



House of Commons
Committee of Public Accounts

Reducing the risk of violent crime

Forty–fifth Report of Session 2007–08

*Report, together with formal minutes, oral and
written evidence*

*Ordered by The House of Commons
to be printed 30 June 2008*

The Committee of Public Accounts

The Committee of Public Accounts is appointed by the House of Commons to examine “the accounts showing the appropriation of the sums granted by Parliament to meet the public expenditure, and of such other accounts laid before Parliament as the committee may think fit” (Standing Order No 148).

Current membership

Mr Edward Leigh MP (*Conservative, Gainsborough*) (Chairman)
Mr Richard Bacon MP (*Conservative, South Norfolk*)
Angela Browning MP (*Conservative, Tiverton and Honiton*)
Mr Paul Burstow MP (*Liberal Democrat, Sutton and Cheam*)
Rt Hon David Curry MP (*Conservative, Skipton and Ripon*)
Mr Ian Davidson MP (*Labour, Glasgow South West*)
Mr Philip Dunne MP (*Conservative, Ludlow*)
Angela Eagle MP (*Labour, Wallasey*)
Nigel Griffiths MP (*Labour, Edinburgh South*)
Rt Hon Keith Hill MP (*Labour, Streatham*)
Mr Austin Mitchell MP (*Labour, Great Grimsby*)
Dr John Pugh MP (*Liberal Democrat, Southport*)
Geraldine Smith MP (*Labour, Morecombe and Lunesdale*)
Rt Hon Don Touhig MP (*Labour, Islwyn*)
Rt Hon Alan Williams MP (*Labour, Swansea West*)
Phil Wilson MP (*Labour, Sedgefield*)

Powers

Powers of the Committee of Public Accounts are set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO No 148. These are available on the Internet via www.parliament.uk.

Publication

The Reports and evidence of the Committee are published by The Stationery Office by Order of the House. All publications of the Committee (including press notices) are on the Internet at <http://www.parliament.uk/pac>. A list of Reports of the Committee in the present Session is at the back of this volume.

Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee is Mark Etherton (Clerk), Emma Sawyer (Senior Committee Assistant), Pam Morris (Committee Assistant) and Alex Paterson (Media Officer).

Contacts

All correspondence should be addressed to the Clerk, Committee of Public Accounts, House of Commons, 7 Millbank, London SW1P 3JA. The telephone number for general enquiries is 020 7219 5708; the Committee’s email address is pubaccom@parliament.uk.

Contents

Report	<i>Page</i>
Summary	3
Conclusions and recommendations	5
1 Trends in serious violent crime	7
2 Keeping the trend of violent crime falling	9
3 Improving local capacity to tackle violent crime	12
Formal Minutes	14
Witnesses	15
List of written evidence	15
List of Reports from the Committee of Public Accounts 2007–08	16

Summary

Violent crime has fallen in recent years in line with crime generally, but more serious violent offences, such as homicide and wounding, have not fallen as swiftly. It is these crimes that cause the most harm to individuals and communities. There are a number of worrying trends. For example, the number of recorded crimes involving a firearm doubled between 1998–99 and 2005–06, as did the number of 15–17 year olds convicted of carrying a knife in public.

The fall in crime and violence overall has enabled the Home Office (the Department) to concentrate on tackling more serious violence and gang-related activity. Yet its efforts have been undermined by poor distribution of funding and by the Department's mixed performance in spreading good practice. The Department's key delivery bodies, Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (Partnerships), usually receive funding for tackling violence late in the financial year, and money is often one-off and short-term. This approach to funding results to expenditure being targeted at the consequences of violence, and not its causes.

Partnerships often lack the information, analytical capacity and strategic approach necessary to understand and, therefore, tackle violence in their communities effectively. More than 40% of Partnerships did not consider themselves to have sufficient resources to analyse the violence occurring in their areas. More than half of Partnerships had never used information about violent crime from the ambulance service, and almost as many had never used Accident and Emergency unit information. Fewer than half of Partnerships had a designated violent crime group in place, and only a third had a violent crime strategy.

An important role for the Home Office is to spread good practice about tackling violent crime. Yet only half of the Partnerships thought the Home Office was effective at this. In part, this was because the Department had not collected reliable data on the use and effectiveness of interventions such as Safer School Partnerships, despite both police and schools seeing these arrangements as an effective early deterrent to violent behaviour.

On the basis of a Report by the Comptroller and Auditor General,¹ we examined the Home Office on how effectively it was tackling violent crime through distributing funding to Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships, how well it had spread good practice, and how it was working with other national government departments.

1 C&AG's Report, *Home Office: Reducing the risk of violent crime*, HC (2007–08) 241

Conclusions and recommendations

- 1. Although the Home Office has been increasingly concerned about the use of weapons, only since 2007 has it been mandatory for the police to record the presence of a knife at the scene of a crime.** In partnership with police forces and Partnerships, the Home Office should use the information it can now gather about knife crime, together with other research, in order to tackle more effectively the root causes of why people carry knives.
- 2. Between 2002–03 and 2006–07 all crime, as recorded in the British Crime Survey, fell by 8.5% and violent crime fell by 9.0%. Incidents of the most serious violence against the person recorded by the police fell by 5.9% in this period, and the Home Office admitted to being worried by trends both in the use of weapons and also in the age of offenders.** Despite the welcome decline in recorded violent crime overall, there is growing public concern about weapons use and more serious violence. The Department should now seek the same level of improvement in rates of serious violence that has occurred in crime generally, by implementing the recommendations in this Report.
- 3. The majority of victims of violent crime treated in Accident and Emergency units did not report their injuries to the police, but without knowing the full picture of violence in their areas, Partnerships cannot implement effective measures to counter the violence.** The Home Office and Department of Health should jointly establish a national system for the automatic sharing of depersonalised violent crime data between hospitals, police, and Partnerships. They should also publicise successful approaches such as training hospital receptionists to record violent crime data for sharing with the police, and establishing what steps they need to take to encourage health agencies to participate willingly in crime reduction groups.
- 4. The Department has made little progress since 2005 in managing to distribute funding for tackling violent crime to Partnerships on a timely or sustainable basis.** The majority of Home Office funding for tackling violent crime is distributed through the grants it makes to police forces for all their activities. In addition to this, the Home Office also provides smaller amounts of additional funding directly to Partnerships specifically allocated to tackling violent crime. In order that this latter funding can be used effectively in tackling violence and its underlying causes, the Home Office should end one-off funding streams or grants, and make the notification and distribution of funding early enough (at least before the start of each financial year) to allow for proper strategic planning. The Home Office should also provide Partnerships with guidance on the most cost-effective way to spend money locally to tackle violent crime. This should be delivered by Government Offices for the Regions so that it is suitably tailored to local requirements.

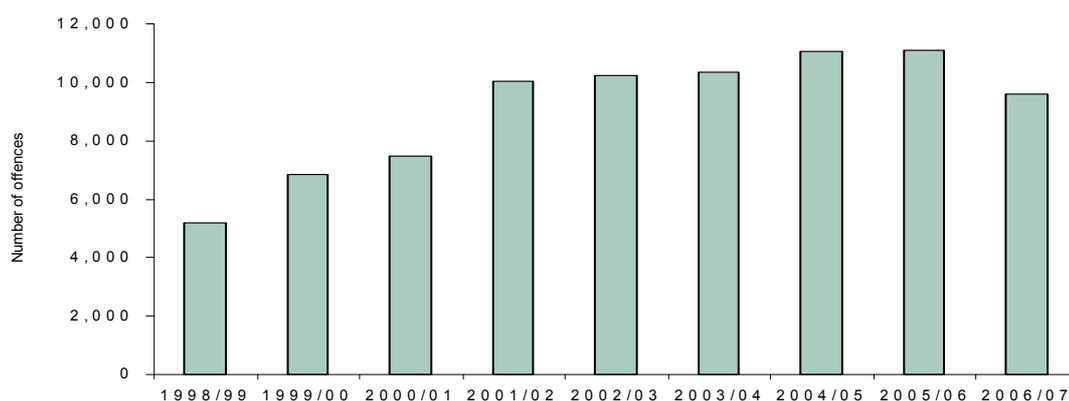
5. **Voluntary sector organisations play an important part in tackling violent crime (especially more sensitive crimes such as domestic violence) but are especially vulnerable to the late funding.** To improve the timely distribution of violent crime funding, the Home Office should give priority to early notification of resources for activities most likely to require input from the voluntary sector.
6. **Gang activity and gang violence is a factor in violent crime but the Home Office has a limited understanding of the nature of gang membership and activity, and how such activity has changed over time.** The Home Office should conduct further research into the reasons why youths join gangs and use this understanding to provide guidance to local communities in their efforts to develop targeted diversions away from gang membership.
7. **The Department has not engaged as well as it could have done with other national partners.** Working with others is vital to the Home Office's ability to tackle serious violence effectively. The Home Office and the Department for Children, Schools and Families should work together to promote good practice in Safer School Partnerships by identifying the number and type of Partnerships and their potential impact upon local crime trends. In collaboration with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, the Home Office should publicise examples of where the 2003 Licensing Act has been used effectively. Its communications should highlight factors for success, such as a strong working relationship between licensing authorities and the licensed trade.
8. **As of summer 2007, fewer than one third of Partnerships had a written strategy, and fewer than half had a specific violent crime group to tackle violent crime.** The Home Office should promote good practice in violent crime groups and strategies by establishing the different types and quality of those already in existence in different areas, and publicising what works well.
9. **Partnerships still lack the analytical capacity needed to assess the data they collect on violent crime in their locality, despite the recommendation made by our predecessors in their report in 2005.** In recognition of the fact that many Partnerships do not have the resources to increase their analytical capacities, the Home Office should use its teams in the Government Offices for the Regions to provide analytical support at a regional level.

