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Foreword

The growing body of research on repeat victimisation in the United Kingdom and elsewhere justifies the allocation of police resources to the small proportion of the population which suffers the highest proportion of crime. This research is relevant to different crime types in both rural and urban areas, directing police resources to the highest crime areas within the context of a problem-solving crime management approach. This short report has been produced as part of the Scottish Executive funded research on repeat victimisation in Scotland to fulfil three purposes:

- to describe and disseminate the aims of the recent research giving details of some of the practical application of its results for Scottish police forces;
- to provide direct evidence of the nature and extent of repeat victimisation in Scotland from analysis of the various sweeps of the Scottish Crime Survey (SCS) in acknowledgement of the desire among Scottish police forces to know more about the levels and form of repeat victimisation;
- to provide actual examples of the way in which Scottish police forces are currently identifying and tackling repeat victimisation.

Although this research is the first on the subject of repeat victimisation in Scotland, the authors acknowledge that many operational police officers are already aware of and are addressing the issue of repeat crimes. Rather than formal 'best practice', these examples are presented as simple low-key illustrations of problem-solving policing using the concept of repeat victimisation as a problem, and have acted accordingly with the result that repeated crimes against specific targets have been reduced or eliminated completely. Such local successes are as important as the larger scale work.

Readers are directed to other documents for detailed and formal examples of best practice and broader strategic guidance (Anderson *et al*, 1995; Bridgeman & Hobbs, 1998; Coghill & Shaw, 1998; Forrester *et al*, 1988; Home Office, 1994; Pease, 1998). Many of these sources are brought together in the recently published *Repeat Victimisation: Taking Stock* (Pease, 1998) which summarises work since the late 1980s on repeat victimisation in the United Kingdom from a perspective directly relevant to policing. The present document is intended to complement these other publications but with a uniquely Scottish focus.

Future reports will deal with the experiences of repeat victims, based upon personal interviews, and the linkage between prolific offenders and repeat victims based upon interviews with serving prisoners. Patterns of repeat victimisation from analysis of police recorded crime data will also be covered in future reports. To anticipate this last element, because of the common themes with survey data considered in this report, repeats in each police force area studied are underrepresented. This is because of recording inaccuracies inherent in police information systems and the underreporting of repeat crimes by victims.

1. Introduction

Research on repeat victimisation in Scotland was commissioned by the Criminology Branch of The Scottish Executive Central Research Unit. The research, which started in March 1998 and ended in September 1999, was carried out within selected divisions in three Scottish police forces: Falkirk, Central Scotland Police; Maryhill, Strathclyde Police; and Dundee, Tayside Police. These areas were selected because of the diversity of policing environments they provide. The aims of the research were to provide information which was relevant and useful to all Scottish police forces. The study itself is distinctive to Scotland but builds on earlier research carried out in England & Wales, other European countries and the United States. The researchers are committed to applied criminological research. To this end the lead researcher (MS) has worked directly with the three forces in developing practical ways of tackling repeat victimisation.

This report is divided into three main sections.

- The first section outlines the research and gives an overview of the information which will be published from the wider programme of work, together with the implications this will have for policing.
- The second section presents the results of analysis of successive sweeps of the SCS and demonstrates the level and nature of repeat victimisation in Scotland.
- The third provides examples of how police officers are identifying and successfully tackling repeat victimisation within the three participating forces. These examples illustrate the way in which information on repeat victimisation can be effective as an intelligence tool within the context of pro-active policing in Scotland. There is, additionally, an example of successful tackling of repeat victimisation within an English police force also outlined within this section.

These examples of pro-active policing are, perhaps, the most important part of this report.

2. Research

2.1 Aims of the research on repeat victimisation in Scotland

The research programme has four main aims. Not all of these aims are addressed in the present report, although they will be in the series of publications of which this is the first.

