being that it was essential those interviewed were able to comment upon some of the key factors contained within the project outline. These factors predominantly related to an individual with experience, not only of partnership working, but also a chronological perspective relating to how the police organisation has evolved in this regard before and after the implementation of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

The characteristics of the population of police officers with experience of partnership working remain unknown, and this makes it impossible to know the representativeness of the sample interviewed for this project. It is possible they are not very representative, and therefore it is problematic to seek to generalise from the findings of this research project, either from the research participants to the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, or from Devon and Cornwall Constabulary to the police forces of England and Wales.

Although one cannot be certain that the participants in this research had the same characteristics as the 'population' of police officers with experience of partnership working, it is reasonable to suggest, nonetheless, that they may be typical of them, and as Denscombe (2002) observes, the notion of typicality is an alternative means of imputing generalisability. There is no particular reason why participants in this research should be any different from other officers in Devon and Cornwall or further afield.

Reflecting back to the 1980s, Devon and Cornwall Constabulary had a particular reputation for community policing due to the enthusiasm demonstrated by its former Chief Constable John Alderson, however, the enthusiasm shown by John Alderson did not necessarily extend to the rest of the Constabulary, nor survive his retirement. With a degree of caution, therefore, it is plausible to suggest that, without knowing the characteristics of the population, there are still grounds for suggesting that the findings of this research project can be generalised to some extent.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has set out the research questions, derived from the general research aim, and informed by the literature review conducted over the preceding three chapters. It then discussed the development of a research strategy to answer these questions, with due regard to a range of practical, ethical and scientific considerations, which inform the choice of strategy and of particular research methods. The research strategy is of a multi-method design, involving;

1. A documentary analysis intended to ascertain the police service's 'official position' on partnership working in crime prevention in the wake of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act;
2. Semi-structured interviews with 30 police officers who have had experience of such partnership working, in order to ascertain their understanding of the meaning of partnership working and its implications for policing;
3. Autobiographical observation of partnership working in crime prevention from the author's own position in a territorial BCU; and
4. A short questionnaire survey designed to elicit information regarding the extent of training in partnership working, as well as general police attitudes towards it.

This research project combines an interpretative orientation with one which is more positivistic, seeking background 'facts' that inform the context of partnership working. In this sense it is pragmatic, concurring with Denscombe's (2002: 23) point, "In practice, empirical social researchers have not been obsessed with the purity of their ontological or epistemological position." Social research, it seems, is a complex enterprise. The difficulty inherent in knowing the social world requires the selection of methods which are far from perfect, an acknowledgement that this is the case and recognition of the best means through which problems such as reactivity and bias can be mitigated. With this in mind, it is hoped that the author has provided a research study, which despite its limitations is robust enough for the task at hand.

Chapter 5: The Research Findings

Introduction

In this chapter the aim is to present the findings from the research. Although the empirical research was informed by research questions set out in the preceding chapter, inevitably the data collected did not necessarily fall easily within the boundaries established by these questions. This is to be expected from the interpretivist stance adopted and from the open structure of the qualitative method, which was mainly employed in the research. Consequently, the findings are not organised directly around answering the research questions. Rather, they are organised around the relatively broad and loose themes, which emerged from the analysis of the data collected. Interview and other data was read and re-read, and emergent themes were identified informing subsequent interviews in order to build a more comprehensive understanding of these themes.

The data is organised around a narrative, which sometimes draws upon the literature to clarify or demonstrate the relevance of a particular issue, however, in the next, and final chapter, a more comprehensive effort is made to relate the research to the main issues addressed by the literature, in the context of the research questions. This chapter is extensive as there was no obvious way to establish a thematic divide, which would make the research more digestible to the reader.

Establishing the Formal Position on Partnership Working

In order to set the scene for this research project it is worth ascertaining the police service's 'formal' position on partnership working in crime prevention as it is set out in official documents, such as the Constabulary's annual reports, various policy and strategy documents and reports regarding the work of the Constabulary made by HMIC. The documentary analysis, which informed this part of the research project focused on the period from 1984 onwards. 1984 was chosen as 'year zero' because it was in that year that the landmark Home Office Circular 8/84 was issued, as noted in Chapter One. This does not mean partnership working in crime prevention was new to the Constabulary prior to this time for, as will become apparent below, the Constabulary had a particular 'reputation' for this kind of work, thanks especially to the pioneering community policing philosophy of the former Chief Constable John Alderson.

The following sample of extracts is broadly representative of the way partnership is represented in such documentation. It is important to note that the term 'partnership' was used more widely after its usage in the 1990 Home Office Circular (44/90). Prior to this time, the terms

'inter-agency' or 'multi-agency' were more widely used. In the 1984 Annual Report Chief Constable Donald Elliott writes as follows:

"Allied to the need to build a closer understanding with the public is a clear requirement to build on the good relationships with other agencies; e.g. Social Services, Education, Probation Service. Here again I am fortunate to find a good working relationship already in existence and I shall do all I can to extend that good liaison." (p7)

In the same document, the Chief Constable's territorial Divisional Commanders added the following:

"Our best endeavours to foster community contact throughout the division continue to bear fruit with inter-agency co-operation a high priority." (Superintendent of West Devon) (p48)

"Officers of all ranks continued to visit town and parish meetings, schools, youth and senior citizen clubs in an endeavour to further the public interest and maintain their confidence and support." (Superintendent of East Devon) (p40)

"District, town and parish councils have been visited by local police officers. Increasingly, the dialogue has become more open and constructive, benefiting the community as a whole. This community contact policy will continue." (Superintendent of North Devon) (p43)

In the 1990 Annual Report the following was written:

"Helping to teach the one hundred thousand children of primary school age in Devon and Cornwall about elementary crime prevention are six PC Padlocks who now regularly visit classrooms and playgrounds. Sponsored by Barclays Bank, 'PC Padlock' [a puppet] has become a popular figure at county shows and fetes. He is also proving a useful means of introducing the role of the police to younger children." (p53)

The HMIC Primary Inspection report for 1995 noted that, "the police of Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scillies have always been recognised for a good multi-agency approach to combat crime and other social problems." (p18)

The 1996 Five Year Plan for the Constabulary included the following Foreword from the Chief Constable:

"My vision of policing in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scillies is of a service rooted in the community we serve, developing effective partnerships with the community and other agencies in our fight against crime." (p3)

The 2001/02 Performance Plan, addressed to the public, set out the following:

“Our vision focuses on your needs and aspirations to provide significant and lasting improvements, recognising the contributions and support received from others in the public, private and voluntary sectors... Our policing is based on;

- Partnership working
- Reducing disorder, crime and the fear of crime
- A partnership style of problem solving, with local solutions to local problems
- Challenging what we do to ensure best value; and
- Improving the way we consult you about our priorities and your interests.” (p7)

The 2002/03 Performance Plan said:

“Local policing is about working together to find local solutions to local problems and partnership is a key factor in tackling crime. There are many causes of crime and anti-social behaviour and it must be recognised that the police alone cannot tackle crime. We must all work together to reduce crime and the fear of crime in our communities throughout Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scillies.” (p4)

The 2003/04 Policing Plan says:

“Our contribution to the staffing and resourcing of partnership teams means we can take a more holistic approach to crime reduction by working together to reduce opportunities to commit crime and to combat criminal and anti-social behaviour.” (p17)

There are several things, which may be said about the way partnership is represented in this official documentation, beyond recognising that this written representation does not necessarily square with the way partnership working is represented ‘in reality’? The first, most obvious point, is that partnership is consistently portrayed in a positive light. It is perceived to be a good thing to do, or to make appeal to. This supports the point made by others (e.g. Gilling, 1997; Crawford, 1998) that the partnership approach is ‘a good thing’ possessing its own public relations value.

The appeal to partnership working often conveys a sense that ‘we are in this together’, thereby binding the police both to other agencies, and to the community at large as if, in so doing, the legitimacy of the police service is enhanced. In this regard, it is interesting that references to partnership working are often accompanied by references to the community, and partnership working is conceived in the mid-1980s as

a form of 'community contact'. As with the word partnership, community conveys a sense of solidarity and togetherness, which ties the police to the rest of society, rather than leaving them on the outside. Controversially, one may argue that the importance of community and partnership has come to be emphasised at just the point in time when the police service was in danger of being 'left on the outside', as a result of such things as corruption scandals, however, especially with regard to the negative imagery surrounding heavy-handed 'fire-brigade' or public order-style policing in the early 1980s. It is this connection between partnership and community, and their use as legitimacy-building devices, which may make sense of the following, partly philosophical, extract for the 1993 Annual Report:

"We are also committed to a variety of community initiatives designed to ensure we can work with the community in enhancing the quality of life for all our citizens. It can be seen, therefore, that the police/public partnership must surely be more than simply crime oriented. Indeed the partnership approach to policing, which is a fundamental part of the Force ethos, underlining the premise that we are the police of the people not the State and must, therefore, function with the consent and co-operation of the public we seek to serve." (p6)

In this quote, the partnership approach is linked to the fundamental principle of policing by consent, and it is interesting to note reference is made, not to the partnership approach to crime prevention, but rather 'the partnership approach to policing' as if partnership has been appropriated to serve other purposes. This symbolic sense of partnership has potentially important ramifications for the way the police service approaches partnership 'working', as will be explored below.

In addition to being seen to enhance police legitimacy, however, positive references to partnership in these documents also serve to convey a message that the Constabulary is being responsive to Home Office policy. As Weatheritt (1986) has pointed out, for example, although Home Office circulars are only supposed to be 'advisory' in nature, thereby not undermining the tradition of Constabulary independence in operational matters, in practice they are responded to as if they are policy directives. Consequently, for example, the very positive references to partnership working in the 1984 Annual Report, and the similar comments made by the different Divisional Superintendents, could be regarded as positive responses to Circular 8/84. That circular says to the police 'you need to work in partnership with other agencies' and, in effect, the 1984 annual report effectively says 'we are'.

A Structure for Partnership Working

In addition to the 'fine words' which indicate the Constabulary's support for partnership working, there were a number of structural and organisational changes made both before and during the period of this research, which could be seen as evidence of local commitment to partnership working. However, especially in terms of their timing providing 'evidence' of compliance to policy directives emanating from the Home Office.

As noted above, Devon and Cornwall has a recent history of partnership working, stemming mainly from the pioneering community policing approach of John Alderson in the late-1970s, which prompted the establishment, albeit only in one part of the force area, of the Exeter Crime Prevention Support Unit (CPSU).

Policy changes, which took place in 1984, entailed the establishment of a new Community Services Department (note the use of the word 'community' again) at headquarters under the leadership of a Superintendent who had been instrumentally involved in the Exeter CPSU, something which could be seen as a natural evolution of this. The new department was given responsibility for developing youth crime prevention, thereby replicating the main focus of the CPSU, however, in addition it was made responsible for developing, among other things, crime prevention panels and neighbourhood watch, both of which were being promoted centrally at this time (Gilling, 1997). When taken together with the quotes from Divisional Superintendents cited above, this may provide evidence of a 'desire' by Force senior managers to be seen in a positive light by the centre, complying with the spirit, if not necessarily the letter, of Home Office Circular 8/84.

This structure remained until the beginning of the 1990s, when further changes were made regarding the organisational response to crime prevention partnership working, following the appointment of a new Chief Constable, Sir John Evans in 1988. In 1991, there was a significant shift, which pulled the responsibility for the partnership approach more obviously beyond headquarters, embedding it further within the territorial divisions. This entailed the establishment of Crime Prevention Management Forums in each of the district council areas of Devon and Cornwall, involving officers from the police service, the district local authorities and the probation service who were charged with a specific responsibility to develop strategic responses to crime prevention within each locality. The establishment of these forums, in theory, replaced more 'ad hoc' arrangements, whereby the presence of formal partnership responses depended upon whether crime prevention panels existed. They did so only in the main towns, and many lacked much in the way of vitality, as was the case nationally (Gilling, 1997).

Given the organisational structure of the Constabulary at this point in time, with 6 divisions and a total of 20 sub-divisions, it is highly likely that many of these Forums would have struggled with the lack of co-terminosity and with the functional split between county and district local authorities, which made it difficult for county-level services, such as education, youth and social services, to engage with the process. The forums could be seen as further evidence of the Constabulary's continuing commitment to partnership working in crime prevention, equally it is important to recognise that their establishment ties in closely with the issuing of Home Office Circular 44/90. Unlike Home Office Circular 8/84, this Circular called upon the police and local authorities to inform the Home Office what response they had made to it and the Home Office had made some attempt to mould this response by sending out, at the same time as the Circular, a booklet entitled 'Partnership in Crime Prevention', which contained models of good practice, that local areas were invited to follow. The forums were not unlike these models of good practice, albeit with the problems noted above.

These forums were not in place for very many years before the next organisational change arrived in 1995. The first relevant change was a reorganisation, which resulted in the abolition of sub-divisions and an increase in the number of police divisions, from six to nine. Three of these were made co-terminous with the major population centres of Plymouth, Torbay and Exeter. One reason for the reorganisation may have been a pre-emptive response to the local government reorganisations, which occurred in 1996 but were foreshadowed some time before. Plymouth and Torbay acquired unitary status in these reorganisations, however, to the surprise of many Exeter did not, though the police reorganisation took little notice of this. The other six police divisions were still co-terminous with local authority boundaries, some containing up to three district council areas within their boundaries. Another possible reason for this reorganisation may be found in the growing pressure placed upon the police service to decentralise service provision and, in this regard, the nine new divisions were able to operate more effectively than the sub-divisional structure that had existed hitherto.

As well as the Force reorganisation, in 1995 the Crime Prevention Management Forums were transformed into Community Safety Strategy Groups (CSSGs), based on the same district council boundaries occupied by their forerunners, the Crime Prevention Management Forums. This time, there appears no evidence to suggest that the Constabulary was responding to governmental 'directives'. No relevant circulars were issued and there was no other pressure specifically emanating from the Home Office, which at this time had lost some of its enthusiasm for the partnership approach following its non-response to the 1991 Morgan Report (Gilling, 1997). However, while there may have not been pressure from the Home Office, it may

well have been the case that partnership working was looked upon favourably by HMIC, which in its 1995 Primary Inspection report commented approvingly upon the Constabulary's "active support for the inter-agency approach involving health authorities, the probation service, and, in particular, the education service."(p2) HMIC's approval for partnership working, however, does not explain the specific establishment of CSSGs in 1995. In interviews for this research, one participant (Interview 014) suggested that the Constabulary was "ahead of the game" by virtue of having recruited a number of senior managers from outside the force, many of whom appeared to have a positive, progressive "take" on partnership working.

Another participant thought that the divisional Chief Superintendent in Plymouth at the time was a particular progressive with regard to community safety, and that Plymouth may have been adopted as a good practice model across the Constabulary. (Plymouth's status as a 'trailblazer' was considerably aided by its having been identified as one of the ten 'phase 2' Safer Cities locations, in receipt of central funding for three years from 1 February 1994, some of which was used to fund a new Community Safety Unit in the city). The replacement of the phrase 'Crime Prevention Management Forum' by the phrase 'Community Safety Strategy Group' is suggestive of the sort of progressive updating proposed in the Morgan Report, which even prompted ACPO's Crime Prevention Sub-committee to consider a name change.

The idea of the Constabulary being 'ahead of the game' is given further support in the Chief Constable's introduction to the Constabulary's Five Year Plan in 1996, in which he notes;

"My vision of policing in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scillies is of a service rooted in the community we serve, developing effective partnerships with that community and other agencies in our fight against crime. As we move towards the year 2001, it is becoming increasingly clear that the nature and role of policing will continue to undergo major change." (p3)

Coincidentally, in terms of the priority it accords to partnership, this vision corresponds with the vision of ACPO, as set out in the 1996 policy document of its crime prevention sub-committee, entitled 'Towards 2000'. Arguably, this document anticipates a change of government, and shows the police service staking a claim to the leadership of crime prevention partnerships, which the New Labour opposition had made clear they intended to legislate for upon taking office. Arguably, therefore, the Chief Constable's vision in 1996 demonstrates a similar strategic awareness, and this may in part account for the change that resulted in the establishment of CSSGs.

In 1996, following the establishment of the CSSGs, the Community Services Department was transformed into the Community Affairs Department. The name change is not especially significant, however, the reason for the change is. In the previous year, HMIC's Primary Inspection Report had made note of the following:

"Her Majesty's Inspector was pleased by the recognition of the value of co-ordinating their community work within one department under the command of a superintendent. An appointed commander is now developing a strategy which, hopefully, will be included in the strategic plan for 1996-2001. Much work is being done through the crime prevention working group under the crime strategy, which Her Majesty's Inspector supports, but he is of the view that there should be a community affairs strategy as well which pulls together all the various strands of their work, in the Force and through multi-agency activities, into a cohesive policy. He would also encourage wider internal consultations, to receive the maximum degree of ownership for the outcome." (p18)

In effect, this quote suggests that HMIC was critical of the fact that while the Constabulary had a headquarters-based department for co-ordinating 'community work', at that point such work was not integrated into the wider operating culture nor the crime strategy. In other words, although it is not put in such strong terms, there is a sense here of 'community work' being ghettoised within the Constabulary, in much the same way, for example, that Weatheritt (1986) wrote of crime prevention officers remaining in a 'security ghetto', not well integrated with other elements of operational policing. The final comment in the quote, regarding encouraging wider 'ownership', further supports this point. This is an issue that will be explored in greater detail below.

The establishment of the Community Affairs Department in 1996 represents the Constabulary's active response to this criticism. The department's brief, as set out in the Five Year Plan, is worth quoting at length:

"Community Affairs

What are we trying to achieve?

- Enhanced public safety in order to reduce the fear of crime
- To make crime more difficult to commit and detection more likely
- To continue to improve our excellent police/community relations
- A reduction in the number of young people who are offenders or victims of crime
- A climate of trust between police and young people

How are we going to do it?

