

# **The Kirkholt Burglary Prevention Project, Rochdale**

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with the assistance of Robin Brown

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### **Crime Prevention Unit Papers**

The Home Office Crime Prevention Unit was formed in 1983 to promote preventive action against crime. It has a particular responsibility to disseminate information on crime prevention topics. The object of the present series of occasional papers is to present analysis and research material in a way which should help and inform practitioners whose work can help reduce crime.

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## Foreword

In 1985 a conference in Bournemouth organised by HM Probation Inspectorate considered the ways in which the role of the probation service could be developed to contribute to the prevention of crime. One outcome of the conference was the Kirkholt burglary prevention demonstration project, which started later that year, with funding for research from the Home Office, and staff from the Greater Manchester Probation Service and Greater Manchester Police Force. The aim of the project was to reduce the high level of residential burglary in a local authority housing estate in Rochdale.

The problem solving method adopted by the project team involved obtaining and analysing a range of types of information on the crime problem in Kirkholt (including interviews with local offenders, burglary victims and the neighbours of those victims) and devising a range of preventive measures in the light of the picture obtained. Victims who had been burgled more than once ('multiple victims') were accorded priority. The preventive measures adopted included improving the physical security of houses, removing coin-operated fuel meters (a major target of burglars), introducing property marking and setting up mini neighbourhood watch schemes involving a victim and his or her immediate neighbours. These actions involved the local authority housing department, the gas and electric utilities, the local victim support organisation and area officials of the Manpower Services Commission. The project therefore adopted a multi-agency approach. Local community involvement came about through the formation of a crime prevention group.

The report presents the preliminary results of an evaluation which showed a substantial drop in the level of residential burglary, with no signs of displacement to other nearby areas or to other forms of crime. A reduction in 'multiple victimisation' appears to have made a significant contribution to the overall fall in the burglary rate.

Further action is now under way in Kirkholt building on the initial success, but this time aiming to reduce the motivation for crime. With the aid of Home Office development funds, the probation service, the police and the university researchers are seeking to tackle the linked problems of alcohol and drug abuse, debt and unemployment. A further report describing this second phase, and an evaluation, will be prepared, in due course.

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Home Office, Police Department  
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## **Introduction**

In the front of his novel, *Howard's End*, E. M. Forster places a cryptic two-word message — “Only connect”. The message inappropriate for very many aspects of human affairs. Nowhere is this more true than in crime prevention, where information, responsibility and expertise are scattered whose connection would make for a much more powerful thrust towards effective work. A theme which runs through much recent work supported by the Home Office Crime Prevention Unit is the attempt to forge links between those who have something to offer. The Home Office Circular 8/84 enjoined a host of local agencies to take an active interest in matters of crime prevention. Put less politely than the Circular did, the tendency had been for agencies to shuffle off their crime prevention responsibilities onto the police, who in their turn accepted the inappropriate burden. An identical circular was issued by all the relevant Ministries (except the Northern Ireland Office, which has recently issued the circular in modified form as CP/1/87). It would be perverse to claim that the spirit of 8/84 has yet suffused local authority thinking — indeed we gained clear evidence in Rochdale that it had not. However some local agencies in some areas are enthusiastic, and others are biddable. Overall many are willing in principle to engage in crime prevention programmes.

In this the Kirkholt project, the priority of two aims were often in tension. On the one hand following 8/84, we aspired to establish robust links between agencies so that in the long term crime prevention would be effective. On the other hand we wished to show quickly that it was possible to prevent some crime of a kind traditionally thought intractable, namely residential burglary. Ideally we wished to do both, but we often wondered which we should strive for as a priority. Should we be content to nurture promising inter-agency collaboration, even when it was misconceived? Should we include an element of a burglary prevention package even when it involved the work of only one agency? The problem troubled us to the extent that at one stage we asked the Home Office which of the aims we should strive for as a priority. After the time appropriate for such an august Ministry to reach a conclusion, we were told that the priority was to prevent crime. The links were a highly welcome bonus. It is no small tribute to those with whom we worked that the links have been forged anyway, despite the priority of the crime prevention aim.

The decision was made to concentrate on the Rochdale area, and on the Kirkholt estate within it. Rochdale is a town that once belonged to a group of South East Lancashire mill towns, but which now finds itself within the county of Greater Manchester. It is policed by the Rochdale division of the Greater Manchester Police, and also houses the Divisional Headquarters of the Greater Manchester Probation Service. We chose the Kirkholt area which, by both reputation and statistics of recorded crime, represented a challenge. Situated two miles south of Rochdale Town Centre and policed by the Rochdale North Sub-division, Kirkholt is a large Local Authority owned estate of some 2,280 dwellings. It has the desirable characteristic (for our purposes) of being an area with well-defined boundaries. It is bounded by two

motorways, the M62 and A627(M) on its southern and western sides, the Rochdale ring road to its north and the main Rochdale-Oldham road (A671) to its east.

The rate of *recorded* domestic burglary on the estate was over double the rate of all burglaries, reported and unreported, characterising 'high risk' areas in the 1984 British Crime Survey (Hough and Mayhew, 1985). Domestic burglaries on the estate in the first five months of 1985 were equivalent to an annual rate of 24.6%. This was particularly dramatic given that the housing type of nearly 90% of units on the estate were of types associated in the British Crime Survey with only a medium rate of burglary victimisation. By any standard, therefore, Kirkholt suffered a severe problem of domestic burglary.

In the tradition of crime pattern analysis established through the work of the Home Office Crime Prevention Unit (e.g. Ekblom, 1988), the immediate task was to generate a more precise awareness of the problem, and thereby of what might be done to reduce the rate of domestic burglary. With very little information from agencies other than the police being available in late 1985, police crime report forms were scrutinised. There too, precise information relevant to crime prevention was not recorded. For instance, even where method of entry was described, the description was too brief and cryptic to form the basis of crime pattern analysis. In the following section we describe the information we gathered to obtain a clearer idea of patterns of burglary within the estate, which in turn informed our choice of initiative.

## Sources of Information

### *Interviewing Burglars*

The probation service based in Rochdale agreed to interview all offenders convicted of burglary in a dwelling who had been convicted and sentenced for offences committed in the Rochdale police division between January 1st and June 30th 1986. Of those so identified, 77% were interviewed, the shortfall being accounted for by offenders' failures to make contact and their refusal to be interviewed, in almost equal measure. In total 76 offenders were interviewed. Fifteen of these had committed the burglary of which they had been convicted on Kirkholt.

The offender questionnaire<sup>1</sup> was used to gather data far beyond what the probation service or indeed any other helping agency would normally seek. Distance of the burglary from home, modes of transport used, reasons for choice of house burgled, premeditation, planning, knowledge of house burgled, of the victims, day, time and circumstance of the offence, types of property known to be in the house, wanted and stolen, the method of its disposal, and feelings, reasons and motives for the burglary, were all covered.

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(1) A copy of each questionnaire/survey form referred to in this publication is available on request from the authors.

The offender questionnaire was completed by probation officers during structured interviews with convicted adult burglars. (Seven juveniles were interviewed by the social services department.) The particular difficulties of this approach are obvious. Most domestic burglars receive a sentence of immediate custody. Thus officers, in the course of their busy lives, had to make time to visit prisons and other places of detention. Those familiar with the prison system will know that prisoners cannot always be easily located, and organisational exigencies sometimes mean they cannot be interviewed. In our study, too, prisoners had to give their consent to being interviewed, so the journey could be wasted. All but four of the 76 burglars were male. Their modal age was in the 21-25 band. 95% of those answering the questions on residence lived in property rented from the council. Over half had lived at their current address for three years or less. 77% were single, divorced or separated. They had been convicted at their last court appearance of a total of 135 burglaries, and had asked for a total of 932 others to be taken into consideration. The sample contained 15 people who each claimed to have committed fifty or more burglaries before. The sample, whilst modest and necessarily biased, therefore represents a very much larger set of burglary events.

The most striking point to be taken from the offender interview was the extent to which burglary, at least by convicted Rochdale burglars, was highly local. The second was the apparently overwhelming importance of signs of occupancy in target choice. The interview was in three parts. The first asked about general techniques and target selection, of all burglaries committed. The second asked about specific target choice and technique in relation to a specified burglary of which the interviewee had been convicted. (The specification of the event was that of the interviewer, not the interviewee. This was to avoid the interviewee selecting more interesting, but atypical, burglaries.) The third part concerned motivation and generally what led up to the burglary. Thus both first and second parts contained similar information. The only difference was that, when the offenders were asked the more specific questions, the basis of target selection seemed even more local and dominated by cues of occupancy. For example, when asked generally, 67% of the sample said that most or all of their offences had been committed in the Rochdale-Middleton-Heywood area, and 30% answered 'yes' to the question "Do you just break into houses in your neighbourhood?" When asked "What is the distance (in miles) you travel from home to the houses you break into/have broken into?" 85% said five miles or less, and 53% two miles or less. When asked about a specific burglary, this distance was less than a mile in 63% of cases. 77% of burglars had walked to the target house. 25% knew the occupants of the burgled house. The differences between the answers to the general and specific questions may reflect a tendency to exaggerate the range of one's criminal activity, or might reflect a greater chance of apprehension when burgling very local houses — after all these were specific offences among the minority the police had cleared. Whichever of the possible alternatives one believes, domestic burglary in Rochdale takes on an almost claustrophobically local aspect. This is particularly important because of the increased chances of recognition of an offender which comes with local crime.

When asked about specific factors which would deter them, more than half stated they would be deterred by signs of occupancy, a visible burglar alarm or high visibility at the point of entry. More than half checked occupancy by ringing the doorbell or knocking on the door. The means of entry was mainly by forcing a window or door; only sixteen of the burglars gained access because the premises were insecure. This seemed to suggest that the scope for a campaign of the 'Lock it or lose it' type would be somewhat limited, at least in Rochdale.

Only 36% of the burglars said they had committed the offence in question whilst alone. 67% were in the house for less than ten minutes. Of those who were in a position to give an answer (ie those who were not caught on the premises) a perhaps surprisingly high percentage, 43%, disposed of their goods through shops or dealers. Offering burgled goods for sale in such a high proportion of cases presumably means that there could be advantages in property marking and purchase registration schemes whereby goods remain identifiable especially with the local nature of burglary. Only eighteen of the burglars claimed to have an idea of the profit they would make before they went in. Of those who had such an idea, the modal estimate was a modest £200.

When asked about the reasons for offending, around one quarter of the burglars acknowledged the role of drink, either because they were drunk at the time of the burglary or because they burgled to pay for drink. 32% linked drug use with burglary in the same way. 70% were unemployed at the time of the offence, of whom 88% linked that condition to the commission of the crime. 41% owed money, most frequently to the fuel boards and in rent.

In terms of their attitude towards the offence, 54% of the burglars claimed to "like enjoying what it gives — but hate doing the job itself." Other assertions with which over half of the burglars agreed were "You see how easy it would be and you can't resist the temptation to go in even if you hadn't been looking for it" (51%), "You don't think about whether you will get caught and what will happen to you then" (70%) and, somewhat inconsistently with that, "If you know you will get a tough sentence then you will think twice" (51%). Remarkably few burglars accepted 'sad tale' characterisations of their offending, such as "People like me have never had a chance so we make up for it by crime (21%) and "You think 'everyone's on the fiddle so why shouldn't I have my share?" (8%)

#### *Interviewing Burglary Victims and their neighbours*

The police inspector seconded to the project undertook to interview the victims of all burglaries in a dwelling on Kirkholt committed between 1st January and 30th June 1986. The interviews took place in the victims' homes some 6 to 8 weeks after victimisation. This delay was deliberate. It allowed completion of operational police investigation of the crime. In total, 305 relevant offences were reported to the police as having been committed on Kirkholt during the period in question. Of these 237 (78%) were interviewed. Of those who were not interviewed, 26 had moved from the area, 33 were not contacted after four visits, and two declined to be interviewed.

The kind of information sought through the interview included visibility of the burglar's point of entry, a detailed record of the burglar's activities, including movement and actions within the dwelling, levels of security hardware and their use, insurance details, occupancy and its signs at the time of the burglary, previous victimisations, views on police response, views on the solvability of the crime and the recovery of the property stolen, fear of victimisation both before and after the crime, perceptions of the crime, practical problems following victimisation, use of other agencies, involvement within the community, suggestions of how to reduce crime and willingness to participate in crime prevention initiatives. Also included were details of householder and occupancy.

Although the victim questionnaire was timed during the pilot stages to take 35-45 minutes to complete, it was found that the victim so relished the opportunity of talking to a police officer about the crime that the interview took from 90 minutes to 2 hours.

Interviews with victims of burglary have now been carried out fairly extensively (eg by Maguire, 1982). It is also not unknown to contrast location and other characteristics of burgled and other houses within the same area (eg by Winchester and Jackson, 1981). We are not aware of a previous attempt to interview neighbours as we did in Kirkholt. Our reasoning was as follows: the most precise and full information about target choice involves the comparison of victimised households specifically with those which are the most obvious alternative targets, namely those which neighbour the victimised dwellings and are physically nearly identical with them. (The strictly applied guidelines for selecting the neighbour to interview are reproduced as Appendix A). Such a comparison also allows the social characteristics of burglary victims to be identified. The neighbour questionnaire was modelled on the victim form, with modifications where appropriate.

It was not possible for the seconded police officer to undertake these interviews. The task was carried out, after briefing, by members of the Rochdale Special Constabulary, who conducted 136 neighbour interviews. The shortfall of neighbour interviews relative to victim interviews is almost wholly a result of the limited availability of special officers. In what follows, we will set out some of the results which emerged from analysis of victim and neighbour interviews.

In common with national figures, less than 20% of burglaries took place during the midnight-8am period. A third of all the burglaries took place between noon and 6pm. The pattern by day is very uneven, with two peak periods, Wednesday-Thursday and Saturday-Sunday. 36% of all the burglaries took place on a Wednesday or Thursday, and a further 23% on Saturday or Sunday. The midweek bulge could not be accounted for in terms of occupancy patterns. The average value of goods stolen was £137, of cash (including meter cash) £46, and the average amount of damage caused was £21. Meter cash and audio-video equipment were the items most often taken. There is a marked pattern of daily variation in what is taken, burglary of meter cash being very

much a Wednesday-Thursday activity, 39% of such burglaries taking place during the day on Wednesday or Thursday. The theft of audio-video equipment is distributed much more evenly throughout the week.

It was interesting that 70% of points of entry were visible to neighbours. Only 35% were visible to passers-by. Generally, the survey indicated how important neighbours and victims could be in watching out for each others' homes but it also emphasised the fact that they would need to be mobilised to take advantage of this visibility.

Method of entry achieved was typically the first one attempted. In two-thirds of cases entry was through a window, in contrast with the literature on point of entry which indicates that entry through windows and doors is evenly split (Litton, 1985). Having window locks did not reduce the proportion of window entries. Over half of window entries did not involve the breaking of glass. As for doors, the achievement of entry by mere exertion of pressure on the doors themselves (22% of all burglaries) suggests that fitting good locks to existing frames will not achieve much, at least in housing of the type found on Kirkholt.

Interestingly, both victim and neighbour interviews suggested that people are able to recognise access points which were most vulnerable to the burglar. 51% of the neighbours said it would have been easy to break into the victim's house at the point chosen by the burglar. Only 18% of victims thought it would have been difficult for the burglar to gain entry. We should not ignore the benefits of hindsight with which these judgments were made but, put the other way, it would have been surprising if citizens did lack this sort of insight — unless one takes burglars to be a species apart, informed by a particular criminal cunning in target selection. One of the practical implications of this is that most people seem to know at least where to look for points of vulnerability, and therefore know where the presence of strangers might be worth reporting. A second point is that the seconded police officer was able to feed citizen judgments of vulnerability into the target hardening feature of the initiative described later in this report.

An incidental benefit came from data on victim and neighbour perceptions of the police response. These data were fed back to the Greater Manchester force in a form which did not allow identification of individuals. On the whole, victims appear to have been satisfied with the police response. Only 28% thought that the police could have dealt with their cases differently. However, their experiences did argue for some 'fine tuning' of police response. For example, most victims received a follow-up visit from a detective officer, but 42% did not. Of those who were not visited, 60% were expecting a visit, so there was a failure to meet public expectation in this respect. Scenes-of-crimes officers visited only a minority of victims (48%), whereas 65% had expected someone to follow up the initial visit to take fingerprints etc.

92% of victims did not know who their local area constable was. Only 6% of victims had spoken to him/her. The victim will probably not appreciate that area constables have a large number of other tasks to perform, for example supplementing police

strength elsewhere by working on a response vehicle. The point is not whether the allocation of personnel is appropriate, simply that the appellation 'area constable' may create in the victim expectations which are unrealistic.

In 87% of cases we found that the burglary victim had not been given a Greater Manchester Police form 301e. The issue of such a form is supposed to occur in all cases, and provides a police contact telephone number and includes an indication of where crime prevention advice may be obtained.

At present, most victims believe that 'their' burglar would not be caught. Only 20% thought that the chances were good or fair. Most victims believed that there was little chance of getting their property back. Most neighbours thought likewise.

The involvement of other agencies was brought into focus by a question which enquired about the uses victims had made of such agencies and the problem which had led them to make the approach. From these responses it was clear that the fuel boards, the local authority housing department and the local victim support scheme in particular would be indispensable in any initiative we proposed to take, and indeed could benefit from our results. 21% of victims at the time of interview (which it will be recalled was some six weeks or more after the burglary) were left with an unresolved problem resulting from their burglary because they did not know whom to contact. For example one of the most interesting comments from victims was relevant to the Rochdale Housing Department.

Nearly one third of victims were concerned about the delay in making their homes secure after the burglary. Bearing in mind the real vulnerability of these people and their heightened anxiety, this is important. This information was fed back to the local Housing Department and made a further contribution to our thinking about possible initiatives. A joiner (an additional appointment) would be required to respond quickly to work on burgled homes. The Housing Department responded to this positively and with alacrity.

The interviews with victims identified some of the effects of being burgled. These undoubtedly speeded the development of the initiative and enhanced our commitment to it. People worried more about burglary after suffering one. 58% said that before the burglary they had worried about leaving their home unoccupied; after the burglary the figure was 83%. The number who had worried before the burglary about being burgled while at home was 34%; after the burglary it was 56%. In practice however only 28% of homes in our sample were occupied at the time of the burglary. Similar concerns were reflected in the views victims expressed about the level of crime in the Kirkholt area generally. 62% said it was bad. A further 8% thought it was getting worse and 9% wanted to move out of the area because, for them, crime had reached an intolerable level.

One immediate focus of action was suggested when we looked at the number of victims involved in community associations, groups, or with other activities in the area. 89% had no such involvement. Yet when they were asked whether they would be prepared to assist with a crime prevention initiative if one were set up in the area, 63% said they would get involved and another 30% gave the idea qualified support. Neighbours were also largely willing to become involved: 66% said they would definitely become involved and 13% gave the idea their conditional support.

Turning to the data which were yielded by the contrast of victim and neighbour questionnaires, two approaches were adopted. The first approach was to identify those characteristics of victim houses which distinguish them from neighbour houses. In summary, the fitting of windowlocks did not distinguish victimised from similar houses, but the lack of a dog and the lack of signs of occupancy did. 22% of victim households and 40% of neighbour households kept a dog. At the time of the burglary, 42% of victimised houses were said by the victim to look occupied. In contrast, 80% of neighbours said their houses looked so.

When asked why they thought the victimised house had been chosen, 40% of neighbour households supplied what they took to be an 'obvious' reason. Low actual or apparent occupancy was cited in 47% of the reasons. 22% of those giving reasons specified meter cash or video equipment as attractive targets. A further 14% specified victim characteristics, either in terms of vulnerability or lifestyle.

The second approach was to look for any differences in the rate of multiple victimisation. This issue of multiple victimisation came to feature prominently in our study. There are suggestions (Sparks *et al.*, 1976) that some people or places are prone to become multiple victims. On Kirkholt, both neighbours and victims were asked how long they had lived in their present dwelling, and how many burglaries they had previously suffered there. Obvious arithmetic yields the prior annual rate of burglary victimisation of the two groups. The victim group had an annual rate of prior victimisation over twice as high as their neighbours. One of the problems about taking this difference at face value is the possible confounding effect of different lengths of tenancy in the two groups. If the neighbours had been tenants longer and the rate of burglary on the estate had risen over time, then the annual rate of victimisation of the neighbours would be lower on that basis alone. In fact neighbours *had* been tenants longer, on average, than victims. We took account of this by appropriately weighting annual rates of victimisation but still found that the victim group had a 60% higher rate of victimisation than their neighbours. This understates the higher vulnerability to repeat victimisation because we have no way of telling whether the same places had been burgled during previous tenancies. Such burglaries would increase the difference in rates observed between first and repeat victimisations.

There are pressures which work towards the departure from the estate of burglary victims at a faster rate than others. The unpleasant experience of burglary may stimulate or intensify efforts to leave the estate. To the extent to which this is so, the difference between victim and neighbour groups in prior victimisation is even larger

than we found it to be. An analysis of 1986 domestic burglaries on Kirkholt clarified the picture. During the year, we were able to calculate that the chance of a second or subsequent burglary was over four times as high as the chance of a first, on Kirkholt. The way we did this was to say if 2 in 10 houses on Kirkholt were burgled during the year, and assuming no extra vulnerability to repeat victimisation, the probability of a second burglary should be 2 in 10 of the 2 in 10 houses burgled once ( $.2 \times 2 = .04$ ). This is just like tossing an unbiased coin, where the probability of tossing heads once is .5 and of tossing a sequence of 2 heads is  $.5 \times .5$ . In fact, on Kirkholt in 1986, the probability of a home being burgled for a second time was four times the expected rate calculated this way. The practical implications come through more clearly when the point is presented differently. Nearly half of those burgled in December 1986 had been burgled at least once before during 1986.<sup>2</sup>

On a common sense level it seems reasonable that a property which has proven vulnerable, and therefore attractive, to a burglar will continue to appeal to the same and other burglars. In other words, the features central to target selection remain over long periods of time. Winchester and Jackson's (1981) study of burglary victimisation, for example, identifies factors which distinguish burgled from other houses. The factors, such as "located on the nearest main road" and "set at a distance from the nearest house" are not ones which change quickly. This means that a dwelling remains a likely (or unlikely) target for further burglary over long periods.

Independent support for the hypothesis that burglary victims are disproportionately likely to be victimised again comes from use of the screening questions in the main questionnaire of the British Crime Surveys of 1982 and 1984. In all relevant comparisons, the number of repeat victimisations greatly exceeds expected levels, Table 1 sets out the relevant data from the British Crime Surveys of 1982 and 1984 combined. It contrasts observed and expected frequency of repeat burglary victimisation. It will be noted that the observed incidence of multiple victimisation is dramatically greater than expected. Put one way, the probability of being victimised for a second time, given that a household has been burgled once, looks to be around 3 to 4 times as high as the probability of being victimised for a first time, using national samples.