2.1.1 Aim 1: To establish levels and nature of repeat victimisation in Scotland

Existing data from victimisation surveys and from police crime management systems are used to estimate the level and identify the nature of repeat victimisation in Scotland. The results of analysis from the first of these sources of data, the SCS, provides a focus for this document. The SCS provides information on the concentration of victimisation in Scotland. Such analysis provides best-estimates as to the general levels of repeat victimisation, reported and unreported, for the whole of Scotland. The second source on the extent of repeat victimisation comes from police recorded crime data for the three divisions participating in the research. Although both sources of data have their disadvantages, together the survey data and force data provide the best information available on the levels and nature of repeat victimisation in Scotland. Only SCS data has been analysed for this report.

2.1.2 Aim 2: To determine experiences of repeat victims

Although there is now a sizeable body of research in the United Kingdom on repeat crimes, particularly housebreaking (first by Forrester *et al*, 1988); theft of and from motor vehicles (Mayhew *et al*, 1993); domestic violence (Hanmer & Stanko, 1985); and bullying (Whitney & Smith, 1991), research is still needed on repeats of different crime types against the same target and to identify crime reduction implications.

The nature and impact of chronic victimisation will also be addressed in the main research report. This issue has only recently been highlighted in research on repeat victimisation. Although only a relatively small proportion of the population are chronic victims (the sub-group of repeat victims suffering the highest proportion of crimes) they are thought to experience many different crime types, sometimes on a daily basis. It is known that they endure many more crimes than come to the attention of the police and there is research evidence to show that they suffer more from their experiences than most other crime victims (Shaw, 1997; Shaw, 2000). Far from getting used to crime, chronic victims suffer many emotional side-effects even when victimisation episodes appear individually trivial. That a series of apparently trivial events can have such an impact on victims is of crucial importance to inform appropriate police responses to incidents they may otherwise dismiss as insignificant.

The results of the interviews with repeat victims will be presented in the main report.

2.1.3 Aim 3: To undertake research to explore the links between repeat victimisation and repeat offending

Research evidence suggests that those who repeatedly target the same victim (person or place) are more established in criminal careers and are responsible for a large proportion of repeat crime (Ashton *et al*, 1998; Gill & Pease, 1998; Pease, 1998). Research to identify the specific characteristics of these offenders, therefore, has potentially important implications for both crime prevention and crime detection. If the characteristics and methods of target selection of specific offenders could be identified from past repeat crimes, this information would enable the police to target known prolific offenders by reference to the types of crime they are likely to commit in the future. In addition, the aim is to find out about the process of target selection of repeat victims by offenders. This information will provide an important intelligence tool for Scottish police forces.

The results of interviews with serving prisoners will be presented in the main report.

2.1.4 Aim 4: To clarify the implications for policing practice of repeat victimisation phenomena

This aim is partially realised by the collection of examples of current police practice based on an understanding of repeat victimisation. The fulfilment of this aim will also be advanced by consideration of victim, offender and offence characteristics alongside each other which are developed in the final report of this research project.

3. Patterns

3.1 What the analysis of the Scottish Crime Survey (SCS) reveals about repeat victimisation in Scotland

3.1.1 Survey data

It is first important to discuss briefly issues involved in analysing SCS data. This is because there is no perfect method of identifying the extent of repeat victimisation. Victimization surveys have shortcomings, such as the ability of respondents to recall incidents accurately or their willingness to report certain incidents, and the SCS, therefore, is only one means of obtaining information on repeat victimisation in Scotland. The other main source, police recorded crime data, also has its limitations. For example, not all crime is reported and of that which is not all is recorded by the police. Together, the two sources give best estimates regarding repeat victimisation, not a perfect picture.

Another limitation with victimisation surveys is the fact that respondents are asked about their experiences within a specific time frame. This produces at least two problems. First, crime victims may tell the interviewer about incidents which may have taken place before or after this specified period of time. Secondly, some incidents reported as crimes may not actually be regarded as crimes by the police. This has consequences for whether data from the main questionnaire or the follow-on victim questionnaire are more reliable. The main questionnaire contains more events, but the victim form will exclude incidents considered not to satisfy the criteria of a crime. In addition, crime surveys lack details of crime sequences which allow patterns over time and spatially to be identified.