- By developing a crime prevention and community safety strategy, which meets the public needs
- By consolidating our existing community policing policies
- By full participation through our chief officers in the formulation and implementation of multi-agency strategies (e.g. Drug misuse and referral; youth issues; mental health)
- Through inter-agency co-operation (e.g. The development of drug action teams and reference groups), and the development of strategic initiatives aimed at reducing crime and the fear of crime
- By ensuring that community safety and crime prevention projects are included in our future bids for funding from the single regeneration budget
- By providing additional architectural liaison expertise in the light of increasing commitments Force wide
- By developing the use of, and ensuring proper control of, CCTV
- By progressing the work of our Community Safety Strategy Groups, emphasising that crime reduction is the responsibility of the community as a whole and co-ordinating agencies in support of community action
- By developing initiatives to counter repeat victimisation in our Force area
- Through community contact in all its many forms, and by the efficient and effective use of watch schemes." (p19-20)

The remit of the Community Affairs Department was evidently intended to demonstrate better integration of 'community work' with other aspects of operational policing and, to some extent, such integration entailed re-formulating such work away from its legitimacy-building purpose (see above) and more in the instrumental direction of enhancing effectiveness. Evidence of this may be found, for example, in allocating a role to the department in making 'detection more likely', by linking it to community policing and by linking it to the work of CSSGs, which this document now characterises as being about 'crime reduction' not crime prevention, nor community safety.

As discussed in Chapter 2, crime reduction was conceived at the time, and promoted by the Audit Commission as, an arm of 'crime management'. Thus, crime management affords an opportunity to integrate 'community work' within mainstream operational policing and this crime management model, coincidentally, features centre stage in the 1996 Five Year Plan, foreshadowing the much later roll-out of the National Intelligence Model (NIM) and demonstrating, once again, the extent to which the Constabulary was 'ahead of the game' in terms of national policy. The significance of integrating the work of the Community Affairs Department, and thus implicitly the work of partnerships, will be returned to below. For now, it is worth noting that a similar integration is evidenced in the ACPO policy document

'Towards 2000' (ACPO, 1996), which describes crime prevention as having three main components, namely

“Counteraction - which is achieved in a partly measurable way by the application of knowledge and skills to anticipate, identify, then remove or reduce the causes of and opportunities for crime.

Intervention - which is achieved to a significant quantifiable extent by operational policing methods designed to impede, disrupt, and, ultimately, curtail criminal activity.

Deterrence - which is achieved to an unknown, and probably unknowable, degree by the very existence of a professional police service and the day-to-day activities of all its members, working in support of an established Criminal Justice System.”

This same ACPO policy document notes that “Several agencies have come to share responsibility for crime prevention and community safety in recent years. The police service continues to occupy the most prominent place within this partnership framework.” It is possible to argue that the Constabulary's Five Year Plan offers a vision that is consistent with this, with its reference to “..‘our’ Community Safety Strategy Groups” (my emphasis), and its implicit view of the police “co-ordinating agencies in support of community action”. While there is acknowledgement here of the partnership approach, it is an approach which is led, or steered, very much by the police. This is also an issue to which we shall return below.

The Constabulary's response to HMIC's criticism evidently found favour with HMIC, whose Primary Inspection report for 1997/98 noted that

“There is clear evidence that the crime strategy, and in particular the crime management model, has made a dramatic impact on the targeting and co-ordinating of resources in the fight against crime, heightening the awareness of operational officers as to the value of intelligence.” (p2)

With such a positive assessment, it was very unlikely that the Constabulary was going to drop the priority it afforded to crime management, which, although integrating crime detection with crime reduction, tended in practice to prioritise detection, thereby, according with the ‘detectionist mentality’ which is a dominant part of the police occupational culture. More recently, much the same point has been made about the NIM which, whilst in theory integrates different approaches to crime control, in practice places the greatest emphasis upon detection. The implication of this, then, is that the integration of ‘crime reduction’ within crime management does not necessarily raise

the profile of the partnership approach within operational policing strategies.

The next important change to accommodate partnership working came in the shape of another boundary reorganisation in 1999. This was perhaps the most significant of the boundary reorganisations as it represented a decisive shift in the direction of decentralisation. The reorganisation was clearly prompted by the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act which, as noted above, placed a duty on responsible authorities to establish a CDRP in each district authority area. The police, or more specifically, "every chief officer of police any part of whose police area lies within the area" were one of the responsible authorities. The wording left open to interpretation the question of exactly who within the police service was the 'responsible authority', and the Constabulary decided to establish 16 police BCUs, referred to as 'policing districts' which exactly matched the 16 local authority areas across the Constabulary's geographical area. The 'District Commander' who, depending upon the size of the BCU, was to be either a Chief Inspector or a Superintendent (except Plymouth), then became the 'de facto' responsible authority as far as the police service was concerned. This was the person from the police side, responsible for establishing CDRPs in each of the 16 areas. An interview participant who was made a District Commander at this time recalls, "*there was a requirement placed upon each district commander to ensure that their CDRPs were set up and running as soon as possible.*" (Interviewee 20).

Sitting at a tier above the district BCUs were 4 Areas, headed by senior managers designated 'area co-ordinators', who held the rank of Chief Superintendent, and whose areas provided support and co-ordination to the districts operating beneath them. This decentralisation to 16 BCUs made the two CDRP 'responsible authorities' completely coterminous, thereby overcoming one of the barriers, which had previously hindered partnership working. It also represented compliance with a decentralised model of policing, very much favoured by the Audit Commission and by HMIC, both of whose influence over matters of operational policing was increasing during this period. The reorganisation, therefore, was very welcoming of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, and suggestive of a Constabulary favourably inclined towards partnership working as far as senior management was concerned. Further evidence of this can be found in the decision taken to allocate an annual budget of £20,000 for each District Commander to spend on CDRP-related business (it will be remembered that the 1998 Act included no additional funding for the establishment of CDRPs). This is another example of the Constabulary being 'ahead of the game', since such funding preceded the central allocation, via regional government offices, of the BCU Fund, which first became available in the 2003/04 financial year. The only problem, perhaps, was that the Force reorganisation occurred in 1999, at a point when

the first round of crime audits and strategies were to be produced, thereby, bringing some 'turbulence' to this process at a time when continuity in personnel may have been advantageous. Indeed, the police service's habit of making personnel changes at short notice is something other agencies have often voiced their frustration about and it is regarded by many as a primary barrier to partnership working, in so far as it hinders the formation of trusting relations which depend, to some extent, on a degree of interpersonal familiarity. In the case of this particular reorganisation, however, this was not due to a lack of formal commitment on the police service's part.

Since they covered the same geographical areas, the CSSGs effectively migrated into the roles of the new CDRPs. Some of the CSSGs were based on former police divisions already coterminous with local authority areas, and here personnel changes were minimal or non-existent. Some of the former police divisions, however, had been servicing up to three CSSGs, and change here was more apparent. This may help to explain one participant's observation that;

"the areas that had worked historically well together in the past quickly fell into place but other areas, predominantly rural, had difficulty in relation to membership and commitment" (Interviewee 20).

The formerly coterminous police divisions (Plymouth, Torbay and Exeter), however, were also the areas within the Constabulary which evidenced the most severe crime-related problems, by some distance, and the same participant also observes that, *"where there is a real need to adopt a partnership approach it works better than a process that is hoisted on us to adopt, merely to be nationally compliant."*

The police contribution to the CDRP areas quickly became fairly standardised, in part, because in each of the four Areas one of the Superintendents was designated a 'partnership Superintendent' to oversee the CDRPs in their area, and they took a consistent approach which was set out by the territorial Assistant Chief Constable to whom they were answerable, via the Area Co-ordinator. Each BCU had a crime prevention sergeant, who, perhaps significantly (given the preceding discussion about crime management), was re-designated, across the Constabulary, as a Crime 'Reduction' Sergeant. The Crime Reduction Sergeant was tasked with working with the other responsible authorities on the production of the audit and strategy, in practice, this meant working with community safety officers. It did, however, take some time for some local authorities to appoint such officers, and in some areas a community safety responsibility was 'bolted on' to other roles until such time as the local authority was in a position to appoint a community safety officer, which for many was not until central funding was more forthcoming. The CDRP then effectively consisted of bimonthly or quarterly formal meetings of the

District Commanders and the local authority Chief Executives, and other agencies who could be 'brought on board', serviced by the crime reduction sergeants and those with a designated community safety responsibility, who drafted the audits and strategies which the senior officers eventually signed up to.

As noted in the literature review chapters, CDRPs started off with a very local mandate and their establishment was partly justified through an appeal to the idea of local solutions for local problems. However, the extent of such localism was questionable for two reasons. Firstly, an official 'expectation' was that CDRP strategies would fit in with the plans and strategies of their constituent agencies. In the case of the police, that meant fitting in with the key national objectives and local plans, which had been imposed upon the police since the enactment of the 1994 Police and Magistrates' Courts Act. Secondly, as noted in the literature review, once central government began to impose a performance management regime upon CDRPs, pressure was placed upon them to respond to national, rather than local, priority concerns.

This performance management regime arrived along with the Crime Reduction Strategy in April 2000 when CDRPs were asked to provide annual progress reports, and prospective plans for the year ahead, to the Crime Reduction Directorates in the government offices, whilst simultaneously being handed down a set of five year crime reduction targets for burglary, vehicle crime and robbery. These targets came complete with a set of Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) that would be used to measure progress towards these targets, with such progress being made visible through the publication of the performance indicators at BCU level, in the form of 'family' league tables capable of picking out the best and worst performers. These two issues will be explored below.

CDRPs: The Question of Police Dominance and the Imposition of a National Agenda

Following the implementation of the 1994 Police and Magistrates' Courts Act, local policing was subjected to a centrally imposed regime of national key objectives. The expectation was that local plans would fit these national key objectives, and in the Constabulary this was indeed the case, as the following extract from the 1995/96 Annual Report demonstrates:

"[National Key Objectives:]

1. To maintain and, if possible, increase the number of detections for violent crime.
2. To increase the number of detections for burglaries from people's homes.

3. To target and prevent crimes which are particularly local problems, including drug-related criminality, in partnership with the public and local agencies.
4. To provide high visibility policing so as to reassure the public
5. To respond promptly to emergency calls from the public.

[Local Plan:]

1. Crime – to tackle effectively, in particular drug-related crime and public disorder, wherever possible with the co-operation of other individuals, groups or agencies, whether statutory or voluntary.
2. Drugs – to reduce abuse of controlled drugs and associated crime
3. Operational policing – to provide an appropriate and effective response to demands from the public for police assistance.
4. Personnel – to optimise the use of all our staff to meet the requirements of policing
5. Consultation – to enhance the public's understanding of policing issues and to create ownership of a shared vision and commitment to agreed strategies." (p15 of the statistical appendices)

This response is interesting for a number of reasons. Initially, the local plan gives presentational priority to the local, mentioning particularly the drug-related criminality the national objectives cite in a local context, however, also criminal damage. This presentation makes the local plan look different from the national objectives. Secondly, however, on closer inspection it is difficult to see much in the way of variation between the local and the national – even if it does not use the words, the local is set broadly enough to encompass the national. Thirdly, this provides further evidence of the broad 'compliance' of the Constabulary to national policy direction, previously discussed above. Indeed, pressure for more specific compliance was evident from HMIC's response to the 1997/98 local plan. That Constabulary plan was criticised by HMIC in its 1997/98 Primary Inspection Report:

"In setting its targets for 1997/98 the Authority has switched the emphasis in relation to assaults away from detections for all violent crime, as specified in the National Key Objective, to reducing the number of assaults in public places, since this category has seen a significant rise in recent years (49% when comparing 1996 to 1993). Her Majesty's Inspectors understand the thinking behind this and accept the content of the plan is a matter for the Authority; they nevertheless register their concern that the focus of this target should not detract from efforts to combat violent crime, and especially domestic violence which in practice is an operational priority, with recorded incidents and arrests increasing steadily over the last three years." (p8)

This criticism can be seen as an organisational 'slap on the wrist', and one can see how such comments might encourage closer observance in future years, since any criticism from an Inspectorate is clearly unwelcome.

The significant thing about the National Key Objectives is they continued to be in existence beyond the implementation of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, a point which led many critics to wonder to what extent the Act really could deliver local solutions to local problems. The pressures 'against' localism were recognised by a number of participants in this research, as the following quotes demonstrate:

"There was some conflict between central and local priorities, an example being where local problems arose demanding attention which did not figure on the large radar system. Again, predominantly ASB activity." (Interviewee 20)

"Sector inspectors are under a lot of pressure with their targets and the bottom line is that I can talk to them [other agencies] 'til the cows come home about what we are going to do about criminal damage, but they [force management] are saying I have to worry about vehicle crime and the rest of it. Yes, you can't argue with that because they are going to get beaten up if their figures are not coming up to scratch." (Interviewee 3)

One question this research sought to provide an answer to was how the tension between the national and the local was managed by the CDRPs. Did they, like the Constabulary, show compliance, or were they more likely to be resistant? A quotation from a Cornish CDRP strategy document produced in 1999 provides one possible answer:

"It is important that this crime reduction strategy arising from the crime audit is linked to and is consistent with the aims of the annual policing plan. If the two diverge, there is likely to be a blurring of the strategic priorities and, as a result, a reduction in effectiveness." (p33 - Penwith)

This suggests a strong pressure on the CDRPs to comply with the police's plan. Some participants in this research suggested that the pressure applied to CDRPs was rather more 'indirect'. This participant, for example, disclosed a police tactic used in public consultation meetings:

"If you ask the question 'is burglary an issue of concern for you?' don't be too surprised by the response. With an enforcement agency like the police leading the charge, of course that will feature as a priority. Similarly, speeding, litter and dog fouling are a public

concern [but] where the police are strong leaders these tend not to appear as priorities.” (Interviewee 14)

In essence, then, provided that the police had the leadership, they could manipulate the agenda in a way which ensured police priorities became, in this case public priorities. This participant, however, used a similar approach with the CDRP:

“In fairness the way we are going we would be quite cute in influencing down here the way that CDRP priorities are very much according to our priorities and that came out of the matrix I did.” (Interviewee 12)

Another interviewee recalls that there was some space for localism at the outset, but such space was relatively quickly closed up:

“The crime and disorder audits did not interfere too much with those priorities already set by ourselves. I think that the force did try to influence CDRP activity towards government priorities but again this was after 18 months or so where it really started to have an effect. In the early stages the priorities set locally by the CDRP were far more meaningful to the local communities.” (Interviewee 20)

It is possible that the stronger ‘steer’ after 18 months is attributable to the effect of the National Crime Reduction Strategy, announced in 2000. This strategy imposed the Home Office’s Public Service Agreements (PSAs) onto the CDRPs, which translated into five-year targets for the reduction of vehicle crime, domestic burglary and street robbery. The imposition of the strategy was partly justified by a criticism of the first round of CDRP strategies, which had shown wide variations in target-setting – some CDRPs had set no targets at all, whilst others had set targets which were wildly ambitious and unattainable.

The increase in Home Office ‘pressure’ provides a partial explanation for the way CDRPs were drawn into a police agenda, as the Home Office’s performance management agendas for the police and for CDRPs started to merge. Police ‘manipulation’ of local agendas provides another partial explanation, however, the research also identified other forces at work. To begin with, there was a widespread view amongst the police that they should be ‘in charge’ of partnerships. This view was ‘tested’ in the survey stage of this research, with 67.2% (43) of the survey respondents either strongly agreeing or agreeing with the statement that, “the police should have lead responsibility for managing crime and disorder in local communities.” This is not to say that they disagree that other agencies should be involved – 62.5% (40) of the respondents also agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that, “it is essential that the police service pushes more of a responsibility for the management of crime

and disorder onto other partner agencies.” There is no contradiction here in so much the police recognise that there are things that other agencies can do to influence local crime and disorder patterns, however, they tend to think that such activities should be directed by, or at least responsive to, police concerns.

The idea that the police should be in a lead position with regard to CDRPs is consistent with the findings of other research which identifies a dominant role for the police in partnerships. Why then do the police feel the need to lead partnerships? Clearly, there is a history to police leadership in local crime control. Prior to the emergence of the partnership approach they were the main, if not the only, local crime control agency, albeit serving as a gateway to other parts of the criminal justice system. As such their professional identity has been crafted out of their sense of expertise as a crime control agency. However, how does this expertise actually manifest itself?

Symbolic interactionists sometimes make use of the concept of ‘the looking glass self’ to make sense of how identities are shaped out of the way others see us. This concept enables us to make sense of one way in which the police leadership role manifests itself, simply because other agencies ‘expected’ the police to take the lead in driving forward partnership business either actively, in the sense of ‘bowing’ to police expertise, or passively, in the sense of not seeing it as ‘their business’ and thus failing to get sufficiently involved. This was a very strong theme in the research, evidenced from the following quotes by participants in the interviews:

“Initially I saw and felt there was a strong emphasis on the police to take the lead in meeting the new requirements and it was still very much still crime and disorder and very much seen as police business.” (Interviewee 5)

“We as a police service we are a driver as we need to work in partnership the problem is not that of the police alone. We need to work with other people and we need to look at long term solutions to solving problems. Whether our partner agencies always see that at the same time I am not so sure.” (Interviewee 3)

“I think the fact is and it’s still recognised I think that they [other agencies] don’t see it as their core business. I mean policing and crime is core business and it’s actually getting it over to them that it has an effect on their organisation ... If there’s no broken windows around it’s good for business trade, increases shops, increases employment and it gives them more revenue. I mean it’s actually making those links.” (Interviewee 23)

"We have all got our targets, ours the police is obviously crime-related, reduction of crime, detection of crime. Our partners, whilst that might feature somewhere within their targets, I am not sure that's their key targets. Whether they have actually got the energy the police have got towards that I am not so sure and that probably depends on, like, everybody else. Partners have their own targets and I don't necessarily know that their targets are to do with crime reduction in the same way as ours. So probably their energy is not quite the same as the police are in getting these solutions." (Interviewee 3) (Since 2000 other agencies – the local authority at least – 'have' had the same crime reduction targets as the police, so this participant's comments indicate that the targets are not the same because they are not prioritised in the same way.)