1 Trends in serious violent crime

1. Between 2002–03 and 2006–07, the number of crimes reported in the British Crime Survey fell by 8.5%, and violent crime fell by 9.0%. This was in line with the decline in levels of all crime. Over the same period, however, serious violent incidents only fell by 5.9%.²

2. In recent years, the Home Office (the Department) has grown increasingly concerned about the more widespread availability of firearms. The number of recorded crimes involving a firearm doubled between 1998–99 and 2005–06 (**Figure 1**). In the year ending December 2007, there were 9,967 recorded crimes involving a firearm in England and Wales. The most commonly used firearm was the handgun, used in 4,163 incidents, followed by imitation weapons, which were used in 2,663 incidents. The Department introduced legislation, including the Violent Crime Reduction Act, which tackled the supply of firearms.³

Figure 1: Recorded crime involving firearms other than air weapons 1998–99 and 2006–07



Source: *Homicides, Firearms and Intimate Violence 2005-06, Table 2.03, Home Office, January 2008*

3. The number of 15–17 year olds convicted of ‘having a blade or a point in a public place’ also doubled between 1998–99 and 2005–06. Research conducted on behalf of the Youth Justice Board in 2004 found that 30% of young people excluded from education reported that they had carried a knife in the previous year. The Department had encouraged the passing of longer sentences which are now available for possession of knives,⁴ but was increasingly concerned about knife carrying in public.

4. The Department acknowledged the difficulties of communicating the trends in violent crime to the public through the media. Isolated cases of extreme violence tended to dominate media coverage, and this made it hard for the public to accept that violent crime had fallen. Overall, violence had fallen, and England and Wales had a low homicide rate in

2 Qq 1, 11–14, 87

3 Ev 26

4 Qq 1–3, 17, 23–24, 34, 133–135, 148, 151

comparison with other countries. The current homicide rate for England and Wales was 1.4 per 100,000 of population. Although fear of crime had fallen since 2006, 15% of people interviewed in the British Crime Survey in 2007 reported that they were very worried about the risk of being a victim of violent crime.⁵

5. International research suggested that the majority of violent offenders were male and between the ages of 16 and 29. Nevertheless, in England and Wales in 2006–07, more than 56,000 violent offences were committed by 10-17 year olds. More than 70% of these offences were committed by males, although the number of offences committed by females increased by 25% in this period. Those aged 16-25 were most likely to be serious offenders if they were from low income families. 85% of the violent offences committed by 10-17 year olds in 2006–07 were committed by members of the white ethnic group, 6% by young black people, and 3% each by those from the Asian and mixed race ethnic groups.⁶

5 Qq 42, 87–89, 118–120

6 Ev 24

2 Keeping the trend of violent crime falling

6. The Department had not fully implemented the commitments it had made in response to the recommendations made by our predecessors in 2005 about its support to Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (Partnerships) (**Figure 2**). The Department acknowledged its slow progress, and has started to tackle the key issues affecting Partnerships of funding, data-sharing, and spreading good practice. However, it agreed that it still had significant progress to make in each of these areas.⁷

Figure 2: Home Office Progress on Implementing Treasury Minute Commitments to the Committee of Public Accounts in 2005

HOME OFFICE COMMITMENTS TO THE COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS IN 2005 IN THE TREASURY MINUTE	C&AG'S REPORT'S EVALUATION OF PROGRESS IN 2008
Good practice is being shared through the Home Office's website, regular newsletters, workshops and seminars.	The Home Office's performance at spreading good practice had been mixed.
The Home Office is committed to bringing about substantial improvements in the capture, evaluation and promulgation to Partnerships of information about what does and does not work in community safety.	
The Home Office continues to provide support and advice to Partnerships on the implementation of crime reduction projects. This includes the work of Research Development and Statistics regional staff in providing increased analytical and research capacity.	Partnerships did not have the capability or capacity to analyse the root causes of violent crime and potential solutions fully.
The Home Office is making funding announcements as early as possible and has reduced the limitations on Partnerships about how money is spent. In providing greater freedoms and flexibilities to Partnerships to use their budgets to support local crime reduction initiatives, the Home Office is seeking to further reduce the burden on them.	Home Office funding to Partnerships continued to be on an annual basis and often arrived part way through the financial year. The effectiveness of violence reduction activities at a local level was significantly diminished by the Home Office's poor administration of funding streams.
The Home Office seeks to make funding announcements as early as possible, and to reduce the limitations on Partnerships about how they use this money.	

7. Given Partnerships' dependency on departmental funding, it was disappointing that funding to Partnerships continued to be late and short-term. Partnerships were often notified late into the financial year as to how much they were going to receive. When funding arrived, it often had conditions attached to it about how and when it could be spent. From April 2008, the Department placed its £9 billion annual funding for police forces on a 3-year basis. Violence reduction funding to Partnerships, however, continued to be distributed annually because the Department intended to use it as a vehicle to either illustrate good practice or to act as a catalyst for other sources of funding for reducing violent crime to which Partnerships may have access.⁸

8. Short-term distribution of funding to Partnerships undermined the effectiveness of national initiatives to tackle violence. Funding had been spent more on managing the consequences of violence, than planning to tackle its root causes. Some 20% of Partnerships reported that they spent additional Home Office violent crime funding on police overtime, 15% on victim support, and 14% on CCTV. Funding uncertainty also endangered effective procurement of services from the voluntary sector to tackle especially sensitive violent crimes, such as domestic violence.⁹ The Home Office undertook to provide most funding for tackling violence distributed to Partnerships on a longer-term basis.

9. The Department had built upon good practice nationally in tackling domestic violence, and has spread information about successful domestic violence interventions, such as the women's safety unit in Cardiff. 27% of Partnerships considered domestic violence measures initiated and promoted by the Department to be one of the changes in the last five years which had most improved their ability to tackle violence. However, the Department had not been as successful in spreading good practice in reducing other types of violent crime. Only half of Partnerships considered the Home Office to be effective in spreading good practice about tackling violence more generally.¹⁰

10. Departmental initiatives had targeted gangs but the Department failed to demonstrate a clear understanding of the reasons why youths joined gangs. In 2007, the Department responded to gang activity with the Tackling Gang Action Programme, which focussed £1.4 million on intense anti-gang activity in certain areas in London, Liverpool, Birmingham and Manchester. This Action Plan resulted in a series of recommendations about tackling gang violence, including the protection of witnesses. At our hearing, the Department speculated about why young people join gangs, but it could not produce evidence of the effectiveness of different interventions to prevent them doing so in the first place.¹¹

11. The Department had not taken even the most basic steps to promulgate Safer School Partnerships. The Safer Schools initiative enabled the police to intervene at an early stage with children at risk of becoming victims of crime or offenders. In launching Safer Schools, the Department, together with the former Department for Education and Skills (the

8 Qq 30, 32, 65, 147

9 C&AG's Report, paras 2.30–2.31

10 Q 8

11 Qq 96, 98, 108–110, 151–154

predecessor to the Department for Children, Schools, and Families), purposely left development of the initiative to local practice. As a result, central government was not able to support individual schools in overcoming the opposition that schools faced to locating police officers on their premises. The Department accepted that it had made a mistake in not promoting Safer Schools more effectively from their launch in 2002. It did not have accurate figures for the number of Safer Schools, the different models being employed, or their impact upon crime in their communities. Estimates suggest that fewer than 10% of secondary schools in England and Wales are Safer Schools. Acknowledging their value, the Department committed to collect data on Safer Schools in partnership with the Department for Children, Schools and Families.¹²