**Table 1:** Expected and observed prevalence of multiple victimisation (burglary and theft in a dwelling): combined British Crime Survey data, 1982 and 1984.

	2+	3+	4+	5+
Observed	111	48	24	15
Expected	32	1	0	0

Note: 1 Weighted data: unweighed n=21232  
 2 Cell entries rounded to whole numbers

(2) This rate was not the result of a freak month in December. Ordinary least squares regression of cumulative 1986 repeat victimisation rates also suggests that by December, 48% of burglaries would be repeat burglaries.

### *Other Sources of Information*

While the burglar, victim and neighbour interviews formed the largest formal set of data, contact was made with as many of the agencies and groups within Kirkholt as was possible. Informal contacts were made with groups including the Tenants' Association, the churches, youth club leaders, community associations and schools. All helped us to understand the estate, and confirmed us in the view that the development of a support system for the project within the estate was essential for its success. We also referred to data from the 1981 census, which gave us some insight into the composition of population within the estate to compare with that of our victim sample, so that we could identify which, if any, types of people were especially vulnerable to the offence of domestic burglary.

In July 1986 the project team organised a half day seminar, chaired by the Chief Probation Officer of Greater Manchester. All relevant agencies were invited to contribute ideas for preventive action based on the information presented about the local crime pattern, as an exercise in joint problem-solving. Those present included representatives of the North West Electricity Board, Rochdale Victims Support Scheme, Rochdale Education Authority, Rochdale Borough Housing Department, Greater Manchester Police, Greater Manchester Probation Service, Association of British Insurers and Home Office Crime Prevention Unit. The seminar cleared a lot of ground regarding the project. For example, it was at that meeting that the movement towards alternatives to cash meters as an element in the project really began. The personal contacts alone were enough to make the seminar worthwhile. Afterwards, several agencies made further contacts with us.

## **The Preventive Initiative**

### *Choice of initiative*

We had from offenders, burglary victims and neighbours almost an embarrassment of riches by way of information. The data from burglars could have justified a debt counseling service, aid with drink or drug problems, and other social interventions by the probation service. There was also clear evidence that convicted burglars had travelled a very short way to commit their crime, and tended to specialise in a particular type of dwelling. This increased the chances of successful recognition of local burglars if effective neighbourhood Watch schemes were in operation, acting as a deterrent to the burglars once they realised how the odds in favour of a detection had shortened. This is particularly the case since 70% of entry points were held to be visible from a neighbour's dwelling.

We had information that almost exactly half of the burglaries involved theft of cash from meters, suggesting an approach to burglary prevention by changing methods of payment.

We had indications of the features of dwellings which distinguished victimised and otherwise identical non-victimised households, which could have been used to provide crime prevention advice to householders and the housing department on which repairs and improvements were most vital.

Another range of choices concerned the scope of any initiative. How comprehensive should the range of cover be? Should it extend to the whole estate or single out a group within it characterised by particularly high rates of victimisation? One group on which we were at an early stage tempted to concentrate were households comprising single parents and their children. This was because such family units comprised 8% of all households on the estate (on the basis of the 1981 Census), and 6% in the neighbour sample. In contrast, they comprised 20% of the victimised households.

Any or all of the different approaches could be defended, and we do not claim to have reasonably chosen the best approach. To explain the choice we made, it is necessary to step back and argue what we understand to be the present state of crime prevention knowledge.

#### *Crime Prevention*

We think that the evidence for success in well planned and executed crime prevention programmed is extensive to the point of being overwhelming. Apart from the work undertaken within the Home Office, either by the Research and Planning Unit or the Crime Prevention Unit (which will not be reviewed here), there remains a great deal. Some instances follow. Van Straelen (1978) reported a reduction in thefts of gramophone records after a reorganisation which resulted in customers having no direct access to the records. He also reports data from a French supermarket indicating a 33% reduction in losses following the installation of closed-circuit television cameras. Hauber (1978) showed that the incidence of public transport fraud was highest where a self-service system existed, with tickets being sold away from the vehicle, where charges were high and where inspection was infrequent. Kuhlhorn (1980) showed a dramatic drop in the number of cheque frauds as a result of the tightening of cheque guarantee regulations in 1971. In both wine and tobacco industries, thefts of goods in transit plummeted after central organisations concerned with security were established by these industries. In the case of the tobacco industry, the losses in 1978 were reduced to one sixth of the value stolen in 1969, adjusted to 1969 prices (Tobacco Advisory Council Security Liaison Office, personal communication).

One of the most valuable lessons to be learned from this earlier work is that the adoption of a *series* of measures is likely to have much greater impact than simply taking one or two steps. Methodologically this is less attractive because it is scarcely ever practicable to tease out the relative contributions to crime prevention of the various measures, and the interactions between them. A crime prevention package of four elements contains fifteen possible ways of achieving its impact. We were persuaded that a programme involving just one of the changes we had in mind would

be less likely to have an effect than an initiative comprising a package of measures. We realised the cost of this decision. We would remain unable to say precisely how the combination had worked. As long as there was an effect, we would be content! However, we also realised that the package or 'all systems' approach would require more organisation and more coordinated effort by more agencies. It would require the seconded police officer in particular, and the project team to a lesser extent, becoming organisers, managers and coordinators of change. Yet this was very important if a well-conceived initiative, based on sound principles and guided by relevant data, was not to fail because of poor implementation. Hope (1986) has drawn attention to the huge problems of property implementing programmed. One particular burglary prevention project involving an ambitious uprating of security throughout an estate (Allatt, 1984, 1985) had what some regarded as marginal effects. That marginality could easily be put down to the problems of implementing the programme as envisaged.

Our desire not to fall foul of problems of implementation did not sit easily with our determination to adopt an 'all systems' approach. The problems were made more acute by the short duration of Home Office funding, since we had to have an all systems programme fully implemented by the end of April 1987, when the initial funding ended. This led us to exclude any thoughts of applying a programme across the estate. There remained the decision as to which group or area of the estate would be the target for the initiative.

One alternative was to target a group, chosen because of its vulnerability, with a high rate of victimisation. The group, as previously mentioned, was the single parent family, whose rate of victimisation was over twice what it should have been given the composition of the estate. The particular disadvantage of this strategy was that there was no obvious and unproblematic way of scheduling the programme. Such selection could also have been socially divisive, however justifiable.

Another alternative involved concentration on a sub-area within the Kirkholt estate. This was unacceptable for local political reasons. No area of the estate was an obvious choice. Although there were notable clusters of burglaries, they were spread throughout the estate. It would have been quite arbitrary and again socially divisive to select one area in preference to others.

We also considered the possibility of measures designed to reduce the extent to which particular categories of property were taken. Property marking of videos throughout the estate or the introduction of alternative methods of domestic fuel payment would have been an example of such an approach. We rejected it because we could not introduce the whole package across the estate. Without the comprehensive package we might make some goods unattractive but leave open the possibility that others would be taken.

We decided that the above-mentioned possibilities should be elements in a programme rather than a programme in themselves. Although the machinery for consultation with

members of the community had still to be set up, informal discussions about these alternatives were held frequently with community representatives. In conclusion, in the light of our survey data and practical considerations listed below, we decided to concentrate on those people who had already been burgled.

The selection of prior burglary victims as the target group could bring into play community resources, notably the Rochdale Victim Support Scheme. Central to the choice was our finding, noted earlier, that the risk of second burglary appeared to be substantially higher than the risk of a first burglary.

An important advantage of the choice of this group was that it made for a method of scheduling the programme to which it would have been difficult to take exception. If, after a burglary, priority was given to help for the victim, this was simply a development of support services to such victims. Victims became identified as such at a fairly steady rate, so implementation could follow at the same rate, simply following the sequence of the burglaries. Responding to each burglary with a number of support measures in this way would also have the effect of affording help to those members of the community who, our data indicate, were most vulnerable to burglary (and anxious about it) in precise proportion to that vulnerability. We were able to assuage our consciences that we were not neglecting single parents and the like after all! Our approach was also consistent with the long-held view in preventive psychiatry that a crisis can serve as the growth point for change.

On these grounds, we were convinced that if we could reduce the rate of multiple victimisations, there would be a case for judging the enterprise successful, even if we failed to reduce the total number of domestic burglaries on the Kirkholt estate.

In the next section, we will set out the elements of the initiative and their justification. There will then follow a section where we describe the processes of implementation. Thereafter we present the results of a preliminary evaluation and attempt to reach some conclusions.

#### *The elements of the initiative*

Having thus decided on the strategy, we had to confirm its component elements. These will be described in turn.

##### Pre-payment fuel meters

The most obvious factor in the burglary profile of the Kirkholt estate was the taking of money from electricity and gas pre-payment meters. The high incidence of this confirms earlier work by the Home Office Crime Prevention Unit (Hill, 1986). On Kirkholt, 49% of burglaries involved the loss of meter cash, and 27% involved the loss of meter cash only. With the removal of pre-payment meters, a reduction in burglaries should be expected.

Before reaching this conclusion, however, we must consider two possibilities. One is that some victims take the opportunity of attributing to a real burglary the cash they themselves took from the meter (on an 'ill wind' principle). The second possibility, frequently voiced by police officers, is that some 'victims' take cash from their own meters and invent a 'burglary' to cover it. The victim interviews convinced us that the rate of such 'do-it-yourself', 'home industry' or 'own goal' events was lower than we had previously been disposed to believe. In discussions at that stage we decided that, whatever the rate of genuine offences, the removal of pre-payment meters was desirable. The argument about do-it-yourself meter thefts did not threaten this part of our initiative. In those cases where people might previously have broken into their own meters, we were not preventing burglary, but an offence was still being prevented by removing the coin pre-payment meter. The worst that could happen would be that some of those who benefited from our protective package would have qualified for that protection by their own offending. Since we could not hope to determine accurately the rate of do-it-yourself meter losses, we decided to proceed on the basis that meter removal would be crime reductive.

If meter 'burglaries' are really household crimes, they are unlikely to be cleared, since there is no burglar and it is difficult in the circumstances of a simulated burglary to prove the householder's offence. That means that if the clearance rate of burglaries involving meter cash is particularly low, this could be accounted for by the offences really being home industry. However, if clearance rates of meter and non-meter burglaries are similar, this would be fairly persuasive that the extent of household crime is slight. During 1986, the clearance rate for burglaries involving meter cash was 13.1%, and for other burglaries 25.6%. The clearance rate for burglaries involving meter cash is therefore about half of what we would expect given the clearance rate for other types of burglary. Assuming that this is due to household crime and that cleared burglaries are representative of all burglaries then it is possible to argue that half of all burglaries involving meter cash were household crime. These D.I.Y. burglaries would be 25% of all burglaries.

Now it should be noted that this estimate leans in the direction of exaggerating the number of such burglaries. This is because the low clearance rate could partially result from other factors, notably reduced probabilities of detection due to police *assumptions* about home industry and the special anonymity of stolen cash as against stolen property. We therefore believe the true figure lies somewhere between 0% and 25% with the vast majority of burglaries (at least 75% and probably more) not being home industry.

The most exacting requirement of this part of our burglary prevention initiative, including the removal of fuel meters therefore, would be that it must reduce burglary by more than 25% if it is to demonstrate that it has done more than prevent the home industry burglaries involving meter cash.

In sum, what was clear from our survey was that a proportion of burglaries and a number of related, home industry offences, would be reduced by the replacement of

pre-payment fuel meters with alternative methods of payment. The reduction or elimination of pre-payment fuel meters was accordingly selected as an objective in the programme.

### Improved Security

It may seem strange that, having been sceptical of the effects of items of security hardware like windowlocks, we should nevertheless include security uprating as one of the planks of our initiative. We feel that security effects are context specific. In other words, particular methods of entry are specific to particular levels of security. When doors can be easily forced, window locks are irrelevant. When no neighbour will come, noise at entry does not have to be minimised. An example of how the effectiveness of security measures is dependent on the context is provided by Sheena Wilson (1978). She showed that estate design features were only effective in crime prevention at particular levels of child density. For the same reason, security hardware may come into its own *in particular circumstances*, and to neglect this possibility would be foolish. It may be recalled that 93% of burglars got into the dwelling by the first route they chose. This contrasts with Hough and Mo's (1986) data from the British Crime Survey suggesting that attempted burglaries are prevented from becoming completed burglaries by relevant hardware. When one notes that 60% of the Kirkholt dwellings which were broken into via their windows also had inadequate locks on their doors, this indicates the need for an *overall* look at security requirements. The primary requirement of the uprating was that it did not consist of token locks and bolts, but that it dealt with real vulnerability as indicated by the entry methods described by burglars and their victims. A second requirement related to the point about context: as the context changed through our initiatives so might modes of entry. The initiative had to be flexible in order to adapt to these changes. The monitoring system was important here. It would be used to identify changes in patterns and methods of burglary.

The key agency for security uprating on Kirkholt was the Council's Housing Department. The Department currently operates experimentally with a decentralised housing management policy. Thus the relevant official is based on the estate. After consultation early in the project, he had held back an application to allocate funds available for security improvement pending the outcome of the first part of our work, so that its use could be the most efficient possible. He accepted our findings and proposals for the strategy of uprating outlined above, and, within the month, had secured the sum of £75,000, spread over three years, to upgrade the security on burgled houses to standards specified by police crime prevention officers. It should also be noted that, under a separate programme (the Priority Estates Project) some of the other houses on the estate not subject to victimisation were also given security uprating. We realised this would serve to mask the effects on multiple victimisation of our project because it would reduce the rate of burglary in other parts of the estate.

Having secured the money, the security uprating programme came into effect on 1st November 1986. With the approval of the Rochdale Police **Chief** Superintendent, the

local area police officers within days of a burglary being reported would visit the victim and offer to conduct a security survey of the house. Apart from the explicit purpose of the visit, the making of contact was itself regarded as important because in the early interviews, it was found that over 90% of the residents would not recognise their area officer.

The only crime prevention training which area constables had hitherto received was very limited. It was thus felt necessary for them to receive an extra day's intensive training on the specifics of the problems of housing types on Kirkholt. This was supplied by two Rochdale Police Crime Prevention Offices (CPOs). In preparation for this, both CPOs visited the estate, inspected the different types of housing stock, were informed of the findings of the interviews we had carried out, and prepared a 'Security Survey Sheet'. Security hardware to their specification was then stocked by the Housing Department. Part of the intensive day training for area constables was the conduct of pilot surveys of unoccupied houses under the supervision of the two CPOs, to ensure competence in the job. The Housing Department joiner was also contacted, and the correct method of fitting the hardware was explained to him.

At the risk of sounding immodest, we think the injection of additional training and advice is worthy of emulation. It ensures area constables make contact with victims in the area they serve. It also ensures that area constables can give sound crime prevention advice in the small areas for which they are responsible. It routinises the provision of relevant security and it involves the joiner in the process,

#### Community Support Team

During the interviews of both the victims and their neighbours feelings of suspicion were expressed on many occasions towards each other and about residents of Kirkholt in general. Yet we had also found there was a large amount of latent support for community-based crime prevention initiatives. It was necessary to mobilise this support by approaching people again and eliciting their cooperation. To this end, we decided a small team was needed to engage in direct community action. This led us to the local authority's Manpower Services Commission agency in Rochdale. Earlier contact with them had established that ideas were being sought under the Community Programme with the object of crime prevention. The Kirkholt project excited their interest. In October 1986 application was made to them for eleven community 'self-help' workers. This number included a supervisor and a deputy supervisor. The application was approved in January 1987. By March 1st six of the eleven posts had been filled (including both supervisory posts). Initially this was adequate for our purposes. After an initial week's training which reflected the multi-agency approach to crime prevention, this part of the project went 'live'. The primary role of these workers was to visit the victims of burglary on the estate, offer support, and put them in touch with appropriate agencies. It was obviously courteous to obtain agreement for this from the Rochdale Victims Support Scheme. We had already had consultations with the scheme's coordinator. Not only was agreement forthcoming, but they also became actively involved in the recruitment and training of the workers. Indeed one of

their volunteers was by good fortune eligible for employment on the scheme and was selected as the team supervisor.

The second role of workers was to take on the security surveys previously conducted by the area constable, together with post-coding of valuables. Following this, providing the victim agreed, came the attempt to seek the support of neighbours surrounding the victim to work together in a 'mini' or 'cocoon' neighbourhood watch. The postcoding service and security survey was also offered to neighbours approached in connection with the cocoon neighbourhood watch. At the time of writing, a total of 143 victims have been contacted by the team, of whom none has declined the security survey. 38% have declined the postcoding offers. Three victims stated they would prefer it if their neighbours were not approached to provide the cocoon. Of course these wishes were honoured and no approach made. Where an approach to neighbours was made, 85% agreed to cooperate. Interestingly, slightly more neighbours than victims took up the postcoding offer. To continue to build upon the data base developed from the initial victim and neighbour interviews, the self-help workers have also interviewed every victim and their neighbours where this was agreed. For this purpose abridged questionnaires were used which helped towards the monitoring of the project, to be discussed below.

Although the setting up of this part of the initiative went relatively smoothly two points of interest did emerge. First, as the collection of data is part of crime analysis, NALGO, the union representing many civilian employees of the Greater Manchester Police, needed to be assured that the scheme was not taking work away from their members. Second, because the job of self-help worker involved visiting people's homes, selected applicants had to meet a stringent set of standards of trustworthiness and ability to communicate. Many were rejected, and in consequence the scheme started with just over half its complement of workers, although the remaining posts were filled during the following weeks.

#### *Cocoon neighbourhood watch*

There were two reasons for our attraction to this idea. The first, and central one is that it mirrors what happens in well-established communities, where close groupings of dwellings share information and support each other. This contrasts with the larger type of neighbourhood watch schemes, which cleave to no particular social and geographic boundaries, and are started with no particular event as trigger. Second, we felt at the start that the cocoons may form the beginnings of some organic development, and would grow into home watch schemes. Seven months on, this has happened. Seventy-five home watch schemes on the estate have now been registered with the police. An indicator of the extent of the enthusiasm for such schemes is the fact that Kirkholt Community Centre is now being used to host meetings, since individual houses have proved too small to hold the numbers of people wishing to attend.

## Setting up a monitoring system and evaluation

Having gathered a wealth of data early in the project, the choice of what and how to monitor was easier than it might have been, particularly as we could use modified versions of the interview schedules developed during the pre-initiative phase. Four information sources contribute to monitoring. These are:

- (i) The Police crime report
- (ii) Security survey sheet
- (iii) Victim questionnaire completed by project worker
- (iv) Neighbour questionnaire completed by project worker

Information from each of these sources is passed to an information coordinator working in the Rochdale probation office. The information coordinator, appointed by the Selcare Trust under an MSC Community Programme scheme, inputs the data onto a personal computer. The data can be manipulated in a variety of ways to illuminate changing patterns of burglary on the estate. Since the comparable pre-implementation data is readily accessible, before-after implementation comparisons can easily be made.

Having the monitoring system in place means that we do not have to rely solely upon immediate reductions in burglary rates as an index of the project's success. Whatever the trend, the system also enables us to explore qualitative changes in the burglaries during the course of the initiative. Has the modus operandi altered? Have burglars found a way past the more secure access points? Are they going for different types of property? Such information will provide the necessary flexibility and enable the thrust of the initiative's components to be changed to meet the changing pattern. As long as the system can pinpoint remedial action to be taken, the initiative will be adaptable.

### *The assessment of success*

There are three levels at which we hoped for success:

- (a) the actual implementation of a set of measures coupled with a facility for monitoring them;
- (b) the prevention of multiple/repeat victimisations (i.e. second or subsequent burglaries on previous victims would become less common on Kirkholt than they were before the project started);
- (c) a reduction in burglary across the estate.

The relationship between the prevention of multiple victimisation and the prevention of burglary more generally is a complex one and this needs to be spelled out. For purposes of evaluation (as opposed to policy), it would be ideal if multiple victimisation was reduced without a more general reduction in burglary. This is because the initiative is focussed on those who have already fallen victim to burglary.

If those who had been protected to a greater extent than other people, proved less vulnerable as a consequence then this would provide the most focussed and persuasive evidence of the effectiveness of the initiative, However, this ideal is unlikely to be achieved for a number of reasons. Several of the measures offered protection both to victim and to other neighbouring households. For instance, cocoon neighbourhood watch includes all the participating households under the same strategy. Thus a general reduction in burglary on the estate could be expected. It is against this background of a probable falling rate of burglary that the effect of the measures to reduce repeat victimisation would have to be assessed. Since the rate of second victimisations (among households who have already been burgled) is in fact higher than the rate of first victimisations (among households who have not yet been burgled), the reduction in second burglaries would have to be in absolute terms much greater than the reduction in first burglaries to represent a similar proportional decrease. Because the prevention package 'leaks' into the community generally, this obviously becomes more difficult. As the probability of a first burglary declines, the *a priori* probability of two burglaries declines as its square. The arithmetic of this is worth elaborating on. If one house in four is burgled, then the rough probability of a house suffering two burglaries is one in sixteen (.25<sup>2</sup>). If one house in ten is burgled once, then one in one hundred will be burgled twice (.10<sup>2</sup>). Note that the change in the probability of two victimisations changes much more dramatically than the change in the probability of one. In short, the odds are stacked heavily against showing an effect particular to multi-victims distinguishable from the reduction of multi-victimisation expected on the basis of chance.

While the 'leakage' of prevention measures into the estate generally may be a bad thing for our evaluation, it is a good thing for burglary prevention. If we can show that focussing on victims can have a general effect in an area, this may form an appealing approach to crime prevention generally. It responds to victimisation, in itself a good thing in terms of victim support, but it does so with hope and confidence of making a more general crime reductive impact.

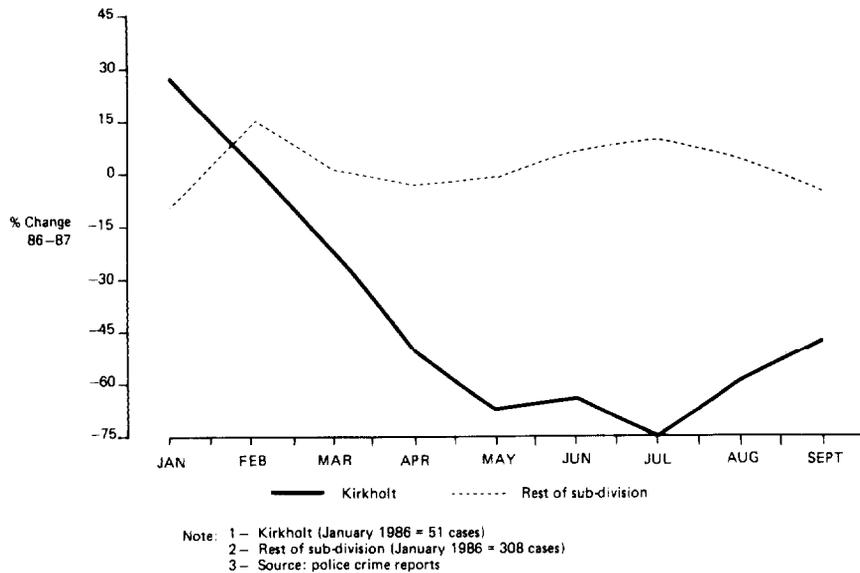
## Results

### *Reduction in overall levels of burglary*

First we need to establish whether burglaries on the Kirkholt estate generally declined in 1987 by comparison with 1986 and to examine whether a similar reduction occurred with the remainder of the sub-division over that time period. In absolute terms, burglary on Kirkholt fell from 316 in 1986 to 147 in 1987 (comparing January to September each year). Figure 1 supplies the data as percentages. It is clear that on Kirkholt there has been a large absolute and proportionate reduction in domestic burglary during the initiative. In contrast, the data for the rest of the sub-division show a slight movement in the upward direction. Moreover, the month by month changes do not give any indication of mirror-image movement of the curves suggesting displacement of domestic burglary from Kirkholt to elsewhere in the immediate area.