"We started feeling a bit sorry for other organisations who couldn't keep up to pace with crime and disorder and how on earth are they going to understand our business." (Interviewee 14)

"We believed this was about other organisations getting into tune with crime and disorder. It wasn't about us. We already had this. It was our day job." (Interviewee 14)

"They [other agencies] thought of us as an organisation who were very much results-based and we were taking the lead a lot and other agencies were dragging their feet. We sort of felt 'great, we have to work with other agencies and they are dragging their feet'. And it was more of a nuisance the sort of thing I felt when I joined [the CDRP]." (Interviewee 1)

"I think the police still take a major role – the lead role – in partnership initiatives, particularly locally, and we are forever badgering our partner agencies to come on board as much as we are involved. I think that's been from the outset and not just [this constabulary]. The police are still the main lead role as other partner agencies don't see crime and disorder as one of their main functions. Again I suppose in their way it is cynicism. They didn't set out to do their particular... they didn't see crime and disorder as a major part of their employment terms." (Interviewee 11)

"You could almost say the name it has been given [crime and disorder reduction] is a barrier to it because the local council may say 'well it's crime and that's the police's job!'" (Interviewee 6)

"The problem has been trying to get other agencies to just take that leap and see what they are doing on a day-to-day basis affects us." (Interviewee 7)

"I think a lot of other particularly key partners – local authorities – have been tardy in their responses and their commitment to

partnership working and have therefore not fully realised the full benefits.” (Interviewee 13)

“In our area the police have taken so much of it on, and I do sometimes wonder whether we should have perhaps held out and been slightly more robust, perhaps forcing one or two others to pick up their end.” (Interviewee 8)

“Look at local authorities. Actually analyse what they really do and have legal responsibility for, particularly principal authorities, and wonder how they actually can find resources to commit to what is not mainstream for them. Harsh words, but I think you will find over 500 Acts of Parliament giving direct and indirect measurable responsibility for something or other to local authorities.” (Interviewee 16)

“The police tend to take the lead and if we pull back from taking the lead and trying to drive things forward I don’t know if there is anyone to step into that void.” (Interviewee 3)

This last quote is perhaps indicative of the way the police can internalise the sense of leadership and responsibility for CDRP business, reasoning on the basis of such an internalisation that things may well fall apart in their absence. In one response, a participant suggested while other agencies might have made some resource commitment to partnership working, it was not enough to demonstrate true commitment. Thus, for example, placing responsibility in the hands of a relatively ‘lowly’ community safety officer was not good enough and the lack of senior management involvement implied a lack of ‘ownership’:

“My concern is sometimes by resourcing partnership individuals [community safety officers] it lets off the organisation to embed further. I have a view about how we structure in terms of locally the BCU commander ... is the person who sits on the strategic partnership. When you sit down with the local authority chief executive that is the person who holds the purse strings and knows that organisation inside out and can make those decisions and can see the strategic way through.” (Interviewee 14)

If minimal commitment from others prompted the police to steer local partnerships, so too did the Home Office’s haste to have CDRPs up and running, even if the police were not as ‘ready’ as they could have been:

“This was the first ‘biggy’ from a new administration. This was the flagship for the Labour Party and it did send out a message about the way the Labour Party was going to work and I remember this quite clearly at the time, thinking ‘bugger, they really do want to

push this through quickly'... Our organisation was not prepared ... [but] what was quite successful in terms of sending this boat out with half its sails up and hoping somehow there was going to be some people on board who knew how to put the sails up and who will be able to steer it. And that sort of happened." (Interviewee 14)

The haste behind the establishment of CDRPs effectively played into the hands of a police occupational cultural inclination to get on with the job, whether prepared or not. This cultural inclination is well set out in the following quote from a neighbourhood team leader, although his specific point applies more to partnership working in beat management rather than with CDRPs:

"I guess it's a matter of priority and where the job sees it in the list of priorities and a lot of work I do I would say is common sense and you are pretty au fait because of the job you do. If you don't know you ask but I think the job relies on that a lot. They will make do and get on with it." (Interviewee 1)

"I don't think the organisation as a body ... knew [how to work in partnership] ... That is the problem. The organisation has ...as a body it hasn't got a grip of this thing about partnership working with the Crime and Disorder [Act] because it moves at a speed at the coal face. ... It deals with the Act when it comes in." (Interviewee 14)

The above quote also alludes to the issue of organisational support for partnership working, which is addressed in further detail below.

It was not just the responses of other agencies, or the haste behind the Act's implementation, which shaped the police's general sense of leadership. Police claims regarding their dominant expertise in local crime control were underpinned, to a considerable extent, by the crime management model the Constabulary had developed since the mid-1990s, as previously noted. The effect of the crime management model is well set out by this participant:

"The crime management model was an interesting innovation. In many ways it was a forerunner of the awful NIM. Anyway, like the NIM it started to make every aspect of crime into recordable and manageable processes. Whilst on the face of it that was fine, what no one could foresee was the beginning of the end for community engagement." (Interviewee 16)

As discussed in Chapter 2, crime management provided the police service with an opportunity to re-assert their competence, and ownership of the crime problem, required as research evidence regarding the ineffectiveness of policing and policy developments before the early 1990s was effectively taking, or threatening to take, this away from them. It gave them the confidence to 'own' crime as a

problem, which they could do something about by themselves. In particular, crime management also entailed the integration of different aspects of policing, evidenced in this Constabulary by the establishment of multi-functional 'Divisional Support Teams' to facilitate the pursuit of crime management at the BCU level. This included crime reduction, and it effectively brought the police crime prevention specialism, which as noted above was re-named crime reduction, 'in from the cold'. Where the crime prevention specialism had been a 'security ghetto' in Weatheritt's (1986) words, the crime reduction specialism was, in theory at least, brought back into the fold, as an integral part of crime management. However, the implementation of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, and in particular the arrival of CDRPs, did nothing to disturb the balance. CDRP business was crime reduction, and it made sense, therefore, for crime reduction sergeants to be given a prominent role in working at the operational end of CDRPs, working with the presumption that other agencies could be cajoled into doing things to help the police realise their objectives, just as crime prevention officers saw their roles as encouraging others, such as members of the public and private businesses, to take sensible security measures. Crime management did not afford space for an alternative view, especially where CDRPs might be involved in the negotiation of shared purpose. Crime management prompted the question 'what could CDRPs do for the police?', not 'what could the police do for CDRPs?'. To some extent this can be evidenced from the guidance that the Constabulary produced in 1996 to accompany the roll-out of the Crime Management Model:

"Crime Reduction – crime prevention, youth affairs, licensing, drugs liaison, and crime alert, are pro-active functions, with up-to-date intelligence being used to tackle current policing problems. The involvement of these functions within the divisional support teams ensures a co-ordinated response and a link with other specialists. Crime Prevention – crime prevention officers benefit from being up-to-date with the latest intelligence and current crime trends, utilising the CIRRaS analytical work, and making full use of intelligence in liaising with community safety groups and statutory or voluntary groups or agencies. They are a focal point in divisional responses to repeat victimisation, and supported by up-to-date intelligence to produce a range of options and plans for tackling specific identified local policing problems." (p22)

It is worth noting that at the time this guidance was produced, key national objectives were geared very strongly towards crime detection as a performance measurement, thereby, consolidating the 'detectionist' mentality, which underpinned the crime management model the adoption of which earned the Constabulary considerable praise from HMIC in its 1997/98 Primary Inspection Report.

If anything, such praise further entrenched this detectionist mentality. However, after the 1998 Act, there was a period of time when, according to one participant "you would have got arrested for talking about detections" (Interviewee 14), this period was relatively short-lived, and may have reflected more of a cosmetic, than a real change – a case of the service being 'politically correct' for a while, especially as the PSA targets were increasingly expressed in terms of crime reduction rather than crime detection. However, in more recent years, particularly with the advent of the NIM which in this Constabulary has been accompanied by a much stronger senior management emphasis upon 'performance', this detectionism has once again been provided freer rein.

The relationship between crime management and CDRPs is a difficult and ambiguous one. The point being made in this section is that the adoption of crime management, before the establishment of CDRPs, effectively prompted a dominant view that, if they were of any use at all, CDRPs could be 'used' by the police to further purposes identified through the crime management process, and pursued by the crime reduction sergeants through their links with CDRPs. This involved strategic and tactical 'tasking and co-ordination groups' (TCGs), which in turn related to Key National Objectives (for the strategic TCGs) and local problems 'guided by' the KNOs (for the operational TCGs).

One problem, however, was that the timescale adopted by the CDRPs did not fit the timescales to which the TCGs operated: three-yearly audits made CDRPs the 'tortoises' in comparison to the TCG 'hares'. Another was that the TCGs were wholly police bodies geared to the collation and analysis of intelligence, which was very much offender-focused, thereby supporting a detectionist mentality. Simultaneously, therefore, crime management placed CDRPs in a potential role of 'serving' police purposes, but then identified these purposes in detectionist terms, geared ultimately towards enforcement, which the police could do largely by themselves without any particular contribution from partner agencies, other than assisting the process of intelligence-gathering (which did not necessarily require the formation of CDRPs).

Metaphorically then, CDRPs were sucked in and spat out by crime management. In practice, they remained marginal as they did not fit the puzzle of local crime management. This is a problem that the 2006 review of CDRPs sought to address, proposing the abolition of 3-yearly audits and their replacement by six-monthly strategic reviews, which could be dovetailed with the police's deployment of the NIM through the strategic TCGs. The review also proposed that partner agencies should be drawn more into these TCGs, although this is something that, at the time this research came to an end, the Constabulary was only beginning to consider, with some reticence.

In this Constabulary, the police continue to 'contribute' to CDRP partnership working as it is clearly a Home Office policy requirement, and because to do otherwise would be to go against the compliance approach described elsewhere in this chapter. Yet CDRP agendas, like local policing agendas, are set nationally through Home Office PSAs, to which they have been subjected since 2000. Thus, while they are expected to contribute, the terms of their contributions are largely set outside the CDRPs, in ways which can be met without any significant contribution to CDRPs, or accommodation to alternative agendas because these terms can be met through a NIM process which, as others have shown (Maguire, 2003), is police-owned, police-led and detectionist in orientation.

Evidence of a genuine 'organisational' commitment to partnership working therefore remains scant. From 2000 there was 'some' evidence of this as the new Chief Constable sought to drive the Constabulary down a neighbourhood policing path: another example of the Constabulary being ahead of the game, since neighbourhood policing was not fully rolled out nationally until 2003/4. The intention was to establish neighbourhood policing teams with dedicated 'problem-solvers' to analyse very local crime problems and develop solutions, many of which would be multi-agency in nature. However, not only did this rub up against the crime management philosophy, which kept problem-solving very much 'in house' within the police service, it was also very resource-intensive, which probably made it unsustainable. The more recent, and perhaps inevitable, retreat from neighbourhood policing has left gaps which have been plugged by the new Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs). Those regular officers now in post have been given a rather different mandate:

"My idea of neighbourhood policing is arresting the bad guys making the streets safer to live. The drive from SMT is to reduce the number of partnership meetings that the beat managers go to and concentrate more on crime reduction, but in particular on crime detection, and also increasing the flow of information and intelligence." (Interviewee 3)

Such a view does not necessarily find favour with serving neighbourhood beat managers:

"I believed that I would get a say in the management of my own patch and that beat managers manage their own area and do initiatives. That really doesn't happen. I am still really led by my sergeant and inspector and what the SMT want, and don't really get to manage very much." (Interviewee 1)

"We've been told that unless it's specifically linked with the detection of crime then we shouldn't be giving any time to it. ... 'I want you out on the streets. I want you in people' faces. I want you doing

warrants and annoying people. Getting in their face. Disrupting them'. That's great, but I would say not by the beat manager. " (Interviewee 1)

"If you are going to have a beat manager, the beat manager should manage his own beat, without so much interference from SMT. And it does work with the partnerships." (Interviewee 2)

"I have got concerns at SMT level, because they are driven by crime stats and they have got their targets to meet and I think they are overriding the partnership work or the community side." (Interviewee 2)

This retreat from a more 'partnership-friendly' model of neighbourhood policing was exacerbated by the recent review of police forces with a view to merging those deemed too small to operate as 'strategic forces'. Within this Constabulary, considerable effort was expended on seeking to demonstrate its capacity in terms of 'protective services', particularly with regard to functions such as intelligence-gathering and enforcement. Some participants acknowledged that this had had knock-on effects for partnership working, effectively diverting resources away from it:

"The review of strategic forces and delivery of protective services to the national level highlights a step too far away from... partnership working and neighbourhood policing. There is this constant trying to find and maintain the right balance, and now we are going to find that perversely whilst we are talking about delivering neighbourhood policing in terms of sworn staff we may well move back slightly towards protective services." (Interviewee 8)

In so far as this shift towards strengthening 'protective services' requires partnership working, it also requires a particular variant of it, as this participant revealed:

"We need an uplift in performance. We need to be involving partners to do things better, and protective services which is the hard stuff. But we need to work with partners as well. Not necessarily community partners, but criminal justice partners." (Interviewee 12)

Work with 'criminal justice partners' includes, for example, public protection work with the probation service which, like detectionism, retains a strong offender orientation, whereas work with 'community partners' – more the province of the CDRP – would appear to hold much less appeal, at least for this participant. Others regretted such a viewpoint and they regarded it as being representative of the current senior management perspective:

"It is really the undervalued side to policing and as individuals we all have to try and influence and inform others around us within the organisation of the value of working in partnership, to sell the vision to them and to attempt to free up sufficient resources to be able to significantly make a difference." (Interviewee 5)

"I think they [senior management] see beat managers as a wasted resource, and I think [senior management think] I am a lost patrol officer rather than an engaged beat manager unfortunately. I think that's the way we are viewed." (Interviewee 1).

Whilst the above focuses upon partnership working in the context of neighbourhood policing, it is important to stress that there is a link between this and the more strategic focus of CDRPs, in so far as the business of CDRPs, ideally, is to provide the conditions which maximise opportunities for operational partnership working at the neighbourhood level. The evidence considered in this section suggests that while the police have occupied a lead role in CDRPs they have generally used this lead role to ensure CDRPs keep 'on side' with the police's own strategic priorities, which are set down from the centre through the performance management framework. Crime management provides a process for bringing CDRPs 'into service' in pursuit of the police's priorities, however, they are not necessarily needed as this can be achieved by the police alone, operating with their dominant detectionist mentality. Despite earlier moves in the direction of a 'partnership-friendly' model of neighbourhood policing, the Constabulary has since retreated to a position, which requires its resources to be more focused on intelligence and detection, and this has further reduced scope for productive partnership working, though the police continue to play their part in CDRPs, as they are expected to do so by the Home Office.

Although the police organisation has operated in many ways to stifle the potential of the partnership approach, there are nevertheless many officers who have worked with CDRPs and who have seen the potential of partnership working. The next section will consider the extent to which they have been supported in their endeavours by the police organisation and culture.

Organisational Support for Partnership Working

When the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act was implemented it was accompanied by a range of guidance materials, such as the 'Statutory Guidance' (Home Office, 1998), the practical 'manual' 'Getting the Grease to the Squeak' (Hough and Tilley, 1998) and 'Beating Crime' (HMIC, 1998). However, it is not usually the case, that police officers routinely access such guidance themselves. Although, it would be reasonable to expect the Constabulary to have some role to play, as a conduit for such advice and guidance. The performance of such a role

would bring the necessary support to those officers charged with a responsibility for delivering the new statutory duty for partnership working. It is reasonable to think, moreover, that there might be a role in this for those with a responsibility for police training in this regard. In its 1996 Five Year Plan, the Constabulary made clear its intentions;

"To optimise the use of all staff to meet the requirements of policing... To develop the skills, knowledge and experience of our staff to the highest standards in order to meet the policing needs of our communities." (p23)

As previously noted, the same plan identified one of these 'policing needs' as partnership working with other agencies, and in its 1997 Primary Inspection Report HMIC noted that "The training and development strategy was being drafted at the time of the Inspection and aims to provide the training necessary to meet the local policing plan objectives." (p25)

The question posed is, has the existence of such aims and intentions resulted in the provision of training support to those engaged in partnership working? Evidence suggests that the Constabulary's intentions, in reality, have not extended to the provision of such training. This was the position as some new recruits experienced it:

"The police training at the time was all about learning the law and the application of force. There was nothing in that training at all about building and maintaining relationships which I think is actually more important than knowing the law. That's the way police training was then, and that was the way it was expressed in my tutorship and on the streets." (Interviewee 7)

"Back then very very different training regime. But it was all about going out catching villains." (Interviewee 10)

The position was not greatly different for those officers more centrally involved in establishing the new partnerships:

"There were a lot of messages and bits and pieces but there was nothing saying this is how we are going to go about it, and this is what it actually means. We still get it now - 'as from this date this will happen' - and I think as a service we need to look at how we circulate and advertise stuff and actually put it across." (Interviewee 9)

"It wasn't until I had the post that I personally had to start picking up community safety issues and I received no training in this at all. I think I booked myself onto one course at Bramshill which was around the strategic development of community safety partnerships or something of that nature." (Interviewee 8)

"I had gone as a district commander to chair a CDRP. ... I was educated by that partnership." (Interviewee 14)

"What we've picked up [has been] from our own personal experiences without any support in that area." (Interviewee 23)

In order to gain a broader sense of the extent of training in partnership working one of the survey questions asked respondents whether they had received any multi-agency training, or instruction regarding how to undertake multi-agency partnership working. 71.4% (45) of respondents said they had received no such training. Of those who had received such training, the majority noted it had been problem-solving training for neighbourhood policing (which was linked to the rollout of neighbourhood policing in the Constabulary), or joint training around specific specialist issues, for example, child protection. The following interview response from a middle manager in police training supports the survey findings:

"Partnership training within the force does not exist as a stand-alone module. However, if we scratch below the surface there are some significant training initiatives that occur, but these tend to be focused upon specific areas of business rather than as a generic 'how to do partnership' package." (Interviewee 19)

An analysis of the most recent (2007/08) suite of training courses provided by the Constabulary supports, to a very limited degree, this participant's point, although out of 570 individual courses only 15 appeared to have a multi-agency element to them, and in only one did the word 'partnership' feature in the course title. Of these 15, most were in specialist areas such as child protection or domestic violence.