The design of some victimisation surveys pays little attention to the phenomenon of repeat victimisation. This is evident through restricting the number of victimisation forms per respondent and imposing a maximum number of events that are recorded. As illustration, within the SCS the limit for event recordings per household or individual is five incidents (MVA, 1998). Inevitably, this limits the amount of repeat victimisations reported within the SCS (see Genn, 1988 for a discussion of these issues

There are also problems associated with police recorded crime data with regard to repeat victimisation. In summary, repeat victims are less inclined to report to the police crimes which they suffer. There are many possible reasons for this. These include: bad experiences with criminal justice agencies when reporting previous crimes; becoming resigned to the probability that no perpetrator will be identified; fear when threatened with reprisals by those who were identified as perpetrators of earlier crimes; and concern that frequent reporting may affect future insurability. Even if repeated crimes are reported to the police, there are obstacles to identification these repetitions of previous crimes. For example, there may be occasions when an event recorded as a crime is not recording, while inaccurate recording of addresses and locations is also a major obstacle to the identification of repeats. The effect is to reduce the proportion of repeat crimes which are

recognised as such. Consequently, data collected from police records necessarily understates the extent of repetition.

In summary, therefore, the problems associated with both police recorded crime data and victimisation surveys in respect of repeat victimisation makes each different from, not necessarily better or worse than, the other. Once one is reconciled to the fact that there is no perfect method which will reveal the extent of repeat victimisation, one turns to the more important issue of whether the phenomena revealed by both methods have enough in common to form the basis of crime control strategies. Given that the patterns drawn from both sources are consistent, there are grounds for confidence in the observations on which a crime control strategy may be founded. This document does not include a survey of the literature on this topic, since general reviews are available elsewhere (see Farrell, 1995; Pease, 1998) and one examination with a focus on Scottish experience has been published recently (Coghill & Shaw, 1998).

The central thrust of what follows in the remainder of this chapter concerns how crime is distributed across places and individuals as assessed from four sweeps of the SCS. We believe that this is the first report of British victimisation survey data to be written exclusively from a repeat victimisation perspective, although the reports from British victimisation surveys (see for example Mayhew *et al*, 1993) have increasingly incorporated analyses of repeated crime against the same victim(s).

3.1.2 Ways in which crime is measured

There are three complementary measures of crime experience: incidence, prevalence and concentration. Incidence refers to the number of crime events suffered per head of population. It is the measure typically incorporated in official publications about the extent of recorded crime and is the one conventionally conceived and described as the 'crime rate'. Prevalence refers to the proportion of people (or places) available to be victimised who (or which) are victimised. The third, and grossly neglected, variable is concentration, which refers to the number of victimisations per victimised person (or place). The neglect of concentration is stunning, given the extent to which crime proves to be concentrated, once data is looked at in this way. Its neglect is also disastrous for the understanding of crime patterns, in that concentration is greatest in areas of high crime. Indeed, concentration is arguably the primary reason why areas suffer much crime (Trickett *et al*, 1992). Finally, the neglect of concentration is misguided in that only this type of measure identifies the places and people in most immediate need of policing and other crime preventive resources. Combining data from extremely different places to yield an average measure of crime is to remove the most useful fact about crime, its extreme concentration on certain people and places.

The sections below now present the results of analysis on the various sweeps of the SCS for property and personal crime in Scotland. There have been four sweeps of the SCS, the only household survey of people's experiences and perceptions of crime. The first two, in 1982 and 1988, covered central and southern Scotland as part of the British Crime Survey

(BCS) and were co-ordinated by the Home Office. The most recent two sweeps, in 1993 and 1996, were carried out independently in Scotland by The Scottish Office and covered the whole of mainland Scotland and the larger islands. The 1996 SCS was therefore the fourth sweep involving interviews with over 5,000 people in Scotland. The next SCS will be conducted in 2000.