12. The 2003 Licensing Act gave local authorities powers to reduce the risk of violent crime, but not all areas used these effectively. The Act allowed local licensing authorities to place conditions on the licenses of drinking establishments in order to reduce crime and disorder. In Cardiff, one bar had a range of conditions placed upon its license, such as the number of door staff, CCTV cameras, and the type of drinking vessels used. Following the introduction of these conditions, the bar experienced an 88% fall in recorded crime. Extending licensing hours had not led to an increase in alcohol-related violence, but fewer than half of Partnerships considered the Act to be effective in tackling the violence that did occur. Some areas were taking a more systematic approach to using data about violent crime in and around licensed premises to inform the conditions they imposed upon alcohol licences.¹³

12 Qq 4, 35–36, 65–71, 140, 143–145

13 Qq 21–22, 81

3 Improving local capacity to tackle violent crime

13. The Department had identified what constituted effective partnership working in tackling crime. The Department's six Hallmarks of Effective Partnerships included empowered and effective leadership, intelligence-led business processes, and effective and responsive delivery structures. The effective tackling of violence required a strong working relationship between the police and other partners, as well as a firm understanding of the drivers of violence.¹⁴

14. Research showed that fewer than half of victims of wounding treated at Accident and Emergency units reported their injuries to the police. Without the anonymised records of these wounding victims, Partnerships did not have a complete picture of violence occurring locally, or its causes. Despite its efforts to encourage the sharing of data relevant to violent crime, the Department was not satisfied by the amount being shared locally, most notably by the National Health Service. **Figure 3** shows that some 55% of Partnerships had never used ambulance service data about violent crime, and 42% had never used data from Accident and Emergency units. To overcome this lack of data-sharing, the Department had imposed a statutory duty upon key partners to share data relevant to violent crime. It had also been working closely with the Department of Health to show NHS staff how to share data without breaching confidentiality.¹⁵

Figure 3: Percentage of Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships which use different data sources to analyse the violent crime in their local area

Data source	Always use	Started to use in last 12 months	Have used in the past but not in the last 12 months	Never use
Police recorded crime	98	2	0	0
Police incidents	89	5	1	5
Anti-Social Behaviour data from councils and landlords	53	25	6	16
Fire service records of emergency calls	32	24	13	31
Ambulance service data	14	17	14	55
Accident and Emergency data	10	35	13	42
Safer School Partnerships	7	10	3	80
Local education records of children excluded for violence	7	19	12	62

Source: Home Office

14 Qq 32, 77

15 Qq 20, 60, 155

15. Partnerships often lacked sufficient capacity to analyse fully the violent crime in their communities. 24% of Partnerships did not have sufficient resources to analyse all the violent crime occurring in their communities. Almost two thirds of Partnerships did not have any of the time of an analyst dedicated to violent crime. The Department announced that it had started paying for the training of analysts in order to tackle this problem.¹⁶

16. Only a minority of Partnerships had designated violent crime strategies and operations groups focussing on violence-reduction activities. Although the Department recommended that Partnerships employ them, fewer than 30% had a violent crime strategy and only 43% had a designated strategy or operations group. However, in many areas violence would have been considered in other groups, such as those dealing with domestic violence or night time economy management. The Department suggested that this low figure is because for most Partnerships anti-social behaviour, not violent crime, had previously been a higher priority. To improve Partnerships' take-up of strategies and groups, the Department committed to monitor and promote good practice in their use, and intervene where Partnerships were not using them.¹⁷

16 C&AG's Report, para 3.17

17 Q 77

Formal Minutes

Monday 30 June 2008

Members present:

Mr Edward Leigh, in the Chair.

Mr Richard Bacon
Mr Paul Burstow
Keith Hill

Mr Austin Mitchell
Phil Wilson

Draft Report (*Reducing the risk of violent crime*), proposed by the Chairman, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 16 read and agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the Forty-fifth Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chairman make the Report to the House.

Ordered, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 134.

[Adjourned till Tuesday 15 July at 12.00 pm.]

Witnesses

Wednesday 7 May 2008

Page

Sir David Normington KCB, Permanent Secretary and **Mr Simon King**, Head of the Violent Crime Unit, Home Office

Ev 1

List of written evidence

Home Office

Ev 19

List of Reports from the Committee of Public Accounts 2007–08

First Report	Department for International Development: Tackling rural poverty in developing countries	HC 172 (Cm 7323)
Second Report	Department of Health: Prescribing costs in primary care	HC 173 (Cm 7323)
Third Report	Building for the future: Sustainable construction and refurbishment on the government estate	HC 174 (Cm 7323)
Fourth Report	Environment Agency: Building and maintaining river and coastal flood defences in England	HC 175 (Cm 7323)
Fifth Report	Evasion of Vehicle Excise Duty	HC 227
Sixth Report	Department of Health: Improving Services and Support for People with Dementia	HC 228 (Cm 7323)
Seventh Report	Excess Votes 2006–07	HC 299
Eighth Report	Tax Credits and PAYE	HC 300 (Cm 7365)
Ninth Report	Helping people from workless households into work	HC 301 (Cm 7364)
Tenth Report	Staying the course: the retention of students on higher education courses	HC 322 (Cm 7364)
Eleventh Report	The compensation scheme for former Icelandic water trawlermen	HC 71 (Cm 7364)
Twelfth Report	Coal Health Compensation Schemes	HC 305 (Cm 7364)
Thirteenth Report	Sustainable employment: supporting people to stay in work and advance	HC 131 (Cm 7364)
Fourteenth Report	The budget for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games	HC 85 (Cm 7365)
Fifteenth Report	The Pensions Regulator: Progress in establishing its new regulatory arrangements	HC 122 (Cm 7365)
Sixteenth Report	Government on the Internet: Progress in delivering information and services online	HC 143 (Cm 7366)
Seventeenth Report	Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Managing Risk in the Overseas Territories	HC 176 (Cm 7366)
Eighteenth Report	Improving corporate functions using shared services	HC 190 (Cm 7366)
Nineteenth Report	BBC Procurement	HC 221 (Cm 7366)
Twentieth Report	HM Revenue & Customs: Helping individuals understand and complete their tax forms	HC 47 (Cm 7366)
Twenty-first Report	The Carbon Trust: Accelerating the move to a low carbon economy	HC 157 (Cm 7366)
Twenty-second Report	Improving the efficiency of central government's use of office property	HC 229 (Cm 7366)
Twenty-third Report	Report on the NHS Summarised Accounts, 2006–07: Achieving financial balance	HC 267 (Cm 7453)
Twenty-fourth Report	The privatisation of QinetiQ	HC 151 (Cm 7453)
Twenty-fifth Report	The cancellation of Bicester Accommodation Centre	HC 316 (Cm 7453)
Twenty-sixth Report	Caring for Vulnerable Babies: The reorganisation of neonatal services in England	HC 390 (Cm 7453)
Twenty-seventh Report	DFID: Providing budget support to developing countries	HC 395 (Cm 7453)
Twenty-eighth Report	Government preparations for digital switchover	HC 416 (Cm 7453)
Twenty-ninth Report	A progress update in resolving the difficulties in administering the single payment scheme in England	HC 285 (Cm 7453)
Thirtieth Report	Management of large business Corporation Tax	HC 302
Thirty-first Report	Progress in Tackling Benefit Fraud	HC 323 (Cm 7453)
Thirty-second Report	Reducing the cost of complying with regulations: The delivery of the Administrative Burdens Reduction Programme, 2007	HC 363 (Cm 7453)
Thirty-third Report	Ministry of Defence: Major Projects Report 2007	HC 433 (Cm 7453)
Thirty-fourth Report	Increasing employment rates for ethnic minorities	HC 472 (Cm 7453)
Thirty-fifth Report	Housing Market Renewal: Pathfinders	HC 106 (Cm 7453)
Thirty-sixth Report	HM Treasury: Making Changes in Operational Projects	HC 332
Thirty-seventh Report	Ministry of Defence: Leaving the Services	HC 351 (Cm 7453)
Thirty-eighth Report	Nuclear Decommissioning Authority—Taking forward decommissioning	HC 370 (Cm 7453)

Thirty-ninth Report	Preparing to deliver the 14–19 education reforms in England	HC 413
Fortieth Report	Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Management of Expenditure	HC 447
Forty-first Report	Department of Health: NHS Pay Modernisation: New contracts for General Practice services in England	HC 463
Forty-second Report	Preparing for sporting success at the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and beyond	HC 477 (Cm 7453)
Forty-third Report	Managing financial resources to deliver better public services	HC 519
Forty-fourth Report	The roll-out of the Jobcentre Plus office network	HC 532
Forty-fifth Report	Reducing the risk of violent crime	HC 546
Fiftieth Report	Preparations for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games	HC 890 (Cm 7453)
First Special Report	The BBC's management of risk	HC 518 (Cm 7366)
Second Special Report	Evasion of Vehicle Excise Duty	HC 557 (Cm 7366)

Oral evidence

Taken before the Committee of Public Accounts

on Wednesday 7 May 2008

Members present:

Mr Edward Leigh, in the Chair

Mr David Curry
Mr Ian Davidson
Nigel Griffiths
Keith Hill
Mr Austin Mitchell

Dr John Pugh
Geraldine Smith
Mr Don Touhig
Mr Alan Williams

Mr Tim Burr, Comptroller and Auditor General, and **Ms Aileen Murphie**, Director, National Audit Office, further examined.