There are a number of possible explanations for the lack of training provision in partnership working within the Constabulary. One simple explanation might be the assumption that such training should be provided outside the Force area. There is some justification for such an assumption due to the existence at that time of the National Crime Prevention Training Centre at Easingwold. This has now closed down, with elements of such training being moved to Bramshill. However, it was certainly in existence at the time of the first implementation of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, yet, as others have identified, this training was overwhelmingly of a practical, situational kind, confined to crime prevention officers, for whom it was considered most relevant. In addition to Easingwold, as mentioned by one of the interviewees above, there was training provision at Bramshill, and some of this did focus upon partnership working. The National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) has established two programmes, one in Core Leadership Development, and the other in Senior Leadership Development, both of which incorporate partnership working within their module syllabi. The problem with such provision, however, is

that it is limited to those more ambitious individuals pursuing their professional development, and thus, this approach runs the risk of partnership working being perceived as a 'specialist' skill rather than a generic element of police training and competence. Evidence for the existence of such a perception may be found in the following comment from one of the interviewees:

"[Partnership working is relevant] from inspector upwards at management team level, but in reality there is still a large percentage of our constables and sergeants who even now still do not get involved or do not see the significance of partnership working."
(Interviewee 5)

With regard to the junior ranks one participant said

"It doesn't affect them because it doesn't fall within their role and I don't think the organisation has ever stopped and taken stock of where they are about the Crime and Disorder Act. 'Hang on we've missed a trick here' or 'we haven't engaged as much as we could' or 'our understanding of it was quite simplistic or quite naïve.'"
(Interviewee 14)

In the previous section the point was made that for many, partnership working was just something that they were expected 'to get on with'. This expectation attests to the existence of a pragmatic 'no nonsense' attitude, which could be regarded as a feature of the police organisational culture - it is action-oriented, rather than contemplative, even if that action is not always well informed. Officers are expected to follow orders and to be decisive rather than hesitant. Such an approach affords little space for questioning 'the whys and wherefores' of partnership working, or to reveal the existence of uncertainty. One might explain the lack of training provision in such terms i.e. it was just something to get on with.

However, this does not really explain the lack of training provision in partnership working, relative to the provision of training in other areas of 'policing need', such as diversity or health and safety. This is not to suggest that these areas are unimportant, but rather to suggest that there is a selection process in determining which policing needs require training support, and which do not. Perhaps there is a view that partnership working does not require training support because it is 'common sense', rather than something that can be taught. If such a view does exist it is mistaken, and the consistency of research findings regarding the problematic nature of partnership working suggests the folly of such a viewpoint. Alternatively, it is possible that partnership working simply lacks priority: it is not deemed important enough to justify bespoke training provision. In the previous section, the discussion demonstrates that in the Constabulary's 'big push' in the direction of crime management, partnership working was to some

extent overlooked, marginalised and made 'excess to requirement'. It was also suggested at the beginning of the chapter that partnership working was conceptually tied to 'community work', which is often seen as having less to do with operational policing, and more to do with enhancing the legitimacy of the police service, through good public relations. If partnership working, then, is seen as little more than 'flag flying', it would follow that there is little need for substantial training support.

Partnership and Police Culture

Training is one way in which organisational support for partnership working can be provided. Another form of organisation support is 'cultural' support: to what extent does the police culture make space for, or accommodate, partnership working? This issue of cultural support was a strong theme in the interviews, which lends support to Crawford's (1997) point that those studying partnership working should devote as much attention to 'intra'-agency factors as to 'inter'-agency ones.

When asked whether they got much in the way of support for their partnership working from the police organisation, the majority of participants were clear that they did not. One participant noted that *"there's been very little central support in my view to tell us how, as district commanders, to do the job."* (Interviewee 23). Lower down the hierarchy, meanwhile, a sergeant said the following:

"Sergeants tend to get things done, which is great, and I guess that is what was needed in the early stages, but certainly senior involvement in the early audits was almost negligible. ... Senior officers in all organisations, not just the police, didn't see or understand what section 17 was all about." (Interviewee 7).

"The difference between the tiers is probably the ideology is perfectly acceptable with what they want us to do and what they want to see, but they don't put the ground work into base level. I mean for someone like me there should be courses to go on. There should be time to go to meetings with the authority. We get nothing given to us to try and get these ideas implemented. ... The philosophy of the national model is we should be working in partnership but if I don't get a phone call or make a phone call it doesn't happen." (Interviewee 9)

"That's where a lot of policing is let down. It looks good on the paperwork disseminating posters, but the nucleus at the bottom – nothing gets done with it. There are public pronouncements regarding community work, but it doesn't seem to come down to basic level and actually do it. ... We say we are doing all this but we are not really." (Interviewee 9)

"It's like everything else. It puts it out and expects it to be done. What it actually doesn't check up on is to see if it is being done? I don't think it happens. It's almost like there is an assumption from HQ that people are doing what they should be doing and because its working and the force is where it is that it actually must be happening. Apart from one senior officer I have not had one person ask me what I am doing and what partnerships I am going to. They have not actually asked what I've done towards partnership since I have got here, what I have done to enable partnership working." (Interviewee 10)

"Personally I think it is something that they spout about but not something they actually do as a force, and its only down to certain individuals with the way they want to push it and what they get out of it and see the way forward and what can be achieved as to some people doing it and some not." (Interviewee 8)

"I don't see the constabulary has it [partnership working] as part of its core business, and I think that is reflected in the limited resource that is put into it, and to a degree of lip service that is put to it." (Interviewee 5)

"The force vision for several years has been of working in partnership with the problem-solving style. In reality this has not been achieved to a great degree." (Interviewee 5)

Taking these views to be broadly representative, the question has to be asked, why there is a lack of cultural support for partnership working within the police? Perhaps reflecting a senior management point of view, one participant suggested that extensive support was not necessary, although this view was not widely shared by other participants who thought the Constabulary could be doing a lot more:

"Does it matter that I don't know how a PCT or a trust authority works? [No] Does it matter I get my shoulder repaired? Yes it does, and I think that's almost true of a lot of partnership stuff. The reality was you don't have to put an awful lot of resources in to make partnership working right. A few intense specialised resources can make it work." (Interviewee 14)

This participant was implying that what was important was the delivery side of things, rather than the strategy, although this does raise the question of what can be delivered from limited resource commitments.

Some participants talked about the way politics got in the way of the kind of strategic thinking the establishment of CDRPs were supposed to encourage:

"No matter what political party is in, whether at a local level or national, there will always be an influence on what we do operationally. ... That's not to say that we shouldn't be doing things but I am wary of making plans too far ahead because I really don't think they will come to fruition because of the changing nature of the landscape." (Interviewee 7)

"There is plenty of literature saying strategic planning in the public sector is a complete waste of time anyway because strategic planning only lasts as long as the next election, and the difference between public and private sector management is that in the private sector you know where you are going to be. If you are McDonalds you need to sell more burgers and you are still going to need to sell more burgers in five or ten years' time. But we are under political control and I don't have a problem with that but it comes with an understanding that political masters can change their minds and they can be changed by circumstances and they can be voted out or voted in." (Interviewee 17)

This politics, therefore, engenders a degree of cynicism, a sense that it is not worth making strategic decisions because they are always vulnerable to change somewhere down the line. The cynicism is directed not so much at partnership working as the strategic thinking that such working is supposed to encapsulate. To some extent such cynicism was justified, given that CDRP strategies were soon rendered 'out-of-date' by the (late) arrival of the Crime Reduction Programme in 1999, and again in 2002 by the (late) arrival of the Safer Communities Fund (Gilling, 2007), with both funding streams becoming available only after CDRPs had been required to publish their three-year strategies. It is also justified by the perpetual policy changes, effected by the Labour government, and referred to by others as a case of 'initiativitis'.

It is not just the political context, which generates a cynical view of the kind of strategic thinking that the establishment of CDRPs was supposed to encourage. Rather, it is also the cultural understanding of the nature of policing itself, which is perceived to be involved very much with the 'here and now'. This was well expressed by the following participant:

"Operational policing is the here and now issues which the command team don't come into contact with. [They] look at a more strategic level at reducing [crime] this year, next year, five years down the line, whereas operationally as a sector inspector I am looking at reducing crime now because everything is very short term and when I go to tactical tasking I am not being assessed on how I have done over 12 months or two years. I am being assessed on what is happening in the last month and what has happened in the last week." (Interviewee 3)

If pressure for policing in the 'here and now' does not come from the crime management process, it comes from public expectations, and 'public expectations' may be used as a rhetorical device to justify the lack of organisational commitment to partnership working:

"What is difficult to evidence and quantify are the gains that are made through partnership working, and you are trying to meet massive public expectations which surround the response element." (Interviewee 5)

"We have proven time and time again that if we can free officers up to be proactive and preventive then we can actually achieve significant gains but as an organisation we continue to try and meet a public expectation for a certain level of response." (Interviewee 5)

"There is inevitably cynicism and it will take a long time actually to sort itself out. You know and I know it's about response, response, response. I don't even like the word. You know that? It's a dirty word, but that's the perception. It's job to job and get through the working day." (Interviewee 03)

"The emphasis of crime and disorder is very much police core business. The subtle changes have been around community safety, and visibility of senior people, the role of a CDRP ... [but] that is not connected into the public psyche in any way." (Interviewee 13)

The above participants recognise the value of partnership working, however, see themselves as fighting a losing battle. Public expectations may be one reason for them losing, but another reason is highlighted within the nature of police culture:

"You have got a massive and then majority of the organisation that still works in a response mode well outside any of the influences or impact of partnership working and still do not see it as their mainstream core business." (Interviewee 5)

"We were heavily influenced by detections and not at any cost but at any value so administrative detections and whatever it was that determined what we did. Again that was something we were responsible for and didn't look to our partners. If we were looking for crime and disorder reduction I suppose we would have squared the circle by having crime reduction officers in place and they kinda did something that we didn't worry our pretty little heads about too much. But they looked after that. The rest of us were supporting a CID charge towards detections." (Interviewee 14)

"I chaired a meeting last Friday around international workers, and we're considering a criminal market and there are a lot of resources in support of that. We're talking about crime and there's a whole

host happening in the partnership world around support of the victim. I'm looking at the process and building the two together, [but] I have field intelligence officers and senior investigating officers looking at me and saying 'I don't want to be involved with Job Centre Plus or 'are we getting the right allowances' and all that stuff.'" (Interviewee 12)

"The trouble with the police is there are so many different officers like NBMs and response, and they get into their own little niche. Your response officer doesn't have the time or inclination to go and get developed into partnership and why should they? Because they are doing a specific job. They see that ... if a job comes up which needs a social worker, the local authority or an ASBO starting off it goes to someone who has the time to deal with that." (Interviewee 10)

"There's a culture that we respond and that is what we do and are good at, and going beyond that when people are progressing in service they are either going to go up the promotion chain or they will specialise into CID for example, and there is a culture that develops in CID that they deal with the hard-edged side of offending and partnership then does not affect them." (Interviewee 5)

"There is still a certain amount of cynicism towards it. I am not trying to stereotype but persons with more service harp back to the good old days, and they're not too willing to embrace the change and see the benefits, and if they are they are not too outward-speaking in relation to that." (Interviewee 11)

"I don't think that sergeants and constables and probably the bulk of response or CID officers see it as their core business, partnership working, even now. I think there is a culture of officers coming in and dealing with what is in front of their noses, what they are tasked with while they are on duty. And a lot of them still do not work with a problem-solving ethos." (Interviewee 5)

"There is a reluctance outside beat managers. Like response looking up saying 'why are we doing that? It's a load of crap!' You do get that a lot and I think it's hard for them to see the benefits of what we're doing. For example, I don't think people realise ... if you go for an ASBO the amount of work required to get that. They think it's a pink and fluffy way of doing that. So I still think there is a certain amount of reluctance from certain quarters." (Interviewee 11)

The cultural disinterest in, and negative evaluation of, partnership working is unlikely to make the task any easier to perform: rather like the 'security ghetto' that Weatheritt (1986) identified as the home of crime prevention officers, these officers find themselves in a 'partnership ghetto', not well appreciated by their colleagues:

"When I came out the Act had kicked in and we had crime reduction sergeants. I was a patrol sergeant, and the crime reduction sergeant was described by the rank and file and some of the inspectors as a bit 'airy fairy'. 'That bloke's always up at the council, et cetera'." (Interviewee 7)

This particular participant, however, did not subscribe to such a view, and went on to say *"But I had a few chats with the individual and quickly saw the benefits of being able to get things done together."* Indeed, many of the participants in this research were aware of the fact they were going against the grain and even had some commitment to so doing, recognising without them there was the danger of a reversion to type:

"Although we've had it on all our strategic documentation for a long time I think if it was left it would revert back to old police culture quite quickly, and in a couple of years we would be back to doing what we did. It needs that constant pressure to say partnership is a way of working, and we have to keep that going." (Interviewee 7)

Others believed that there were signs of things getting better, with the value of partnership working being recognised more within operational policing:

"GCIs [geographical chief inspectors] to be honest have been much more savvy about what the benefits are likely to be and I think sometimes it is driven by the view that we are going to get something for nothing here, which is fine because at the end of the day we all want to achieve something. But the level of awareness I have noticed certainly among sector inspectors has grown immensely over the last three years. They talk much more these days around 'can the CDRP do this, can the CDRP do that?'" (Interviewee 6)

"Policing culture has changed, there are no two ways about it. Prior to '98 individuals worked in partnership but it really wasn't an organisational thing. It's now required, and there is an expectation that we work in partnership. But that has been a long haul. That's about putting that partnership word in our strategic vision for a long time. So I think people accept it is there but I really don't think we have convinced everybody yet." (Interviewee 7)

"I certainly think there's an awareness now with most officers, that perhaps I didn't have, as to how to call in and direct other agencies to issues. ... [There is] a greater embeddedness of partnership working to the extent now where on BCU we have strategic partners at strategic assessments. We are at a level now where we have come an awful long way." (Interviewee 8)

This same participant, however, was not naïve. He acknowledged that;

"the cultural change perhaps hasn't occurred and ... you could argue that perhaps there should have been more mandating of some of the requirements."

Another participant thought that the 'here and now' nature of policing would always limit the capacity of partnership working to penetrate the working culture:

"We have so many jobs coming. People still come to us and say we need your help, and we still haven't got that right at all. So, that demand management stuff, that's still our priority and what the public expects us to do. The other bits and pieces are icing on the cake. In my view the issue around partnership working is that it's long term. You are talking millions of pounds and years of investment to change some social issues. And while that's going on, we still have the day job." (Interviewee 12)

Whilst it might have been thought that support was a major issue for those embarking into the unknown world of mandatory partnership working, in reality this is not necessarily how those working in partnership saw it. As one participant observed:

"I think the pace of district development and working in partnership was moving so fast that the centre couldn't keep up with it. I mean we've direct links with Home Office websites, we've got internet in district. We're getting documents straight off the web and starting to work on them before we get a steer, if we need a steer, from the centre on anything." (Interviewee 23)

Another noted simply that *"we were pretty well autonomous."* (Interviewee 14). It may be that this acquired autonomy was a natural corollary of the move towards decentralisation to BCUs, which the Home Office had been encouraging since the mid-1990s, along with the technological changes identified above that provided alternative sources of support and guidance from the centre. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the Constabulary had shown, through its 1999 reorganisation, a compliance with this wish for more decentralisation and some participants stressed the important role played by some far-sighted senior managers in this process:

"It was heavily dependent upon key individuals. In my experience we did have those key individuals." (Interviewee 14)

"Shortly after 1998 the force recruited some new chief officers and there was one in particular who was very well read and versed in the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act and problem-solving policing, and I was involved in a reorganisation which took us towards much greater emphasis and integration with partners [and a] problem-solving style of policing. ... But that was very much a top-

down [initiative] and down to one individual that then led to a number of changes underpinned by the Crime and Disorder Act and its requirements.” (Interviewee 13)

“We had transferees into the force at senior ranks and they brought things into the force as well, and the agenda certainly built and it was all about working together plus the mandatory element of certainly local authorities. They had to start engaging with us and they were looking for it and they soon latched on that we were a model organisation.” (Interviewee 12)

“We got the momentum going. The command team at the time realised this is the way to go and actually were up for it and that was one of the reasons we then got into district commands.” (Interviewee 12)

The interview participants offered different views in relation to what the new District Commanders were able to do with their ‘new-found’ autonomy. One suggested that the career interests of the District Commanders got in the way, stopping them from operating too independently:

“The culture in the force equalled a feeling of imposed direction and compliance [to] the centre. This led to an unwillingness among commanders to be creative, innovative, or to make decisions that hadn’t either been made before or that were recorded in the million or so pages of useless policy and working practice that we have.” (Interviewee 18)

The same participant added that *“The controlling nature of the centre made it impossible for me to vary crime recording, deployment, and screening policies locally, and this meant that the centre actually cost me performance.”* He suggested, moreover, that this pressure extended to all other district commands as well:

“Senior officers identified the potential in the district structures to significantly improve performance, but with sixteen of us it was difficult to manage and I believe HQ needed to control commanders, which was at that time more important than the desire for radical performance uplift.”

Evidently this caused tensions within the police organisation:

“In relation to the police area/district (note: in the reorganised structure areas set above districts) relationship, there was a particular challenge in [one area]. A compliant chief superintendent with no ounce of pro-activity or innovation, and a number of keen district commanders who just wanted to get on and rebuild the world. This was unmanageable and caused a lot of stress for the

chief superintendent who was the wrong personality to control the district commanders on behalf of HQ."