3.1.3 Repeated property victimisation in Scotland

Incidence and prevalence of property victimisation

Some 35-40% of all property crimes captured in SCS are committed against 3-4% of respondents, who suffer three or more in the course of a year. There is remarkable consistency across time. These observations support research on repeat victimisation elsewhere in the United Kingdom, Europe and the United States. Recorded crime in Scotland is concentrated on a small proportion of the population.

Probability of further property victimisation

Victimisation increases the probability of further victimisation. Looking at the 1982 data, 19% of households were subject to property crime at least once. Of those victimised at least once, 37% went on to be victim to crime on at least one more occasion during the year. Of that proportion, 43% went on to be victims at least once more, and so on. Similar patterns for further victimisation are true for all four sweeps of SCS. It should be noted that with every additional crime the risk period for the next is less. Thus, a first crime has twelve months in which to occur, a second crime has the period between the first crime and the end of the year, the third has the period between the second and the end of the year, and so on. The probability of victimisation therefore increases steadily. In essence, this means that victimisation predicts victimisation.

Concentration of property victimisation

A third way of depicting repeat victimisation is by presentation of concentrations, i.e. the number of victimisations suffered per victim. This is calculated by dividing the incidence figure by prevalence. Concentration rates seem to be very stable over all four sweeps. For example, in 1996 victims reported an average of 1.74 property crimes each.

3.1.4 Repeated crime against the person in Scotland

Incidence and prevalence of personal victimisation

As with property crimes in Scotland, a high proportion of personal crime is suffered repeatedly by a small proportion of the sample. For example in 1996 1.2% of respondents suffered 40% of personal crime. There is a degree of consistency across time in that proportion. Again, these patterns support research on survey data in other countries.

Probability of further personal victimisation

Once again, a different way of analysing the data is to present the probabilities of at least one extra personal victimisation during the balance of the risk period used in SCS. Everyone starts the year unvictimized. The first transition is to being victimised once. Looking at the 1982 data, 7% of the total number of respondents were subject to personal crime at least once. Of those victimised at least once, 19% went on to be victim to personal crime on at least one more occasion during the year. Of that proportion, 29% went on to be victims at least once more, and so on. It should be noted again that, with every additional crime, the risk period for the next is less. The probability of victimisation increases steadily, and is remarkably consistent across sweeps of the SCS, subject to the fluctuations one would expect given that there are smaller numbers than for property crime.

Concentration of personal victimisation

It is important not to be naïve about the concentration of personal victimisation. Some of those repeatedly attacked will be victims of, for example, domestic violence. Others will themselves be members of a subculture of violence in which they may be attacked one day and attackers the next. The violence may be a by-product of a drug market, gang and soccer affiliations and the like. However one might question their victim status, it is with this group, one way or another, with which the problems of violence lie. To neglect them is to misrepresent the problem.

To repeat the final exercise undertaken with property crime data, it is crucial to look at the measures of concentration of personal crime (i.e. victimisations per victim) by SCS. There is a steady increase in the concentration of violent crime over the period covered by the surveys, so that in 1996 victims were reporting 1.7 incidents each in contrast to 1.3 in 1982. To elaborate on what that means, it is that 75% of the increase in incidents of violence captured by SCS was attributable to an increase in the number of incidents which victims described, and only 25% to an increase in the number of those who fell victim to violence. Put in that way, the problem of violence is increasingly one of repeated violence than an increase in the prevalence of victimisation. It is the same victims being victimised over and over again rather than previously unvictimized people becoming victims.

Given the consistency in patterns across time in relation to property crime, particular crime types across years were combined to generate samples large enough to analyse meaningfully. This was carried out for housebreaking and for theft of and from motor vehicles. The results of analysis for repeats on each of these crimes are presented below, using the same three methods as for property crime in general.