Ms Paula Diggle, Treasury Officer of Accounts, HM Treasury, further examined.

REPORT BY THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL

REDUCING THE RISK OF VIOLENT CRIME (HC 241)

Witnesses: **Sir David Normington KCB**, Permanent Secretary and **Mr Simon King**, Head of the Violent Crime Unit, Home Office, gave evidence.

Q1 Chairman: Good afternoon. Welcome to the Committee of Public Accounts where today we are looking at the Comptroller and Auditor General's Report on *Reducing the Risk of Violent Crime*. We welcome the Home Office, Sir David Normington, who is the accounting officer and Mr Simon King, who is head of the Violence Reduction Unit. Sir David, congratulations, you seem, in recent years, to have achieved an overall reduction in violent crime, but there are some worrying aspects, including the increase in gun and knife crime, and we read about this particularly in paragraph 1.7 where we see on page 10 that: "the Home Office is increasingly concerned about the carrying and use of weapons, particularly by young people. The number of 15 to 17-year-olds convicted of 'having a blade or point in a public place' doubled between 1998–99 and 2005–06 . . .". I suppose I have to ask you, first of all, why are we seeing this happen, do you think?

Sir David Normington: You are absolutely right in drawing attention to growth in both gun crime and knife crime, but within the overall context of violent crime reducing quite sharply. I think that knife crime is particularly related to young people. It is a fact, I think, that more young people are carrying knives. They say they are carrying them in order to protect themselves but, of course, by carrying them to protect themselves they put themselves at danger. In response, we have been toughening both the law in relation to knife crime but also encouraging the police and prosecuting authorities to be tougher in prosecuting people for knife crime. Nevertheless, it is the case that knife crime has been going up.

Q2 Chairman: It says here, "30% of excluded young people said that they had carried a flick knife in the previous year." That is pretty bad, is it not?

Sir David Normington: Yes. I do not want to minimise this at all, it is a serious matter, but it is the case that knife crime is about 7% of violent crime which in itself is a small proportion of overall crime. We are not talking about vast numbers of people but, of course, these are the most serious and dangerous offences.

Q3 Chairman: From the answer you have just given me, it appears to me you think the solution lies in more severe penalties. Is that what you are saying?

Sir David Normington: I think it lies in everything from improving the education of young people about the dangers of carrying knives through to being very tough in the enforcement against people who do carry knives through to when people are convicted, making sure that their treatment is not only a punishment but involves, again, showing them what the dangers are of their actions. You are right to highlight things like school exclusions and truancy. Some of the most vulnerable children and young people in relation to knives are those who have problems at school, are excluded from school or truanting from school. They are a particularly vulnerable group, and that is highlighted partly by the Report.

Q4 Chairman: You are getting more police into schools, are you?

Sir David Normington: Yes. The Report talks about Safer School Partnership and has some criticism of us in that regard but, nevertheless, the Safer School

Partnership, putting police officers in schools, is a very important way of both improving the discipline in schools and also improving the links between the school and those pupils who are at greatest risk of going wrong.

Q5 Chairman: Why do we read in figure 4 on page 11 of this part of the Report that: “recorded crimes involving a firearm almost doubled between 1998–99 and 2006–07”. What is the reason for that?

Sir David Normington: There are certainly more guns around and there are more guns available. I think that it is something to do with the prevalence of gangs. It is not as though gangs have lots of guns, but they do often have a gun that they hand around. I think, again, one has to tackle all parts of this problem, but particularly the supply of guns, not just real firearms but imitation firearms, and also the reactivation of deactivated firearms. Those are all things which are a problem. The use of imitation firearms by young people is a particular issue, of course. They are not a danger to anyone else, but they are a danger to the young person themselves when they wave it at someone else. That is a particular growth area.

Q6 Chairman: You mentioned gangs, they are mentioned in the Report, at paragraph 2.12: “The Home Office is taking action to address increasing public concern about the perceived prevalence of weapons in society and levels of gang membership . . . ” How much progress do you envisage making in dealing with gangs? I think there is an interesting case study, case study number two, which deals with gang membership.

Mr Burr: Number four

Q7 Chairman: Number four sorry, page 20. It is the Birmingham Reducing Gang Violence Project. I wonder whether you feel this sort of project can be rolled out elsewhere, whether it is useful.

Sir David Normington: I do think that. What we have been doing over the last six months, and it is very much how we have been operating, is we have taken the four areas of the country where gangs are most prevalent—Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham and some parts of London—and we have very intensively worked with the police in those areas and others, both in bearing down on gangs but also in learning what the best practice is in those places. That Birmingham project, which is tackling why people become gang members, and also the battles between gangs, is a particularly good bit of practice which we are now spreading to other parts of the country. The aim of this is to take the best practice and spread it. This is a really tough problem. People join gangs, they say, partly, again, for their own protection in a place and trying to stop that happening is a tough proposition.

Q8 Chairman: We read in 2.20 a pretty mixed message about the response to the Report and about how effective you are in spreading good

practice. About half of respondents say you are not bad at it and about half have neutral or negative views. It does not really tell us a great deal, does it?

Sir David Normington: Yes. I was disappointed in that because we have put a huge amount of effort into trying to draw out the good practice and spread it. It is clear that only half of the partnerships, and there are 373 of them, think that is working really well and actually since this Report was written we have been stepping up our efforts in that regard with all the things you would expect in terms of taking best practice, putting it on websites, having conferences, having online discussion between experts about the best way of doing it, producing good practice, and so on. In the end, we are very reliant on the partnerships picking it up and doing it. There are, and the Report shows it, plenty of examples of things which can be done to tackle gangs, to tackle guns and to tackle knives.

Q9 Chairman: I wonder whether you should not try and focus on less, but be more sustained. If we look at figure 9, there are various programmes here, fine, but perhaps there are too many different programmes, perhaps you do not have a sustained enough approach.

Sir David Normington: We try to focus on the things that we think will have the greatest effect. If you go back to 2004, we took two big issues in violent crime, one was domestic violence, which has a much bigger impact in numbers terms than guns and knives, and also alcohol-related violence, which again accounts for 46% of violent crimes. We do try to focus on the places where we think working with others we can have the biggest impact. Having done that, and having learnt the best practice, and we hope embedded it, we then move on. We try not to do everything at once, but there are many different causes of crime and obviously crime is also changing.

Q10 Chairman: Obviously we like to feel we make a difference in this Committee. If we look at appendix 5—my last question—“The Home Office’s response”, you see we made various recommendations about all these partnerships, better data sharing, we made recommendations on funding, for instance, more ability to analyse, and frankly your record in carrying out what we recommend has been pretty patchy, has it not?

Sir David Normington: It has not had the impact that we wanted it to have everywhere. We have tried to tackle the big issues that were identified there on funding, on data sharing, on getting the best practice in partnerships drawn out. The job is not done, as you can see. If you take funding, we have moved almost all our funding now onto a three-year basis, which is what was recommended, there is a small part that we have not, but almost the whole of our £9 billion is now provided on a three-year funding basis, which does actually predate the Report. I agree it has taken time, more time probably than it should.

Home Office

Q11 Nigel Griffiths: I notice that in figure 1, page 5, violent crime has fallen by around 9%, which I understand is about 200,000 fewer cases, but that more serious violence has not fallen by as much. How much has it fallen by?

Sir David Normington: 6% I think is the figure over the last five years, serious violence 6% down.

Q12 Nigel Griffiths: It is 6% down?

Sir David Normington: Yes, just under.

Q13 Nigel Griffiths: I saw an 8.5% figure somewhere.

Sir David Normington: I think that is overall.

Q14 Nigel Griffiths: The general trend?

Sir David Normington: Basically, crime is down, violent crime is down and serious violence is down a little less.

Q15 Nigel Griffiths: Am I right in interpreting figure 4, “recorded crimes involving a firearm.”, that last year was a five year low?