Another participant confirmed this picture:

"Direct funding streams arrived, autonomous resourcing, et cetera. It gave the new district commanders power that was not liked upstairs. In fairness that concern was justified as, still, most of the legislation put accountability directly on chief constables, but they were losing the ability to direct and influence. That is why the areas had to come back to force the district commanders into line and, later on, one of the reasons why areas actually became the new basic command units." (Interviewee 16)

"I remember [the chief constable] getting very irate at district commanders who he perceived as having 'gone native'. He used to say things like 'they are my officers, working for me, towards my authority's targets." (Interviewee 16)

The perceived problem, of headquarters 'losing control' of autonomous districts, was not necessarily down to the threat of CDRPs 'going their own way' because, as discussed previously, police representatives generally sought to 'steer' CDRPs, with greater or lesser degrees of subtlety, to ensure that CDRP strategies were consistent with policing priorities, as imposed upon headquarters from the Home Office. One participant, however, did suggest that the threat came from CDRPs as much as from the individual district commanders:

"The force was right to be concerned. I think the force looked at it and was saying 'OK, we have given up too much here' to de facto partnership working within the CDRPs, probably in equal measure to just the fact we have people of chief inspector rank who were district commanders who had autonomy or this illusion of autonomy. They thought 'why are we putting all our trust into these individuals, and why is this individual talking with such confidence and autonomy?'" (Interviewee 14)

"[There was] a bit of conflict between the BCU and the organisation and our CDRP and how that worked. Maybe that is another reason the force didn't give us any support because it acknowledged this was the government pushing out this to the local community." (Interviewee 14)

The then Chief Constable, who was then serving a term of office as President of ACPO, perhaps indicated his views of the situation during his introduction to ACPO's Annual Report in 2000 which said:

"We fully accept the right of the Government to set the overall strategy for the Service and then have a voice in WHAT we do, but

the danger inherent in this shift to centralism is the involvement in HOW we do it." (p3)

The imposition of Best Value Performance Indicators in 2000 could be seen as the 'what', whilst the push towards decentralisation, through BCUs working closely with CDRPs, could be seen as the 'how' and the part of government policy to which ACPO most strongly objected, not least as it was perceived to undermine the Chief Constable's traditional operational independence. It will be remembered, in this regard, that the 2002 Police Reform Act's redefinition of operational 'independence' as operational 'responsibility', signalled the government's intent to 'take on' ACPO over this issue.

It is conceivable, however on balance doubtful, that CDRPs were perceived as the major threat to Constabulary independence. More likely, the shift towards highly decentralised BCUs had put greater 'distance' between them and headquarters, whilst simultaneously putting the BCUs in closer contact with alternative sources of influence. The CDRPs may have been one such influence, but more importantly was the Home Office, operating through its regional presence in the government offices.

Prior to the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, when the Constabulary and its partners established CSSGs, the possibility of local variations in priorities was recognised, as the HMIC Primary Inspection report of 1997/98 witnessed:

"To ensure uniformity of presentation, all divisional and departmental plans are drafted around a template devised by headquarters. Territorial divisions set their own targets for each of the objectives in the annual policing plan, which are reviewed by corporate planning to ensure the aggregated effort is sufficient to meet the overall targets. Commanders have the flexibility to introduce their own specific targets to address local problems and, through their involvement in the annual senior officers planning conference, have the opportunity to influence the choice of key policing priorities." (p9)

From the author's own experience as an area inspector, this typically involved balancing attempts to achieve corporate objectives, based on reductions and detections in headline crimes, with attempts to address local community concerns, typically about low-level anti-social behaviour and criminal damage. The idea, then, that CDRPs might introduce a similar amount of local flexibility when they were established, would not have been a shock to headquarters and, as we have seen, the approach adopted with CDRPs was one which would have contained local demands had they diverted markedly from Constabulary priorities. As it was, as previously discussed, other

agencies largely acceded to the 'expertise' and 'authority' of the police anyway.

However, perhaps a defining moment arrived with the announcement of the government's Crime Reduction Strategy in mid-2000, after the first round of CDRP strategies had been devised. The document which introduced the Crime Reduction Strategy stated the following:

"Alongside the performance plans for police authorities and local councils we will be asking each partnership in April 2000 to submit a progress report on its achievements during their first year of operation, to indicate what action is proposed for 2000/01, and what quantified crime reduction targets they will be setting themselves for that year. These reports will be scrutinised by regional crime reduction teams who will provide the central perspective on the direction of the partnerships and identify those partnership areas in which further support or assistance may be needed." (p12)

The publication of CDRP-level (and thus, in this Constabulary's case, also BCU-level) crime statistics further enhanced the message that scrutiny would be directed at this level, as did the announcement in the above document of HMIC and Audit Commission inspections where there was clear intention "to see how far police and partnerships have adopted the lessons of those key reports" [*Beating Crime and Safety in Numbers*].

One indication of how well this sign of stronger central interventionism was being received can be surmised from the following comment from this participant:

"Another challenge was the growing role of GOSW [Government Office South West] who would communicate directly either with the police district, the district local authority or the CDRP itself. I can remember responding to GOSW on one occasion and then about four weeks later being asked by HQ to submit a draft response to be censored/modified by HQ before going back to GOSW. I remember the deputy chief constable being horrified that I had dared to communicate without going through HQ. From a performance perspective I considered the district CDRP performance as my main priority and this was sometimes in conflict with force priorities."
(Interviewee 18)

In retrospect, the Constabulary's response to this unhappy state of affairs was perhaps predictable and it undertook yet another territorial reorganisation. Although the sixteen districts still remained in structure, BCU status was removed from them and transferred instead to four geographic Areas. Districts were subsequently headed by Chief Inspectors (although in Plymouth, which was also an area, and thus a

BCU, a Chief Superintendent remained), and they were designated as 'local policing area chief inspector'. The term Commander, quite deliberately, was transferred to area-level, and so Area 'Co-ordinators' became Area, then BCU 'Commanders'. The reorganisation therefore represented a clear attempt by headquarters to wrestle control back from the districts, not so much because the districts were out-of-control, but rather because the districts were more vulnerable to the outside influence of the government office and, through them, the Home Office.

What was the impact of this upon CDRPs? The reorganisation sent out a clear message that district lead officers lacked autonomy, thereby strengthening still further the idea that CDRPs had to 'fit in' with local policing priorities. However, the imposition of the Best Value performance management regime, which applied the same performance indicators to CDRPs as to the police, therefore brought both within the ambit of Home Office PSAs, effectively doing this anyway. Symbolically, with the police 'leads' under no illusion that they now lacked autonomy, and with them often possessing a level of authority less than that of their partner agencies (chief inspectors are not the equivalent of district council chief executives, for example), a sense of CRDP localism was lost. Inter-agency relations, moreover, were disturbed as the reorganisation was accompanied in some places by personnel changes, with the police being 'guilty' of actions which on other previous occasions had attracted criticism from other agencies for undermining the trusting relations that had been built out of representative continuity.

When CDRPs were first established, the indirect threat they posed to Constabulary independence was not recognised in part perhaps because, as noted earlier in this chapter, CDRPs were categorised with other forms of 'community work' which lacked massive operational relevance, and in part because the Home Office had not 'shown its hand', with regard to its intent to 'steer' local policing by exerting regional influence over CDRPs. Subsequent to this reorganisation, however, CDRPs were taken seriously in the sense their operational significance was taken more into account. Viewed in an operational light, however, CDRPs had to demonstrate their contribution to what the Constabulary refers to as 'performance uplift'. In other words, resources devoted to the CDRPs must be justified in terms of their likely measurable returns. Since contributions to CDRPs are not directly measurable in terms of their contribution to the 'here and now', however, this has currently led to a 'cooling off' of partnership activity. One participant expressed the issue as follows (once again using 'public demand' as a rhetorical device to justify the police position):

"One of the important things for the public is delivering the here and now, and it depends whether we have put the resources into it.

Because if we put all our resources into partnership there here and now will suffer. If we put all our resources into the here and now the partnership will suffer. So it's getting the balance, but it's also keeping the drive on to keep the partners on board and keep them engaged." (Interviewee 3)

Since partnership working does not so clearly or evidentially contribute to the 'here and now' performance requirement, it is more difficult to justify supporting it. This has led, in the Constabulary, to the withdrawal of the Partnership Superintendent role, which had been based at the BCU level. It has also led to the withdrawal of dedicated funding that the Constabulary had allocated to support CDRP activity:

"Where are we going to make our 3% cashable savings? There was an attempt by me to protect the partnership budget but the problem was we couldn't save cash anywhere else so the partnership budget we just gave out to CDRPs to say 'do what you will locally' has all been pulled back into the centre." (Interviewee 7)

This participant was aware, however, that underpinning resourcing questions were deeper questions about power and about the reluctance of the police service to give it up:

"When you go into partnership you always give up a little bit of power. The end product may be greater than the sum of the parts, but it is actually difficult to see that sometimes, and each little partner when they go into the partnership has to give up a little bit of control. For our organisation control is a big issue, rooted in our culture. It is what we do. We are the social control agency for the state, so to give up power is actually quite difficult." (Interviewee 7)

The irony behind this statement is that the control that the police were reluctant to give up was being claimed not so much by other agencies, for reasons previously cited, but rather by the centre, operating through the body of the government office and the influence that it was perceived to be trying to exert over CDRPs. Even more ironic was the fact that the reorganisation, which both reflected and prompted a more hard-nosed 'business case' attitude towards CDRPs, once again showed the Constabulary being 'ahead of the game' with regard to national developments. The establishment of Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) in 2000, logically, suggested the relocation of crime and disorder reduction business to principal authorities, based on county or unitary authority boundaries. LSPs were slow to get off the ground, however, the advent and inception of Local Area Agreements (LAAs) as their delivery arms breathed life into them, and these changes ultimately informed the 2006 Review of the Crime and Disorder Act leading to the proposed reform of CDRPs, whereby, their strategic business would be transferred (in the case of two-tier areas)

to principal authorities, leaving district-based CDRPs as operational, delivery-oriented bodies.

The Constabulary reorganisation had, however, largely pre-empted such a change, as one of the four BCU's was coterminous with the unitary authority of Plymouth, and one was coterminous with Cornwall. The other two areas do not fit the boundaries of 'new Devon' LSP and Torbay LSP, and in this regard remain somewhat problematic. Subsequently, the whole of Devon (except Plymouth) is currently being re-organised to represent a single BCU structure, leaving Devon and Cornwall Constabulary with just three BCU's.

A New Structure and a New Cynicism?

Given what has been discussed thus far, the prospects for effective partnership working look bleak. According to participants in this research there seems a general unwillingness to really make CDRPs work. This unwillingness is born of an over-dominant detectionist mentality and an organisational perspective which regards partnership working as an add-on to 'real' policing and one which prompts an inclination to regard partnership working rather disdainfully as an aspect of 'community work'. It is also born of a performance management regime that undermines localism and, with other aspects of policing policy unwittingly ends up supporting and reinforcing the detectionist mentality. The presence of such organisational unwillingness, although not necessarily exhibited by most participants, does raise the question of what can CDRPs really do? Pursuing this issue with the research participants, it became clear that CDRPs started to be viewed in a rather cynical, mercenary light. The following comments offer a flavour of this;

"The big thing that changed is was this government, when they came to power and developed a criteria of starting to have to chase pots of money." (Interviewee 12)

"We then realised that there were external agencies who had access to money so that's when the concept of looking at drugs ... The idea of use giving them needles was not on the agenda. They were all druggies. They were criminals." (Interviewee 15)

"They turn round and say there is £X million available from the centre to deal with an issue. Neighbourhood renewal will be a classic example. ... So what they do is people get together and say 'let's build up something'. There is funding for three years, say, to go into a post and we'll go chasing that until the money runs out. ... I was very much into that culture, and the beauty about that in my view was there was a lot of knee-jerking going on at the national level about trying to get to grips about what all the issues were." (Interviewee 12)

In other words, the police saw CDRPs as vehicles through which they could obtain additional funds. The existence of CDRPs worked in much the same way as the conditions, which had previously been attached to Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) funding under the Conservatives. To qualify for SRB funding one had to demonstrate partnership working, and to qualify for these new 'pots' of money one had to apply as a partnership, namely the CDRP. On the positive side, this possibly pushed agencies to develop initiatives they might not otherwise have considered – the above example about a needle exchange is a case in point. On the negative side, however as the last quote suggests, this prompted an ad hoc 'knee-jerking' approach to local community safety policy development. Another participant recognised this problem:

"[With short-term project funding] there is a danger that you secure an artificial partnership engagement purely for what you can bring to the table. I would prefer to use money in a pooled manner ... so we can properly prioritise that spend." (Interviewee 5)

And another participant was aware that 'chasing the money' resulted in local spending that was either not necessary, not effective, or possibly both:

"A lot of the funding streams funded posts and people, but some of it was a sort of self-fulfilling prophecy in a sense. The money generated, it was delivered in a bidding way and with community safety partnerships employing people who would then in turn find projects to fund or sometimes just to justify their own existence. So I don't think in hindsight that a lot of the money was spent very wisely. Nor in fact was the money spent in a way that you could say 'that's improved community safety'." (Interviewee 8)

Some participants suggested that the presence of short-term project funding from central government corrupted local partnership working, in two senses. As this participant suggests, the short-term funding prompted short-term commitment:

"For some councils it's been peripheral business because the funding streams have been temporary. ... Partnership is kind of considered discretionary activity by some of the statutory agencies." (Interviewee 8)

The short-term funding also hampered the development of genuine, strategic partnership working;

"There was more focus on working smarter back then [before the Crime and Disorder Act], because there were no pots of money. ... Since then we have been pot-chasing which has led us into more a knee-jerk type of reaction." (Interviewee 12)

"For me it would have been more successful if there hadn't been any cash with it. For me the most effective partnerships aren't the ones which work out how to spend some funding stream. The successful ones are the ones when people around the table commit to deploying their mainstream resources in a co-ordinated way to address community issues." (Interviewee 8)

It is conceivable, also, that the presence of short-term project funding encouraged another aspect of 'grantsmanship', in that such funding could be used to support service provision which may otherwise have been funded from mainstream sources. It was previously noted, for example, that the Constabulary 're-branded' some of its resources to support CDRPs - notably the crime reduction sergeants, and the creation of 'partnership' Superintendents, who had previously been designated as 'operational support' Superintendents. It is conceivable that the resourcing of some of these posts was temporarily substituted as a result of additional funding made available in rural areas from the rural policing fund. Accounting for its spend from this fund, the Constabulary noted, for example, that in 2000/01 £195,000 was spent on 'partnership working', with this figure rising to £216,000 in 2001/02.

The introduction of various short-term project funding streams from 2001 onwards, therefore, has not necessarily been of great benefit to the CDRPs covered by this research. The funding may have been intended to encourage partnership working, yet, it may have served, ironically, to undermine it, or at least to undermine partnership working which is not geared to the cynical pursuit of central funding streams, not necessarily corresponding with local priorities. However, the arrival of LAAs has served to alter this situation, with central funding now being directed in themed policy streams to LSPs, which have greater discretion over how the funds should be deployed. As one participant said:

"We're beginning to move away from that notion [of external project funding] ... to this commissioning model where it is about co-ordinating delivery of mainstream services, or the joint commissioning of discretionary services." (Interviewee 8)

In theory, then, the advent of the LAA facilitates less 'knee-jerking' and more corporate, strategic partnership working. Although the extent of localism is limited because LSPs are still 'guided' by central government's performance management regime and because in two-tier areas strategic partnership working will be 'scaled up' to the county level.

The advent of LAAs was welcomed by some participants:

"I can see why the government are saying that money must sit at a county level because there is enough money to do something worthwhile as opposed to the piecemeal approach across the county." (Interviewee 7)

"I personally think that that is probably a better and more effective model than some of those partnerships where you are squabbling around often quite small sums of cash." (Interviewee 8)

"What it allows us to do is punch above our weight. You think we sit at tables now at an LAA with a budget of £38 million and 1000 employees, and the chief executive of the county council has 19,000 employees, so if the BCU commander says things they will happen. It does allow us an influence around that so that is important. In terms of it being clawed, I think we have to be signed up and it isn't just us to go with it. That suits our case because it is a means for us to manage demand. We just can't deal with it all." (Interviewee 12)

There was some concern, though, that now the strategic funding decisions bypassed CDRPs in two-tier areas they had even less of a role:

"All the money is going through the LAA process to the county LSP so that local solutions ethos which blossomed in 1999-2002 is dying off slightly because some of the CDRPs are too small to do things effectively and they are not joining up as the idea originally was. So delivery at a county level or unitary leaves the CDRPs in an interesting position because they are no longer particularly strategic as that role has been taken off them. So what do they actually do?" (Interviewee 12)

There was also a recognition that while the bigger budgets might put LSPs in a better position to be 'strategic', this did not necessarily mean they would operate more like partnerships. The same participant said:

"We have had massive battles because they didn't want us to be chair of the new county strategic safety group, and we kicked up to get it because we know that's where the influence is going to be. We've put a lot of thought into making sure we get what we need to get. Now is that partnership working? It's probably not. It's looking after our own interests and that's the world we have gotten into now."

To be balanced, if the police are looking after their own interests, so too are other agencies. The author's own experience of this followed a Home Office decision to cut the core funding of the community safety budget by 13%. Proposals were put forward within the LSP to make good this shortfall by diverting funds from other thematic streams, however, such proposals were met, perhaps unsurprisingly, with

resistance and unwillingness from those other agencies present, concerned regarding potential reductions in their own resource streams or power base.

Thus, although the funding has shifted upwards to the LSPs, the same cynical view remains of partnership bodies being used primarily as access points to funding streams. The participant, quoted immediately above, was of the view that LSPs are largely undemocratic bodies, however, it was important nonetheless to ensure that the police were in a good strategic position within them because "that is where the influence is going to be." There has been long-standing concern about the problems partnerships pose for democratic control, relating for example to the difficulty of controlling informal decision-making that takes place outside partnership forums (Crawford, 1997), or to the absence of democratically elected members from such forums (Liddle and Gelsthorpe, 1994a). In this research, problems of control were exacerbated for CDRPs by the relative autonomy that police districts enjoyed from police headquarters and, ultimately, the Police Authority, although this body's democratic credentials are much less than they once were, as a result of changes in membership following the 1994 Police and Magistrates' Courts Act.