3.1.5 Housebreaking

The 0.2% of households experiencing three or more housebreakings suffered 17% of all housebreakings. Those suffering two accounted for a further 17%. Turning to look at the likelihood of future victimisation, a similar pattern occurs with housebreakings as with property crime in general, where housebreakings seem to increase the probability of subsequent housebreakings.

Finally, the concentration rate for domestic housebreaking is 1.27. To oversimplify, this suggests that for every four homes entered over the course of a year, there are five housebreakings. Other data (e.g. Trickett *et al*, 1992; Johnson *et al*, 1997) show that the bulk of these repeats are in high crime areas.

3.1.6 Theft of motor vehicles

Theft of motor vehicles has the lowest level of repeats of the crimes examined - unsurprisingly given that some 40% of cars are not recovered, and their availability for being taken again is thus limited. Nonetheless, 19% of victims had two or more vehicles taken during the course of a year. Again avoiding naïveté, the role of insurance fraud for this crime type should not be understated.

There is, by now, a familiar increase in probability of at least one additional event as the number of prior offences, for thefts of motor vehicles, increases.

The concentration for this crime type is 1.13, with nine car thefts for every eight victims of car theft during the course of a year.

3.1.7 Thefts from motor vehicles

The distribution of theft from motor vehicles across households follows previous patterns, with four such crimes per three victimised households and 20% of such crime being suffered by households suffering at least three such crimes. Risk of further thefts from motor vehicles again increases with the number of prior thefts.

3.1.8 Area differences

Reference was made above to the notion that crime concentration (victimisations per victim) is greatest in areas of highest crime. The point is important because of the claim that crime prevention is facilitated by attention to repeat victimisation because it automatically takes one to areas of highest crime, with a natural focus (crime prevention and victim support) for intervention with the victim and their immediate surroundings. Previous research suggests that areas high in crime are high in the number of victimisations per victim, and indeed that this factor contributes to the fact that an area is high in crime.

Patterns found in other research were supported in the analysis carried out on the 1996 SCS. This communicates the unsurprising fact that the worst areas are very much worse than other areas. It supports everyday experience, too, that crime is especially concentrated in these worst areas. Even in the worst areas, however, only some 20% of people suffer a personal crime, and less than 30% suffer a property or a vehicle crime. Thus high crime areas are not areas in which everyone is victimised.

What substantially characterises high crime rate areas is the number of victimisations per victim: those suffering personal crime in high crime areas suffer an average of three over the course of a year; those suffering crime against their property over two each; those whose vehicles are subject to crime suffer an average of almost three events per year in the worst areas. Perhaps a helpful way to express this is to say that if the worst areas had the same number of people victimised as now, but at a rate (concentration) of an average Scottish area, crime in those areas would fall to below half of their present levels. Hence emerges the merits in employing problem-solving policing methods to focus on the victims of repeat crimes.

3.1.9 Cross-crime type repeats

Classifying people into those who had been victimised not at all, once, or more than once by property crime; those who had been victimised not at all, once, or more than once by personal crime; and those who had been victimised not at all, once, or more than once by vehicle crime reveals unsurprisingly that those victimised more than once by one crime type were also more likely than statistically expected to be victimised more than once by another crime type. The association was closest for property and personal crime, but still substantial and statistically reliable for the other two linkages.

3.1.10 Summary of findings on repeat victimisation from the SCS

SCS data show the familiar repeat victimisation phenomena: crime being disproportionately suffered by repeat victims; increasing probability of becoming a victim again as the number of prior victimisations increase; and the concentration of repeat victims in areas of highest crime. With appropriate caution about the shortfalls of SCS as a data source, but supplementing these analyses with analysis of police recorded data, repeat victimisation is a robust phenomenon worthy of providing one platform among others for preventive effort in Scotland.

4. Good Practice

To some extent, Central Scotland, Strathclyde and Tayside Police are already identifying and successfully addressing repeat victimisation, as are other forces throughout Scotland.