Indeed, the area closest to Kirkholt, Ashfield Valley, itself shows something of a decline in burglary, albeit less dramatic than is the case for Kirkholt. Interpretation of this, and even more of repeat burglary victimisations on the Ashfield Valley estate, is confused by substantial occupancy changes within that estate, ie by people moving within Ashfield Valley as part of housing policy in preparation for improvement.

**Figure 1: Change in burglary rate 1986–1987 (%).  
Comparison of Kirkholt with rest of sub-division**



Data from police records on changes in other offences as between Kirkholt and the rest of the sub-division are presented as Table 2, again covering the period January to September in each year. The classification merits a little explanation, 'Woundings' encompass all recorded assaultive crime. 'Minor damage' does not feature in official statistics of crimes known to the police, but may reflect damage inflicted in an attempt to burgle. Acquisitive crime lumps together all other crime (with the numerically trivial exception of fraud) which will have been carried out for profit. It is clear that, for both assaults and acquisitive crime, the rate of offending on Kirkholt has dropped relative to the rest of the sub-division. In contrast, the rate of damage has gone up. Of all kinds of displacement, that from domestic burglary to criminal damage is the least plausible, on the basis of motivation for the two offence types. If you want money or goods, you do not turn to criminal damage as an alternative way of getting them. We think what is happening is that pride in the estate, and confidence that the police will do something when asked, has increased the rate of report of offences of criminal damage. It may further be that some of the incidents of damage reflect failed burglaries. Apart from the untenable view that burglaries are displaced to damage rather than to other acquisitive crime on the estate, the only other interpretation which would damage our position is that in which there is displacement to acquisitive crime

other than domestic burglary outside the estate. In other words, the possibility exists that the Kirkholt burglar *both* gives up burglary *and* simultaneously moves his offending off the estate. We cannot discount this possibility, but we find it implausible. There was no suggestion of a local initiative on burglary outside the Kirkholt estate, to dissuade the commission of burglaries elsewhere. It is easier to conceive of a movement to domestic burglary off the estate or to other acquisitive crime within the estate. No evidence exists for either of these alternatives. To restate, there is a *general* burglary reduction on the Kirkholt estate coinciding with the period of the initiative. Its extent is massive and there is no evidence of obvious displacement either to burglary elsewhere in the relevant police subdivision, or to other offences on the Kirkholt estate itself. In terms of risk per house the massive reduction can be expressed as having reduced from 1 in 4 houses being burgled on Kirkholt during 1986 to less than 1 in 8 in 1987.

**Table 2:** Comparison of offences on Kirkholt and in other parts of the sub-division, 1986-7. Figures exclude domestic burglary.

	Kirkholt			Sub-Division Excluding Kirkholt		
	1986	1987	% Change	1986	1987	% Change
Woundings	24	19	-21	233	270	+16
Criminal damage	81	98	+21	1031	940	-9
Minor damage	131	148	+13	808	835	+3
Acquisitive	288	313	+9	4690	5810	+24
<b>Total</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>578</b>	<b>+10</b>	<b>6762</b>	<b>7855</b>	<b>+16</b>

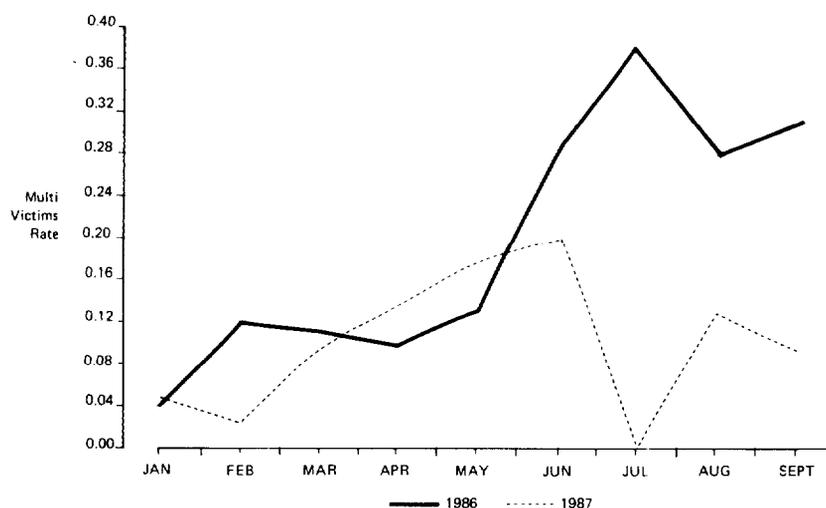
There can be major fluctuations in the rates of particular crimes in particular areas at particular times. There will be a variety of reasons for such fluctuations. The reduction of domestic burglary on the Kirkholt estate coinciding precisely with our initiative provides only suggestive evidence that the initiative caused the drop. However we cannot find any alternative explanation for the reduction. What is more important is the reduction in multiple victimisations as the prevention of these was the main thrust of our initiatives. It is to a discussion of our success in this area that we now turn.

#### *Reduction in multiple victimisation*

To demonstrate this achievement we have adopted two approaches. The first approach was to count the total number of burglary victims in each month during 1986 and 1987. From each monthly total we identified those people who had been burgled previously during that calendar year. We then expressed this number as a proportion of the total victims for that month. For example, during February 1986 59 households were burgled. Of these, 7 households had been burgled already during 1986. This

gives the proportion of multiple victims for February 1986 of .12. For successive months of the year, we would expect the proportion to rise simply because of the greater time period available for repeat burglaries to occur (in March, for example, repeats could occur to households first burgled in January, February and March). Figure 2 compares 1986 and 1987. It clearly shows this expected rise during 1986, and a continuation of the trend until May 1987, but a sharp *decline* thereafter, some two months after the start of the full preventive initiative in March.

**Figure 2: Second or subsequent burglary victimisations as a proportion of all burglaries on Kirkholt**

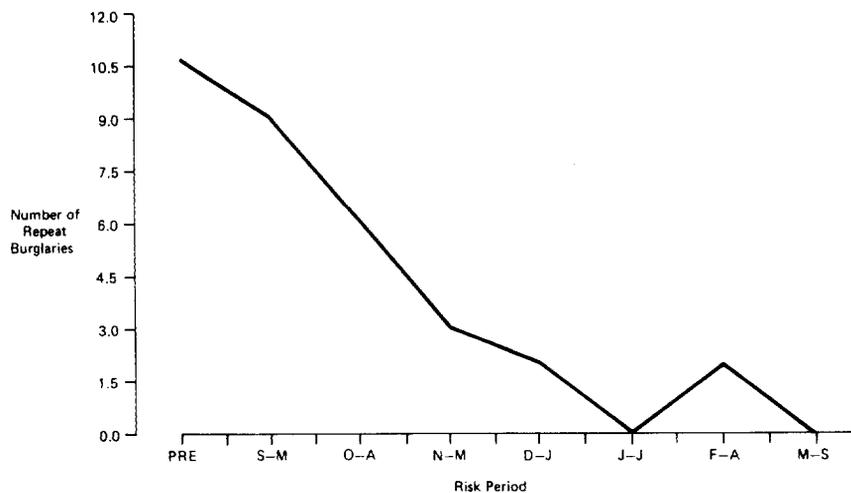


Note: 1 - The full initiative commenced March 1987.  
 2 - 'Multi victims rate' means the number of houses burgled each month that had been burgled previously during the same calendar year, divided by the monthly total.  
 3 - Source: police crime reports.

Although this shows the contrast between the pre-implementation year and the seven months of our initiative, it does not give any indication of the absolute change in the number of repeat burglaries in 1987. For this we address the second approach, the relevant data for which are presented as Figure 3. To explain how this was constructed we need to recognise that the initiative had only been operating fully for 7 months, from March 1987 to September 1987 when this report was prepared. The implication of this is that for the purposes of comparison the longest post implementation time period we could possibly use was 7 months. We therefore calculated how many victims during the month of September 1987 had been burgled previously since the beginning of March 1987. This is indicated at point M-S on the extreme right of the Risk Period axis for Figure 3. We then worked back to the next month, i.e. August 1987 and calculated how many victims of burglary that month had been burgled in the previous 7 months, i.e. between February 1987 and August 1987. (F-A on the Risk Period axis.) We continued to calculate the number of repeat victimisations in this way

until we reached the 7 month period September 1986 to March 1987. (S-M). For all the 7 month periods prior to that we calculated them back as far as the period to January 1986 and obtained an average of those period totals. This is shown as 'pre' on the Risk Period axis. Once again there is a clear decline in the number of repeat victimisations post implementation. Is this more or less than one should anticipate on the basis of change in the first time burglary rate? To put the matter in concrete terms, taking seven month risk periods, what reduction do we need from the pre-implementation period to the period March-September 1987 just to keep in step with the reduction in expected repeat victimisation? In effect we need a reduction to a level of 27% of the pre-implementation rate just to stay abreast of expectation! When we compared the number of repeat victimisations during the last pre-implementation seven-month period with the seven-month period wholly covered by the initiative, we found that multiple burglaries had been suffered by 41 households in the former pre-implementation period whereas only 8 had been suffered in the latter, initiative period, a reduction of more than 80%. The first indication of success in tackling multiple victimisation over and above achieving a general decline in burglary on Kirkholt.

**Figure 3: Number of repeat burglary victims on Kirkholt  
(Seven month risk period)**



Note: 1 - 'Repeat Burglaries' are defined as second or subsequent burglaries to houses, with both the first and subsequent burglaries occurring within the risk period.  
 2 - 'Risk period' means a seven month time period (e.g. S-M is the period September 1986 to March 1987).  
 3 - Source: police crime reports.

The most stringent test however that we could apply to our decline in repeat victimisations involved the comparison with another area in the Rochdale police division with a rate of burglary decline similar to that of Kirkholt, as pointed out by the local police command. We observed earlier that crime decline can occur for a

variety of reasons. Evidence that it was our initiative which produced the effect on Kirkholt would in our view be conclusive if repeat victimisations declined more on Kirkholt than in the other area with a dramatic burglary decline. Demonstrating this is especially difficult since the comparison area (Langley) started off with a much lower rate of burglary. Specifically, there had to be three less repeat burglaries on Kirkholt for every one less on Langley, just for the reductions to be equivalent in proportional terms. A fuller description of the analysis is presented as Appendix B. Suffice it to say here that there is a significant correlation between time and the ratio of actual to expected repeat victimisations in Kirkholt, and that the equivalent correlation for the Langley area, although it shows a similar pattern, is distinctly smaller, and not significant. Thus, there is some suggestion that the reduction in the rate of repeat victimisation on Kirkholt is outstripping the reduction in the rate expected from the *general* decline in victimisation, and that this is not true to a statistically significant extent for Langley. In short, even in the most stringent test possible, there is some suggestive evidence for the effects of the particular focus of the Kirkholt initiative. This should not be overstated, but given the intrinsic difficulty of success in these terms, it is surprising in itself.

The monitoring system which we have described will continue to record this relevant data for subsequent months and further funding will now make it possible for a longer term evaluation to be undertaken and subsequently reported on.

## **Conclusions, constraints and recommendations**

### *What has been demonstrated?*

We should first stake a claim as to what has been achieved. On Kirkholt, *early* experience is most encouraging. A number of interrelated initiatives have been successfully implemented on an interagency basis:

- (i) uprating of household security
- (ii) property postcoding
- (iii) removal of gas and electric *cash* pre-payment meters
- (iv) cocoon neighbourhood watch
- (v) home watch
- (vi) setting up a computerised monitoring and evaluation system.

Following implementation, a dramatic reduction in overall levels of burglary has been achieved, and the reduction in the rate of repeat victimisations outstrips the reduction expected on the basis of the lower rate of burglary generally. A monitoring system is in place which will allow flexibility of response to changing burglary patterns on the estate. In addition a system of consultation, through the setting up of a crime prevention group with the community has at the time of writing just been set up to direct efforts to other offence's on the estate in response to expressed need. In essence, we believe that an inter-agency base has been established for crime prevention based

upon repeat victimisation. It has been demonstrated that once a household is burgled, it is more likely to be burgled again. This is, in our view, of *fundamental* importance for burglary prevention strategy, and should be of particular interest to insurance companies, town planners and housing departments. It has been demonstrated that a strategy based on the prevention of repeat burglaries is viable and makes good sense. Such offences represent a significant proportion of all domestic burglary nationally. The strategy is attractive in offering protection to the most vulnerable.

We are ready to be surprised by the development of crime prevention on Kirkholt. It will not be mechanical, but organic. Working relationships and new lines of communication will ensure this. The Kirkholt project feels more like horticulture than engineering! In what follows, we will make comment based on experience of the scheme, and how crime prevention initiatives might best thrive.

(a) The need for resource allocation

In the commercial world new products are seldom developed cheaply. The successful innovation which increases a company's share value compensates for the many expensive attempts which lead nowhere. Crime prevention initiatives may be thought of in a similar way. Support must extend beyond the application of an initiative, but to the early stages of data gathering and analysis which are necessary to the proper establishment, and subsequently the proper evaluation, of a project. Unless there is such a phase, no-one will ever know whether a project has prevented crime: perhaps more importantly, no-one will ever know what to modify to enhance a project's chances of success. An analogy (*only* and analogy) may be made with the children's game of 'Blind Man's Buff'. When played properly, the blindfolded player is told "Warmer" or "Colder" until she or he succeeds in touching the target person. A proper data base serves a similar function in a crime prevention monitoring system. Until one knows whether one is warmer or colder (more attempts for every completion, change in entry point, change in method of entry) one cannot know what to change to get closer to the objective. Setting up a crime prevention initiative without such a data base is like playing 'Blind Man's Buff' where the only thing you are allowed to say is 'touching' 'not touching'. If you are not touching (i.e. have not apparently prevented crime) you do not know which way to go to get warmer!

In our project we were fortunate to be supported by Home Office funding and to have the unqualified support of two important local agencies, the police and probation services. The Greater Manchester Police responded to the initial proposal by releasing an Inspector to work full-time with the two Manchester University-based people involved in the project, and their research assistant. On the other hand, the Greater Manchester Probation Service initially attempted to incorporate work on the project (in the initial stage the interviewing of burglars) within the existing workload of staff in Rochdale and Middleton probation offices. However at a very early stage in the project the Assistant Chief Probation Officer in the area wrote to the project team expressing his anxieties about overloading his staff in this way. To complete the target number of burglar interviews would, he estimated, require each officer "spending as

much as 30 hours during the six months on this work (this includes training, gaining consent, travelling, interviews and waiting time)." Subsequently, the Probation Service made additional resources available to the project. In the first instance, this was the designation of one part-time officer to carry out the interviews. Latterly, one officer appointed to a specialist post within the Rochdale sub-division came to spend 20% of his time on the Kirkholt project. When the pairing of police and probation officer came into play, we realised what we had been missing. It was often noted that the two services making common cause in crime prevention made a considerable impression on public meetings. No doubt in part because of the personalities of the people involved, a wholly constructive set of working relationships came to be established. Given that the Greater Manchester Probation Service was in at the beginning of the scheme, and given that its commitment to the scheme was never in question, it is regrettable that this report is probably more police than probation oriented (which is reflected in its authorship). This is wholly and unintentionally a product of early working arrangements. In the development of the Kirkholt initiative in the phase after this report, the more equal partnership which is now in place will be more fully evident,

(b) The need for a support structure

One of the unintended consequences of how the Kirkholt project was resourced is that the staff seconded to it had a tendency to become marginalised in their own organisations. One aspect of this is that because something becomes the specialist responsibility of someone, other practitioners regard it as peripheral to their work. This is unfortunate for any initiative; it is particularly fatal in one whose focus is crime prevention. One of the aims of this project, in common with other recent ones, is to reflect the purposes of Home Office Circular 8/84. According to this, the level of responsibility and influence is to be pushed down the organisation's hierarchy and into the community itself. To attempt this while distanced from mainstream police and probation work would be disastrous. Yet because the initiative may require the collection of data concerning existing practices and their effectiveness — as ours did — those seconded may be perceived with indifference or antipathy by those in the rest of each organisation involved whose work thereby comes under scrutiny. The consequences of this will depend in part on the calibre of the people seconded, the degree of their personal commitment to the project, their resolution and strength of character to challenge established practices and unfounded assumptions of some of higher status within their organisation. However, structural factors are important too. We set out below the kind of support structure needed to avoid the undesirable effects alluded to above.

*1. Regular meetings of the project team.* The two University-based investigators, their research assistant, the seconded police officer and, at a later stage, seconded officers of the probation service and their immediate supervisor within the probation service met fortnightly throughout the project. The meetings were formal, with an agenda and minutes taken. These meetings proved to be invaluable, to head off problems and to renew expressions of commitment to the project.

2. *An institutional base.* The seconded police and probation officers were assisted by having a position within their own organisations which allowed direct links with the highest echelons where necessary. Increasingly the benefits of such an arrangement became evident. In the case of the Probation Service, the regular attendance of a senior probation officer at the project team meetings improved the flow of communication (after an unhappy start) and ensured that top management in the local area and in the service generally were kept in touch with developments and any problems arising from them which required their intervention. More recently, a representative of Chief Officer rank has come to be involved in these meetings.

In the case of the seconded police officer, his attachment to a department of the force which had a Chief Superintendent at its head, and a chain of command parallel with that of a territorial division, has both prevented isolation and guaranteed some necessary independence from the command structure of the Rochdale division. Although a great deal obviously depends upon the commitment of senior ranks to an initiative such as ours, the fact remains that there are distinct advantages in the seconded officers having a clear departmental base.

(c) The need to involve local personnel

It would be misleading to suggest that the project was immediately welcomed by all local police and probation officers. The fact that the survey meant that a third party was visiting victims of crime and their neighbours and taking details that could be matched against (contrasted with?) official reports, caused suspicion. More threatening still were the questions about police response to burglaries and the satisfaction or otherwise of victim expectations.

The literature on police work shows that police officers place a high premium on the discretion they exercise and adopt practices designed to maintain the positions of low visibility from which their decisions are taken. The data collection threatened these strategies by providing an alternative source of information on police practices and service delivery. Although the interviews were carried out by a police officer, he was asking questions which are traditionally 'unaskable', and this served to increase his perceived marginality.

Another difficulty encountered in involving operational officers from both services (outside the research team) was their modest appreciation of crime prevention principles and practice. Within both services there seems to be an underestimation of the possible benefits of crime prevention initiatives and cynicism about the advantages of collaboration across agencies. This may be changing, and is not intended to represent the position of those of Chief Officer rank with whom we were involved, nor of the officers whose commitment made the project possible.

There may be in some parts of the organisations skepticism about the benefits of successful crime prevention for the organisation. We have heard the view of some senior police officers that the manpower establishment of their divisions is in part

determined by the volume of reported crime. Thus successful crime prevention would reduce the police establishment in those divisions in which it occurred. More generally, it is held by some that those who wish to see a reduction in the size of the police service would use the success of crime prevention initiatives as a means of arguing for such a reduction or reallocation of resources.

In response to these fears we would repeat our earlier point that crime prevention initiatives are time-consuming and expensive in personnel to implement. This must be recognised. Collection and analysis of management information to monitor crime patterns, design measures and then to adjust to the changing nature of crime necessitates much work. As crime prevention initiatives make an impact, reducing the demand on strained resources will make possible the improvement in the quality of policing, for instance in the investigation of the remaining crime and the servicing of other areas of public demand. A reduction in crime must not be used as an argument for reducing police strength.

As for probation resistance, some of this must have stemmed from the additional work required in the early days of the project. Other factors also inhibit collaboration. Most management in the probation service and some social work teachers have attempted in recent years to focus probation concern on *offences*, but the dominant focus remains the *offender*. Probation officers also tend to be properly concerned about confidentiality and what some perceive to be the enforcement bias of crime prevention programmed. They question how their clients are helped if the latter provide information on how and why they commit offences, particularly if that information becomes available to the police. Will it simply increase an offender's chances of detection later? Will it assist the officer in working with clients and how?

We cannot claim to have wholly overcome the problems described. However we think we have benefitted from our experience of them, and note that experience for what it is worth. The institutional base described above enabled the seconded police officer to ensure that policy relevant findings from victim and neighbour surveys were fed into the police organisation swiftly and appropriately. Soon after this, one of the University-based workers accompanied the seconded officer to a meeting with the divisional commander of the Rochdale division to elicit his continuing support. While he expressed some reservations about the survey findings and about the initiative in general he was prepared to continue his support for it and agreed to three area constables on Kirkholt carrying out the security surveys on the homes of burglary victims on the estate. The involvement of the crime prevention department locally and the three area constables on the Kirkholt estate in the implementation of the initiative has led to the sharing of ownership of the project with people at grass roots level. This, as noted earlier, is the direction we want the project to take.

The need for training programmed to fill in the information gap about crime prevention initiatives led the seconded police officer to address Inspectors' Development courses at the Greater Manchester Police training school. These are designed to increase awareness of the potential benefits of crime prevention and to overcome resistance

based on inadequate information. The question of the emphasis which should be given to crime prevention on social workers' training courses (particularly for probation students) is worthy of further consideration. The Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work may be interested in developing this possibility.

(d) Retaining the principle of community involvement

It has been important repeatedly to remind ourselves of the basic decision that, having nurtured the fledgling initiative, the statutory agencies will require it to take wing on its own. More recently, tenants have taken an increasing role in its management and direction. There will always be a place for a support service, but community ownership of the scheme, and its further development, is the outcome to which we aspire.

### **Postscript**

1. As previously indicated, the evaluation described above only covers the seven month period after initiative implementation which took us to September 1987. During that period a significant reduction in burglary victimisation occurred. At the time of this publication going to print, some eleven months after initiative implementation, we can report that recorded burglary victimisation has reduced by some 262 cases as compared with the same time period one year earlier. As time passes however this reduction looks set to be even greater. For example in January 1987 64 cases of burglary were recorded whereas in January 1988 there were only 10.