In theory, LSPs were supposed to enhance democratic control, by mixing the representative democratic element of local government with the direct democracy of community engagement, however, it may be that such a mix is not working. In the case of the police, the advent of LSPs once again raises the issue of the relative autonomy of the BCUs from headquarters, although this time the BCUs are scaled up from 16 to 3. It may be that police headquarters finds it easier to control and influence this smaller number of BCU Commanders, however, some of the participants in this research wondered whether there might be a more radical scenario in the future:

"I can see the delivery of local policing being part and parcel of local government and chief officers of police, as in many American jurisdictions, are very much part and parcel of the local government sector." (Interviewee 8)

"When you see at the top level the coming together of the Home Office and the ODPM, and the national policing plan which cuts across so many different departments, there is a clear recognition that each is a very important part of the overall picture. I think it will be driven nationally. I think the funding requirements and outcomes will probably define the shape of local partnerships, be they LSPs or CDRPs. And there is a possibility I suppose that you might have a police commander that is managed by a chief executive, if there are some really strong messages that need to be drawn in that way." (Interviewee 13)

"The only way that would happen [greater agency integration] is if we became part of the local authority and you would become one authority." (Interviewee 7)

These participants, then, can envisage a situation where policing becomes more embedded within local government, as a logical outcome of the push to more strategic partnership working, and perhaps as a resolution to some of the tensions of partnership working, including those related to democratic accountability, since the logic of a more integrated organisational structure is that it would be more clearly driven from the top. Interestingly, however, one participant was quite aware that this would not necessarily lead to greater clarity of vision:

"If that happened [greater agency integration] you could say in theory we would all be working for the same boss in terms of where the money comes from and where the chief executive sits. But, even within that, every department like education has its own culture, social benefit has its own, social services and police would have their own culture." (Interviewee 7)

So, greater integration would not necessarily overcome cultural differences; they would just re-appear in the guise of departmentalism. In the case of the police, presumably that would mean the persistence of the detectionist mentality which mitigates against partnership working, or at least mitigates against working with those that the police do not see as helping them to achieve a 'performance uplift'. As one participant pointed out, referring for example to work the police do with the probation service with regard to prolific offenders, or to closer working relations with the Crown Prosecution Service:

"We need to be involving partners to do things better, and protective services, which is the hard stuff. But we need to work with partners as well. Not necessarily community partners, but criminal justice partners." (Interviewee 12)

Chapter 6: Summary and Concluding Discussion

Introduction

There are two distinct purposes to this relatively brief final chapter, pursued in two following sections. Initially, the research findings are summarised, so in the course of the summary, the research questions are answered and the most significant points to emerge from the research clearly set out. Secondly, having completed this, these findings are reflected upon, in terms of their relationship to the key issues raised by the literature review and, in particular, in terms of their policy and theoretical significance. The intention is not to come up with a list of policy recommendations as the orientation of the research, while partly applied, was also more interpretative: more about understanding policy than recommending changes to it. Rather, the intention is to use the interpretive knowledge of how the police have accommodated partnership working to make sense of the established problems of such working, which have been well documented by previous research, as well as by the present research. These problems also need to be placed into theoretical context, and particularly, in the context of the paradigmatic shift in which some authors argue are being evidenced by developments such as crime prevention partnerships.

Summarising the Research Findings

The research questions were set out at the beginning of Chapter Four, the methodology chapter. To remind the reader, they were derived from the issues raised in the literature review section of this thesis, and they are as follows:

1. Has partnership working occurred in the wake of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act?
2. How is the police contribution to partnership working organised?
3. To what extent does partnership working through CDRPs reflect, and contribute, to the decentralisation of police service delivery through the body of police BCUs?
4. How far does the police service take cognisance of, or attempt to spread knowledge of, guidance on 'critical success factors' in partnership working?
5. What position does the police service adopt within the CDRPs?
6. Is the agenda of partnerships locally or nationally set, and what is the consequence of this for partnership working?

While it is possible to provide relatively brief answers to these questions, such answers would not in themselves capture the richness or depth of the data collected in this research project. Therefore, it is

proposed these answers should be provided in a rather less direct way, allowing the richness of the data greater expression and enabling such data to draw attention to other issues, which have emerged from the study and were perhaps less anticipated by the above research questions. It is acknowledged that this approach is more faithful to the interpretivist orientation of much of the research.

It is apparent that the police Constabulary, which forms the subject of this research, does indeed contribute to the partnership requirements of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act. It provides police managers to attend partnership meetings and it provides crime reduction staff to service those partnerships, often working closely with local authority officers with a designated responsibility for community safety. In addition, they have often playing a major role in the production of audits and strategies, although, the requirements for these have now altered in the light of the 2006 Police and Justice Act. For a period of time, the Constabulary also provided dedicated resources to local CDRPs, including financial contributions and it has also provided other forms of support, for example office space, use of analyst time etc, not covered by this research. However, in relation to this commitment of police resources to CDRPs it does not necessarily tell us very much about the actual character of the police contribution.

Initially, the police contribution appeared to be shaped by two main influences. The first was an institutional 'compliance reflex'. When the police service is told, in this case by legislation, to do something, it responds accordingly and appropriately. It contributes to CDRPs because of an institutional assumption that this is what it is required to do. This 'compliance reflex', which does not necessarily require the stimulus of legislation, was demonstrated on a number of occasions through, for example, the establishment of partnership bodies (crime prevention management forums) in response to Home Office Circular 44/90; the creation of a new 'community services unit' in response to Home Office Circular 8/84; the development of a 'community affairs' strategy in response to HMIC criticism and the re-drawing of divisional or BCU boundaries to accommodate the need for coterminosity, creating from 1999 16 policing districts across the Force area.

Whilst the Constabulary complies with 'the letter of the law', it does not necessarily comply with its spirit. Thus, while the Home Office's interest in establishing CDRPs, at least at its administrative (rather than political) level, lay in the putative role of CDRPs in developing a highly instrumental, problem-oriented approach to crime prevention, the Constabulary's view was somewhat different. This view was not particularly shared by many of the respondents in the research, who in general demonstrated quite a commitment for partnership working. However, it nevertheless held much currency, expressed in particular through official policy documents which placed crime prevention partnerships in the category of 'community work', along with

phenomena such as community consultation and public relations work, for example, attendance at county shows, visiting schools and so forth. According to such a view, 'community work' is not a part of the instrumental side of policing but rather a part of its symbolic side, useful for furthering and maintaining a 'tradition' of policing by consent.

'Community work', therefore, becomes an end in itself, rather than a means to an end, and the presence of such a mentality does not suggest that the police contribution to CDRPs needs to amount to very much in terms of practical outputs or outcomes. Although it needs to be stressed again, this is not necessarily how those participants who represented the police service on CDRPs saw their roles.

Those who did represent the Constabulary on CDRPs inevitably saw beyond the symbolic function of crime prevention partnerships, however, they were also either acutely aware of a number of constraints operating upon the police collaborative role, or they demonstrated other constraints in their cultural expectations or attitudes. They were aware that CDRP strategies needed to fit in with local policing plans, and in some cases they made this constraint manifest, as evidenced in the words accompanying at least one CDRP strategy analysed. Whilst in other cases they brought this constraint to bare in more subtle ways, effectively manipulating the strategy-setting process, or as one participant put it, playing 'cute', to ensure that CDRP priorities fitted local police ones. Arguably, there may have been no need to play 'cute', as participants indicate that there was a general expectation, amongst other agencies, that the police would 'lead' the partnerships, because crime and disorder was the police's particular areas of expertise after all. To some extent this was a concession to police expertise, though some participants were aware that such a concession also concealed a lack of interest amongst some partner agencies.

This concession to police expertise, and authority, was not unwelcome to the police with many participants sharing a view, also much in evidence within official documentation, in essence, endorsing the police 'should be' in the leadership role. This was due to the fact they broadly agreed with those other agencies who saw the police as the natural source of expertise on matters of crime and disorder. Such a view is part of the police's 'professional identity'. Yet there were also a number of practical drivers, which further encouraged this sense of police leadership. There was, for example, considerable haste in the implementation of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act resulting in the production of limited time for partnerships to meet, let alone to produce audits and strategies in time for April 1999. Therefore, it made sense to put lead responsibility in the hands of the police, supported by the police's cultural tendency to 'get things done', or to deal with the 'here and now'. It made little sense to wait for others

who lacked the interest, commitment or the action-orientation (local authorities are notoriously slow in their decision-making), to get on board.

Furthermore, prior to the implementation of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act the Constabulary had introduced a comprehensive model of crime management which, as one participant was moved to suggest, spelt 'the beginning of the end for community engagement'. Although there was a place for crime reduction within crime management, it was a relatively lowly place in comparison to detectionism and the crime management model operated in such a way as to maximise the police's sense of ownership of local crime and disorder problems, as well as its solution. It is telling, perhaps, that no effort was made to modify the crime management model to incorporate the new CDRPs, although as experience with the more recent NIM suggests, whilst there is supposed to be some partnership input into the TCGs, in practice this input either does not exist or is not significant in nature. In addition, the demand of such a police tasking process is focussed on the very short term (3-4 weeks), a demand which does not necessarily accord with the operating dynamic of partnership working. In addition, its processes are relatively retrospective, the analogy being shutting the stable door when the horse has already been stolen.

Police leadership of CDRP business is further encouraged by two other factors. Firstly, and closely related to the idea of crime and disorder being the police's area of 'natural expertise', is the notion of crime and disorder being the police's 'core' business. While such ideas are supported by the police's professional identity, they are also strongly supported by the performance management regimes which new public management has applied to the police service, particularly since the 1994 Police and Magistrates' Courts Act. Initially there was a bias towards objectives and targets expressed in terms of detections, which existed at the time CDRPs were first established. Although it is acknowledged since 2000 the targets, as expressed through BVPIs, have taken on a stronger orientation to crime reduction. However, whether focused on detections or crime reduction the key point is these are targets and performance indicators 'owned' by the police, and thus they need to be in control of the means by which such targets are to be achieved.

Secondly, some participants in the research justified the police's primacy within CDRPs through reference to public expectation. This worked in two ways. Initially, the public expected the police to be responsible for local crime and disorder problems and, as some participants pointed out, the idea of CDRPs being responsible had yet to catch on in the popular imagination. Yet, it was also argued that the public expected the police to take swift, authoritative action. Thus public expectations were used as a sort of 'rhetorical device' to support the idea that the police should be the lead agency and, in their lead

role, should take decisive 'here and now' action, which did not necessarily fit well with the more strategic and 'slower time' orientation of CDRP business.

Interestingly and importantly, therefore, crime management and the rhetorical appeal to public expectations worked in the same, paradoxical way. They both gave the police the 'excuse' to 'own' CDRP business, while simultaneously leading that business towards a dead end, because the strategic problem orientation of CDRPs either did not fit the more immediate concerns of the detectionist 'here and now', or because this strategic problem orientation was barely recognised due to the persistence of a more symbolic view of CDRPs, as an exercise in flag-flying and legitimacy-building. These tools and expectations gave the police considerable power over CDRPs, however, to a large degree it was power deployed to achieve limited results.

The capacity of the police to thwart problem oriented partnership working was not confined to CDRPs. Although, it was not a strong focus of this research, a number of participants had close experience of the Constabulary's engagement with neighbourhood policing. Although this engagement continues, particularly through the deployment of Police Community Support Officers, it is apparent there has been pressure to draw back from close engagement with other agencies unless it can be justified in performance terms, and specifically in terms of detection and bringing offenders to justice. Partnership working 'is' intended to enhance such performance by problem-solving, however, according to this way of thinking such an output seems to be simply dismissed, presumably because performance pressure leaves little time for such 'symbolic' luxuries, or perhaps problem solving is insufficiently productive in detectionist terms. As one participant effectively acknowledged, working with 'criminal justice' partners is more acceptable, because of the detectionist results it is likely to deliver, while working with 'community partners' is dismissed as less productive.

National policy developments demonstrate there has been considerable central frustration with CDRPs for their lack of progress and action, hence the reforms affected by the 2006 Police and Justice Act. This research suggests one reason for this lack of progress is the strength of a detectionist mentality permeating the police service at a cultural level, which plays itself out through processes such as crime management and rhetorical appeals to public expectations. This detectionist mentality basically affords little space for the kind of strategic problem-oriented thinking which CDRPs were intended to embrace. Ironically, such a mentality is actually encouraged by elements of government policy, such as the Audit Commission's promotion of crime management and the more recent adoption of the NIM, thus what frustrates government is also partly the product of its own actions.

However, if its poor fit with a dominant detectionist culture is one explanation for the general lack of progress of CDRPs, another explanation, uncovered by this research, relates to the lack of training and support given to those individuals who are put forward to represent the Constabulary on CDRPs. It was clear from participant responses they had received little or no training with regard to partnership working and engaging with other agencies, through the new CDRPs, was just something that they were expected to get on with.

There are a number of possible reasons for this lack of preparation. To some degree it fits the 'here and now', 'just get on with it' attitude prevalent within the police organisational culture. Yet it is also possible that training in partnership working does not attract a high priority because, as noted above, there was some inclination to regard partnership working as requiring little more than a flag-flying presence. Certainly some participants suggested their supervisory officers often had little interest in the partnership working undertaken by their staff. Also, some participants suspected that the Constabulary's response to the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act was a cautious one, reflecting a cynical view of politics and policy-making, what was here today may, on a political whim, be gone tomorrow. Experience has taught the police to be cautious due to the frequency of policy changes from the centre, something which has certainly accelerated under New Labour's 'initiativitis'.

The effect of all this for those given a responsibility or mandate for engaging with other agencies through CDRPs is one of marginalisation. Nationally, crime prevention specialists have always been marginalised from the police mainstream, existing in what Weatheritt (1986) referred to as a 'security ghetto'. This Constabulary took crime prevention specialists out of this security ghetto by re-naming them Crime Reduction Officers, giving them an instrumental location within the crime management model, and requiring the crime reduction sergeants to play an instrumental role in servicing the CDRPs, working in tandem with local government officers with a designated responsibility for community safety. However, while they may have been lifted out of the security ghetto, they (specifically the crime reduction sergeants) ended up being dropped, instead, into a 'partnership ghetto', which was no less marginalised than before. And, whilst this lies outside the focus of the research, it is also the case that crime reduction officers are not well integrated with crime management, because of the dominance of detectionism and the lowly place afforded to crime reduction within that model.

The 'dumping' of CDRP-related work into a 'partnership ghetto' may be a familiar by-product or unintended consequence of specialisation. Some participants conveyed the strong impression that partnership working had not been well integrated into the organisational cultural

repertoire as a generally accepted part of operational policing, and thus it tended to be regarded more as the preserve of 'specialists'. The identification of partnership working as a specialism, however, then gives others within the organisation an excuse not to shoulder any responsibility themselves, in much the same way that Harvey et al. (1989) suggest that the establishment of the crime prevention specialism has abrogated responsibility for crime prevention from elsewhere within the police service.

Despite the ghettoisation of partnership working, it would be very wrong to suggest that the police service has totally neglected it. Two particular reasons presented themselves from the research to suggest although partnership working would remain largely on the outside of operational policing, it nevertheless held some significance for the police service. For one of the reasons, partnership working presented the service with an opportunity while for the other, it presented the service with a threat. The opportunity side of partnership working has arisen, particularly since 2001, because CDRPs have provided the police service with a gateway to funding sources. As resources get tight, as they have in recent years with the imposition of and increased expectation around efficiency gains, CDRPs have provided the police with an opportunity to access resources, which they may not otherwise have, to supplement existing resources, to replace lost resources or potentially to replace resources who can then be deployed elsewhere.

A number of participants in this research revealed the emergence of a rather cynical tactic of 'chasing the money', pursued both by the police and other agencies within CDRPs. This did not always result in the money being well spent, and sometimes it appears that the funding was used more to support infrastructure than to enhance delivery, though this may depend upon the funding stream being accessed. Some suggested, indeed, that partnership working was probably more effective when this cynical tactic of chasing the money was taken out of the equation. The emergence of more solid funding streams through the LAAs has not necessarily eliminated the tactic, however, it may have displaced it onto a different stage, with some participants emphasising the importance of the police service, putting themselves in a strong position to influence resource allocation decisions within the LSPs.

If the additional funding, which flowed as a result of participation in partnership working presented the police service with an opportunity, then the presence of alternative lines of accountability, in large part to account for the spending of this additional funding, presented the service with a threat. A somewhat unanticipated finding of this research was that the arrival of CDRPs intensified an internal politics of policing, which was perhaps always beneath the surface and always likely to become an issue given the pressure placed upon police services to decentralise provision, increasingly to the BCU level.

The Constabulary had prepared itself for the arrival of CDRPs by reorganising into a district-level command structure and, initially, in the first round of audits and strategies this was not regarded as problematic, perhaps because of prevailing police attitudes about partnership working and a tendency to see them more in symbolic than instrumental terms. However, this all changed once the Home Office's Crime Reduction Strategy was introduced in 2000, because that strategy brought in a performance management regime for CDRPs and also gave a key role in such performance management to the new crime reduction teams working out of the government offices.

Once funding streams began to flow towards CDRPs, after 2001, these government offices took on a new significance as an alternative source of funding for BCUs and as an alternative line of accountability and source of influence, particularly over operational priorities. The threat, therefore, was that BCU Commanders would be drawn towards the government offices, away from Constabulary headquarters and the authority of the Chief Constable. The threat was of BCU Commanders 'going native' in their localities, and gaining an over-inflated sense of their own importance and autonomy, as far as headquarters was concerned. Once the perceived threat was recognised, steps were taken to rectify the situation through a reorganisation, which placed the control of BCUs much more within the influence of police headquarters.

Outside of Plymouth, where the area was also the district by virtue of its unitary status, this left district Chief Inspectors with a responsibility for working with CDRPs, without any of the power, as the centre was able to hold a tighter rein over what the districts did. It is plausible to suggest that this reorganisation conveyed to other agencies a 'cooling' of the police service towards partnership working in these locations, and possibly made participation in the CDRPs less interesting at the district level, thereby marginalising it further from the operational policing mainstream. Arguably, however, this would have occurred anyway, once the changes introduced by the 2006 Police and Justice Act took hold, thereby effectively shifting the strategic side of CDRPs up to principal authority level in these areas.

Although the Constabulary's reorganisation may have mitigated the immediate threat posed by districts 'going native', it did not remove the threat altogether. Reflecting upon the wider significance of the emergence of LAAs, some participants could envisage a situation where police BCUs become more firmly integrated into the world of local government, emulating a situation pertaining to other countries such as the USA. Thus, albeit through LAAs rather than through CDRPs, partnership working still poses a threat to the authority and influence of police headquarters and the delivery of a strong corporate control process. Within partnership working in LAAs, therefore, there exists a subtext, where the 'struggle for the soul' of local policing is

being played out. It may mean the police service flexing its muscle over the contents of the 'safer and stronger' block of LAAs, or it could entail the absorption of the police into the more corporate voice of local government. One participant's comments suggested that, whatever the fate of this 'higher politics' of policing, the 'departmental' cultural identity of the police would remain entailing, presumably, the continuance of a detectionist mentality, and a preference for 'here and now' police-led policing.