Sir David Normington: Is that table 4? Yes, there have been now two years when the figures, having peaked in 2005, have come down.

Q16 Nigel Griffiths: Right. So the latest figures show a further—

Sir David Normington: Yes, but it is a little early to tell whether the tide has properly turned although that is very encouraging, obviously.

Q17 Nigel Griffiths: Sure. Which specific actions have been taken in that five year period, or now six-year period, which have helped that trend?

Sir David Normington: I think that is about changing the law. I think that is about having—to coin a phrase—zero tolerance of the possession of a firearm, getting other people to carry the firearm, the dealing in firearms. I think we have some very tough laws in this country and you can see from the international comparisons that we have relatively less use of guns still than many other countries. That is not so true of knives; it is true of guns. I think you have to put that down to both the very tough legal framework we have and also the action of the police in enforcing it.

Q18 Nigel Griffiths: Was it the Mayor of New York who said London is a more violent city than New York or something like that? Is there evidence to sustain that?

Sir David Normington: He may have said that, but I do not know that I want to agree with you.

Q19 Nigel Griffiths: I think we all share the Chairman’s concerns, and probably yours, about not taking up the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership’s best practice. Is there anything Members of Parliament can do to foster that locally?

Sir David Normington: I think that giving a higher profile to the importance of the police and the local authority and the health authority particularly working together would be helpful. I think that they do to an extent, but when you ask them to share

data, to analyse that data together, to look at the hotspots around their area, some of the practice there is very variable. Anything in your contacts you can do with each of those parties to say how you are working together and actually you have all got data here and you are all analysing it, if you pooled that you would have a much better picture of what is happening in your area, I think that would be really useful and helpful.

Q20 Nigel Griffiths: What is the Department’s way of persuading the partnerships to use that data? How do you sell this?

Sir David Normington: We do both produce best practice but also provide specific support to partnerships that we think need help, either through the Government Office or through our own central team. It is always something that you should use rarely. We have imposed, partly as a result of the previous report here, a statutory duty on partners to share certain data, and with PCTs, who are very nervous about sharing data because of their fears about confidentiality. We have been working with about 22 of them—the Department of Health has—to show them how you can share data without breaching confidentiality. There is some very specific action going on with them.

Q21 Nigel Griffiths: 2.8 mentions the Licensing Act of 2003, which seems to have been much maligned, but the conclusion of the National Audit Office is that this is a useful tool for addressing alcohol-related violence. It says it could be used more effectively. Is the implication here that some councils and police forces are pretty hopeless at enforcing it and tend to let youths and others get away with, not murder literally but certainly unacceptable behaviour in their part of the area when the Act is working perfectly well in other parts of the country?

Sir David Normington: I think the Report showed it was working well in just under 50% of areas. By the way, it is true that a lot of the law enforcement agencies, and the licensing authorities and so on, really like the new powers that are in the Licensing Act to enforce against people who are selling alcohol to under-age drinkers and so on.

Q22 Nigel Griffiths: You would not know that if you read the papers, would you?

Sir David Normington: You would not know a lot of things from reading the papers, would you! The Licensing Act has quite a lot of powers in and it always takes time for the police and others to learn what the best way of using those powers is through warnings first and then escalating the action. What we did recently was we evaluated all those things with other departments and then we produced, in a sense, another statement of what the best practice was using the areas which had already made a success of it. We actually got some quite targeted interventions with local partnerships where we think they need to improve their performance. Obviously this is a variable issue, not every area has the same problem in relation to alcohol in public places. Some have serious problems, some have not.

Home Office

Q23 Nigel Griffiths: Am I right in thinking that incidents like knife crime and whether people were carrying knives were not formally recorded but are now?

Sir David Normington: Yes. We have only just started properly and fully recording crime specifically related to knives, and we will have our first accurate data about this in the next publication of data in July.

Q24 Nigel Griffiths: I presume that takes up police time and fuels concerns that the police are spending too much time form filling. What is the value of recording that information?

Sir David Normington: Well, because, as we started out this hearing, knife crime is one of the most serious growth areas and we need to know more about where it is happening, how it is happening, who is using knives, in which areas that is happening, and in order to do that we need the data. We are trying very hard, in parallel, to cut down the amount of data that we require in other areas so we concentrate on particular areas of crime. I think the police want this data as well actually; this is something they have asked for. We all agree this is a priority.

Q25 Nigel Griffiths: We have talked about the value of having the data. I am interested to know whether that is the sort of data that has helped shift in table 4 the reduction in firearms.

Sir David Normington: I think having that data does do that.

Q26 Nigel Griffiths: It targets policies, does it not?

Sir David Normington: It enables you to target the policy and decide what kinds of weapons are being used and where the growth is. This is how we know there is a growth in the use of imitation firearms. You get that, of course, from the police, but also we actually have the data to show that is a growth area. We also know what kinds of firearms are being used. From this September we will be able to track firearms so we know better where they come from, and that is also an important issue.

Q27 Nigel Griffiths: Finally, you have mentioned your persuasive powers in getting people, partnerships in particular, to follow best practice. Are you able to supply the Committee with a table of the 375 partnerships which are applying them effectively and which are not in which areas so that we can put even more pressure on?¹

Sir David Normington: I can certainly try and do that. I do not know whether I can provide you with a full table but I can certainly try and provide you with the successes and the less successful, although you will have to use those with care. Yes, we can do that.

Chairman: I do apologise. I should have welcomed the delegation from Nigeria led by the Speaker of the House of Representatives. You are very welcome.

Q28 Keith Hill: Sir David, as our Chairman began by remarking, we have an improving picture of reducing levels of serious and violent crime but obviously there is a lot still to do. Can I ask you if you attach high importance to the work of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships?

Sir David Normington: I think that we have probably undervalued them in the past and we now understand that if the local partners are working really well together that is often the key to success. If you take the alcohol action, you have to have the licensing authorities, you have to have the voluntary agencies, you have to have the private sector, and you have to have the police and if they are not all working together to the same end you have some dysfunctionality locally, so yes.

Q29 Keith Hill: So, yes, you attach high importance, but in the past you have undervalued their work, which presumably explains why, on the whole, the Home Office has treated them so badly. If we look at the report, pages 22 to 23, paragraphs 2.26 to 2.32, what you see there, Sir David, is a picture of delay, unreliability, and short-termism in Home Office funding of these partnerships. How can you defend this case and what are you going to do about it?

Sir David Normington: They actually say that we have been effective in our interventions, but that effectiveness has been reduced by our poor administration of funding, and they are particularly complaining about short-termism in funding, and one-off bits of funding, no certainty about the long-term. As part of trying to put this right, we have been moving our funding to a three-year basis and giving them more certainty about what they can expect.

Q30 Keith Hill: They are still on an annual funding basis, are they not?

Sir David Normington: Most of the funding for partnerships comes from the partners themselves, so the police, the partnership funding, which is the main funding for this, which goes through the local authorities, PCTs, that is all on a long-term basis now. We hold back in the Home Office of our £9 billion £24 million and that is not on a long-term basis yet, partly because most of it is intended to be funding to get things going or to demonstrate best practice. I do not think we could ever get to the stage where all of that was on a three-year basis but they can have an assurance that most of them now have the assurance about long-term funding.

Q31 Keith Hill: Perhaps I could bring Mr King in, who has enjoyed a period of silence so far. Could I ask you, Mr King, what expenditure best reduces violent crime?

Mr King: I think the experience of the past few years is that is where we develop working with the police and other partners a very good level of understanding about the situation as it varies across the country and where we can identify areas where problems are particularly acute and then focus our resources on those areas to both try out new ideas to see how effective they are but also to roll out a good practice that we have perhaps identified elsewhere or

¹ Ev 19

 Home Office

through other means. Targeted expenditure like that to kick-start new initiatives in new ways of working locally is what has had the biggest impact over the past few years

Q32 Keith Hill: That is how you focus the expenditure, as it were, and when you focus the expenditure what have you found to be the most cost beneficial expenditure in terms of reducing violent crime?

Mr King: Basically, I think the most effective thing is where you can have the police working in partnership with other agencies and also with the voluntary sector in certain circumstances in a local area to make sure that there is a genuine partnership approach working, that it involves members of local communities rather than being something that is just done to the local communities and where people can work collaboratively to solve the problems which exist in those areas. But it is important for the funding and for the work to be very much tailored to the situation in specific local areas rather than trying to impose a one-size-fits-all reaction.

Sir David Normington: May I just add one thing though, and it is a real Home Office answer. I think you have to first of all ensure that there is really good funding for the police, because what this Report is about is the extra money we put into specific things, but unless you have really good funding for the police as a starting point for that then you are not going to be able to lever out this extra.