2. Whether the preventive momentum can be sustained and rates of burglary pegged at the existing level (or reduced even more) will be examined further. To assist in the evaluation of the long term effects the project has secured additional funding from the Home Office to complete a further two years of development and evaluation. During this second phase, in addition to maintaining what has been created, the project will aim to develop additional offender/community initiatives, focusing on the drugs, alcohol, unemployment and debt problems revealed in the offender interviews, as a way of complementing the hardening of targets, and the surveillance afforded by the cocoon neighbourhood watch and home watch schemes. To aid this development the Greater Manchester Probation Service, in October 1987, seconded a probation officer to work full time with the project from an office situated on the Kirkholt estate. It is anticipated that a report on this second phase of the project (which will include a cost/benefit analysis) will be published towards the end of 1989. It is hoped that this two-pronged approach — reducing the motivation to burgle whilst making burglary harder to commit — will have an especially powerful impact which is both long-lasting and unlikely to engender much displacement.

## **Appendix A**

### *Guidelines for Neighbour Selection*

UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL ADMINISTRATION

### **BURGLARY PREVENTION DEMONSTRATION PROJECT**

#### *CHECKLIST OF CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION OF RESPONDENT FOR 'NEIGHBOUR SCHEDULE'*

1. If victims' house is 'mid-terrace' select either neighbour randomly.
2. If 'end-terrace', interview neighbour in adjoining terrace.
3. If 'semi-detached', interview neighbour in adjoining semi-detached house.
4. If 'detached', select neighbour randomly unless clear difference in design or location, in which case select nearest equivalent.
5. If flat (Systems/Balcony Model), 'end-balcony' select adjoining dwelling. If flat 'mid-balcony' select either neighbour randomly.
6. If flat (1 flat per floor model), select flat immediately below.
7. If flat (ground floor) select nearest neighbour, select randomly if two.
8. If flat (semi-detached 4 unit-model), select opposite flat on the same floor.

## Appendix B

### *The Comparison between Langley and Kirkholt Estates*

Two approaches were adopted, a straight comparison between pre and post-implementation phases on the two estates, and an analysis of the trend during the introduction of the programme. For the former, the mean frequency of households suffering burglaries 1, 2, 3 or 4 times in the eight overlapping seven month periods between January 1986 and February 1987 (the pre-implementation phase) was calculated for each estate. These data should fit the Poisson distribution. Expected frequencies were calculated on this basis. Observed and expected frequencies were calculated for the post-implementation seven month period. (The analyses to be described were run both on these data and on the data converted from households suffering burglary, to burglary *events*. The results did not differ in any important way and results from only one form of the analysis will be discussed. ) In this analysis expected frequencies were considered as *data*. One can conceive of the data as a four-way contingency table with two levels of each factor: time (pre- and post-implementation), estate (Langley and Kirkholt), victimisation (single or repeat) and 'reality' (observed and expected). Thus depicted, the data allow a single test of the hypothesis that repeat victimisations have changed disproportionately to expectation according to estate and time. The crucial comparison was the four term interaction effect in log-linear analysis of the contingency table. In the event,  $G^2$  failed to reach an acceptable standard of significance, although by inspection the data tended in the desired direction. For reasons rehearsed in the text, this is not surprising. However, another way of looking at the data, one which makes use of more of the data from the implementation phase, was next attempted. In this analysis, seven month risk periods were studied, from the one ending in February 1987 to the one ending in September 1987. For each of the seven-month periods, the ratio of expected to observed repeat victimisations was calculated for each estate. Thus for each time period and each estate, one could see achieved relative to expected rates of repeat burglary. If the initiative on Kirkholt were progressively making a particular impact on repeat burglary, this proportion should reduce. By Spearman's rank correlation coefficient, it does. ( $r=.79$ ,  $p .05$ ). For Langley, while the correlation is substantial, it fails to reach statistical significance ( $r=.66$ , ns).

One interesting point which emerges from the analysis is that, on the Langley estate, while not to a statistically reliable extent, the reduction in burglary might be disproportionately benefiting repeat victims. It merits a separate piece of research to establish the circumstances in which major changes in crime rates, up or down, do or do not particularly benefit potential repeat victims. This would substantially clarify the dynamics of crime prevention programmes.

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**The Kirkholt Burglary Prevention Project:  
Phase II**

David Forrester  
Samantha Frenz  
Martin O'Connell  
Ken Pease

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### **Crime Prevention Unit Papers**

The Home Office Prevention Unit was formed in 1983 to promote preventive action against crime. It has a particular responsibility to disseminate information on crime prevention topics. The object of the present series of occasional papers is to present analysis and research material in a way which should help and inform practitioners whose work can help reduce crime.

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## **Foreword**

This is the second report of one of the most successful projects established by the Research and Development Section of the Home Office Crime Prevention Unit. As the report acknowledges the success stems from the combined effort of many agencies – the police and probation services, the local authority, victim support and a number of individuals from the private sector. It is impossible within the context of a relatively short report to reflect the extent of commitment from all those involved with the work.

We now have a responsibility to learn from the Kirkholt experience and to ensure that these lessons find their way into the thinking of policy makers and practitioners. The first report on Kirkholt led to similar schemes being set up around the country; I hope that this second paper will be equally well read and prove as helpful in the development of new community crime prevention initiatives.

I M BURNS

Deputy Under Secretary of State  
Home Office Police Department  
November 1990

## **Acknowledgments**

Any list of those to whom we have reason to be grateful is bound to be incomplete. Those listed below have made a palpable contribution. To those whom we have omitted, we apologise. To the people of Kirkholt go our thanks and congratulations.

Cedric Fullwood, Bob Mathers, Phil Kelly, June Leeming, Peter Hanlon and Edna Ross, of Greater Manchester Probation Service; Alison Murphy – Kirkholt Project Worker; Ron Tench of Rochdale Safer Cities Project; the Chief Constable of Greater Manchester, Mr. James Anderton and all officers from the GMP who assisted with the project; Paul Bissell, Mike Chatterton, Mike Rogers, Daniel Gilling and Alan Trickett of Manchester University; Dr. Samuel Cameron of The University of Bradford; Vicky Maybury, Cil Clayton, Val Hardy and Hilary Ashton, of the “Unity for Our Community” Project for schools; Lindsay Boothman of Rochdale Social Services; Brian Courtney and Berenice Clarke of Rochdale Housing Department.

Special words of thanks must be given to David Simpson, a colleague on the project whose voluntary contribution was important and valued, and to Roger Crofts, who was the seconded Probation Officer for much of Phase II of the project. Roger had a rough ride, but his consistent hard work provided the foundation of Phase II as described in this report.

Although all work of this kind is done through individuals, it requires the collective goodwill of local agencies. The Rochdale agencies which consistently showed such goodwill included the following:

Kirkholt Community Crime Prevention Group  
Kirkholt Credit Union  
Kirkholt Youth Forum  
Rochdale Social Services  
Rochdale Housing Department  
Rochdale Victim Support Scheme  
Churches Action on Neighbourhood Care and Employment.

Although it may be invidious to single out one group, we always enjoyed our contacts with Victim Support. In particular John Paterson’s humour and good sense will live long in the memory.

Thanks are finally due to Kevin Heal, Gloria Laycock and Mary Barker of the Home Office Crime Prevention Unit, and Paul Ekblom and Tom Ellis of the Home Office Research and Planning Unit for their help, advice and adjudication when local conflicts occurred.

David Forrester  
Samantha Frenz  
Martin O’Connell  
Ken Pease

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## **CHAPTER 1. WHAT HAPPENED IN PHASE I**

The design and early results of phase I of the Kirkholt initiative were reported in Paper 13 of the present series, which covered the period to September 1987 (Forrester et al. 1988). This paper continues the story up to March 1990. It should be regarded as a bare-bones summary of much of what was done. The representation of work and ideas is necessarily partial and personal. It is envisaged and hoped that contributing agencies will flesh out their work and its significance in separate publications. In advance of those publications, anyone wishing further information on particular aspects of the project should write to the last-named author, who will direct enquiries to the relevant agencies.

In this chapter we provide a brief summary of the early part of the project, so that the report can be regarded as self-contained. We go on to describe briefly the development of the strands of Phase I of the project into Phase II, and follow this with a brief account of the elements of Phase II itself. There follows a description of burglary patterns on the estate and their change over time. Finally, a short chapter considers developments in crime prevention in the light of the Kirkholt experience.

### **Kirkholt Phase I: A Summary of Information Gathered**

Kirkholt is two miles south of Rochdale Town Centre. It is a local authority estate of some 2,280 dwellings, bounded by four major roads. The rate of recorded residential burglary on the estate (approximately 25% of dwellings were burgled in 1985) was over double the rate of all domestic burglaries (recorded and unrecorded) for high risk areas identified by the 1984 British Crime Survey (Hough and Mayhew 1985). This is more dramatic than it seems since the housing on the estate is of a type generally associated with only a medium level of burglary.

The first task of the project team was to generate the information necessary to guide a crime prevention initiative. Apart from consultation with relevant local groups, systematic information gathering came from structured interviews with three categories of respondent; domestic burglary victims, neighbours of domestic burglary victims and convicted burglars. Victim responses described the dwelling, occupancy patterns of the victim, and fine detail about the burglary and its circumstances. Neighbour interviews identified similarities and differences between victimised houses and the most obvious alternative targets. Burglar interviews gathered information of three types; the first concerned general techniques and target selection in relation to all burglaries committed; the second dealt with specific target choice and technique in relation to a specified burglary; the third concerned burglar motivation and what led up to the burglary. Information included a wide variety of facts, such as the distance of target from home, modes of transport used, reasons for the choice of house burgled, premeditation, planning, knowledge of victim, day, time, circumstances of offence, type of property known to be in the house, the method of disposal, and feelings about and motives for the burglary.

All types of interview yielded relevant data, as did a simple examination of recorded burglaries. A few instances must suffice. Burglary in Rochdale was very local. 85% of detected burglars travelled less than two miles to commit their offences. The distance travelled was less than one mile in 63% of cases. Factors which seemed to act as a deterrent to burglary included signs of occupancy, dogs, and high visibility at the point of entry. Despite this, 70% of points of entry were visible to neighbours. Only 35% were visible to passers-by. Both victims and neighbours were able to recognise points which were most vulnerable to the burglar. 40% of neighbours thought there was an obvious reason why the victim dwelling had been chosen. Reasons included low actual or apparent occupancy, attractive property, and victim lifestyle. Theft of cash from pre-payment fuel meters was a major contributor to burglary loss.

The project team made contact with as many of the agencies and groups within Kirkholt as possible. More formally, in July 1986 the Project Team organised a half-day seminar chaired by Cedric Fullwood, Chief Probation Officer of Greater Manchester. All relevant agencies were invited to contribute ideas for preventive action based on the data presented about the local crime pattern.

The data suggested elements of a burglary prevention initiative. The question remained about the group to which the programme should be applied. Taking victimised homes generally, it was found that (in 1986) the chance of a second or subsequent burglary was over four times as high as the chance of a first burglary. Thus, a burglary flags the high probability of another burglary. Reference to the 1984 British Crime Survey showed this pattern to be national, albeit not to the same extent. Subsequent research in Canada (Polvi et al 1990) shows the same pattern to exist in Canada. The period of greatest risk of repeat victimisation is within six weeks of the first. To put the position as it applied to Kirkholt in 1986 more concretely, nearly half of those burgled in December 1986 had been burgled at least once before during 1986.

### **Kirkholt Phase I. The Choice of Multiple Victimisation.**

The prevention of repeat victimisation lay at the centre of the strategy of Kirkholt Phase I. Since the significance of this is now even clearer than it was at the time, it seems appropriate to outline the advantages of such a strategy.

The observation that victimisation is a good predictor of later victimisation appears to be of general validity. On a commonsense level, it seems reasonable that a property which has proven attractive to a burglar will continue to appeal to the same and other burglars. The features central to target selection remain operative over long periods of time. Winchester and Jackson's (1991) study of burglary victimisation, for example, identified factors which distinguish burgled dwellings from other dwellings. The factors, such as 'located on the nearest main road' and 'set at a distance from the nearest house' are not ones which change quickly. This means that a dwelling remains a likely (or unlikely) target for further burglary over long periods.

There are a number of reasons why the prevention of *repeat* victimisation is a very attractive approach to the prevention of crime generally.

- \* Repeat victimisation is much more probable than first victimisation, and so attention to a given number of dwellings is much more productive in crime reduction terms when it is concentrated on dwellings already victimised.
- \* Preventing repeat victimisation protects the most vulnerable social groups, without having to identify those groups as such, which can be socially divisive. Thus, attention to those already victimised will have the incidental effect of protecting many single parents, for example.
- \* The normal rate of victimisation offers a realistic pace for crime prevention activity in response. Preventing repeat victimisation is a way of efficiently “drip-feeding” crime prevention to an area.
- \* On the unrealistically pessimistic view that no crime is prevented but only displaced, preventing repeat victimisation remains a worthwhile aim, in the spirit of sharing the agony around. On the more realistic view that displacement is only partial, it becomes defensible on both prevention and agony-sharing grounds.
- \* There is evidence that the areas with the highest rate of crime generally are also the areas with the highest rates of multiple victimisation (Trickett et al. 1990). This means that the prevention of repeat victimisation is commensurately more important the greater an area’s crime problem is.

In short, the prevention of repeat victimisation has appeal as a crime prevention strategy. Apart from those set out above, victim support has been an emerging theme of criminal justice in the last decade, and there is a case for saying that the best support a victim can be given is the avoidance of further victimisation. The collaboration with Rochdale Victim Support which the Kirkholt Project enjoyed was both crucially important and a coming together of two important aspects of the response to crime.

### **Kirkholt Phase I. The Components of an Initiative.**

Perhaps the most obvious factor in the burglary profile of Kirkholt was the taking of money from electricity and gas pre-payment meters. 49% of burglaries on the estate involved the loss of meter cash, and 27% involved the taking *only* of meter cash. The importance of pre-payment meters in residential burglary had been established by Hill (1986). The objective was to replace pre-payment meters by token meters or other payment schemes in the homes of those burgled. The cooperation of the fuel boards was absolutely necessary – and forthcoming.

Overwhelmingly, Kirkholt burglars entered a dwelling by the first route that was attempted. A security upgrading of the homes of burglary victims was put in hand, together with post-coding of valuables. The primary requirement of the upgrading was that it did not consist of token locks and bolts, but instead dealt with the real points of vulnerability as evident in the entry methods

described by burglars and their victims. The security uprating was based upon crime prevention officer advice in the light of our information and communicated through the local area police officer. Alongside this uprating, a system of monitoring burglary techniques on the estate was set in place so that security advice could be based upon changing burglary practice.

The most publicised element of the Kirkholt scheme nationally has been cocoon neighbourhood Watch. By this device, the residents of the six or so houses or flats contiguous with a victimised dwelling were asked to look out and report on anything suspicious around the burgled home to prevent repeat victimisation. If they agreed to cooperate, they too were provided with security uprating.

This kind of Watch scheme is triggered by a specific event and has a specific focus. It also mirrors what happens in a well-established community. While we remain wedded to the cocoon idea, as was pointed out in the original report, these cocoons took on a life of their own as foci of more conventional Home Watch schemes, and we have consistently regarded them as the nucleus of rather than a substitute for community organisation,

Community support was an element of Phase I of the scheme. Project workers visited the homes of burglary victims on the estate, offering support and putting victims in touch with the appropriate agencies. In due course project workers took over from area constables the security surveys, the associated post-coding of valuables, and establishing cocoons. Workers also put in place a continued monitoring of relevant burglary techniques, to facilitate the evaluation of the scheme over the longer term.

### **The 'Success' of Kirkholt Phase I.**

For the purposes of evaluation, rather than policy, it would have been ideal if repeat victimisation had been reduced without a more general reduction in burglary. This is because the initiative focused on those who had already fallen victim to burglary. However this ideal was always improbable of achievement. Several of the measures offered protection both to the victim and to neighbouring households (in cocoons, all members were offered security uprating). Thus people not victimised were offered protection which was intended to prevent their victimisation. For purely statistical reasons, the reduction in repeat burglaries would have to be very much faster than the reduction in first burglaries to be significant. In short, the odds are stacked heavily against showing an effect peculiar to repeat victimisation. In our first report, no statistically persuasive reduction in repeat burglaries occurred over and above that achieved generally.

In brief, the rate of burglary on Kirkholt fell to 40% of its pre-initiative level within five months of the start of the programme. Repeat victimisations fell to zero over the same period, and did not exceed two in any month thereafter. The trend was in contrast to that observed in adjacent areas of Rochdale. However there was no evidence that crimes had been deflected from Kirkholt to bordering areas. The time period of the first evaluation was short, and acknowledged in the first report to be so. In the foreword to the first report,

the description of Phase II was as follows: "Further action is now under way in Kirkholt building on the initial success, but this time aiming to reduce the motivation for crime. With the aid of Home Office development funds, the probation service, the police and the university researchers are seeking to tackle the linked problems of alcohol and drug abuse, debt and unemployment. A further report describing this second phase, and an evaluation, will be prepared in due course" (p.iii). We will next describe the transition of the project from its first to its second phase.

## **CHAPTER 2. THE TRANSITION TO PHASE II**

The funding arrangements for Phase II of the project were different from those which had earlier applied. In Phase I, the University was funded to pull the elements together, and police and probation services contributed staff time. Greater Manchester Police seconded an Inspector to the project. There was no obvious lead agency, although Greater Manchester Police donated most staff time. In Phase II, the Police Inspector returned to normal duties, and a seconded Probation Officer became the full-time professional responsible for the scheme. This was reflected in the funding arrangements. The body holding Home Office development funds was the Greater Manchester Probation Service, with the University being paid to undertake evaluation of what was done. In this sense, the project ceased to be a multi-agency enterprise in quite the same way, although on the ground it was so, by its very nature. Although agencies like the police and the Rochdale Victim Support Scheme continued to collaborate and to attend Management Group meetings with members of the Probation Service and University, the enterprise was more clearly probation-centred. This was entirely appropriate, since the substance of Phase II described later is clearly in the heartland of probation expertise. However, the new working arrangements had their problems. A doctoral student of the University of Manchester is undertaking his thesis work on the Kirkholt Project from the perspective of inter-agency working (which will be published as Gilling 1990), and we believe that the lessons of this should be heeded by those undertaking multi-agency work. One of the issues was that the elements of Phase I continued alongside the introduction of Phase II. Contending for resources were new elements and the continuation of the old, with frictions which were probably inevitable. The seconded probation officer was required to introduce the elements of Phase II while at the same time ensuring the continuation of Phase I. Those involved with the project had differing allegiances and enthusiasms about the elements of the two phases of the project. As will be clear in the Gilling report mentioned above, to the problems intrinsic to multi-agency ventures were added the problems of phasing, whereby different project elements (with different organisational origins) were introduced at different times and competed for attention. The issues here are very important and, as noted, will be addressed in detail by Gilling.

The transition from Phase I to Phase II has been caricatured as a transition from physical to social crime prevention, but this is to misunderstand Phase I. There was constant community consultation in Phase I, and clear social elements, including cocoon Neighbourhood Watch, the establishment of a crime prevention group on the estate, and a rapid development of conventional Home Watch schemes. Rather Phase II can be thought of as the development of an offender and community focus alongside the victim focus of Phase I.

### **The Continuation and Development of Phase I**

Phase I remains in place in most particulars. Three years after setting up the programme of visits to the victims of burglary, we still have the support of the

agencies which agreed to work with the support team. The police on Kirkholt have continued, daily, to refer burglary victims via the team to the Rochdale Victim Support Scheme. The Local Housing Authority has implemented the security recommendations of the team and the fuel boards have removed cash meters when requested. Home Watch schemes have blossomed and have been monitored. What has changed is the nature of the support team. Following a successful application to the Manpower Service Commission in 1986, we had available the resources to employ eleven support workers for twelve months, including two supervisory staff. This we had calculated as being the number required to deal with the work that would be generated if the number of victims on the estate during 1987 remained at the levels obtaining in 1986 and previous years. Although the initiative implementation commenced and the project went live on March 1st 1987, on that date only six of the eleven posts had been filled. Over the following weeks this number at one point reached ten. Full establishment was never reached, for three reasons. The first was quality of applicant. Despite no real shortage of applicants, we did set a stringent set of standards which applicants had to meet. We could not afford to take risks with the employment of people whose work would take them into the home of recent victims, and despite polite approaches from the MSC agency to lower the standard, we adhered to the original criteria. The second reason for not achieving a full complement of workers was that MSC schemes were intended as a stepping stone to work, and happily some moved on to full time employment elsewhere. The third reason – which makes the first two largely incidental – was that the twelve month period saw a significant decline in burglaries on the estate. During the twelve month pre-initiative period some 526 reported burglaries occurred on Kirkholt, whereas during the twelve month post-initiative implementation period that number had been reduced to 223. This meant that fewer workers were required.

For the second year of initiative implementation, commencing in March 1988, we had to make a further application to the MSC. The scale of this application reflected the crime reduction on Kirkholt. Application was made for only six workers, including a supervisor. This team would continue the work of the previous year, and administer a questionnaire which would seek to monitor the Home Watch schemes set up during the previous twelve months.

As part of Government strategy the Community Programme was to be run down during 1988 and replaced by an Employment Training programme. We were informed by the MSC agency that we would only have our six workers for six months before the agency closed down. During those six months members of the management group had to ensure that the Home Watch questionnaire (discussed later) was administered, as well as seeking a replacement for the MSC team. Despite much uncertainty about the new Employment Training programme we did secure two workers from that scheme. This allowed work with burglary victims on the estate to continue, which had by then reached such a low level that two workers could cope.

In 1990, funding for two workers has been secured from the Rochdale “Safer Cities” initiative. These are based with the seconded Probation Officer in the

project office on Kirkholt. They are managed by the Probation Service in Rochdale.

Having entered the fourth year of initiatives, the Local Authority Housing budget of £75,000 set aside to improve the security hardware of victimised dwellings over three years has run out. So pleased has the Housing Department been with the project that the procedure has been integrated into the normal Housing Department budget and council policy throughout the Borough of Rochdale, so that burglary victims receive a priority response instead of being routinely added to the council's repair list, as happened prior to 1987.

In the first project report we stated that, "community ownership of the scheme, and its further development, is the outcome to which we aspire". That objective has remained firm. It has been approached on two fronts which have subsequently merged. The first was through community involvement in Home Watch, and the second was through the setting up of the Kirkholt Crime Prevention Group. While it is difficult to separate the intertwined strands of Phase I and Phase II, we include below a description of the development and monitoring of Home Watch as reflecting a continuation of Phase I in this chapter. This will be followed by a brief account of the transition to community-based arrangements for the administration of crime prevention on Kirkholt.