Reflecting upon the Relevance of the Research

It is important to recognise the limitations of the empirical research, which has informed this thesis. It has focused upon only a single police constabulary area, which is not necessarily representative of all other constabularies and, within that constabulary, it has included participants and respondents from headquarters, but also importantly from different BCU areas. A deliberate decision was taken for reasons of confidentiality and anonymity not to focus upon a single BCU, and yet it is apparent that BCU experiences are different. Some of the locations having greatest crime occurrence levels, which happened also to include the unitary authorities, did not experience all the partnership working difficulties experienced by the more rural, lower crime and two tier areas. Consequently, caution has to be exercised when seeking to generalise the findings of this research beyond the Constabulary area, as well as beyond the time period covered by the research, as it was also clear many of the major issues raised by the police's accommodation of partnership working were closely related to specific policy developments and events, which would not necessarily have occurred at other times. That said, however, many of the issues raised are likely to have wider applicability. There is no particular reason to think that the findings uncovered here can 'not' be projected on to a wider canvas.

The literature review set the background for this project. Taking the three literature review chapters together, the general picture painted was of the police service being subjected to a range of different reform measures and initiatives, of which the pressure to engage more in problem-oriented crime prevention partnerships is but one. The general case for reform has rested upon a number of different concerns about the state of the police, and principally, involves concerns regarding effectiveness (the police have not been as good at controlling crime as they should be), accountability (governments have found it harder than they should to influence what the police do) and legitimacy (the public are less enamoured of the police than they should be in a stable democracy). These concerns often overlap in individual reform measures, with partnership working in crime prevention being a case in point. Thus, a strategic problem-oriented focus is intended to make the police more effective, addressing major and/or recurrent problems in a systematic way. Performance targets

and specific funding streams are intended to influence what the police do (and sometimes how they do it). Partnership working, consultation, and particularly more recent initiatives in community engagement, meanwhile, are ways of enabling 'the community' to exercise greater say over, and have involvement with, what the police do, in an expectation that this will bring greater satisfaction and greater police legitimacy.

One of the problems with reform initiatives is while the rationale for change may be sound, there remains uncertainty regarding how, precisely, to bring the change about and within that uncertainty there is space for disagreement and conflict. In other words, it is difficult to argue with the case for greater effectiveness, accountability or legitimacy, however, it remains unclear exactly how these worthy objectives might be realised. It is like knowing what is wanted but being unsure of how to get it. Different groups of interests have different ideas of how to get it, government may have one view, the police service may have another. Government and the police exist in a relationship of power-dependence. Being in 'the front line' the police possess considerable experience and expertise, however, they cannot act without authority and resources both of which are acquired, notwithstanding the tradition of constabulary independence, from government.

It is possible to read all of the various policy initiatives discussed in the literature review as attempts to achieve 'worthy' objectives through means that are uncertain and contestable, and which are often contested. Thus, for example, there are times when reform initiatives have been resisted and there are times when police bodies have sought to develop alternative reform agendas. The pressure to work in crime prevention partnerships can be seen in such terms. As mentioned above, the reasons for partnership working are generally valid, if often overlapping. In its identification of 'critical success factors' official guidance, of the sort highlighted in the literature review, has an idea of what it wants to see yet does not know exactly how to bring around these success factors. As the literature has demonstrated, attempts to engineer them have not generally succeeded, however, they have generated resistance and alternative agendas and this is what the more critical literature on partnership working has often picked up, in the form of problems such as inter-agency conflicts, or police 'colonisation' of partnership bodies.

The research on which this thesis is based follows a similar line identifying, as with previous research, the resistance and alternative agendas. The focus of the research has not been so much on the inter-agency conflicts, in part because it concentrated only on the police service, but in part also because, as the research uncovered, police participants generally felt that other agencies tended to leave crime and disorder reduction to the police anyway. They were not

particularly interested in getting more involved and the perennial problem of getting others to take more of a responsibility for crime prevention evidently remains. This research has focused more specifically on the intra-agency dimension and, as such, it has helped to add detail to our understanding of the alternative agendas and tactics of resistance, which other research has highlighted.

In the case of the police, we have learned partnership working is something the police organisation is yet to take completely seriously as a route to greater effectiveness, mainly due to the cultural dominance of detectionism and the 'here and now' mentality of operational policing, which is rhetorically justified as representing 'what the public wants'. Partnership is taken more seriously as a means of building legitimacy by increasing what the dominant police culture would dismiss as 'warm and fluffy' contact with the community, which is symbolically important. This cultural resistance to partnership working is similar to the cultural resistance, which Reiner (2000) identifies as a major barrier to attempts to enhance police accountability. As with those efforts, the police demonstrate compliance with the requirement to form crime prevention partnerships, just as they are compliant with the PACE Code of Practice, however, this is compliance more with the letter than the spirit of the law. In the case of partnership working, the compliance masks an internal police politic in which headquarters seeks to retain control of BCUs, rather than having such control wrestled from them by the political centre, operating at a distance through the government offices. In such politics, police headquarters supports the worthy aim of accountability, yet sees it more appropriately directed internally, up the police hierarchy, rather than externally to political 'masters' who, as this research demonstrates, the police regard with some cynical suspicion, not least because of the volatility of, and frequent tidal changes in, political decision-making.

If the research has highlighted the problems crime prevention partnerships face from police resistance, they also demonstrate the problems they face from uncertain government policies. As previously stated, governments may know what they want but they do not necessarily know how to get it, and their reform attempts do not always meet with success. In particular, the cause of partnership working was not helped by legislation, which initially identified the police as one of only two responsible authorities, with the other in many areas being relatively disinterested, thus making police colonisation of partnerships highly likely, even if not intended, a natural causal effect of the police being very aware of 'the buck stopping' with them. In addition, the chances of bringing other agencies on board were always limited by the lack of 'joined-up government' at the centre, as agencies were pressured to focus on their own 'core business'. Meanwhile, attempts have been made to drive up performance through the central imposition of a performance

management regime and set within a crime management model, which has since been replicated nationally through the NIM, further emphasising the focus on detectionism to meet targets, by encouraging a short-termist, 'here and now' approach to performance which, in large part, militates against strategic, joined-up, problem-oriented solutions. And the government's sovereignty predicament (Garland, 2001) ensured that despite the apparent support for problem-oriented partnership working, the performance pressure and expectation for local crime and disorder control would always fall ultimately on the police.

The introduction of a variety of funding streams since 2001 has done little to change this, as other agencies have used such resources more to support infrastructures subsequently becoming ends in themselves (auditing and mapping crime has become an industry, and perhaps also an end, in its own right), and the police have 'chased the money' to make good the resource shortages found elsewhere. The research probably paints too pessimistic a picture here because identifying 'issues' tends to equate with identifying 'problems', which therefore overlooks more tangible achievements however even so these problems are important to establish in order to highlight the deficiencies of government policy. Genuine partnership working does not necessarily happen just because money is thrown at it.

This research did not focus on the everyday mechanics of partnership working, because it was more interested in how such partnership working was 'scripted' from the police perspective. Had it focused on these mechanics it may well have found partnerships appearing to work well: agencies meeting together on cordial terms, audits and strategies being produced and agreed upon where necessary, funding applications being made and spends being properly accounted for. Yet all of this may have looked like good partnership working, however, it would have had a somewhat empty, ritualistic quality to it. This is not to say that this level of analysis is unimportant, rather, it is 'very' important that those working in partnership have the appropriate personal and interpersonal qualities and skills. However, this research has demonstrated that the stage for partnership working is really set beyond the interpersonal level, at the organisational and governmental level, where reform ideas are hatched, received, modified and opposed according to a politics of power-dependence between the police and government.

There is a theoretical literature, which argues that we are entering a new era for governing crime. The new era is characterised by some as the shift from 'government' to 'governance' (Pierre and Peters 2000), which in the criminal justice context translates as the shift from 'police' to 'policing', or from policing to 'security governance' (Johnston and Shearing, 2003). Its distant cause is seen as being the decline of the nation state in the context of economic globalisation (Pierre and

Peters, 2000), and the emergence of a risk society, which both disperses the responsibility for managing risks such as crime (Garland, 2001), and encourages a proactive, preventive approach to such risks. The arrival of crime prevention partnerships appears in sympathy with such developments. It spreads the responsibility for 'policing' or 'security governance', both broadly conceived, beyond the police to other agencies, whether in the public sector or further afield and it encourages partner agencies to engage in processes of risk assessment and risk management, as typified by crime auditing and problem oriented policing. It would be easy, then, to conclude that the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, through its establishment of CDRPs, provide firm evidence of this movement into a new era of governing crime.

However, the results of the research, informing this thesis, casts doubt upon such a simplistic conclusion. The establishment of CDRPs is not convincing evidence of the end of the police service's pre-eminence in local crime control. The police remain pre-eminent, in part because what government policy appears to take away with one hand is restored with the other, with greater or lesser degrees of deliberateness, since some of this restoration is the unintended consequence of practices such as, ironically, the lack of joined-up government. However, they remain pre-eminent also because, as other research has found, crime prevention partnerships are vulnerable to police colonisation, which again is not always deliberate given the lack of interest sometimes shown by other agencies. And having colonised them, the police organisational culture then marginalises them from the operational policing mainstream, tapping them as a useful source of funding whilst also seeking to minimise the threat they pose to internal lines of police accountability, although at present this is a threat that can only be contained, and not removed altogether. The net effect of this paradoxical police colonisation and marginalisation is to ensure that, whilst CDRPs have altered the local crime control landscape, they have not altered it fundamentally, and thus talk of the shift from police to policing, or of the rise of security governance is premature. Rather than CDRPs providing evidence of the emergence of a new era, they represent yet another initiative in police reform, the fortunes of which hang, as do other such initiatives, on the outcome of a contest of wills between police and government, existing as they do in relations of power-dependence.

Chapter 7 - Policy Implications

The findings of this thesis point to a number of problems, which have arisen as the police service has been placed under pressure to engage in crime prevention partnerships. It suggests, overall, the partnerships covered by this research may not be living up to their true potential. If we accept, nonetheless, that partnership working in crime prevention remains a good idea and the case for it remains a compelling one, given that the drivers and levers for crime occurrence extend well beyond the reach of any single agency, or of the criminal justice system, then we are left with the challenge of how to take things forward in terms of policy development.

The review of partnership provisions resulting from the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act (Home Office, 2006) was partly premised on the Home Office's frustration at performance problems and, in addition, the lack of delivery and visibility of CDRPs. This frustration suggests the problems identified in this research are experienced more widely, though the Home Office conceptualises them, as it would, in more managerialist terms. The Home Office's proposed solution to these problems was set out in the reforms made under the 2006 Police and Justice Act, rolled out from mid-2007 onwards. Among other things, this involves the imposition of a set of national standards, based upon notional 'hallmarks of effective practice', as articulated by the Home Office (2007) on the basis of its understanding of what the 'best performing' CDRPs are doing.

While it is too early to tell whether these reforms have resulted in the requisite 'uplift' in CDRP performance, it is arguable that the reforms and the national standards repeat many of the errors of the 'what makes a good partnership' approach discussed above in Chapter 3. Thus, the hallmarks isolate factors such as strong leadership, appropriate seniority for agency representatives, and the adoption of clear partnership processes. It is difficult to argue with the merits of any of these, however, the point is that while these may indeed be features of the 'best performing' CDRPs, the road to emulation may be blocked by structural barriers, which no amount of guidance can shift.

This work has uncovered some of these barriers, demonstrating how the police service's attempt to get to grips with partnership working has been hampered to some extent by its own positional dominance in the local crime control field; the self-imposed subordination of other agencies; its default cultural predilection for detectionism; its inclination to treat partnership working as a source of accountability pressure requiring a degree of 'flag-flying'; the strong performance pull from central government; the centralisation tendency of the constabulary, and so forth. The implication of the research is that more effective partnership working will be difficult to achieve unless

these barriers are overcome, and thus the key policy-related question arising from this research is how this might be done.

Arguably, a principal source of the barriers uncovered in this research is cultural, however, the problems that accrue from this source are exacerbated by structural tensions in police organisation. It might be naïve to expect that structural changes can automatically effect cultural changes, yet it is equally naïve to conceive of police culture as some immutable force (Chan, 1997), unaffected by the structural organisation of the police service. In the case of this research, the structural issue is that of the position of the police BCU. It will be remembered from the research that, having taken the enlightened step of decentralising BCUs down to being coterminous with the district and unitary local authority areas within its boundaries, the Constabulary then later reversed its decision and instead scaled up to four BCU areas, which have since been reduced to three. These BCUs are still coterminous in the sense that none of their boundaries cut through local authority areas, however, two of the BCUs encompass a large number of CDRPs within their new boundaries, with one including both unitary and non-unitary areas.

Reasons for the initial decision to establish district based coterminous BCUs were never sought in the research, however, logic suggests they were put in place in preparation for the arrival of CDRPs in 1998, thereby recognising the importance of partnership working as a function of BCUs – something that has also been recognised more recently by the Police Superintendents Association (PSA) (2004). The reversal of this decision was clearly related to a headquarters concern that BCU commanders were in danger of ‘going native’ – operating with some autonomy from headquarters, and thus acting as a latent threat to the Chief Constable’s authority. However, beyond the potential threat to the Chief Constable’s authority, it is important to ask what is wrong with the idea of BCU commanders ‘going native’? Is this not the quintessential expression of local policing, and of looking to provide ‘local solutions to local problems’, as the rhetoric surrounding the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act originally promised?

It is important to remember, as Loveday (2007: 325) does, that following heavy promotion, by amongst others the Audit Commission, BCUs were devised in the mid-1990s as “the future building blocks of police forces”, replacing the previous structure of divisions and sub-divisions with decentralised management, flatter hierarchies and firmer territorial leadership. The capacity of the BCU to deliver decentralised management, however, depends upon its access to financial resources, yet it is a frequent concern that police headquarters have been reluctant to devolve funding to BCUs (HMIC, 1998 and 2000; PSA, 2003). Loveday argues that in the absence of such devolution BCU commanders have turned increasingly to sources of direct funding, which flow from government offices to CDRPs. This

is precisely what was uncovered in this research, with the police viewing their own actions in a cynical light. Such cynicism may have been born partly of the fact that while this direct funding was used to address local priorities, the local priorities themselves had been manipulated by the police to ensure consistency with their own force priorities, which in turn fell out of Home Office-imposed priorities.

However, this is not so much the police colonising CDRP agendas in some sinister, underhand way. Rather, it is BCU Commanders doing what they should be doing in pursuit of decentralised management, but in a context where decentralised management is constantly undermined by the imposition of priorities from 'on high' - from police headquarters, and through them the Home Office. That is to say that there is a certain rationality to police action here, just as, before direct funding became available, CDRPs tended to be dismissed in the research areas as forums requiring only symbolic demonstrations of support and a bit of flag-flying. When the CDRPs were not gateways to direct funding, their role for the police was potentially that of local white noise. The police had no obligations to respond to local community concerns as expressed by CDRPs because they were taking their strong cues from the central priorities, weighed heavily on local policing plans in the wake of the 1994 Police and Magistrates' Courts Act. In a context of such strong centralisation, a failure to recognise the relevance of CDRPs to local operational policing is quite understandable.

The way local policing is structurally organised tends to militate against the operation of CDRPs as effective bodies for delivering local solutions to local problems, if that is their purpose, as indeed it should be. The establishment of BCUs has promised, yet failed, to deliver decentralised management, because the boundary-setting of BCUs remain at the discretion of the Chief Constable, and far too tied to centrally-imposed crime reduction agendas. Thus this equates to one of the key partners in CDRPs, the local police, being distracted from their local tasks. In Crawford's (1997) terms they are, 're-centred' at the same time as being 'de-centred' and by far the strongest influence lies with the re-centring, due to the performance management role of the centre.

While there may be problems with specific performance indicators, which help to perpetuate a detectionist mentality, there is some virtue in New Labour's aspiration to bring performance data within reach of local communities, so local people can access information about local crime problems and how they are being addressed. To this end, as set out in their 1999 Crime Reduction Strategy, from January 2000, New Labour facilitated for the first time the publication of crime statistics at BCU level. At that time there were 318 police BCUs across England and Wales, containing 376 CDRPs, and this evidently presented a slight problem, since performance data had to be produced for both,

creating a situation which was, for local people, somewhat confusing. This problem intensified as, in a bid to make this performance data more intelligible and useful, the Home Office decided to put CDRPs into 'family groupings' (Leigh et al., 2000) to aid benchmarking and comparison. The reason for the intensification of the problem is that the same grouping exercise needed to be undertaken for police BCUs, and was rendered problematic by the fact that the constitution of BCUs, unlike CDRPs, was not fixed.

Chief Constables are able to change BCU boundaries as they see fit, because such changes are regarded as operational matters – hence the changes witnessed through the duration of this research. For those seeking to compare performance, this is a potential headache. Indeed, a research group set up to establish the criteria for BCU family groupings encountered this problem. At the time their report was published in July 2002 it highlighted the number of BCUs had fallen from 318 to 280, 30 new (merged) BCUs having been created in the intervening period since January 2000 (Sheldon et al., 2002). The frequency of police force boundary changes also created problems for the Home Office's BCU Fund, which was established for the first time in 2003/2004 to enable BCUs to contribute financially to the work of CDRPs. It also created problems for those assessing the effectiveness of specific crime control-related interventions. Researchers reporting on crime level changes in New Deal for Communities (NDC) areas, for example, were unable to assess changes in Leicestershire NDC areas because of changes to BCU boundaries, which rendered statistical comparisons impossible (Adamson, 2004).

The problems raised by BCU boundary changes clearly bothered the government to the extent that the National Community Safety Plan 2006-2009 (HM Government, 2005) contained within it the expectation that there would in future be coterminosity between BCU and CDRP boundaries, and the Home Office's review of the Crime and Disorder Act (Home Office, 2006) also stressed the need for such coterminosity. In early 2006 the Home Office consulted regionally about this matter. Hitherto, between one-quarter and one-fifth of BCUs had been non-coterminous. The upshot of the consultation was the insertion of a clause into the 2006 Police and Justice Bill that proposed putting BCUs on a statutory footing something that, together with the expectation of coterminosity, would place them on a more permanent basis, thereby addressing the performance management problem of seeking to tie down constantly moving targets.