Examples for different crime types from the three Scottish police forces participating in the research are presented in this section. These specific examples show that the problems associated with, and actions to tackle, repeat victimisation are relevant to both commercial and domestic properties in Scotland and in rural and urban locations. In addition, some of the examples show that, by including local agencies in a partnership approach, resources can be focussed more effectively on the people and the places which suffer most from crime. Many of the approaches illustrate that tackling repeat victimisation does not have to be complicated. Simple approaches are often effective methods of tackling repeat victimisation.

This section ends with an interesting example from England – a summary of the approach used by the first police division in the United Kingdom to develop a repeat victimisation strategy using only divisional funding.

4.1 Repeat vehicle crime

Example 1: Car park, Dundee International Sports Centre

Problem: The car parking areas at Dundee International Sports Centre are spread throughout the site. Despite CCTV and adequate lighting, there were numerous incidents of vehicle-related crime within the car parks.

Action: All crime sheets were analysed. Although in some cases there was a common time period, in all cases there was insufficient information with regard to the description, and exact locus of the incident. All complainers were sent letters together with a map of the car park and asked to indicate where they had parked their vehicle. A 90% response rate was achieved which resulted in the identification of two adjacent parking bays which were outwith the coverage of the CCTV system. The parking bays in question were subsequently landscaped.

Result: There have been no further problems reported since this action was taken.

Example 2: Car parks, Mugdock Country Park

Problem: The Country Park was experiencing repeated occurrences of vehicle crime to the extent that 120 out of 149 recorded crimes between 1993 and 1997 were vehicle-related.

Action: A police constable carried out analysis on the time of day, day of the week and the specific car parks in which the incidents were happening. This showed that vehicle crimes were concentrated in those areas most shielded from public view. As a result, a strategy was developed to target the most affected areas. This included changing the landscaping by reducing the amount of foliage in the locations. Public awareness was raised through posters, a press-release, an article in the Park's publication to clients and park rangers were alerted to the problem. Police patrols were also focussed on the area.

Result: Since these changes were implemented the number of recorded incidents has reduced dramatically.

Example 3: Car parks, Falkirk Town Centre

Problem: Several instances of car crime were reported in two of the main car parks in Falkirk town centre.

Action: The police began liaising with the car park managers in an effort to prevent crime at these locations. As a result, a number of security issues were addressed, such as lighting and landscaping.

Result: At the start of 1998, after the safety issues were addressed, the chances of becoming a victim of crime in either of these car parks was estimated at 1,500,000 to 1, based on the number of vehicles using the sites compared with the very small number of crimes which have been committed. Both car parks have achieved 'Secured by Design' status.

4.2 Repeat theft

Example 1: Local employer, Grangemouth

Problem: A high incidence of theft of staff property from the kitchen, locker rooms and offices of a major employer in Grangemouth was reported to the police.

Action: A visit to the building by police officers identified a simple management issue concerning the lack of control over access from outside the premises to these areas. Action was taken by the employer to control access by the introduction of security hardware.

Result: No crimes have been reported since.

Example 2: Commercial premises, Milngavie

Problem: Off-sales premises in Milngavie were the subject of numerous incidents of theft by shoplifting.

Action: The Force Community Involvement Branch arranged a meeting with the Area Manager. Crime prevention advice was given, particularly regarding the layout of stock within the premises.

Result: Action taken as a result of this advice has resulted in a reduction in the number of thefts and incidents in the premises.

Example 3: Bogus health visitor, Glasgow

Problem: An elderly man was the victim of a bogus health visitor who stole £2,000 from an item of clothing which was hanging on the inside of the front door. The police considered this victim to be vulnerable to a repeat incident, given his age, the fact that he was quite infirm and did not understand or speak very good English.

Action: A referral was made to Victim Support who, in turn, arranged for Glasgow City Council to fit British Standard recommended locks and a security chain on his door. The man was also advised by Community Involvement Officers against holding large sums of money in his home. The Social Work Department was informed and arranged home visits.