### **Home Watch in the Continuation of Phase 1**

Before the project there were no Home Watch schemes on the estate. Attempts to introduce them by local Police had been met by apathy. We chose to go for much smaller units of neighbourly support through the introduction of "cocoon" neighbourhood Watch as described in Chapter 1. We believed that an "organic" development would occur into Home Watch schemes. This was reflected in the cocooning interviews (see below). During the first twelve months of initiative implementation, the support group visited nearly every household on the estate as part of the cocoon scheme and spoke to the occupants as either victims or the neighbours of victims. Whilst introducing the concept of "cocoon" neighbourhood Watch each household was also introduced to the idea of Home Watch. Residents were asked whether, if sufficient support were identified in their locality for such a scheme, they would be prepared to join. The role of a Home Watch coordinator was explained and volunteers sought. From these beginnings a large number of Home Watch schemes was set up in twelve months (at the time of writing there are 93 Home Watch schemes on the estate, with an average membership of 20 - 25 households. The estate is now almost covered by Home Watch).

An initial problem was not in getting people to join, but in sorting out who was to be the coordinator. There were far more volunteers for this role than necessary. Having set up the schemes, the project team was acutely aware of the lessons learned in respect of Home/Neighbourhood Watch. Although Sohail Husein's research on the topic had not at that time been completed,

the reported account of that research (Husein 1988) chimes well with both our direct and vicarious experience. One message seemed to be that once the initial enthusiasm for such schemes begins to wane, unless a support structure is built into schemes, they quickly lose support and collapse. Husein identified a tendency to blame the police for lack of support during this decline. A meeting of all coordinators on Kirkholt was called, at which the problem was aired. They decided to meet every three months. A newsletter was produced for each meeting which coordinators were asked to deliver to scheme members. Discussion at these meetings was encouraged to go beyond house burglary and issues such as litter, fly-tipping, vandalism, and dogs appeared on the agenda.

Support for Home Watch meetings was always good but those attending were principally coordinators who could be expected to be the most enthusiastic. The strength of Home Watch schemes however comes from its group unity. The management team decided to try to gauge the operation of Home Watch on the estate by introducing a new questionnaire for participants. The survey ran for ten months between June 1988 and April 1989. One in ten participating Home Watch households were selected each month on a random basis (without replacement) so that after ten months one member of all households taking part at the start of the period, and some who had joined since the beginning of the survey, had been questioned (934 in total).

The purpose of the Home Watch participants questionnaire was to spot problems in the scheme and act as a means of keeping interest alive.

### **Worries about Crime Since Joining Home Watch**

When asked whether they were *worried* about crime since becoming a member of Home Watch, almost exactly half said they were. When this is compared with responses to the question "In the year before you joined your Home Watch scheme, were you worried about becoming a victim of crime?", it is apparent that the percentage of people who expressed worries has dropped substantially (from 68% to 49%). Interestingly, this did not apply to people who had lived at their current address for one year or less: the percentage of those who were worried *before* joining a scheme was 51% which contrasts with 55% who were worried *after* joining a Home Watch. This comparison confounds the effects of moving with those of the scheme. The possibilities include the following:

- (i) Home Watch is irrelevant to worry reduction (recall that no questions were asked of non-participants). Kirkholt just got less worrying. Newcomers do not worry less than they used to, because they moved from areas which were less worrying than Kirkholt is, even now.
- (ii) Home Watch reduces worry generally, including the worry of newcomers. Moving intrinsically induces worry, so newcomers would have worried even more had it not been for Home Watch.

It should be noted that the absolute levels of worry were similar for newcomers and others, indicating a shared perception of the estate. In addition to the above, when worry levels both pre and post joining a scheme

were crosstabulated controlling for length of residence it becomes apparent that there was no significant relationship between these variables. This invites explanation in terms of the type of argument set out above rather than in terms of differences between newcomers and others.

Kirkholt originated as a burglary prevention project. There is thus some interest in looking at worries concerning burglary separately. There was a drop of nearly 20% in the number of participants who were worried when compared to the pre-membership period. Nonetheless, burglary remained overwhelmingly the worrying crime. No other crime attracted even one-tenth of the number of people worried about burglary. When asked whether burglary had been the biggest problem on Kirkholt, just over one-half of the respondents said it had. When asked whether it was currently the biggest problem, only 15% said it was. Of course, a problem can cease to become the biggest problem in one of two ways. Either it becomes less of a problem, or other problems become larger. Although we cannot exclude the second possibility, we know of no problem which became prominent on Kirkholt at the time in question, and thus the more obvious explanation is also likely to be the correct one, namely that burglary worry had decreased.

A question on crime fear was asked separately. Overall, 57% of participants claimed that membership of Home Watch had reduced their fear, 39% that it had had no effect, and 3% that it had increased it.

### **Aspirations for and Incidental Achievements of Home Watch**

Participants were asked what they had hoped Home Watch would achieve. When given options which included the reduction of various types of crime, and one of improving community spirit, overwhelmingly the aspiration was restricted to the reduction of domestic burglary. 77% of respondents hoped for that. The next most common specific option indicated was the improvement of community spirit, a hope for 9% of respondents.

When asked what they had thought the chances were of a Home Watch scheme working successfully on Kirkholt, respondents were moderately optimistic. Just over 20% had thought the chances were poor to non-existent, 23% fair, 38% good, and 19% very good. A higher proportion of older people (51 or over) seemed to think that Home Watch had a "very good" or "good" chance of working. Only 40% of people in the "19 to 25" group rated its chances in this way compared with 55% of the "51 to 65" group and 63% of the "over 65's". A chi-square test showed that age group and estimation of the chances of success of Home Watch were significantly associated (chi-square = 60.23, df 25, P = 0.0001), by inspection in the manner described, of greater optimism going with greater age.

### **Have Problems on the Estate Diminished?**

Nearly 90% of participants thought that things had either "improved" or were "much improved". Less than 1% thought things had got worse or much worse. The perception of improvement was greatest amongst those who had lived there longest. 91% of those who had lived there between five and ten years, and 90% of those who had lived on Kirkholt for over ten years, thought

things were “much improved” or “improved”, compared with 86% of people who had lived at their current address for one year or less. When chi-squared is applied to these two variables (length of tenure and diminution of problems on the estate), a significant relationship is identified (chi-square = 26.14, df 15, P = 0.04).

### **Membership of and Enthusiasm for Home Watch**

At the time of interview, respondents had been members of a Home Watch scheme for a minimum of 4 months and an average of 14.5 months. There had been time for enthusiasm to decay. When asked if they still felt they were members of Home Watch nearly all participants (94%) replied, “yes”. More young people (19 to 25) felt they were no longer a member of Home Watch (9% compared with 2% of the over 65 group). Again, a test of significance confirms the association between these variables (chi-square = 32.80, df 10, P = 0.0003).

While a sense of continuing membership is an expression of at least a minimum degree of enthusiasm, a question about enthusiasm was asked explicitly. 64% of people said they were as enthusiastic as at the outset of the scheme, and a further 32% were now more enthusiastic. Given the way in which the respondents had been selected, and the length of time which had elapsed, this is impressive confirmation that, whatever is the case elsewhere, cocoon-based Home Watch on Kirkholt had sustained enthusiasm.

The main purpose of the Home Watch participants questionnaire was the development of the scheme, not its evaluation. That said, the general impression is that the developing scheme commanded allegiance and enthusiasm over the period of the project, and that the problem of house burglary, and the worry about house burglary, was felt to have declined. There were some interesting differences according to age and length of residence on the estate, which suggest where effort needs to be applied to improve the scheme. This exercise identified very little discontent. Where it did occur it was often a small personal problem that was easily resolved, and whose identification helped justify the exercise. The overwhelming majority of residents was happy with the scheme and thought it the major cause of burglary reduction on the estate. There were no significant suggestions on how the scheme could be improved. Plenty appeared to be taking place. The Home Watch participants questionnaire is the last major data-gathering exercise to be clearly linked to Phase I of the project.

### **The Scheme's Management: Emergence of the Kirkholt Crime Prevention Group.**

Ever since the project management team first met in December 1985 it had been determined that its position was temporary. It was agreed that if success was going to be sustained then the main thrust and motivation should come from within Kirkholt. The group which emerged came to be known as the Kirkholt Crime Prevention Group. In July 1987 the management group set up a meeting at the Community Centre on the estate to which anyone who had

an interest in forming such a group was invited. 76 people attended. They included representatives from community groups, statutory agencies, schools, churches, councillors and a number of local residents. Such was the support that over the next few months the Crime Prevention Group was formed, with officials being elected together with a committee and rules to administer the group. Since then, open meetings have been held by the group every two months with committee members also meeting quite often in between. The group has been responsible for organising several pedal cycle post-coding days. It organised an anti-litter campaign where over a series of Saturdays the entire estate was cleaned of rubbish by the residents supported by the Council Cleansing department. It has invited guest speakers to the meetings. For example, the local dog warden came and advised how best to deal with the nuisance of dogs roaming the estate. The group provides a forum for agencies and the community to meet together to identify the estate's problems and seek to resolve them. In 1989 it became obvious that duplication was beginning to occur on the agendas of the Home Watch Coordinators' meetings and those of the Crime Prevention Group. Indeed, some of the principal members of these groups participated in both sets of meetings. With Home Watch Coordinators having settled into their role and Crime Prevention group members having become confident in theirs, they were both now getting on with the business of identifying and trying to prevent crime problems on the estate. A decision was therefore made, with the consent of both groups, that they had grown to the point where the logical development was to amalgamate. This was brought into effect at the Annual General Meeting of the Crime Prevention Group in October 1989 which had as its guest speaker the Chief Constable of Greater Manchester, Mr James Anderton. To mark the change, the combined group became known as the Kirkholt Community Crime Prevention Group. As planned, in April 1990 the management team which has been overseeing the project since its inception ceased to exist and the above-named group took over responsibility for the Kirkholt Project. This is not to say that the agencies involved have severed links with the project. A seconded Probation Officer remains in post at the office on The Strand, as do the two Safer Cities workers, and strong links and support between this office, the Police, Victim Support and the Housing Department, to mention but a few, are maintained, both with one another and with the Community Crime Prevention Group.

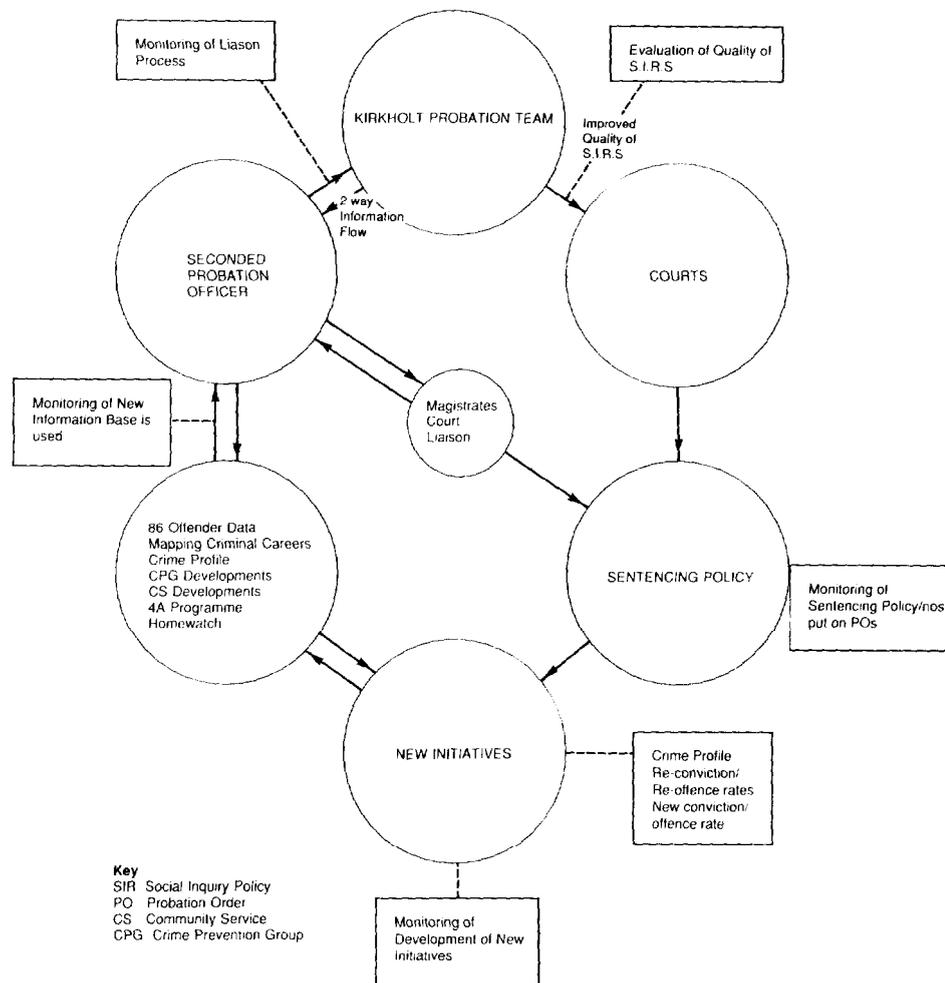
### **CHAPTER 3: THE SUBSTANCE OF PHASE II: STRATEGY AND INTERROGATING SOCIAL INQUIRY REPORTS**

The work of the probation service is changing rapidly. A decade ago, it would have been difficult to imagine the extent of probation interest in crime prevention which is now apparent. The tension which resulted from the new situation, as perceived by the University members of the team, had two aspects. The first was that the Probation Service is encouraged by Government to advocate and organise realistic alternatives to custodial sentences. In doing so, some short term crime prevention (by incapacitating offenders) is forgone. What they judged necessary was a strategy which reconciled the aims of the avoidance of custody and the prevention of crime. A secondary aspect of the tension was that the University had been funded to do an evaluation of a project whose specific elements were under development. A research assistant was employed with only observation and commentary to carry out. This led to two members of the management group devising the diagram presented as Figure 1, which was accepted as a brief statement of strategy, and hence as a basis of what to measure. With hindsight, it has inconsistencies and ambiguities. However, it also succeeds in establishing a mechanism reconciling the reduction of custody and prevent crime at the same time. Crucially, it also established what it would be appropriate to measure, thus solving the University's problem. Because of the perception of this document as having continuing relevance, what follows is a brief exposition of the thinking behind it.

The circles in the figure are people or processes. The rectangles are the implied measurements which flow from that part of the diagram. One of the important relationships was that between the seconded officer and the team from which he was drawn. That relationship, in which data about the pattern of burglary on Kirkholt would be communicated, would inform the team's practice with Kirkholt clients (not explicit in the diagram) and reports written for the courts on Kirkholt offenders. For instance, knowing better the Kirkholt offending context, a report writer would be better able to make detailed recommendations for non-custodial alternatives, informal reparation and community service possibilities. There was also predicted a motivational factor, whereby officers would become even keener to write informed reports on such clients. This would be reflected in better quality reports (measured in the top right hand rectangle). The better quality of reports, and also the direct communication between seconded probation officer and magistrates courts, would lead to a higher take-up of non-custodial recommendations. The changed, better informed sentencing policy, in parallel with emerging data sets (bottom left hand corner of diagram) would together generate new initiatives, to form the content of probation 4A programmes, community service orders, and so on. Thus the content of non-custodial sentences themselves would be directed at crime reduction. The new initiatives would themselves be monitored.

Those involved at the time were quite proud of this diagram. The management group agreed to it as a plan of action. It solved the conflict

Figure 1



between decreased custody and crime prevention by making the substance of non-custodial alternatives feed into a crime prevention programme and making the detail about offending yielded by the programme itself generate changed sentencing practice towards non-custodial options which offer the hope of being crime reductive.

In the event, there were many reasons why the scheme's development did not proceed exactly as envisaged in the diagram. Nonetheless, there was some merit in the aspiration which the diagram represents, and it is hoped that this is useful in informing the thinking of other probation-led crime prevention projects. The document was influential in shaping the project. The present seconded probation officer (the third author of this report) sees the Project having been successfully assimilated into the probation team (see circles at top and top left of figure). This includes the community service and 4A elements of probation work. The offering of options to the court which mesh

with the Kirkholt project has occurred. Most importantly (and a point with which all members of the management group would agree) is that latterly data from the project has informed new initiatives. The two circles at the bottom left of the diagram are as in the relationship described. At the top right of the diagram, the probation service by internal monitoring evaluates the quality of Social Enquiry Reports.

While the diagram was perceived as a crucial formative document by police and University representatives on the management group, probation representatives stress the centrality of the Phase II document prepared by the seconded probation officer in September 1988. The aims and objectives set out in that document were as follows:

### **Aims**

1. To develop a successful initiative on Kirkholt geared towards preventing offenders or those likely to offend from committing offences.
2. To do this in conjunction with the community and other agencies.
3. To continue and develop the work associated with Phase I of the project.

### **Objectives**

1. Create a 'Kirkholt Team' within the Rochdale Probation Office, this team to become far more involved with the project and to have the responsibility for developing the work with the Kirkholt clients.
2. To actively involve other agencies, in addition to the Probation Service, in Phase II, further developing many of the links already in existence from Phase I.
3. To actively encourage and involve local people in Phase II, working in particular through the Kirkholt Crime Prevention Group and Home Watch schemes. Local people will also be encouraged to discuss issues relating to crime on the estate and their fear of crime, initiatives then being designed to respond to these.
4. To design and put into action specific methods of working with Kirkholt offenders, these relating to the community (ie Kirkholt) in which the offenders live.
5. To examine the causes of offending on Kirkholt and in conjunction with other agencies and the community, design and set up initiatives so that such negative motivations may be positively tackled.
6. To seek constructive involvement with those who are prone to offend, but who are not currently clients of the probation service.
7. To reinterview, as far as is possible, those offenders from Kirkholt who were interviewed during the 1986 research, in order to establish what difference the Project has made to them and how, if they have ceased to offend or reduce their rate of offending, they are now using the time and energy which previously went into offending.

8. Collect and develop all necessary relevant information so as to inform the above objectives.

9. To record, monitor and evaluate the work.

It was regrettable that the reinterview of 1986 burglars mentioned as objective 7, although pursued with assiduity, did not produce a meaningful sample because of unwillingness to respond and untraceability of members of that group. Of course, several of the elements linked to the diagram can also be linked to the above set of objectives. While there are contending views about the development of objectives for Phase II, there is less about what was done. A description of elements of this follow.

### **Interrogation of Social Inquiry Reports prepared on Kirkholt Residents.**

#### **Introduction and Methodology**

Between September 1989 and March 1990 (inclusive), a total of 47 Social Inquiry Reports (SIRS), compiled by Probation Officers from the Rochdale Office on Kirkholt residents during the time period, were examined.

Age and sex of each SIR subject and information regarding the offense, recommendation of sentence and the sentence imposed were recorded.

A scrutiny of reports written on Kirkholt residents shows one major difference. Reports well into Phase II contain concluding paragraphs of the following kind: "The Court will be aware that the Probation Service has been involved in a Crime Prevention Project on the Kirkholt Estate. As an extension of this, the majority of Probation clients are now being supervised, within their community, via a group work programme. This initially consists of an Induction Programme of 7 x 2 hour sessions examining the offender's behaviour in relation to the local community, criminality, money management, constructive use of time, alcohol/drug misuse, employment and relationships. Having completed the Induction Programme the offender may then be invited to participate in other specialist groups pertinent to his particular problems. Non-attendance at the group would, of course, result in breach proceedings being instigated". Thus is Phase II communicated to the courts.

Details about the content of social enquiry reports (rather than their quality) were assessed in the following way. Using a checklist of motivational and underlying social factors, the researcher read through each report several times before noting which factors appeared to be identifiable from the report's contents. A pilot study which was carried out using past reports written on Kirkholt residents illustrated that the list of factors was by no means exhaustive so the researcher added new factors as and when they appeared. Much of the information presented in this section is grounded in the researcher's translation of the content of the SIRs and therefore could be viewed as subjective. However, as in a similar survey carried out by the Inner London Probation Service in 1980, the,

"analysis will reflect (some of) the information presented to the court, and thus available to aid sentencing..."

(Stanley and Murphy, ILPS, 1980: p.8)

### **Objectives of the interrogation**

The specific objectives of the interrogation were as follows:

- (a) to examine “motivations” that might indicate “reasons” for offending,
- (b) to look at underlying “social” factors that may influence offending behaviour,
- (c) to examine the different types of offences committed by the subjects of SIRs living on Kirkholt and,
- (d) to look at the recommendations for sentencing made by Probation Officers in the report and, the sentence of the court.

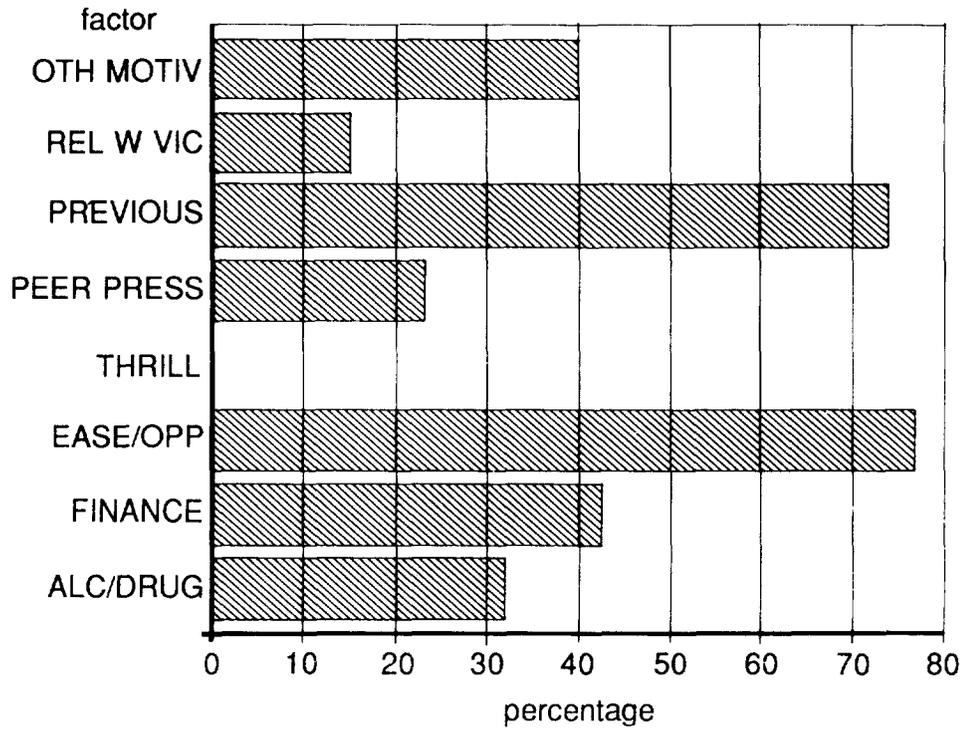
At the outset it was envisaged that the assessment tool used in the interrogation, and the results produced, may be used as a means of indicating the frequency of different problems which require specific help. It will be recalled that the group work begins with a seven-meeting Induction Programme. It was considered that the analysis of reports might mean there would no longer be a need for the Induction Programme aimed at identifying such problems, as some Probation clients could be pointed straight in the direction of specialist groups and/or help aimed at dealing with their particular area(s) of need.