This proposal was strongly backed by the Local Government Association (LGA, 2006), which made the point that "strengthening local police accountability is particularly important as the new larger strategic police forces [then under consideration] may be remote from the communities they serve." It also moved Loveday (2007: 334) to write approvingly of a "move towards ending the arbitrary redrawing of

BCU boundaries by chief officers that had served to undermine the development of local partnership arrangements.”

However, the clause was as equally strongly opposed to by both ACPO and the Association for Police Authorities (APA), who raised the predictable objection that such a reform was in danger of undermining the tradition of constabulary independence. This opposition prompted the Bill manager, a senior Home Office official, to write in a letter to the APA stating that “I can assure you that there are no plans to directly fund BCUs”, however, ultimately it also prompted a backtrack, as the government moved an amendment to the Bill in the House of Lords, as explained by Lord Bassam, whose words, for their significance, are worth quoting at length (Hansard, 2006, 76):

“My Lords, this amendment removes from the Bill the provision which would place basic command units on a statutory footing. In explaining why we are withdrawing this provision, it is perhaps worth reminding the House why we included it in the first instance. There is widespread agreement that agencies involved in tackling crime and disorder can work best together if their boundaries are aligned. This is particularly true in the case of basic command units and local authorities, which are the two key pillars of crime and disorder reduction partnerships and strategies. Most, if not all, chief constables recognise this, but it is open to any new chief constable to alter BCU boundaries. Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Schedule 2, therefore, simply sought to enshrine in statute the requirement for BCU and local authority boundaries to be aligned and coterminous, and to place a duty on chief constables to consult key partners before altering BCU boundaries. It is undoubtedly the case that other motives have been read into this provision... I repeat that, in bringing forward this provision, we are concerned solely with ensuring that BCUs are coterminous with local authority boundaries to aid partnership working on community safety issues. Happily, the police service shares that objective. A number of chief constables have moved during the past year or so to review their BCU boundaries. I am now aware of only six BCUs out of some 225 which are not coterminous with local authorities, and in four of these cases the discrepancy is very minor.

As the situation on the ground now largely reflects the outcome we were seeking, the government are ready to withdraw this provision from the Bill. My ministerial colleague, the Minister for Policing, Security and Community Safety has, however, written to the Association of Chief Police Officers to reinforce our expectation that the principle of coterminosity will be observed, save where there are compelling reasons for departing from this general rule.

We have a happy situation here where a policy objective is shared; there is commitment to it; and, in large measure, it is in place without the more rigorous hand of statute imposing its print on the way in which

policing operates. That happy outcome enables me to move the amendment. I beg to move."

This climb down is significant because, as indicated above, the government appeared to be concerned enough to steer clear of stirring up something of a hornets' nest. Lord Bassam claims, effectively, that coterminosity was sought because of its likely contribution to effective community safety, but that the means of achieving it, through statute, was somewhat heavy-handed, risking a degree of constitutional conflict, as it impinged upon the principle of constabulary independence. However, is Lord Bassam correct in suggesting that the need for statutory intervention has disappeared because chief constables' have 'seen the light' anyway? In his own statement, he notes that the number of BCUs now (in 2006) stands at 223 – a significant reduction from the 280 BCUs existing in 2002, as noted above, and significantly fewer than the 376 CDRPs with which they are expected to engage in partnership working.

The trend has been for BCUs to become larger. For example, since the allocation of the BCU Fund in 2006/07, Thames Valley has seen a reduction in BCUs from 10 to 5, and Northumbria has seen a reduction from 15 to 6. O'Byrne (2001: 125) says in relation to BCU size that "When the Audit Commission initially proposed the concept [of BCUs] the ideal number was reckoned to be between 150 and 200 police officers. By the late 1990s the ideal number had become for most forces between 250 and 350 officers. Some forces now have BCUs of over 400 officers and at least one force has BCUs of 1000." As Loveday (2006) observes, the numbers of such very large BCUs have grown significantly since the time O'Byrne made this observation, and such calculations also fail to take account of the (growing) numbers of police support staff. The case for ever-larger BCUs, Loveday (2006) says, rests on the professional judgement of chief constables, yet, as he points out there has been very little analysis to support such a case. Elsewhere (2005: 277) he notes that, "*there appears to be a shared perception within the police organisation that BCUs with relatively small manpower numbers are unviable although there appears to be no clear research evidence that this is the case either.*"

Loveday and others do not share this view. The danger with the growing size of BCUs is that they become more and more remote from the communities that they are supposed to serve, therefore, open up an accountability gap. As Loveday (2006) points out, this gap is particularly noticeable in two-tier areas where the large BCUs – such as those now in existence in the site of this research – cover a number of different CDRPs. Such a model, of large BCUs embracing smaller CDRPs, fits with the changes brought by the 2006 Police and Justice Act, as the strategic role of lower tier CDRPs is supposed to be migrated upwards to the LAAs set by the principal county authorities,

and this fit helps to explain why the government was prepared to withdraw its controversial clause from the preceding Bill, as noted above. However, while the government and ACPO may be seeing eye-to-eye on this issue, this does not necessarily mean that they have got it right. Despite the provision to migrate the strategic role of lower tier CDRPs to the county LAA, there remain serious misgivings about the likely tensions that this will cause, as the lower tier CDRPs are pressured to concentrate upon delivery, thereby losing some of their democratic voice and influence upon the shape of these strategies, notwithstanding the fact that the Home Office (2007) expects that lower tier community safety portfolio holders will have a direct input to the county LAAs.

Making provision for input is all very well, however, this does not recognise the potential conflicts that will ensue, and there is no guarantee that they will be resolved in ways that ensure that local voices are heard – particularly when, despite the rhetoric of localism that underpins LAAs, it still remains the case that they are subjected to the same kind of performance management regime, albeit under the new name of the Assessment of Policing and Community Safety (APACS) (see Home Office, 2007).

The important point is that there will be pressure for standardisation. A quote from a recent report of the Police Authority of Wales (2007: 6) is very revealing in this regard:

“There is a real likelihood that all, or most, of the seven partnership areas in South Wales, reflecting the Local Authority and BCU boundaries, will have progressed their LSP development work ahead of the release of the formal learning from the WAG Development sites. This is not necessarily a bad thing. However, what it does mean for an organisation such as the South Wales Police is that it will need to relate to seven different LSBs, and may well find itself having to work to seven different approaches. It is important for South Wales Police that its BCU Commanders have a clear sense of direction when representing the chief constable in local discussions, and that, as far as possible, it is able to influence local development so that the disadvantages associated with working to 7 different structures and approaches are limited.”

In Wales, all local authorities are unitary authorities, so there is one-to-one coterminosity with BCUs. The above quote suggests that the South Wales constabulary will aim to work, as the constabulary did in this research, to stop BCU commanders from ‘going native’. In two tier areas in England, where large BCUs embrace a number of CDRPs, this problem will be worse: BCUs will be under pressure to standardise within their territorial boundaries, and constabularies will do the same, another step removed. In such a scenario, the prospects for localism does not look good.

Another example of the potential problem to accrue from larger BCUs embracing smaller CDRPs can be found in a publication intended for crime analysts (Chapman, 2006: 8), which points out that the accommodation of a number of CDRPs within larger BCUs in Dorset "has helped to reduce bureaucracy and duplication of partnership forums, provide consistency in terms of performance agendas, encourage enhanced strategic thinking and developed more consistent service delivery." The author of this article evidently finds such things advantageous, and such thinking was clearly also in evidence when the Home Office was pondering, in its review of the Crime and Disorder Act, the possible merger of CDRPs – a step it eventually decided not to take, preferring to advocate instead the awkward strategic/operational split between counties and lower tier CDRPs. Again, however, little account is taken of the potential disadvantages in terms of the loss of localism.

Interestingly, in an argument that would not have looked out of place coming from one of the media-dubbed 'loony left' local authorities of the 1980s, the shadow home secretary David Davis has put forward a strong argument for local police accountability, saying of BCUs that "local people have no control over them whatsoever ... there must be a formal mechanism to put local accountability in place." (cited in Loveday, 2006). A similar argument has been made by the Policy Exchange (see Loveday and Reid, 2003), and more recently by Brand (2007: 4) for the National Local Government Network:

"Locally elected councils, and through them communities, should be put back at the heart of an overly-centralised criminal justice system that is struggling to maintain the public trust. We argue that a more locally tailored and responsive criminal justice service would strengthen community ties, restore faith in the criminal justice system and reduce fear of crime. Strengthening the role of local authorities in policing can deliver visible police accountability, increase efficiency, improve service co-ordination, strengthen community engagement, target local crime more effectively and create a police force that is truly embedded within the local community it serves. Council Leaders, as the figureheads for local democracy and directly accountable to the public vote, should lead and support such a system."

Interestingly, and importantly, this argument has also been made by the PSA, the staff association, which represents BCU Commanders, who are often deeply frustrated by the lack of delegated funding and decision-making they have been given in what are supposed to be structures for decentralised management. The PSA, as Loveday (2006) points out, is prepared to countenance a much greater role for local authorities in the hiring and firing of BCU Commanders, and the determination of local policing policy, thereby placing local policing very much within the corporate management structures of local government.

So, thus far, while central government has supported and promoted the idea of coterminosity between BCUs and CDRPs, it has done so at a level of abstraction that goes well beyond the boundaries of lower-tier, but sometimes also unitary CDRPs; and its promotion stops a long way short of joining up policing and local government at the local political level, in order to enhance local accountability. This is not so much because accountability is unimportant to central government, rather because it prioritises calculative and contractual (Reiner and Spencer, 1993) managerial accountability over local political accountability, and remains wedded to the managerialist idea that bigger BCUs (and CDRPs) will deliver economies of scale. Hence, coterminosity is attractive because, for example, as we have seen it makes performance measurement considerably easier, as well as joint inspection under the new APACS regime, and it also makes it easier to govern local policing and CDRPs directly but at a distance, through government offices, which continue to have strong influence over the contents of LAAs.

The argument here, however, is that the case for smaller BCUs operating under stronger regimes of local accountability is a compelling one as it offers the best prospect of overcoming the barriers that have been uncovered in this research, which have prevented the local police from making a more effective contribution to crime prevention partnerships. Local political accountability would give other partners a much stronger stake in local crime control, possibly succeeding where devices such as Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act have ostensibly failed. It would make it less likely that partners – particularly local authorities – would simply defer to police expertise, because, in a much more meaningful way crime control would also be their *business*. For their part, the police would be less likely to treat partnership working as an opportunity for a bit of flag-flying and tokenistic support, because they would be part of a corporate structure that was much more focused upon delivering local community safety, because it was directly accountable to the local electorate for this, rather than, as now, because it is obliged to comply with central policy, which may encourage CDRPs to be viewed more as vehicles for public relations than for local delivery. By the same token, since local agencies would all be ‘in it together’, the police inclination to take the lead would be more muted, simply because other agencies would be less likely to let them. Particularly because the drivers for crime lie beyond the criminal justice system, local community safety practice should not necessarily give priority to police actions against crime, and making crime a truly corporate responsibility may be the best way of de-centring the police from local crime control, whilst still recognising their crucial importance.

Also, while it cannot be regarded as a panacea, stronger local political accountability might offer the best prospect for tackling the detectionist mentality which prevails within the police service and

which has been encouraged by the Home Office's crime reduction performance management regime, and the 'detectionist friendly' deployment of the NIM.

Presently, the police are *primus inter pares* in the business of local crime control, and the Crime and Disorder Act has done little to challenge this status - indeed, the reinvigoration of local policing under neighbourhood policing may have, if anything, exacerbated the problem. Embedding the police service more firmly within structures of local government, and reducing some of the performance management influence from the centre, would challenge both their local independence and their autonomy, and in so doing it would go some way to challenging a dominant culture that, as Chan (1997) observes, is not immutable, let alone monolithic, as the participants from this research, with a genuine enthusiasm for partnership working, have clearly demonstrated. And finally, with the police service being more seriously confronted with a demand to change their way of working, and to engage more meaningfully in partnership working to tackle the 'wicked issue' of crime, it is surely more likely that they would begin to address the training need in partnership working, which this research revealed has been sadly lacking.

As noted above, local accountability would be no sudden panacea, and the benefits identified here are necessarily speculative at this stage. It should be recognised that localism is not necessarily an unmitigated benefit - there clearly are dangers of undue local political influence over a public service as politically sensitive as policing. Yet at present the dangers of undue central influence may be playing out in the difficulties experienced by CDRPs in making a reality of partnership working when the police, in particular, are exposed to this de-centring/re-centring dialectic, which tends to maintain their independence from other local agencies in general, and the local authority in particular. The conclusion of this thesis is that it is the problems accruing from this central influence, and the constitutional independence of the police from local political control, that creates the barriers to partnership working uncovered by this research. They cannot easily be wished away by clearer central guidance and direction, but they may just be overcome by local political accountability. There is a discernible movement for local democratic change that is presently building up: perhaps now is the time to give it a chance.

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 without prior agreement of the Graduate Committee.

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Resulting from this, and preliminary studies, the author has presented as course lecturer on the Partnership Course at the National Crime Reduction College. Subsequent to this, thematic presentations have been undertaken focussed upon strategic and operational partnership working.

In addition, the author has been published by the Home Office resulting from partnership research conducted under the National Police Research Award Scheme.

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Signed 

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A Survey of Multi-Agency Partnership Working

A Definition

While agencies have always worked together in terms, for example, of routine referral i.e. domestic violence, this is *inter-agency*, rather than multi-agency, work. Multi-agency partnerships typically require more frequent and more intense contact between agencies. In addition, this is normally undertaken with a long term and wider perspective. Multi-agency partnerships are now more common, and it is these partnerships, which are the focus of this research.

Research Aim

It is hoped that by your co-operation in this work I may be able to provide an indication as to how the police service has evolved and embraced the philosophy of multi-agency working.

The Questionnaire

The questionnaire covers some general issues about multi-agency partnerships as well as details about your own background.

I appreciate that with the mass of paperwork on your desk this represents yet another task. However, I am sure you will acknowledge that without assessing such issues we as a service will not be in a position to progress.

When completed please return it to;

A/Superintendent Stuart Lander
Paignton Police Station
South and West BCU

Thank you in anticipation.

Experience of Partnership Working

1. In your current role, or previously, do you work with other agencies/organisations to address crime and disorder issues;

- Yes
- No (If no go to Q6)

2. Which of the following agencies or services do/have you worked with? (tick as many as required)

- Social service department
- Education department
- Local authority other (please specify)
- Health service (please specify part).....
- Probation service
- Prison Service
- Fire service
- Voluntary sector
- Other (please specify).....
- Other (please specify).....
- Other (please specify).....

3. How would you describe the nature of the most recent piece of work you have undertaken with other agencies.?

- Strategic (e.g. the planning of service delivery)
- Operational (e.g. the delivery of services)
- Mixture of both

4. Approximately what proportion of a typical working week (expressed as a percentage) do you devote to partnership working in your present post (or a previous one if your current

role does not require partnership work)?

“I spend approximately % of the working week on partnership working”

5. “I am allowed enough capacity within my workload to fully engage in partnership working.”

Strongly Agree 5 4 3 2 1 Strongly Disagree

Please evidence your response to question 5.

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6. “The work that I put in to multi-agency partnerships is valued by my own organisation?”

Strongly Agree 5 4 3 2 1 Strongly Disagree

Please evidence your response to question 6.

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7. Are you formally appraised at work by a supervisor or manager?

- Yes
No *(If no go to Q9)*

8. In general, is partnership working considered in your appraisal?

- Yes
No

9. Have you received any training or instruction regarding how to undertake multi-agency partnership working?

- Yes
No *(If no go to Q12)*

10. Please briefly describe the nature of this training.

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11. Who provided this training?

- In-house
- By one of the multi-agency partners
- Independent training agency
- other (please specify)

12. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 was intended to make several key agencies work together with the community to deliver to reduce crime and disorder. Are you aware of this legislation and its aim?

- Yes
- No

13. How would you judge your current knowledge of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

Excellent 5 4 3 2 1 No Understanding

14. "The Devon and Cornwall Constabulary has placed partnership working fully the core of its operating culture." To what extent do you agree with this statement.

Strongly Agree 5 4 3 2 1 Strongly Disagree

What evidence can you provide to support your answer to question 14.

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15. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statements;

- D&CC has partnership working as a core policing activity.

Strongly agree 5 4 3 2 1 **Strongly disagree**

- The police should have the lead responsibility for managing crime and disorder in local communities.

Strongly agree 5 4 3 2 1 **Strongly disagree**

- Multi agency partnerships working is really only a sideline to our core business!

Strongly agree 5 4 3 2 1 **Strongly disagree**

- Policing needs to get back to law enforcement and not become overly bothered by partnership working!

Strongly agree 5 4 3 2 1 **Strongly disagree**

- Partnership working undermines our core business of law enforcement.

Strongly agree 5 4 3 2 1 **Strongly disagree**

- Devon and Cornwall Constabulary are fully committed to multi agency working.

Strongly agree 5 4 3 2 1 **Strongly disagree**

- It is essential that the police service pushes more of a responsibility for the management of crime and disorder onto the shoulders of other agencies like local authorities.

Strongly agree 5 4 3 2 1 **Strongly disagree**

- The police should concentrate on serious crime and leave minor crimes and disorder to our partner agencies.

Strongly agree 5 4 3 2 1 **Strongly disagree**

16. **If you could shape the future of partnership working in Devon and Cornwall Constabulary what would you do? What would your vision for such working look like?**

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Personal and Service Profile

1. Gender

- Male
- Female

2. Age (years)

- 18-24
- 25-30
- 31-40
- 41-49
- +50

3. Length of service with the police (years).....

4. Current rank/role

- Constable
- Sergeant
- Inspector/Chief Inspector
- Superintendent/Chief Superintendent
- Assistant Chief Constable and above
- Police Staff – Specify grade.....

5. Current role

- Uniform Response
- CID
- Neighbourhood Beat
- Specialist (specify).....
- Management/Supervision (specify).....
- Police staff (specify).....

6. How long have you worked in your present post?

I have worked in this post for years and months.