Result: There has been no reported recurrence of the initial crime. This is an example of the way in which different partners can become involved to prevent repeat victimisation.

4.3 Repeat housebreaking

Example 1: Domestic premises, Bishopbriggs

Problem: The home of an elderly man was the subject of theft by housebreaking. From enquiries, it was established that this was the third such break-in at the address.

Action: Crime Prevention Officers at Kirkintilloch were alerted to this fact and, after surveying the premises, installed a portable alarm board encompassing a 'panic attack' button and digital monitoring facility. Five such alarms were available after Strathkelvin District Crime Prevention Panel won an award of £1,000 towards a 'revictimisation project'. The alarm remained 'in-situ' at the address for a period of three weeks until a fully operational alarm system was installed.

Result: As a result of the intervention there were no reports of further break-ins at this address. In addition, the victim indicated that he felt much safer in his home.

Example 2: Local church, Falkirk

Problem: A local church in Falkirk suffered repeat break-ins.

Action: Crime prevention advice relating to the security of doors and windows was given and all the recommendations made were implemented.

Result: There have been no further incidents at that location since the implementation of the recommendations.

Example 3: Bakery, Dumbarton

Problem: A bakery in Dumbarton was the victim of one attempted housebreaking and one housebreaking.

Action: A portable alarm was installed. Although, after a period of 48 hours, the premises were once again the subject of a break-in, the alarm was activated and the perpetrator was apprehended within the premises.

Result: No other housebreakings have since occurred at the premises.

Example 4: School, Dumbarton

Problem: A school in Dumbarton was the subject of vandalism and several break-ins throughout the summer months.

Action: A portable alarm was installed, which brought about the apprehension of two youths breaking into the premises.

Result: The school remained free of vandalism and break-ins throughout the remaining summer months.

4.4 Repeat threat and nuisance

Example 1: Violent crime, Glasgow

Problem: A female victim of attempted murder and rape had been subjected to further threats from the offender.

Action: The woman was given home security advice and issued with a mobile telephone linked to the police control room. A 'panic alarm' was also fitted in her home, again linked to the police control room.

Result: No further incidents or threats were subsequently reported

Example 2: Veterinary practice, Falkirk

Problem: The premises of a veterinary practice in Falkirk was the victim of several acts of vandalism.

Action: The Force Community Safety Department carried out a survey of the area, including the building involved. It transpired that the means of carrying out the vandalism was a waste paper bin which the Council had located immediately outside the building only a few months earlier. This was being used as a projectile against the window. The local Council was contacted and the bin was re-located.

Result: Since then, there have been no reports of vandalism, or any other crime, at that location.

Example 3: Racial incidents, Dundee

Problem: An increasing number of repeated racial incidents were being reported to different agencies, including the Housing and Education Departments of the local Council, Social Services and the Police. Each agency had its own method of recording these incidents but with no mechanism for exchanging the information.

Action: A pilot scheme has been set up involving a multi-agency panel, with the Police being the monitoring agency. A standard recording form was agreed by all agencies. Whenever and to whomever a racial incident is reported the incident form is completed and sent to the monitoring agency which collates the information and identifies repeat victims. All participating agencies have agreed that these cases will be dealt with as a matter of urgency within five working days of receipt of the complaint.

Result: Although this is a pilot scheme, which is currently being evaluated, the early results in terms of a reduction in repeat victimisation are positive. This partnership approach, with a clearly identified co-ordinating group, appears to be extremely effective.

4.5 Repeat assault

Example 1: Domestic violence, Glasgow

Problem: A woman living in Maryhill was assaulted by her common-law husband. The assaults were of a particularly violent and degrading nature. The woman was extremely frightened to pursue a complaint against him for fear of further attacks as she had been assaulted by him on numerous previous occasions over a four year period.