Q33 Keith Hill: What do you think is the most cost-effective activity by the police themselves in reducing violent crime?

Sir David Normington: Of course, it varies from place to place, but the best practice in focusing on different types of crime, the most successful action in recent years in cutting violent crime has been on domestic violence, and that is because the police have completely changed their practice in dealing with domestic violence, backed up by specialist courts and specialist support for the victims. Crime in domestic violence has fallen by over 50% as a result of that. That is about really good police and criminal justice practices.

Q34 Keith Hill: I am sure you are absolutely right about that incidentally, because although I suspect most of the discussion, perhaps even today, will be about gangs, knives and guns, the fact of the matter is in my own London Borough of Lambeth, which is not short of activity on the gangs scene as you are well aware, it remains the fact that by far the largest single reason for these call-outs is actually domestic.

Sir David Normington: That is quite right.

Q35 Keith Hill: Any activity which reduces that and improves performance is welcomed. Can I come back to this issue of partnership. It seems to me that by common consent early intervention is amongst the most effective tools in reducing violent crime and that includes work with children in schools. There seems to be genuine enthusiasm amongst police officers for the Safer School Partnerships.

Sir David Normington: Yes.

Q36 Keith Hill: That programme started in September 2002 but the NAO points out that not much more than 10% of secondary schools have got Safer School Partnerships, and it also says in paragraph 2.25 on page 22 that the Home Office has a very limited knowledge of the number of these partnerships, their location and operation. Why have you taken, relatively speaking, so little interest and given so little support?

Sir David Normington: I think that we may have made a mistake in not giving it more support. This spans the two worlds of my recent career. I was the Permanent Secretary for the Department for Education before this, and what I know from those early days of rolling out Safer School Partnerships was very considerable reluctance in some schools to have a police officer on the premises on a regular basis but, once we had shown what benefits there were to the school from that, more then began to have them; but I do not think that has been an area that has been particularly pushed by the Home Office. In fact, that is shown by the report in the fact that neither departments have the data to support what is happening with Safer School Partnerships. We have basically left it to local practice, and I think that is probably not good enough.

Q37 Keith Hill: With your background, your joint background, I hope that you are in a particularly good position to give that programme a boost.

Sir David Normington: I hope so.

Q38 Keith Hill: May I turn to the Tackling Gangs Action Programme, which has been operating in the past financial year? Are you in a position to judge its success?

Sir David Normington: Some of this success is anecdotal, of course, and we will be publishing a full evaluation of it in a few weeks' time, where we will answer these questions in detail. What the local people who are involved in this are saying is they think that, as a result of the very intensive action that has been taking place, young people are less likely as a result to join a gang and to use a gun. If that is true and it is more than anecdote, that is a very significant bit of information. In your own area, as you know, the Five Boroughs Alliance or partnership which is working with the police on tackling gangs is very intensive work and it has had a lot of success. It would be very disappointing if there are not those effects, but we are drawing that out in detail at the moment.

Q39 Keith Hill: Let me take this opportunity to draw your attention to the absolutely brilliant analysis of gang activity that has been carried out at Streatham police station, identifying 92 gangs across the five boroughs; unfortunately, 32 in the London Borough of Lambeth and 13 in my own Streatham constituency. I have to say that one of the pleas that the local police have made—and I would like you to perhaps think about it and if possible react now—is

Home Office

the possibility of having borough-specific, Trident-style teams. Because they know the local patch; they already engage in the interception of gang activity, which is extremely important; and they say that if the same kind of principles of Trident were to be resourced at that local level, they think that they would get very beneficial results. Are you thinking about that?

Sir David Normington: Of course, I do not direct the police.

Q40 Keith Hill: Does Mr King then?

Sir David Normington: No, he does not direct the police either. We have sat down recently with the people who are running Operation Trident to talk about some of these issues, and I know that is their view. I will certainly pass that on to the Commissioner.

Q41 Keith Hill: I am very grateful. May I finally raise one other issue of local concern; that is, a certain anxiety that in some of these London boroughs there will be so many people released under the early release scheme that it will undermine the focus on anti-gang activity. Are you aware of this and are you doing anything about it?

Sir David Normington: I am aware of the anxiety. I am also aware that there is very serious risk assessment of the people who are being released, in order that we are not releasing early, people who will go straight back into their gangs. We are also trying to ensure with serious offenders that, when they do get back into their communities, there is a continued management and monitoring of them, and that they cannot just go back. I think that is some assurance, therefore.

Q42 Mr Curry: Sir David, you referred to the international comparison on page 36. Whatever we do, we always tend to find out that the Scandinavians do it better. If we look at hospital infection, the Scandinavians are right at the bottom—in terms of degree of infection. Here they are, at the bottom of the table again. What do they do? Is it because their society is different? If it is different, in what way is it different? Is it because they do things better, or are their police more intelligent, or their government more perceptive? Why is it that they always tend to be down there? What can we learn?

Sir David Normington: I do not know the answer to this. I can speculate with you that this is about the nature of those societies, but I do not know. They are always at the top of the league tables on education; they are always at the bottom of the league tables on things like this. I suspect that there is a connection between those things, in terms of communities which are more supportive of people when they are growing up; families that are more supportive. I do not know. It is all generalisation. I would just say that, if you take Appendix Four, the good news is that England and Wales has been moving in the right direction; so, although those are out-of-date figures, the footnote points out that we are now down to 1.4 per 100,000.

Q43 Mr Curry: Could one of the reasons be that they are much more decentralised societies than Britain, with hugely greater powers to local government and local communities, and that the central government does not think that it can solve problems in the way we do? Might ownership of problems at the local level be something to do with it?

Sir David Normington: It could be. Of course, a lot of this report is about how you ensure that local partners and people take greater responsibility and have the support to do that.

Q44 Mr Curry: That is different. It is not the same thing.

Sir David Normington: But things like putting the local authority money now on a three-year basis, not ring-fencing it and giving them the ability—I may not persuade you, but I think that is a move in the right direction.

Q45 Mr Curry: We are having a sort of constitutional almsgiving when we give things to local communities; we do not embed the power in the local communities, which is what happens in some of the other societies. We can discuss that, perhaps not now.

Sir David Normington: I certainly think that the most successful law enforcement comes when the community is taking responsibility for itself and supporting law enforcement.

Q46 Mr Curry: To follow what Mr Hill has been discussing—and my constituency across the Yorkshire Dales is probably as far away from his as it could conceivably be—if you take the black-on-black violence which we see as being a problem in London and if we related that to people who leave school without three, what are referred to rather optimistically as “good GCSEs”, what sort of correlation would we find? In today’s papers we saw some figures relating to truancy. It is something like 40,000 kids per week are missing at least two days. I speak from having just seen the sketch of a headline. What sort of correlation is there? And that is correlated again to a breakdown of family relationship; perhaps no family there in the first place to have a relationship. What sort of correlations do we discover?

Sir David Normington: We would find that those young people who were most likely to commit crimes, particularly serious crimes, were those who came from families that were in one way or another broken; children who had not had regular attendance at school and had tranted or been excluded. This is all part of a pattern, which is why some of what you have to do is to go back down the chain and—

Q47 Mr Curry: That is what I wanted to ask. You have referred to your previous incarnation. What is being done to identify at an early stage kids who are regularly not in class, who are unlikely to get a single GCSE at “G” grade, or however far down the scale these things go, and to try to mentor them from the start to stay in school, to get some qualifications to

 Home Office

be able to get some sort of employment? If you do that, presumably the alternative magnet of the gang which gives some sort of identity is less appealing.

Sir David Normington: Yes, and it is essential. I have appeared before this Committee on exclusions and tackling exclusions a few years ago, and I think that since then there is much greater support for children who are dropping out, missing lessons, and insistence that they go back; intensive support in schools; special classes to help them get back into the curriculum, and so on. The trouble is that some of that intervention needs to be even earlier. Some of that is happening almost before young people come into school. The state cannot replace all the things that are going wrong in people's lives in terms of family background and so on, but it can try.

Q48 Mr Curry: To what extent can the police identify a propensity in certain families to commit crime and to be involved in this? We know that one of the strategies of the police is to identify families where there may be criminal problems, and focus on them. To what extent can you do a socio-economic profile, as it were, and look in advance at families which may have a propensity to fall into this sort of activity?

Sir David Normington: Some of that is done, but you have to be extremely careful about branding children as though they are going to be the criminals of the future. The police and others can look for the most vulnerable families and do, and this is again where you need the local social services, the children's services, the school, and so on; but you have to be extremely cautious about it.

Q49 Mr Curry: They are not as badly branded as they would be if they ended up in jail, are they?