Demographic information about this sample is available on request from the researcher concerned (the second author).

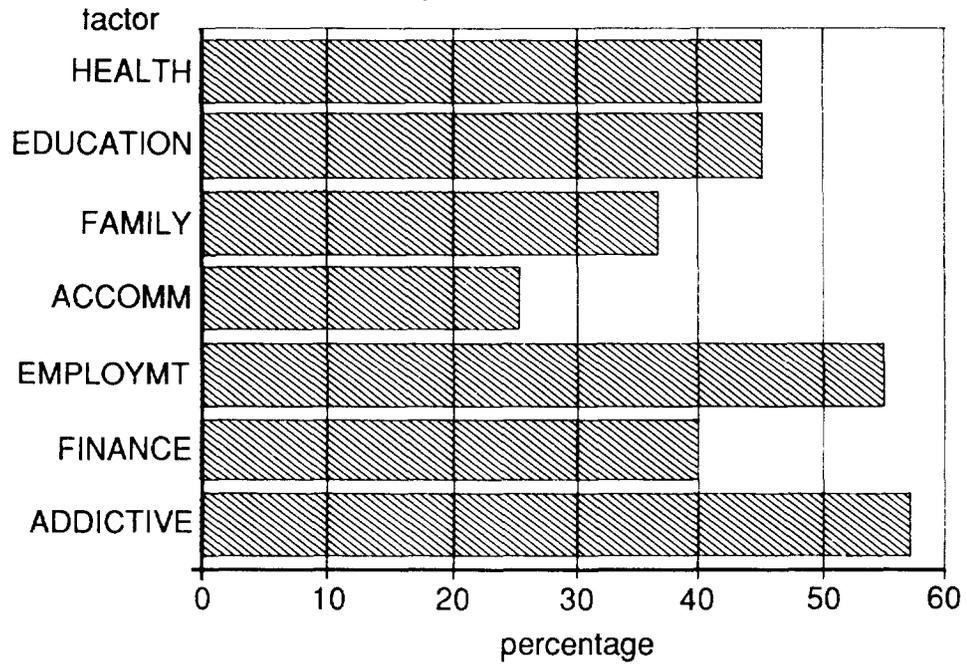
### **Motivational Factors**

Figure 2 illustrates various factors that have been identified from the contents of SIRs as being possible motivations for committing an offence. It shows that not only had the majority of the 47 (75%) subjects committed offences in the past, but also that a similar percentage appear to have been influenced by the fact that there was some element of ease or opportunity about committing the crime(s). Over 30% appear to have been under the influence of alcohol or drugs at the time of committing the offence, and a sizeable percentage seem to have had some sort of financial reason for doing it.

**Figure 2** Motivational factors identified for Kirkholt SIR subjects (9/89 - 3/90)



**Figure 3** Social factors identified for Kirkholt SIR subjects (9/89 - 3/90)

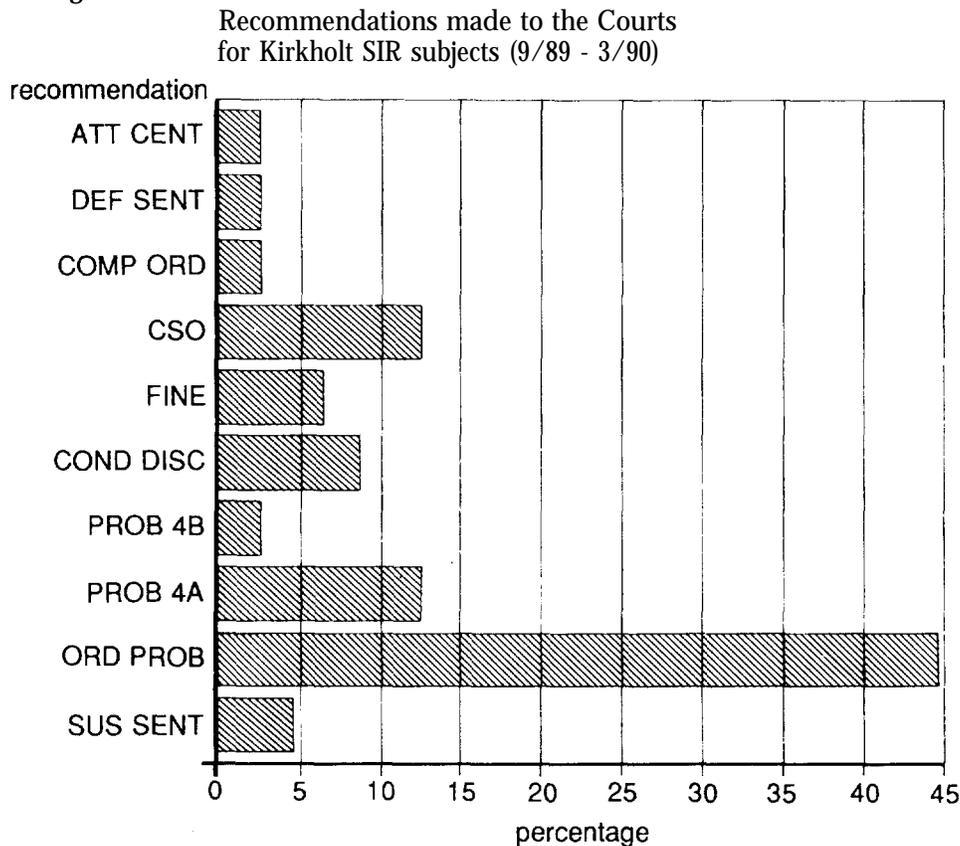


### Underlying Social Factors

Figure 3 above shows percentages of the various underlying social factors identified from subjects' SIRs. Difficulties with employment and addictive problems (the most prevalent addiction being to alcohol) feature as the most frequent factors linked with crime. When the type of offence committed is examined in conjunction with these two social factors then the following results emerge:

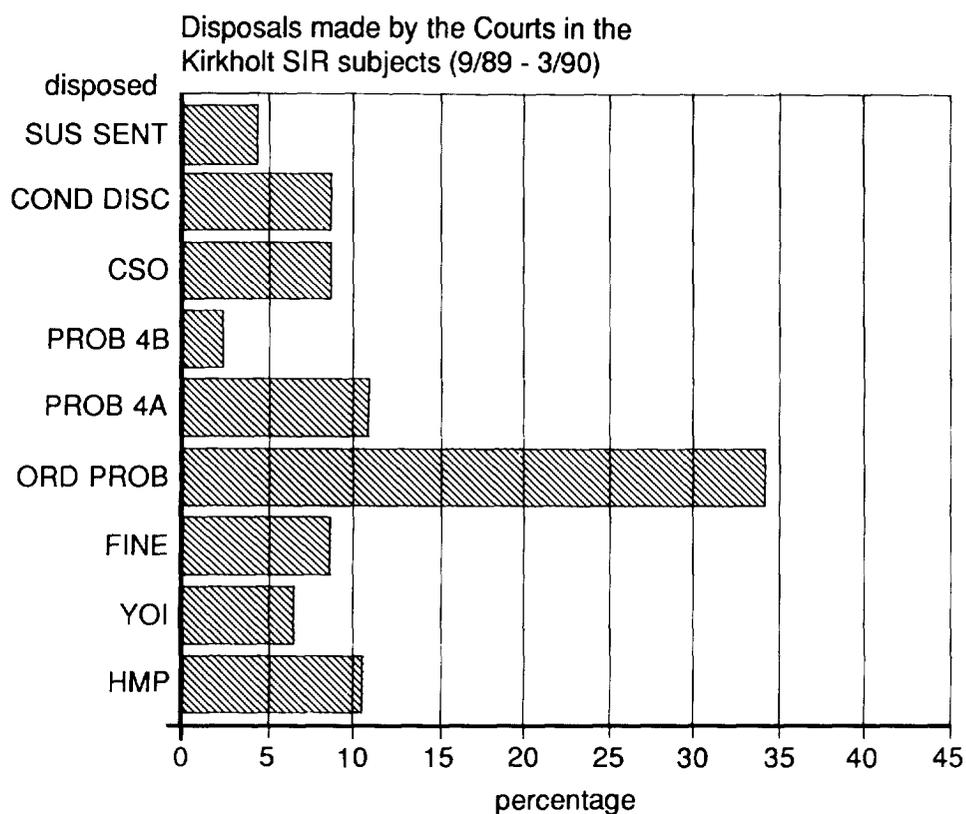
- (a) 70% of those convicted of burglary also had addictive problems, as did 63% of those found guilty of driving offences.
- (b) Two thirds of those found guilty of handling offences appeared to be having difficulty in relation to employment at the time of the offence, as were four of those convicted of deception.

**Figure 4**



Figures 4 (above) and 5 (overleaf) show that a probation order is both the most frequent recommendation and the most frequent outcome at court, for this sample. Custodial sentences (either HMP or YOI) comprised 17% of disposals with other sentences making up small proportions of sentences passed.

Figure 5



If the level of concordance between recommendations made and sentences passed is analysed then it is easy to distinguish from Table 1 below that the sentence passed was usually that recommended. When it was not, the sentence was almost always more severe than the recommendation.

Table 1: Recommendation and Sentence compared.

	Count	Percentage
More Severe	13	28
Less Severe	2	4
Same	32	68
Total:	47	100

### Conclusion

The main findings of the SIR Interrogation can be summarised as follows:

- (1) The offence most commonly committed by subjects was burglary.
- (2) Many SIR subjects appear to have addictive problems.
- (3) Addictive problems and difficulties with employment appear to be prevalent among offenders surveyed.

- (4) Most recommendations for sentence correspond with the sentence imposed.

As outlined in the section dealing with the objectives of the interrogation exercise, it was intended to act as both an indicator of need for various specialist groups, and also as a means of identifying SIR subjects particular area(s) of need thus negating the requirement for an Induction Programme. This may seem a good idea in principle but upon reflection it appears to have difficulties:

- (a) Although the officers writing SIRs on Kirkholt residents at the time of the interrogation seem to have a high “take-up rate” in terms of courts following their recommendations (especially in the case of Probation Orders), there is no guarantee that this will always be the case.
- (b) SIRs are more often than not written on the basis of only one or two interviews with the subject. There may be problems not identified at the social inquiry stage. If so, attendance at Induction Sessions may remain necessary.
- (c) A perceived contract with the court, or offenders’ own developmental needs, justify the Induction Programme.

Overall then, the interrogation appears to have been a useful tool in terms of revealing the motivations and underlying social factors which may contribute to the crimes of some Kirkholt residents, and Probation Officers may find it helpful to employ the checklist as a rough guide to help predict the demand for specialist groups and advice. Nonetheless, if the issues outlined above are borne in mind it would be fair to state that there is a distinct requirement for an Induction Programme which acts as a “feeder” and indicator for specialist groups.

## **CHAPTER 4 KIRKHOLT PROBATION GROUP WORK PROGRAMME - AND OTHER FACETS OF PHASE II**

As an element of Phase II of the Kirkholt Crime Prevention Project, the Probation Service in Rochdale has been seeking, with the aid of Home Office development funds, to deal with the problems of offending behaviour, drug and alcohol abuse, unemployment and debt on Kirkholt. Initially this has been directed at people who live on Kirkholt estate and are clients of the Probation Service, though the aim is to gradually broaden work to include a larger section of the community. In some particulars, for instance the schools project, the work is already broadly based, and there is no question that the Probation service now contacts those well beyond its clientele, and this process of outreach is continuing and developing.

### **The Group Work Programme**

A total of 30 clients have taken part in at least one of the focused groups. Probation Officers writing Social Inquiry Reports on Kirkholt residents for the courts with a recommendation that a Probation Order be considered as the most suitable means of disposal also recommend, in many cases, that the individual should attend an Induction Programme. Attendance at Induction sessions and specialist group programmed is compulsory for those clients taking part in the course(s). Members who fail to attend without a legitimate reason are warned in the first instance and made aware of the probability of breach proceedings if they do not return to the group. Most groups take place at the project office on Kirkholt itself, since clients taking part live on the estate.

The content and approach of these groups has been written up extensively and is available on request from the second author. Preliminary impressions, from both attendance records and questionnaires completed by those undergoing the groups, are that the groups were acknowledged by most participants as helpful. The specialist money management group was a particular success in these terms. Further, only two of the thirteen offenders enrolled on the first induction groups commencing in late April 1989 had been convicted of further offences at the time of drafting this report (June 1990). It is of course impossible to conclude that this is lower than would otherwise have been achieved. The average number of convictions per group member for the first two groups was eight.

Besides the offender-based group work initiatives and Social Enquiry Report interrogation described earlier, a set of other elements form the substance of Phase II of the Kirkholt Project. Some are mentioned in more detail below but these are not exhaustive. Community service offenders have been involved in a clear-up campaign with residents on the estate, work with the Groundwork Trust and do ongoing work on gardens and the estate environment. Inmates from a local Detention Centre were to be involved, but the Centre closed before the plan could be put into effect. Besides these and the specific initiatives mentioned below, the Assistant Chief Probation Officer puts involvement thus "The clean-up campaigns were designed to be an outward sign of positive change within the community, giving tangible and visible proof of what can happen when people work together....Crime prevention activity must be inextricably linked to community development."

## **Kirkholt Credit Union**

Credit unions are savings and loans cooperatives which encourage people to save small amounts of money on a regular basis, thus enabling their members to receive credit at very low rates of interest and, in the case of some credit unions, free life assurance cover. Credit unions are made up of groups of people who share a common bond or interest, such as residence in a housing estate or clearly defined neighbourhood. They are based on a premise of self-help whereby borrowing and lending money is less of a risk when the people doing the borrowing and lending share some link.

Initial interest in the idea of establishing a credit union on Kirkholt was generated by the results of the original 1986 survey of burglars which identified debt and lack of money management skills as primary motivations for committing burglary. The Probation Service initiated discussions with Rochdale Citizens' Advice Bureau. A money advice service was established on the estate. The identified problem of debt for offenders was addressed through the establishment of a money management group which targeted this principal motivation for committing crime. Following a talk by a representative of Rochdale Citizens Advice Bureau, a group was set up to look into the idea of a Credit Union more fully in 1988. After its officers had completed 18 months training, Kirkholt Credit Union was set up. After one month the Credit Union had recruited 44 adult and 12 junior members.

Kirkholt Credit Union covers an area containing an adult population of over eight thousand people, ie it extends beyond the boundaries of the Kirkholt estate. All adult member pays a joining fee of £1.50, and the minimum amount that can be saved is fifty pence per week for adults and ten pence a week for children. Members receive their own passbook in which their savings are recorded, and can deposit money at any of the four sessions per week held at Kirkholt Community Centre.

When someone joins Kirkholt Credit Union the only information required is name, a signature and proof of residence at an address which falls within the catchment area. Criminal records are not considered. In February 1990 a representative of Kirkholt Credit Union talked to several groups of people on probation who lived on the estate to encourage them to join the Credit Union. Several have now become members.

### **“Unity for our Community” Project for Schools.**

The idea for a community-based crime prevention project involving children in schools on the Kirkholt estate was initially developed through the meetings of Kirkholt Youth Forum. The Youth Forum is a multi-agency practitioners' group which meets approximately once a month to discuss various issues relating to youth and community work, provision of facilities for young people living on Kirkholt and in Rochdale, and crime prevention specifically in relation to the youth of Kirkholt.

The starting concept of the “Schools' Project” was to find some means of channelling the “negative ingenuity” of young people into more positive directions through the formulation of a community initiative. The Probation

Officer then seconded to the Crime Prevention Project made preliminary visits to the head teachers of all Kirkholt schools. The response was very favourable, and a multi-agency steering group was set up to develop and coordinate the project. Members of this team represent the Probation Service, the Community Education Service and, Churches Action on neighbourhood Care and Employment.

Figure 6 represents diagrammatically the activities which this project encompassed. Of special note may be the following three features:

(a) *A visit to Kirkholt by the "Geese" Theatre Company in February 1990*

"Geese" is a theatre company which specialises in working with offenders in and outside custodial establishments. Although this was the first time they have worked with school children, the members of the company expressed interest and enthusiasm for the project and its aims, and viewed their involvement as a challenge. The company presented short scenes based on the theme of crime prevention to pupils from each of five schools on Kirkholt estate: Queensway, Holy Family, Thornham, St. Mary's and Hill Top. Each performance of the production was followed by work with smaller groups of the pupils in creating their own drama work around this topic. As much of this activity as possible was recorded on video tape, thus enabling each school to have work they can keep and use in the future. One of the aims of the visit by "Geese" was to act as a "taster" for work with pupils within schools and a four day long Crime Prevention Festival which began on May 21st 1990.

(b) *Work with pupils in schools*

Following the visit by "Geese", members of the "Unity For Our Community" project team and individual teachers have undertaken work with targeted children one afternoon per week for six weeks. These are the young people moving into the age range statistically most likely to commit offences (14-18 years old), taken from the school age population on Kirkholt. By presenting them with the opportunity to think about and discuss the sort of community they want to live in, their socialisation should be enhanced to the benefit of the community they do live in.

(c) *Work with disaffected pupils*

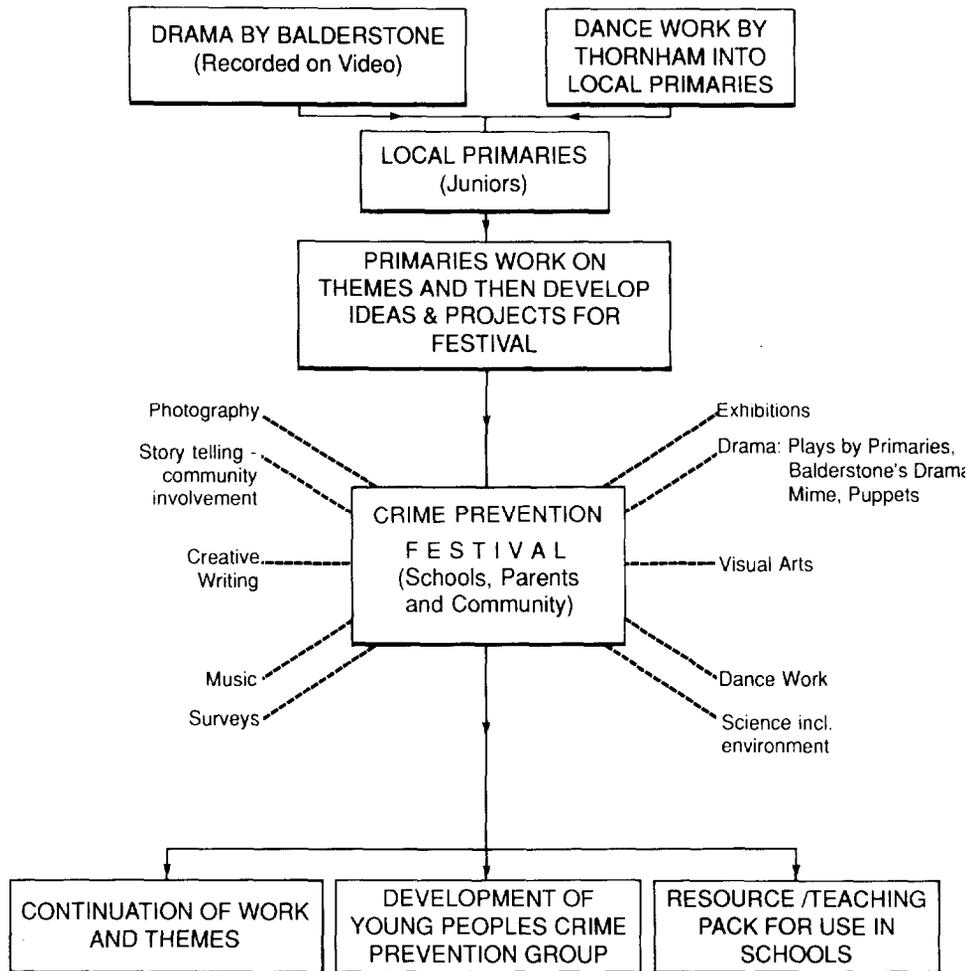
One of the project team has been working with disaffected pupils for some time. These are non-school attenders, or those pupils which schools find problematic. In late January, the project team member, along with a local Education Welfare Officer, set up a group for disaffected pupils which meets weekly at Kirkholt Youth Centre to discuss, amongst other things, the topic of crime prevention.

(d) *"Unity For Our Community" Crime Prevention Festival*

In addition to displays of work undertaken by pupils involved with the project, the festival took the form of various activities, including; mural painting with local artists; work with the local police and representatives from the Police Crime Prevention Unit; badge and slogan making; sampling refreshments which have their origins in different places (eg: Asian, Caribbean, Lancastrian); sampling self defence and awareness

Figure 6

"KIRKHOLT SCHOOLS CRIME PREVENTION PROJECT"



Balderstone = Local Community Secondary School with 6th Form  
 Thornham = Middle School  
 Primary Schools = Queensway; Hill Top; Holy Family (R.C.);  
 St Mary's (C of E).

training; and drama and discussion work, involving children and visiting authors.

A crime prevention teaching pack, targeted for production in December 1990, is to be developed for use in schools elsewhere. In the short term, the success of the project can only be measured in terms of the high quality of the work produced. Comments from the participating schools have been extremely positive. As for longer term benefits, the attempt is to enable pupils to assimilate, internalise and uphold those values which will help prevent them from committing crime.

### **Conclusion**

The content of Phase II of the project is diverse. Three elements have been selected here for particular attention: focused group work for those on probation and the associated changes in the service to courts; the Kirkholt Credit Union; and work for and in schools. They are the most concrete changes but not necessarily the most important. Perhaps that is the suffusion of probation involvement into the Kirkholt community in the interests of the improvement of its own service and the prevention of crime on the estate.

## CHAPTER 5 CHANGE IN BURGLARY RATE BURGLARIES AND BURGLARY VICTIMS: 1986/7 TO 1989/90

### The level of burglary dwelling: 1986/87 to 1989/90

As was stressed in the first report of the project, our choice was to prevent burglary by any means to hand. The disadvantage of this was that the contribution of the various elements of the programme were not distinguishable. Similarly in this report, any continuing change in rate of burglary on Kirkholt may be attributable to the continuation of Phase I of the project, the extra momentum of Home Watch schemes, the elements of Phase II, to any of these in combination – or merely to the fact that something had stirred community action into existence.

### Burglary during the project

Table 2 illustrates the number of residential burglaries taking place per month on Kirkholt between March 1986 and February 1990. (It should be noted that the pre-implementation figures are not atypically high, and hence any changes are not attributable to statistical regression). The data are also presented in a visually more accessible form as Figure 7, which is a summary of the experience throughout the project, illustrated as percentage falls in burglary levels over six month periods.