Action: Officers gave the woman advice regarding help groups, re-housing and the legal process, including procedures for obtaining a court interdict. As a result, she agreed to pursue her complaint. A report was prepared for the procurator fiscal and a request made for an arrest warrant. In view of the serious nature of the previous offences, and the obvious potential for the offender to carry out further acts, the woman was issued with a mobile telephone directly linked to the police control room. Six days later, the man returned and subjected her to threats. In fear, she fled to a neighbour. She immediately used the mobile telephone and officers attended and arrested the man.

Result: No further incidents of this type have been reported.

Example 2: Hospital, Falkirk

Problem: One of the wards at a local hospital sought the advice of the Force Community Safety Department in relation to acts of violence against staff. These assaults mainly took place within the staff office, because of the inadequate material used in the construction of the unit.

Action: Advice was given and the office was re-designed to the specification given by the Department.

Result: No assaults on staff have been reported in this area since the re-design of the office.

4.6 An English example

Dewsbury Division, West Yorkshire Police

Problem: Dewsbury Division is situated adjacent to Huddersfield Division, where the successful Home Office funded 'Biting Back' project took place between October 1994 and March 1996. 'Biting Back' (Chenery *et al*, 1997) was the first time that repeat victimisation was tackled across a whole division, following the success of the Kirkholt project in the late 1980s in an area of Rochdale (Forrester *et al*, 1988; 1990). It succeeded in reducing domestic housebreaking by 30% and thefts from motor vehicles by 20%, as well as increasing arrests from temporary alarms from 4% to 14% of installations and improving the quality of service to victims (see Chenery *et al*, 1997; Pease, 1998; Coghill and Shaw, 1999). The Project's three tier 'Olympic' model was taken up totally, or adapted, by many other police force areas. Although there was no evidence for displacement, Dewsbury Division became increasingly concerned that crimes might be displaced onto the area and the negative publicity and media coverage which would result.

Action: As a consequence, a decision was made to devise their own repeat victimisation strategy, based on the 'Olympic' model of 'Biting Back'. If 'Biting Back' itself was a first, Dewsbury was the first Division in England and Wales to devise a strategy based only on divisional funding. Proceeding without any additional funding, Victim Support and the local authority were used to implement target-hardening measures in domestic properties which had been subject to housebreaking. The level of response was stepped up each time a further housebreaking occurred, in the same way as the 'Biting Back' model. This graded response was highly successful in reducing repeat victimisation in the Division.

Result: Without extra funding, this was the first divisional strategy to target repeat victimisation. As well as illustrating that existing police resources can be directed to the location of highest crime concentration to both prevent and detect crime, this example suggests that it is in the interests of police divisions adjoining those where there is already an operational repeat victimisation strategy to develop an approach to address the issue of repeat victimisation themselves.

5. Conclusions

The aim of this document has been to describe the nature and extent of repeat victimisation in Scotland and to provide a user-friendly guide to the ways in which repeat victimisation is being addressed in Scotland. It is hoped that this will give an idea of the nature of forthcoming research findings which will be unique to Scotland and will enable Scottish police forces to deal more effectively with repeat victimisation. This is the first in-depth research project of its kind in Scotland and police officers will, it is hoped, feel more informed on ways of dealing with repeat victimisation in their own force area.

It is clear from the examples included in the first section that repeat victimisation is now taken seriously in Scotland as a management tool with which to target the most victimised people and places. The findings from analysis of the SCS have shown that both property and personal crime is distributed unevenly within Scotland. Crime is prevalent amongst only a small proportion of people in Scotland, who suffer a high proportion of all crime incidents captured by the SCS. Furthermore, the analysis of the SCS has found that victimisation predicts further victimisation and that the increase in crimes captured by the various sweeps of the SCS is due to an increase in the number of crimes being experienced by people who have already been victims, rather than an increase in the number of victims. These victims, and therefore crime itself, tend to be concentrated within high crime areas. Within any one period of risk, the time which elapses between successive victimisations becomes less and less. All these facts give the police in Scotland evidence for the first time about the concentration of victimisation and, thus, where resources should be focussed.

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