Sir David Normington: That is true, but you have to get the balance right, do you not, between assuming that this child is going to become a criminal long before they have become one?

Q50 Mr Curry: Tell me about girl gangs. There has been a lot of publicity about girl gangs recently on the *Today* programme, which we all listen to reverently of course, about drink. Girls being arrested for drink regard it as a badge of pride to be arrested, of course. You have not had a good night out unless you have been arrested, according to some of them. Is that an increasing problem? Are "ladettes" becoming more like the lads? Is there a different way of getting hold of that at an early stage?

Sir David Normington: I do not think that they are gangs in quite the same way. Binge drinking by girls is on the increase, but I do not think that is the same as having violent crime related to girl gangs.

Q51 Mr Curry: No, but the girls who get into that might end up as the girlfriends of the blokes doing the violent crime.

Sir David Normington: They might do that, yes. I do not really think that girl gangs are the issue we are really dealing with. I think that there is some evidence—

Q52 Mr Curry: Criminality by girls is, is it not? That appears to be on the increase.

Sir David Normington: Partly, I think, because binge drinking is on the increase. We have a situation with alcohol that the numbers of young teenagers drinking is falling, but those who are drinking are drinking a great deal more; so the binge drinking problem is considerable.

Q53 Mr Curry: It is a British sort of phenomenon, is it not? Germans do it occasionally when they have got a football match on but, by and large, foreigners come to Britain and note it as one of the peculiar British ailments.

Sir David Normington: I think that there is more binge drinking here, yes.

Q54 Mr Curry: Tell me about PCTs. There is a section here about relations with PCTs. Anybody who has visited an A&E department at a big hospital on a Saturday night about midnight knows what is swept up in there. What can be done to improve the relationship between—we are not actually talking about PCTs, we are talking about hospitals on the ground—and people working to prevent crime, or just to make sure that if people do end up there, wounded, the police are there pretty damned quick to find out all about it? It does not seem to be as effective as it ought to be, does it, from this?

Sir David Normington: In truth, wherever you go around the country you are most likely to hear that the people who are not actively engaged in the partnership are the PCT or the local hospital. That, of course, is because they have got a lot of things to do, and we should understand that. What we have been doing, as I was saying earlier, is showing them how easy it can be to collect the data and give it to somebody to analyse, and also to show them what benefits there are to them from reducing violent crime.

Q55 Mr Curry: So what are the three easy steps, as it were? If you were going to do the idiot's guide to PCTs "without hesitation, deviation or repetition", give us a minute on it.

Sir David Normington: On what PCTs should be doing?

Q56 Mr Curry: Yes.

Sir David Normington: What we need is PCTs to collect data about wounding, to hand it to the police, and to turn up—

Q57 Mr Curry: How much later than when the wounded person turns up?

Sir David Normington: I am very happy for it to be done afterwards.

Q58 Mr Curry: Instantaneously.

Sir David Normington: But there is some evidence—I think there is some Scottish evidence—of people having a free-phone, where they just phone up and give it, just send a recorded message, "We have somebody here. These are the characteristics of it". Obviously it is better if it is done when the person is

Home Office

in front of you because you know what it is all about, but as long as it is collected I am happy for that to happen. Then what we need is for them all to come together to analyse what is happening in that area. Because the hospital knows what is happening on drinking; it knows what is happening on wounding; it knows what is happening on violent offences. It often has more real, up-to-date data about that to bring to the party.

Q59 Mr Curry: On my very first question when I was talking about overseas comparisons, you said you might speculate on what the results might be. Anything that you had which might give us firmer information, of practice which might be taking place overseas which would be helpful to us, I am sure that the Committee would be very interested in it.²

Sir David Normington: I will certainly try to do that.

Q60 Chairman: On this, to help the Committee, figure 14 on page 29 deals with data that Mr Curry was talking about. It makes depressing reading for you. “Percentage of Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships which use different data sources . . .”: accident and emergency data, 42% “Never use”; Safer School Partnerships, 80% “Never use”. That is pretty poor, is it not?

Sir David Normington: It is not good enough. This is why, in a sense, as a last resort we have now put a statutory duty on the partners to share that data. We should not need to do that really, because what should be evident is that the benefits of doing this are quite great in monetary terms; but, since that has not been happening, we have underpinned it with some statutory powers in the 2006 Act and, on the basis of that, are then demonstrating in these 22 projects how that can be done easily.

Q61 Mr Touhig: Sir David, I think that the Government is to be congratulated on the success of reducing crime, and the Police Service in particular for their efforts. However, I would like to follow on from the comments of my colleague Keith Hill. It is clear from the report that the Home Office’s provision for funding to tackle violent crime is a complete and utter mess. It is conducted practically on a short-term basis, according to paragraph 2.26. Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships have little time to plan ahead; money arrives late—that is the verdict of paragraph 2.28—which is of little good to partnerships; and, when the money does arrive, it comes with the requirement that it be spent in a very short and tight timeframe, which does not allow the partnerships to engage in the voluntary sector, according to paragraph 2.31. Why is it that the Home Office takes such a short-term, stop-start approach to funding on an issue that really needs a sustained long-term solution?

Sir David Normington: I agree that that is not good enough. We have already substantially changed it and we will go further. I am personally never in favour of many one-off, small amounts going into

areas, because that is not usually enough to build the evidence and build the capability. We have moved 99% of the funding now onto a three-year basis.

Q62 Mr Touhig: You said that earlier.

Sir David Normington: Yes.

Q63 Mr Touhig: But is that sufficient? We give ourselves five years’ employment, roughly, between elections. Why cannot the partnerships have something more than three years?

Sir David Normington: They cannot have more than three because the Home Office only has three, and that is the basis on which the Government—

Q64 Mr Touhig: So you need to start kicking the Treasury, do you?

Sir David Normington: I am always very happy for someone else to be kicked, yes!

Q65 Mr Touhig: Okay, but I do think that it is something worth looking at. It is often a problem because of the short-term funding arrangements. It is not only on money that your department is bad in passing things on: you do not share information. Again, Keith Hill was exploring this point. Everyone agrees that the Safer School Partnerships are very effective, but do you not think it is a problem that you have only a very vague idea where they are based? You are not even sure how many we have, according to paragraph 2.25 on page 22. Should you not know how many there are?

Sir David Normington: I think that either we or the Department for Children, Schools and Families should know, yes. We have tried to have a bit of a self-denying ordinance about collecting too much information.

Q66 Mr Touhig: It is fairly basic, though, to collect information about how many partnerships there are and where they are based.

Sir David Normington: I agree about that, and that is what we are going to do.

Q67 Mr Touhig: Who sets up the Safer School Partnerships then?

Sir David Normington: It is largely done at local level.

Q68 Mr Touhig: Local . . . ?

Sir David Normington: By the school and the local police.

Q69 Mr Touhig: Would it not be a good idea to ask them to inform the Home Office when they set up one of these partnerships? Is that too obvious? It is a Home Office initiative, is it not, the Safer School Partnership?

Sir David Normington: It is a joint initiative with the Department for Children, Schools and Families.

Q70 Mr Touhig: And kind of a good idea that you should know how many you have?

² Ev 21

Home Office

Sir David Normington: It may be self-evident, but we have to be quite selective about when we ask people to report into the Home Office, because we are trying to cut back on that. However, I am accepting that we need to know more about where the Safer School Partnerships are, yes.

Q71 Mr Touhig: Do you have any plans afoot to discover how many partnerships exist?

Sir David Normington: Yes. As a result of this report, we are sitting down with the DCSF and counting them, and also trying to make sure that we know better about the best practice.

Q72 Mr Touhig: You seem to have a problem, I think, communicating across government too. The Chairman made the point about figure 14, where 42% of partnerships never use information collected by accident and emergency units. What are you doing about that?

Sir David Normington: This is about the willingness of local partnerships to share information. There is a lot of good analysis going on in each of the individual bits, but actually the partnership is not working unless that is shared. We are working with the Department of Health to put that right. We have good working with the Department of Health; it is one of our strongest partners.

Q73 Mr Touhig: But it is pretty sensible to do that.

Sir David Normington: It is essential to do it and it is disappointing that we have not got further with it; but that is a priority.

Q74 Mr Touhig: You have an action plan, do you not, and you are not really sticking to that action plan if you are not doing that?

Sir David Normington: That is what we are doing and we are doing it area by area, and it is underpinned by a statutory requirement to do that. However, people hold on to their data, do they not? One of the things that has happened with health-related data is the anxiety that somehow it will breach rules of confidentiality. We have been working with the Department of Health to show them that that is not so. You can perfectly well share this data, depersonalised, and there are no breaches of codes of practice or the Data Protection Act.