In order to facilitate comparisons, the information in this chapter has been separated into four twelve month periods (March 1986 to February 1987 (pre) – prior to Phase I of the Burglary Prevention Project; March 1987 to February 1988 (post1) – the first year of the project's implementation; March 1988 to February 1989 (post2) – the second year post implementation and, March 1989 to February 1990 (post3) – the third year since the project was set in motion. Also shown are mean monthly figures for each epoch and percentage falls in burglary between the various epochs.

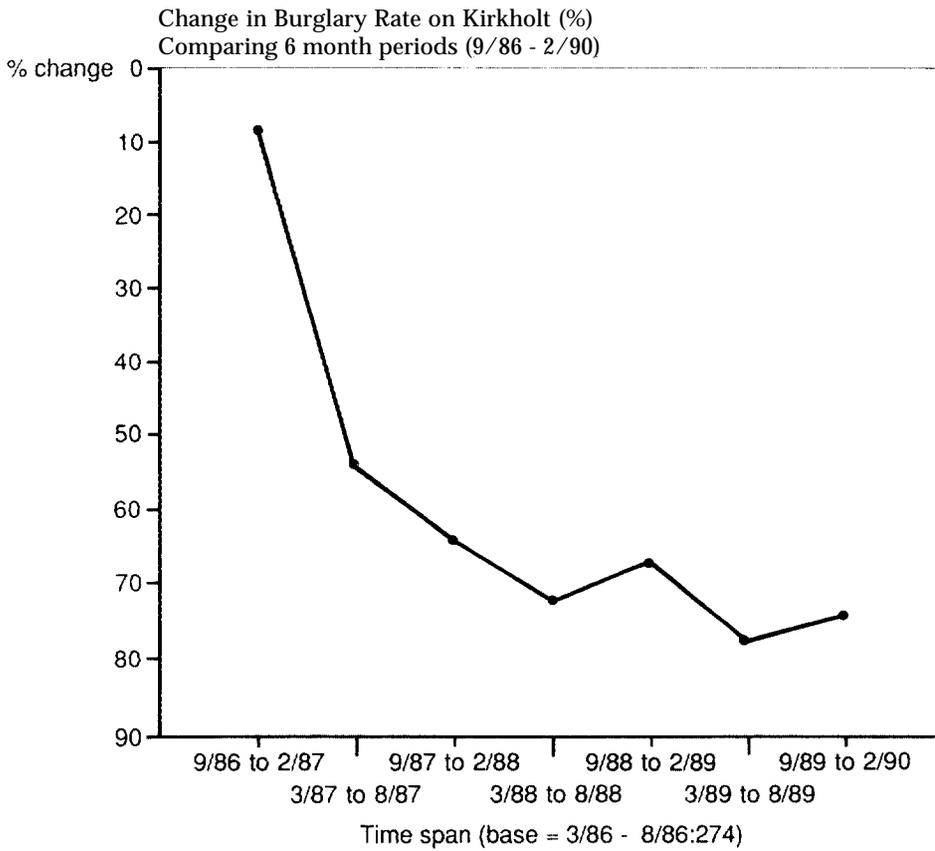
The level of residential burglary measured during the 1989/90 epoch was *one quarter* of that recorded for the 1986/7 period (ie: the total number for 1986/7 was 526 burglaries and the monthly average 44, compared with 132 burglaries in the 1989/90 period and a mean per month of 11).

**Table 2: Burglary dwelling: pre and post initiative**

	<b>EPOCH</b>			
	1986/7 (PRE)	1987/8 (POST1)	1988/9 (POST2)	1989/90 (POST3)
<b>MONTH</b>				
March	54	42	14	18
April	61	30	21	10
May	52	17	15	9
June	28	10	5	8
July	40	10	7	2
August	39	16	13	14
September	42	22	29	18
October	27	16	9	9
November	36	14	9	12
December	23	16	18	18
January	64	10	17	6
February	60	20	10	8
<b>Total for epoch</b>	<b>526</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>132</b>
<b>Average/month</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>% fall on previous year</b>		<b>58%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>21%</b>
<b>% fall on two years previous</b>			<b>68%</b>	<b>41%</b>
<b>% fall on three years previous</b>				<b>75%</b>

Figure 7 below illustrates (by representing percentage decline on a base period: March 1986 to August 1986) just how dramatic the drop in burglary on Kirkholt has been over the last four years.

Figure 7



**Kirkholt in Relation to the Rest of the Sub-Division**

Table 3 shows the numbers and percentage change of burglary in Kirkholt and the rest of the sub-division of which it forms part. (The shift from years March-February to January-December as between Tables 2 and 3 reflects no sinister intent, but the way in which sub-division data were made available). It will be noticed that there is a general decline in the sub-division, but that the Kirkholt experience is markedly better. This Table is important in considering the issue of geographical displacement. It is clear that, as in Phase I of the project, there is no pattern suggestive of displacement. For those interested in the complexities of this topic and its measurement, and who wish to apply these to the Kirkholt experience, a recent review (Barr and Pease 1990) will provide an overview of the issues.

**Table 3: Comparison of Kirkholt with Remainder of Sub-Division**

Calendar Year	Kirkholt	% change on 1986	Remainder of Sub-Division	% change on 1986
1986	512	—	2843	—
1987	317	-38	2880	+1
1988	170	-67	2311	-19
1989	145	-72	2160	-24

### **The Victims of Burglary**

While there has been a continuing decline in domestic burglary on Kirkholt, people are still being burgled there. The spirit and intent of the analyses below is to inform new aspects of the scheme. This is not an unreal ambition, since some elements of a clear pattern remain. For instance, scrutiny of Table 2 shows the much elevated frequency of domestic burglary in September. Vulnerability during September (while decreased in absolute terms) increased relative to the burglary rate during the remainder of the year.

The following information concerning the victims of burglary on Kirkholt, and details of the burglaries themselves, has been obtained from two sources:

- (a) Interviews with the victims of burglary using an interview schedule which includes questions relating to the burglary itself, details about the victim and the victim's dwelling etc. This is a revised version of the original victim questionnaire used throughout the project.
- (b) Information from police crime reports relating to Kirkholt burglaries.

Data for the period prior to Phase I of the project only covers the time between 1st January and 30th June 1986 as interviews with victims did not take place during the latter part of that year. The data from the other three epochs comes from 85% of burglary victims, the shortfall being accounted for by people leaving the estate, refusing to be interviewed etc..

The most convenient form in which a time comparison can be made is between the pre-implementation period (1986) and the three post-implementation periods. Comparisons are approximate in a few cases due to changes in the coding of some variables.

## House Type

Table 4 below shows how victims of burglary were distributed by type of house occupied at the time of victimisation, and compares percentages for all four epochs.

**Table 4: Victimization by House Type (%)**

	EPOCH			
	1986 (PRE)	1987/8 (POST1)	1988/9 (POST2)	1989/90 (POST3)
<b>House Type</b>				
Semi detached	66	51	52	45
Terraced	16	16	8	13
Maisonette	11	22	25	22
Flat	6	5	7	6
Other	1	6	7	14
Total	100	100	100	100
N of cases =	237	209	154	80

The housing stock has not changed over the project period, so that changes in victimisation experience are not attributable to changes in the types of houses available to be victimised. Note that these figures are percentages of a declining number. The percentage of burglaries taking place in maisonette-type residences rises to a peak in 1988/9, and then falls away slightly to a proportion which is still almost twice that measured in 1986. A possible explanation for this and the apparent rise in the victimisation of “other” types of dwelling (it: bungalows and detached residences) may be that, due to the level of victimisation of semi-detached houses over the period of analysis (a level which has fallen yet still remains much higher than that measured for other kinds of residential property), a greater number of semi-detached residences have benefitted from improved security measures. This factor may have served to lessen their overall “desirability” and vulnerability in terms of being potential targets for burglars at the expense of enhancing that of some of the other types of residence. There may also be a confounding of house type with tenure. As will be shown below, people who have not spent long in their current home may be disproportionately vulnerable, and there were relatively more newcomers living in the maisonettes towards the end of the project.

## Length of residence at current address

One of the most dramatic changes in the pattern of burglary on Kirkholt relates to tenure.

**Table 5: % Victimization by length of residence at current address**

	EPOCH			
	1986 (PRE)	1987/8 (POST1)	1988/9 (POST2)	1989/90 (POST3)
<b>Length of residence in whole years</b>				
0 or 1 year	21	39	46	39
2 to 4 years	31	28	26	26
5 to 10 years	17	16	14	18
> 10 years	30	17	15	18
N of Cases =	237	209	154	80

Table 5 above shows that whereas in 1986 those people who had lived at their current address on Kirkholt for a year or less made up just 21% of burglary victims, by 1988/9 nearly half of all victims belonged to this “newcomers” group, and in the most recent epoch made up almost 40% of all burglary victims. Interestingly, when victimisation by length of tenure is examined in conjunction with the type of dwelling occupied it becomes evident that in 37% of maisonette burglaries which took place in 1986, the tenant had lived at that address for one year or less, whereas in the post3 epoch this percentage had risen to almost 70%. This is not an artefact of an increased proportion of the population being newcomers. In fact, the number of tenancy terminations (and new lettings) declined over the project period.

Looking at whether newcomers were more careless in leaving their homes secure, it was found that they were not. Thus, the problem appears to be some combination of newness and dwelling, rather than of the carelessness of newer residents. Current thinking among project staff is that informal surveillance cannot work efficiently when residents are not known to their neighbours. The seconded probation officer is currently working to put in place a new residents programme, whereby introductions are effected between newcomers and those who live nearby. Already, new tenants are introduced by a project worker to the Kirkholt project, and a free postcoding and security check offered. Five attempts are made to make contact. The Homewatch system is explained and the tenant given the opportunity to join Homewatch. The newcomer is provided with information about the crime prevention office, the local police constable and the street coordinator. The coordinator is also visited to inform him/her of the new tenant, unless contact has already been made. What the current arrangements lack is the establishment of recognition of the new tenant. For Homewatch to work, the old hands must know what the newcomer looks like. This is now being considered.

Another option which is being considered is whether the crime prevention advice which specified the security uprating of each housing type may have been less appropriate for maisonettes than for other housing types. A crime prevention officer will be invited to look at victim questionnaires from those in the maisonettes to see if hardware protection is suggested by the patterns found.

## **Age of Victim**

In 1987/8 and 1988/9 the age group with the highest level of victimisation was the "19 to 25" band, making up 40% of all burglaries in the post1 epoch and 30% in the post2 period. Even though this age group remained the most frequently burgled in the post3 epoch (20%), it did not differ so much from the next most often burgled ("26 to 35" - 16%) when compared with earlier epochs. What is immediately apparent is that the "19 to 25" age group has become increasingly less victimised over the span of the project, as has the "26 to 35" band. By comparison, victimisation of the remaining age groups appears to have fluctuated slightly over time but on the whole remained fairly steady.

## **The Circumstances of Burglary** **When did it take place?**

The pattern of burglary with regard to **when** it took place can be examined in terms of:

- (a) the month of the year,
- (b) the time of the month,
- (c) the day of the week, and
- (d) the time of day.

It cannot be too often stressed that we are talking about percentages of a declining figure. If a day, month or time stands out more in the post epochs, this is not because there is more crime then, simply that crime then has been more resistant. It is like washing sand from an object reveals the contours of the rock beneath. Preventing simpler burglaries reveals the distribution of those which prove more resistant. Inevitably, this also means that patterns in the reduced figures are more subject to apparently large proportionate changes which are in fact random. This should be kept in mind in reading what follows.

Let us first consider burglary pattern by month. As stated earlier, the numbers of residential burglaries on Kirkholt have gone down at a striking rate since 1986; this trend is reflected for some individual months (February, April, May and July). However, the burglary figures for other months seem to follow different patterns of change between epochs. In the case of March, June, August and November, the burglary figures dropped between 1986/7 and 1987/8, and also declined further between 1987/8 and 1988/9. The figures rose in the 1989/90 period but not to the levels measured in 1987/8.

Burglary in October and December fell between 1986/7 and 1987/8, and had decreased more by 1988/9. However, the level measured in this post2 epoch persisted in the post3 period. September and January figures follow a very similar pattern to each other. Burglaries decreased between 1986/7 and 1987/8, rose again in 1988/9 but diminished in the post3 period to levels below those occurring in the 1987/8 epoch.

Despite these apparent similarities it would be difficult to use the above as any sort of prediction tool with a view to gauging future rises and falls in

burglary on Kirkholt at different times of the year, as many different, perhaps inestimable factors may affect these figures, possibly causing them to deviate from their identified “pattern”. For instance, individual burglars released from prison who return to the area might become “active” at certain times. Nevertheless, despite the difficulties mentioned above it would be interesting to see whether, if say a fall in burglary is measured in September 1990, a drop is also registered in January 1991. The most remarkable monthly consistency is the continuing high rate for September figures, This will be commented on further below.

Table 6 below illustrates the percentage of burglaries by epoch taking place at different times of the month

**Table 6: Time of Month by epoch (%)**

	<b>EPOCH</b>			
	1986 (PRE)	1987/8 (POST1)	1988/9 (POST2)	1989/90 (POST3)
<b>Time of month</b>				
1st - 7th	30	21	27	21
8th - 15th	26	29	27	25
16th - 23rd	24	26	27	32
24th - end	20	24	20	22

There seems to be a steady rise over the four year period in the proportion of burglaries taking place in the third week of the month. ie for some reason those burglaries prove most resistant to change. It would be premature to interpret the minor differences which emerge.

If we examine the day of the week burglaries took place, some rather more interesting results emerge.

**Table 7: Day of Week by epoch (%)**

	<b>EPOCH</b>			
	1986 (PRE)	1987/8 (POST1)	1988/9 (POST2)	1989/90 (POST3)
<b>Day of week</b>				
Monday	10	23	14	13
Tuesday	13	16	14	14
Wednesday	15	11	11	14
Thursday	22	12	12	15
Friday	10	18	12	17
Saturday	15	14	14	14
Sunday	14	9	23	14

When each epoch is examined in turn, the following findings become apparent:

- (a) *1986*: Two peaks are observed in this period, Wednesday/Thursday and Saturday/Sunday. The mid-week rise coincides with a increased theft from coin meters. However, there appears to be no specific or obvious explanation behind the Saturday/Sunday phenomenon, save perhaps that the presence of alcohol as a motivation for offending may have been more at work here than at other times of the week. Videos were a favourite weekend target.
- (b) *1987/8*: It is interesting to note that the removal of most of the coin-fed fuel meters on Kirkholt estate seems to be coincident with the disappearance of the mid-week “hump” in burglaries. Nevertheless, in this post1 epoch two different, albeit lower, peaks appear: Monday and Friday. Again it is not that there were more burglaries on these days, merely a higher proportion of a smaller number.
- (c) *1988/9*: Another different picture appears during this epoch. Percentages of burglaries from Monday to Saturday are fairly even (maximum: 14.2%, minimum: 10.7%), but intriguingly the proportion of burglaries which took place on a Sunday are substantially higher than the percentages which occurred on other days of the week.
- (d) *1989/90*: By comparison, apart from Friday (which differs a great deal less in percentage terms from other days than Sunday burglaries did in the previous epoch). no day appears to stand out from the others as a time when there was a significant peak of burglaries.

The analysis of the time of the day when (percentages of) burglaries took place has been simplified by looking at two twelve hour periods:

- (i) after 7.00am until 7.00pm: “day” and, (ii) after 7.00pm until 7.00am: “night”.

In the 1986 period, nearly 60% of burglaries took place during the day, a percentage which fell steadily to 44% in 1988/9 (along with a corresponding rise in night victimisation), but then rose again in the post3 epoch to 52%. This could possibly be an indicator of the success of Home Watch schemes on the estate, assuming daylight increases Home Watch deterrent effects.

### **September Song**

As noted earlier, a constant factor was the relatively high rate of burglaries during September. Left at this level of generality, it would not have much of a preventive message, other than the bland “Watch out in September – there are even more thieves about”. We thus tried to locate the problem more precisely within September, and by victim group.

In 1986, the number of burglaries in September was very close to the average for the pre-project epoch as a whole (September: 42 burglaries, average for 1986/7: 44 burglaries). Although the level of September burglaries has never returned to that measured in 1986, the numbers taking place in September 1987, 1988, and 1989 have *all* been substantially higher than the average burglary figure measured for the surrounding months.

Table 8 below summarises this information.

**Table 8**

	Monthly average for whole epoch	September figure
1987	19	22
1988	14	29
1989	11	18

When the age of burglary victim was looked at in conjunction with the month of burglary occurrence, it became clear that in the case of September 1988 and 1989, an inordinate number of older people (in the “51 to 65” or “over 65” category) had been victimised when compared with age distribution of victims over the whole epoch (September 1988: 46%; 1989: 37%, of victims fell into one of these two age categories). Further investigation showed that in September 1988, 77% of September burglaries took place in the first two weeks of the month and, in September 1989, 79% of burglaries happened in the middle two weeks of that month. In addition to this, we found that in 1988, 79% of September burglaries had taken place when the dwelling was unoccupied and that likewise in September 1989, 90% of victimisations occurred when the residence was empty. So, what did all this tell us? Investigations “on the ground” provided us with the following information:

- (a) Early September is a traditional holiday period in Rochdale and likely to be a time when many older and retired people are accustomed to take their holiday. (Incidentally, one offender living in the area remarked that, “You can tell if its an old person’s house just by looking at the ornaments in the front window”. We should add that this comment was made along with a message that the person in question would not burgle such a house!).
- (b) One individual was found to be responsible for many of the 29 burglaries which took place in September 1988. When this person received a custodial sentence in the same month this was reflected in the burglary figure for October.

What does all this amount to? It is that the September song is about old people taking their holidays, and being burgled as a result. It allows a much more focused approach to prevention than the general September picture would. A combination of oversight by neighbours, perhaps some persuasion of older people to take their holiday at less predictable times, (or at least to remove their ornaments) and police checks might serve to silence the September song.

### **Occupancy at the time of victimisation**

In almost 30% of burglaries being analysed for the pre-implementation period, the dwelling was occupied at the time of victimisation; a percentage which fluctuates over the course of the project but is reduced to its lowest level in the post3 period (14%).

**Table 9: occupancy and time of burglary (%)**

	EPOCH			
	1986 (PRE)	1987/8 (POST1)	1988/9 (POST2)	1989/90 (POST3)
Occupied at night	24	15	15	6
Unocc. at night	16	34	40	42
Occupied in day	8	4	8	8
Unocc. in day	52	48	37	41

Table 9 illustrates that, as in the case of the other three periods, in 1989/90 a large proportion of burglaries occurred during the day when the dwelling was unoccupied. However, what is also apparent is that the percentage of night burglaries taking place when the property was unoccupied has increased dramatically (from 16% in 1986 to 42% in 1989/90). Interestingly, in all the cases where maisonette-type dwellings were victimised during the night in 1989/90 the property was empty.

#### **Precautions taken to give signs of occupancy**

Five different “signs of occupancy” have been examined:

- (1) leaving lights on
- (2) leaving the television on
- (3) leaving music playing
- (4) leaving the curtains closed, and
- (5) leaving a car on the drive.

In general terms, a greater proportion of burglary victims exercised the sort of precautionary measures outlined above in the 1989/90 epoch than in any of the other periods. The most popular measure taken was “leaving the curtains closed” in all periods; though it should be noted that on average over the four periods around one fifth of victims had taken none of the precautions.

As noted earlier, when “precautions taken” were examined in tandem with the length of residence at current address for the post3 epoch, it was found that similar proportions of tenants who had recently moved in and more established occupants took the sort of precautions described above. Similarly, victims in the 19 to 25 age group were no less careful than their older counterparts.

#### **Where did burglars get in?**

Table 10 below illustrates the percentages relating to the different points of entry for the four time periods.

**Table 10: Point of Entry by epoch (%)**

	EPOCH			
	1986 (PRE)	1987/8 (POST1)	1988/9 (POST2)	1989/90 (POST3)
<b>Point of Entry</b>				
Front door	16	20	25	20
Side door	8	3	1	6
Back door	12	18	13	28
Front window	6	4	4	5
Side window	8	3	4	3
Back window	49	49	50	38
Not stated	1	2	3	0

If the percentages for entry through doors and windows are examined irrespective of location in relation to the dwelling, an interesting shift becomes apparent. While in 1986, 36% of burglars entered through a door, by 1989/90 this percentage had risen to 54%. Considering individual entry points, entry through a back window still appears to be most frequent in 1989/90 (1986: 49% got in through a back window, compared to 38% in 1989/90), but there seems to have been a substantial increase in the proportion of burglars entering a property through a back door (1986: 12% used this point of entry, in comparison with 28% in 1989/90). One interpretation is that those burglars whose offences were not prevented have a (relative) preference for doors. It may be that door protection is another issue which should be reconsidered by police crime prevention officers.

Put more speculatively, this raises questions about two issues:

- (i) the standard of locks and doors at the rear of properties and,
- (ii) if locks on back doors are of good quality then are the residents of victimised dwellings using them properly? (ie: are some people failing to secure the mortice lock on rear doors?)

If we examine the burglar's point of entry along with the type of dwelling for the most recent epoch, it emerges that:

- (a) The percentage of burglaries of semi-detached dwellings where the burglar gained entry through a rear window is lower than that measured for the period as a whole. By comparison, the percentage entering through a rear door is higher.
- (b) The proportion of maisonette burglaries where the point of entry was a rear window was much higher than that assessed for the whole epoch.

### How did burglars get in?

A scrutiny of techniques to gain entry can elicit some interesting findings.

- (a) The percentage of cases where a door has been forced to gain entry (either by using bodily pressure or an instrument) rises from 15% in 1986 to 26% in the post3 epoch, again raising questions about how effective doors or door locks on certain victimised dwellings are. The percentage

of burglaries where glass in a door was broken to gain entry has doubled (from 6% in 1986 to 12% in the post3 period).

- (b) The proportion of burglaries where the technique was either “breaking a window” or “forcing a window” peaks in the post2 period and then diminishes in the 1989/90 epoch (from 46% in 1986 to 32% in 1989/90).

Table 11 below contrasts percentages over time for maisonettes and semi-detached houses where the M.O. (modus operandi – technique) was “breaking a window” or “forcing a door”.

**Table 11: Comparison of Selected M.O’s: Maisonettes and Semis**

	EPOCH			
	1986 (PRE)	1987/8 (POST1)	1988/9 (POST2)	1989/90 (POST3)
<b>House Type/M.O.</b>				
Semi – break window	21	11	30	18
Mais – break window	15	13	31	37
Semi – force door	13	15	24	26
Mais – force door	30	30	15	21

The percentage of semi-detached dwellings being burgled where the M.O. was “forcing a door” has risen steadily since the pre-implementation period. Similarly, save a slight fall in 1987/8, the proportion of maisonette burglaries where the burglar entered the property by “breaking a window” has also increased. While the results again stress the points of vulnerability, it may be that more burglars than hitherto have to *break* in rather than just walking in. Also, it could be that the burglars still active are those who always broke doors of semi-detached houses and maisonette windows. Other burglars, who did not, may have given up burglary.

#### What was stolen?

Table 12 below details property stolen in Kirkholt burglaries by epoch,

**Table 12: Type of Property stolen by epoch (%)**

	EPOCH			
	1986 (PRE)	1987/8 (POST1)	1988/9 (POST2)	1989/90 (POST3)
<b>Type of Property</b>				
Cash	23	16	22	13
Meter Cash	48	22	2	1
Benefits/Giros	0	2	0	0
Bank Cards	2	3	1	0
Jewellery	21	12	11	9
Audio Visual	33	40	47	43
Clothing	6	2	–	–
Other property	23	29	46	44

(n.b. The column percentages do not add up to 100 as in some individual burglaries more than one type of property was stolen).

Perhaps the most striking thing about the above table is the dramatic fall in the percentage of burglaries where meter cash was stolen, a phenomenon which is easily explained given the removal of coin-fed fuel meters in the vast majority of properties on the estate. However, this can be contrasted with the increase in the proportion of audio-visual property stolen (this peaks in the post2 period – 47% of burglaries involved stealing property of this type, and falls away slightly in the 1989/90 epoch to 43%).

The above may suggest that with the increasing lack of “easy pickings” which came in the shape of the contents of fuel meters, burglars who look to steal the sort of property they may be able to sell quickly for a reasonable return (it: video recorders, televisions and hi-fi equipment) now account for a higher proportion of the burglaries on the estate. Or it may indicate that the offenders who are less easily deterred always took this kind of property, which is now proportionately more important after the prevention of other burglaries.

If we look at the day of the week when burglaries took place in conjunction with different types of property stolen, the following results emerge:

- (a) In 1986, meter cash was most frequently stolen on Wednesdays and Thursdays. The theft of audio-visual property on the other hand appeared to be much more evenly spread throughout the week, with higher levels at weekends.
- (b) When the epochs after project implementation are examined, there is no perceptible evidence of there being especially “popular” days of the week on which certain types of property were stolen.

When the mean values of the property and cash stolen are compared across epoch (taking into account the rate of inflation and the fact that the overall standard of living on the estate may be higher now), it is apparent that burglaries were, on average, far more costly to the victim in the most recent epoch than they were in 1986. The mean value of cash *and* goods stolen in 1986 was £190, compared with £396 in 1989/90, a finding which might suggest that those committing burglaries on Kirkholt Estate these days could be classed as the more professional burglar. The cost of damage caused has also risen since 1986 (£21 of damage was reported on average per burglary, compared with a mean figure of £51 in the 1989/90 period). This implies that, in general terms, as well as experiencing a greater loss in terms of the value of goods and cash stolen, in the most recent epoch the average burglary victim living on Kirkholt estate sustained a larger bill in terms of damage caused as a result of being victimised.

### **Multi Victimisation**

One of the groups who appear to have been hit hard, in terms of being “multi victims”, are newcomers. In 1986, 34% of victims who had lived at their current address for one year or less had been victimised more than once at that address. This percentage fell in the two epochs which followed, but by 1989/90 it had risen again to 33%. An examination of 1986 and 1989/90

incidence of burglary involving multi victim and non multi victim newcomers produces the following findings.

- (a) In 1986, the majority of victims of a second or subsequent burglary were burgled during the day, whereas in the most recent epoch there is evidently a much more even split between day and night when the burglary is a repeat. By comparison, the time of burglary for those people who had been victimised only once remains fairly constant across all four epochs.
- (b) 80% of 1986 multi victim newcomers had meter cash stolen, compared with just over half of those who had not suffered multi victimisation.
- (c) The point of entry for burglars breaking into the properties of newcomers (multi and non multi victims) in the most recent period was either a rear window (73%), front door (18%), or back door (9%). If this is contrasted with all newcomers in 1986, where *all* the points of entry identified were used by burglars, it might suggest that those perpetrating burglaries on Kirkholt nowadays are less opportunist. The more experienced burglar might perhaps be aware of the “easiest” way to get into a residence, unlike the opportunist who may just try any point of entry without any consideration of its vulnerability in relation to other entry points.

If the different types of “precautions” taken are compared for multi and single victim newcomers in the pre and post3 periods, then a lower percentage of multi victims took precautions than people victimised just once. The table below illustrates this information more clearly and shows that there was a larger difference in the most recent epoch (NB for multiple victims, the second burglary is the one selected).

**Table 13**

	1986		1989/90	
	MV	Not	MV	Not
<b>Precaution</b>				
Lights left on	18	12	9	41
Music playing	0	6	9	14
TV left on	0	6	0	9
Curtains closed	35	27	18	50
Car on drive	0	3	0	0

NOTE:

MV = multi victim

Not = single victimisation

This does make it seem that the new generation of multiple victims, unlike multiple victims in 1986, may need to take more precautions. This has clear implications for the content of follow-up visits after a first burglary.

- (e) In both pre and post3 epochs, the mean amount of property stolen and damage caused was higher for people who had been burgled for the first time than for those who had already been burgled.

## Summary of Main Findings

Analysis of combined data obtained from Victim Questionnaires and Police Crime Reports relating to the incidence of burglary on Kirkholt Estate has produced the following findings:

- (a) The most striking finding is the drop of 75% in the rate of burglary of dwellings on Kirkholt measured over the duration of the project.
- (b) In percentage terms, the victimisation of semi-detached residences on the estate diminished by over 20% since 1986. By contrast, the proportion of maisonette burglaries recorded for the most recent epoch is almost double that measured in 1986.
- (c) The victimisation of tenants who had lived at their current address for a year or less has risen by 19%, while the percentage of victims who had lived at the same address for more than ten years has practically halved when compared with that measured in 1986.
- (d) 20% of burglary victims in the most recent epoch fell into the "19 to 25" age category: a proportion which is 10% lower than that recorded in the pre-implementation period.
- (e) There is a clear monthly pattern in burglary levels. Close analysis of the September peak makes it clear that the effect is largely accounted for by burglary of the unoccupied homes of holidaying older people. This has prevention implications.
- (f) The Wednesday/Thursday peak in burglaries registered in 1986 disappeared after the removal of virtually all of the coin-fed fuel meters on the estate.
- (g) With respect to the time of day when burglaries took place, the data illustrates that there is a much more even split between day and night time burglaries in the most recent epoch than there was in 1986. Whereas in the period prior to the start of the project the greatest proportion of victimisations took place during the day when the residence was unoccupied, by 1989/90 burglary when the dwelling was unoccupied at night had become as common.
- (h) In 1989/90, the point of entry most frequently used matched that identified for 1986: a window at the rear of the property. In over half of the occurrences of burglary recorded in the most recent epoch the point of entry was a door, which in many cases was forced either by using bodily pressure or an instrument.
- (i) Since 1986 the proportion of burglaries where cash from meters was stolen has decreased drastically. In percentage terms the theft of audio-visual property has increased by almost 10%.

## Conclusions

The initiation and maintenance of a substantial reduction in burglaries taking place on Kirkholt is a principal indication of the success of the Burglary Prevention Project over the past three years. Nevertheless, as stated in the account of Phase I of the project,

“... the adoption of a series of measures is likely to have much greater impact than simply taking one or two steps. Methodologically this is less attractive because it is scarcely ever practicable to tease out the relative contributions to crime prevention of the various measures, and the interactions between them.”

(Forrester, Chatterton and Pease: Home Office CPU Paper 13, 1988: p.11)

In other words, we are unable to draw out which of the specific measures implemented in the project has been instrumental in reducing the incidence of burglary dwelling on Kirkholt. We cannot contend that, for instance, the project would have been less successful without the establishment of Home Watch. However, as outlined in the report dealing with Phase I of the Kirkholt Project, a monitoring and evaluation system facilitates the investigation of qualitative changes in burglaries during the project (of the sort detailed earlier), providing adaptability at a level which can enable,

“... the thrust of the initiative’s components to be changed to meet the changing pattern.”

(Forrester, Chatterton and Pease: Home Office CPU Paper 13, 1988: p.18)

For example, in the light of some of the findings detailed earlier, the following suggestions should be considered for implementation.

- (1) Examining possible means to prevent doors being forced in certain types of dwelling.
- (2) Investigating and developing new methods of protecting and preventing the theft of audio-visual property (a new way of marking equipment visibly has already been introduced).
- (3) Re-establishing “cocoon” Home Watch schemes aimed at protecting “newcomers”.
- (4) Concentrating on cocoons for holidaying older people in September.
- (5) Conducting a new “Offender Survey” designed to elicit detailed information about present day occurrences of burglary on Kirkholt plus an investigation into other crime committed by people residing on the estate.
- (6) Further development of existing work with offenders living on the estate with an emphasis on challenging their offending behaviour.

In addition to the development of new initiatives, there are ultimately two things which are of primary importance if the continued success of the project is to be assured:

- (i) the conservation and reinforcement of already established inter-agency links plus the initiation of ties with different agencies and organisations and,
- (ii) the maintenance of a flow of information regarding changes in burglary patterns which may occur, primarily aimed at helping to sustain the “flexible approach” to its prevention.

## CHAPTER 6: THE KIRKHOLT PROJECT: PAST AND FUTURE

In this chapter we give ourselves licence to consider the project as a whole, and more especially the future in the light of the project. First we will address the issue of the costs and benefits of the projects – in a rough and ready way. We will go on to emphasise some of the points made earlier in the report which we believe to have a generality beyond the Kirkholt Project.

### Did the Project Give Value for Money?

The complexity of cost-benefit analysis in relation to crime prevention is very considerable. This is well stated in the 1988 Report of the Home Office Standing Conference on Crime Prevention entitled 'The Costs of Crime'. We have also looked at the report on the same topic prepared by the Northumbria Police (Bailey and Lynch 1988), and this has been used in the analyses reported briefly below. We will seek to show that, despite its extensive funding, the project does appear to have resulted in cost savings. The detailed breakdown of costs has been excluded from this report, but is available on request from the third author, whose work it reflects.

**Table 14: Cost Benefit Analysis (in £'s)**

Item	1985/6	1986/7	1987/8	1988/9	1989/90	TOTAL
Savings	nil	nil	529,089	465,838	509,017	1,504,664
costs	9,444	46,648	88,815	92,144	61,347	298,398
Balance	-9,444	-46,648	440,994	373,694	447,670	1,236,266

The picture is summarised in Table 14 above. The costs do not include the opportunity costs of the project workers employed through the Manpower Services scheme, and later Employment Training. This figure is estimated at £36,400 for 1987/8 and £36,120 for 1988/9. These estimates are derived from payments to these workers. Estimates based upon wages outside the scheme would be higher, bringing the figure in total closer to £100,000.

If crime prevention is defined as securing a non-event, the difficulties of calculating 'saved costs' is quickly apparent. The method of calculating prevented burglaries for the present purpose was to take the year prior to the prevention initiative, apply sub-division burglary trends to that figure to gain a baseline, and subtract the actual number of burglaries from that baseline. To this figure the Northumbria Police model (see Bailey and Lynch 1988) is applied, with a notional detection rate of 20%. The balance of savings, on this method of calculation, was £1.2 million in total (see Table 15). This astonishing figure is offered as a tentative indication of cost savings, conservatively estimated. It is a gross figure, not net in relation to the more modest reductions occurring over the same period elsewhere in the sub-division. It is judged to be conservative since it neglects associated benefits, like the income generated by the reduction in the number of empty properties on the estate from a 12% figure to less than 1% during the currency of the project, savings in insurance claims and the psychological effects of victimisation. As noted earlier, a much more detailed breakdown of these

costs is available on request from the third author. It should not be overlooked that 'coming free' with the Kirkholt project is a set of citizens on a previously highly victimised estate who now seem empowered to build on the changes, a framework and set of information which allows attempts to repeat Kirkholt elsewhere, and hopefully some insights into the process and dynamics of inter-agency collaboration.

### **Drip-Feeding Crime Prevention**

The cornerstone of the Kirkholt project was a recognition of the importance of repeat victimisation. (which we chose to call multi-victimisation) for a crime prevention strategy. To acknowledge that the best predictor of the next victimisation is the last victimisation is to acknowledge that victim support and crime prevention are two sides of the same coin. Since repeat victimisation is most pronounced in those areas which suffer most from crime (Trickett et al. 1990), a prevention strategy based on the prevention of repeat victimisation has most to offer to those areas which suffer most. Since those areas which suffer most crime suffer disproportionately serious crime (Pease 1988), the same strategy is potentially even more powerful in alleviating suffering from crime. Thus, the prevention of repeat victimisation will, almost automatically, direct crime prevention activity to places and people in most need of it. There are other advantages to the strategy of preventing repeat victimisation. One of these invites the drip-feeding analogy. It is that constant, and relatively minor, effort generates an effect which suffuses naturally throughout a body under treatment. More sudden or large-scale action could not be absorbed. In responding to victimisation with crime prevention effort, a natural pace is dictated for that effort. Unlike projects which seek, for example to uprate security or give publicity to saturate an area, response to victimisation is paced and focused. In practical terms, a smaller staff is required to drip-feed than to bludgeon crime prevention activity. In the Kirkholt project, the images of growth and suffusion seemed particularly apt, and led to a Home Watch scheme grounded in the cocoons (another growth analogy) which *seemed* thereby to be better established and supported.

There remains one final virtue of crime prevention by response to victimisation. It is that it removes potentially divisive choice of targets for prevention. A crime prevention officer responding to requests for attention has to make difficult choices (see Harvey et al. 1989). Having been victimised already probably represents the least contentious basis for a claim to be given crime prevention attention. To give a practical and extreme instance, there is a view that identifying attacks as racially motivated causes distinctive problems, such as imitation. If a prior attack justified crime prevention attention, and if many attacks were racially motivated, the vulnerable ethnic groups would get attention commensurate with that, on the basis of their victimisation. It is a way of ensuring distributive justice in crime prevention without mentioning potentially socially divisive issues as such.

In short, the emphasis on repeat victimisation which underpins the Kirkholt Project has emerged in our thinking as an important strategy of crime

prevention generally. Whatever the particular and undoubted defects of the Kirkholt Project itself, we hope that this perspective is incorporated into other projects in the future.

### **The Limits of Crime Prevention without Detection**

Two facts seem well established on the basis of criminological research. One, dealt with at length above, is that victimisation predicts further victimisation. Victimisation goes in clusters. The other is that a relatively small proportion of offenders contribute a large proportion of crime committed. Some commit offences at many times the rate of others during the course of an active criminal career. This is true both for self-reported studies and for studies based on arrest or conviction data (see Cohen 1986 for a review). How do these two facts relate to each other? It must be recognised that what follows is speculative.

Having achieved the reduction of burglaries on the Kirkholt estate, what remains is the stubborn core. In the nature of things, we cannot be certain who commits most of these offences. We do know that the shape of the burglary problem is now different (see Chapter 5), and in ways which may be taken to imply greater commitment to or professionalism about committing burglaries. In the language commonly (and perhaps mistakenly) used in this sort of context, we may have prevented opportunist but not professional burglary. Local knowledge contributes to this impression, when clusters of burglaries bubble up at particular points of the estate coinciding with the residence changes of particular individuals. People active on the estate think they know who commits the burglary clusters. This is the usual state of affairs on many estates. Police or probation officers with extensive local connections are typically confident that they know who in the area is "at it". If they are right, there are a few frequent offenders on Kirkholt, as elsewhere, who account for the remaining burglary problem there. There is a case for saying that the next stage in burglary prevention would be the explicit joining of detection and prevention elements in a project and indeed this is something which is developing on Kirkholt. In recent months, mapping the location of burglaries showed the majority were concentrated in a small area of the estate, close to the residence of a known burglar. This information was passed from the project office to the police and an arrest was made. Nevertheless, to develop an analogy made earlier, a prevention project can wash away the sand of opportunistic crime with relative ease. This will then leave the rock of professional crime. How far beneath the surface the rock lies is never known, but criminological research would suggest that it constitutes a significant proportion of the total. We have observed (emphatically not in the Kirkholt project) among social workers drawn to work in crime prevention projects a disinclination to address the issue of detection as a means of crime prevention for the frequent offender. It seems to raise spectres of incapacitative sentencing which many of them find distasteful. Nonetheless, if we wish crime prevention to be as complete as possible, the relationship between conventional prevention and detection will have to be seriously addressed. We advocate a demonstration project in which the elements of the prevention of repeat victimisation and detection effort were explicitly combined *ab initio*.

### **Crime Prevention: The Measurement of Success**

The Kirkholt project in its Phase I was caricatured by some as being a “target-hardening” approach. In its Phase II an explicitly social, offender-focused, element was added. The facile division of crime prevention into physical and social has always irritated us. Some, probably most, physical changes in the name of crime prevention have their effect because of social changes they induce. Property-marking will have its effect (see Laycock 1985) via changes in offender perceptions. Social changes will have physical consequences. For example, inducing neighbourliness will lead neighbours to take in milk and newspapers, and leave lights on to protect the homes of absent neighbours. Thus it seems to us to make no sense to characterise crime prevention action as being physical or social, when the intervention is in terms of what has come to be known as primary crime prevention – the protection of vulnerable places or people. This remains true despite the tenacity with which many police crime prevention officers, and others, hold to one or other perspective.

The picture is complicated when one considers secondary and tertiary (hereafter conflated as indirect) crime prevention. In this approach, the actions taken do not in themselves reduce crime but generate a state of affairs wherein crime may be reduced. To its advocate, indirect crime prevention is a more fundamental approach than primary crime prevention. According to such a view, crime will only be permanently reduced if personal inclinations or social arrangements are made less criminogenic. To the cynic, indirect crime prevention is a way of making desired social changes by pretending that they will reduce crime. Further, since indirect crime prevention needs time to ‘work through’, the day of reckoning on which the measurement of crime level will be made is so far into the future that other changes will obscure the issue – if indeed the pattern of crime had ever been specified closely enough to make measurement possible.

The issue was not academic in the Kirkholt project. In brief, the offender and school programme elements of Phase II invited measurement of a type and on a time scale quite different from that appropriate for the assessment of Phase I. We did not resolve matters in time for incorporation into the assessment of the project, but we have considered the issue enough to offer some tentative suggestions for the future. In essence, the objective is to measure indirect crime prevention within a time scale which makes assessment a realistic possibility, while at the same time making it a measurement of a type which is true to the aspirations of the indirect approach.

### **Direct Crime Prevention**

Whatever the substance of an initiative, direct crime prevention must be measured as the non-occurrence of crimes in relation to prior or expected rates. The crimes and areas targeted must be specified in advance and in detail. The time scale for measurement is defined by the degree of implementation of protective measures. Direct crime prevention is in one sense definable as that kind of prevention which can have immediate effect and must be so measured. Phase I of the Kirkholt project was an example of direct crime prevention, and was assessed accordingly.

### **Indirect Crime Prevention: Offender Based**

Offender-based indirect crime prevention is one strand of Kirkholt Phase II. It cannot be satisfactorily measured by the rate of crime committed, because of the issue of recruitment into criminal careers. Preventing offenders with records from committing further crimes will have no effect if more new offenders are thereby recruited into crime. One instance where this may occur is drug importation. If there are many willing would-be couriers, the prevention of re-offending among existing couriers will not have the effect of reducing the amount of importation. Thus the appropriate measure of indirect crime prevention by attention to known offenders lies in the reconviction rates of those offenders, and the proportion of those found guilty or admitting guilt who have prior records. Both measures should decline. The reader will at this point be likely to argue that it is an unsatisfactory sort of crime prevention for which the number of crimes committed is not the measurement of choice. We agree. For this reason, we conclude that this type of indirect prevention should always be accompanied by the second sort of indirect prevention described below.

### **Indirect Crime Prevention: Concentrating on Offenders-to-be.**

The strand of Kirkholt Phase II which is of this kind is the Unity for our Community Project, which involved schoolchildren. Attention to schools (in some cases focused on 'vulnerable' children) is the standard approach here. The rate of crime is again an inappropriate measure, since the recruitment of adults into criminality is a confounding factor. The appropriate measures of this approach are again twofold: the prevalence of criminality in the cohort attended to, and the proportion of cleared crime which can be attributed to known offenders.

Because of what we see as the crucial importance of the prevalence measure to the assessment of crime prevention measures concentrating on pre-delinquents (however inclusively defined), a few sentences will be given to its consideration. Prevalence in the sense used refers to the proportion of an available population which falls into the condition of interest. In this case, we are interested in the proportion of an age cohort which is convicted (or officially processed) as criminal. Farrington (1983) established the proportion of people who could expect to acquire a conviction at some or any stage in their lives, an estimate which has been supported by subsequent research. The uniquely appropriate measure for assessing the success of pre-delinquent programmes is that of crime prevalence. If a school cohort is targeted for attention, a smaller proportion of that cohort should cross the boundary from non-criminal to officially processed criminal. A supplementary measure, of course, would be the number of convictions per person convicted in the same cohort. In this way it could be seen whether the most active criminals extend their activities to exploit the criminal opportunities which remain unexploited by their peers who refrain from crime. In the same spirit, as noted above, one should measure the proportion of cleared crime attributable to known offenders. This should increase for areas with successful pre-delinquent programmes.

### **Other Indirect Crime Prevention**

Any change in social arrangement may have crime consequences (the best-known example being the effects of helmet legislation on motor-cycle theft, see Mayhew et al. 1990). It is difficult to think of any generalisation, about such programmes, apart from the notion that they should have measurement which is true to the presumed mechanism of change. For instance, if an excess were required on household insurance, (see Litton 1990) this would have the effect of making small-scale fraud no longer worthwhile. The distribution of amounts lost in 'burglaries' reported to the police would change, with fewer small losses being reported. In such an evaluation, the level of report would also have to be assessed by victim survey. Similarly, consider the introduction of identity cards. This would arguably have an indirect crime-reductive effect. Its extent would be in proportion to the extent to which deception about identity was used to commit the crime. Thus the pattern of crime would change, with the greatest reductions being in crimes like cheque fraud, and the least in crimes of impulsive violence. The evaluation would have to be against a presumed pattern of change.

While these last examples might appear a little banal, they perform the useful function of offering comparison with the offender-related indirect crime prevention approaches. It does seem that the measurement approaches there advocated, while arguably at least as obvious as those in the last examples, have not featured in the literature on person-centred indirect crime prevention.

### **Farewell to Kirkholt**

The last word should be about Kirkholt itself. It has consumed much of the writers' time and energy since 1986, and has taught them many things. For one (M.O.C.), it will continue to do so. What will happen next is that readers of this and the earlier report will decide what experiences and perspectives can be put to use in crime prevention elsewhere. We hope that, despite its faults, the project does inform others. The approach is already being repeated elsewhere in Rochdale with initially similar results. It would be a fitting tribute to the people of Kirkholt for the name of their estate to be used to encourage others that their crime problems are not insuperable. The success is theirs.

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