Q75 Mr Touhig: But it is sensible to do that.

Sir David Normington: It is essential to do it, yes.

Q76 Mr Touhig: My mother used to say to me when I was growing up, “Son, in life you will find that sense isn’t that common“!

Sir David Normington: If it was, everybody would already be doing it.

Q77 Mr Touhig: One of the other goals of your action plan, the “six Hallmarks of Effective Partnerships”, figure 10, was “Effective and Responsive Delivery Structures”. Why is it that fewer than 30% of the partnerships responding to the NAO survey had a violent crime strategy and only 43% had a violent crime group?

Sir David Normington: Because we had given partnerships the freedom to decide where their priorities should be, you would see that, if we were talking about antisocial behaviour, a substantial number of partnerships have groups and strategies on antisocial behaviour and have given priority to that rather than to violent crime. We are saying, as a result of our latest programme on violent crime, we think that everybody should be analysing their patterns on violent crime; because, in a sense, as crime falls overall, this becomes a particular priority and everybody should be doing that.

Q78 Mr Touhig: It would be a good idea for them to have a violent crime strategy.

Sir David Normington: They should have one, yes.

Q79 Mr Touhig: Some have. What are you doing to spread that good practice throughout?

Sir David Normington: We are showing them what a good strategy is, but also we are monitoring them on whether they do, and we will be intervening if they do not.

Q80 Mr Touhig: So it is one of your ongoing measurements.

Sir David Normington: Yes.

Q81 Mr Touhig: The report makes it clear that the Licensing Act is not being used sufficiently well in many parts of the country, and I certainly believe that is the case in my own constituency; although, I note, except in Cardiff. We see in Case Example 2 that, using the Act, the police managed to change Bar Zulu from the city’s most violent bar into one which, even at the busiest times, has few problems. In former times, on a Friday and a Saturday, policemen were permanently stationed outside the bar between 7 p.m. and 2 a.m. In the last year or so, incidents have dropped by 88%. That is a good practice that ought to be—

Sir David Normington: A very good practice.

Q82 Mr Touhig: So what are you doing to try to do something about that?

Sir David Normington: We do have our *Good Practice Guide*—this is one I made earlier! It does exactly what you describe. It looks at how to deal with problem premises; how to deal with disorder in public spaces; and how to deal with individuals, *i.e.* drunken people. It pulls out the best practice in all those areas. It is backed up by a lot of effective practice that is online. This is getting better. You cannot just pass a law and expect everybody to know how to use it effectively. What the review we did on licensing showed was that practice was really improving, and I hope that this will give it another push.

Q83 Mr Touhig: You have been taking lessons from Delia Smith, I can see. You made that one earlier! But are you now making sure proactively that that goes out to the partnerships, and are you measuring their responses?

Home Office

Sir David Normington: Yes, we are. We are doing that through our government offices, which of course are closer to them. It is not all done from the Home Office; it is done through the government offices, where we have specialists on alcohol.

Q84 Mr Touhig: You said earlier that you were reluctant to collect certain information, but this is a sensible progression in order to advance your objectives.

Sir David Normington: This is a very big drive; because, as I say, nearly half of violent crime is alcohol-related.

Q85 Mr Touhig: The Chairman also pointed out earlier that a number of recommendations that were made in previous reports by this Committee have not been acted upon. Do we have much hope that anything that might come out of this hearing will be better received by the Home Office?

Sir David Normington: You have my assurance it will be received. The previous report has been acted on. What it shows is that it has not had the full effect that we want yet, because the report talked about funding, about analysis of data, about sharing of data and about best practice. We have acted on all those things and actually implemented what the Committee said. As you can see from what the surveys underlying this report said, we do not have everybody up to the same standard yet; but it is coming along. I think you can say that we should have been a bit quicker, but we are really getting on with it now.

Q86 Chairman: The key finding does not support what you have just said. It said that partnerships do not have the capability or capacity to analyse the root causes of violent crime.

Sir David Normington: No, but we have not talked about the analysis work. We are paying for the training of analysts now, specifically to deal with that issue.

Q87 Geraldine Smith: Reading this report somewhat cheered me up this week. It has not been an easy week if you are a Labour MP in a marginal seat! It is very good to read that violent crime has fallen by 9%, and I would hope that is in all the national newspapers tomorrow. I think that one of the problems is that the good news does not get reported. People may say with other recorded crime, "Oh, well, it's because people aren't bothering reporting it", but I think that it is much harder to say that about violent crime. I think that violent crime does get reported. There are other indicators, of course. I find that I have less chance of being murdered than in 1991; I also find that the older I get the safer I become—so things are looking up.

Sir David Normington: May I cheer you up even more? I have been waiting to say this. Violent crime has fallen 31% in the last 10 years; serious violence is down 28%. That is not on police-recorded crime; that is on the British Crime Survey, which is asking people about their own experience of crime. I know nobody believes these figures: that is the trouble; but

it is the most reliable measure we have, because it asks about people's own experience. It is 31% and 28%, and this is the biggest sustained fall in crime that we have ever had.

Q88 Geraldine Smith: My question would be why does nobody believe that? Even I found it hard to believe. You look through and you think is it because the media always portray these isolated cases?

Sir David Normington: I am reluctant just to blame the media, because I think it is more complex than that. There were some things that we were saying earlier about the most serious crime, which understandably gets a very high profile—murders, stabbings, shootings. They do create a sense of insecurity in communities. Although they are very rare, it is no use our saying that they are very rare when your community has a little boy shot. That has a completely disproportionate effect. I can say all I like about burglary or antisocial behaviour, but those crimes have a disproportionate effect; which is why, in a sense, we are talking about them and focusing on them, I think.

Q89 Geraldine Smith: If crime is falling and violent crime is falling, and it is quite clear that is the case, why is that not the perception? Twenty years ago, I think people felt that they were safer, but in effect they are probably safer today.

Sir David Normington: If you ask people, their fear of crime has also fallen; their fear of being burgled has fallen. We know this from our own surveys. I think that this does not translate into a national view. We know this with all areas: that people always think the national picture is much worse than what is happening in their own lives and locality.

Chairman: We have to break now.

*The Committee suspended from
4.29 pm to 4.34 pm for a division in the House.*

Q90 Geraldine Smith: One of the reasons I think that crime, and in particular violent crime, has fallen is the presence of more police and community support officers on our streets. I think that, anywhere in public places where there is a visual presence of someone in authority, it does help. What are your comments on that?

Sir David Normington: I think that you do have to start, as I was saying earlier, by making sure that there are enough police, enough police staff in support of them, and that they are on the streets more. That, of course, has been where the Government has been driving the policy, very clearly. We do have more police, as you know. It is 11% up over 10 years: just under 140,000 police. You have to start with that. Investing real resource in policing is the starting point for any of this, I think; but then working with the police and others on what is best practice in policing violent crime is really important. Some of these crimes are complex and in some areas they are not very common. Some forces

 Home Office

have a lot of expertise in dealing with them; some do not. Partnering up forces that have better experience with those that do not, and so on, is part of the job.

Q91 Geraldine Smith: Do you think the Home Office are very good at sharing best practice? I can think of at least two schemes in my area which I think are extremely good: a stunt school for young people, which has attracted a lot of interest, and crime fell dramatically when the police went along with vouchers for people to be able to go in free, and so on. Because it was an adventurous activity, it channelled their energies in positive ways rather than negatively. Another scheme is Wise-Up, where ex-offenders are being mentored by other ex-offenders who do not go back to crime. I think that both of these schemes could work very well in a number of places, but there seems no way that that information is ever shared. Particularly with the Wise-Up scheme, we have had ministers visit that scheme in the past. I think that the Home Office really does have to do better at sharing best practice.

Sir David Normington: The report says that we are not good enough at it. Wherever I have been over the last 20 years, this issue of how do you get best practice spread in all services has been a key issue. I am disappointed in the report, because we have put huge effort into this and we continue to do so.

Q92 Geraldine Smith: What efforts? What do you actually do?

Sir David Normington: We now have a dedicated resource in the Home Office that is dedicated to doing just what you say, which is in constant contact with our field force in drawing out that practice and putting it—

Q93 Geraldine Smith: Can you ask them to contact me?

Sir David Normington: I certainly can. We have something that is called the “effective practice database”, which is all about the best practice being available to everyone around the country. Some of what you are talking about, though, is not in policing; it is in prevention. Some of the most important practice is both in prevention and also in dealing with re-offending. If we could get the best practice spread better there, it would have a major impact on crime.

Q94 Geraldine Smith: I think that I have two very good examples for you. Can I turn to one of the case examples? It is on page 20 and it is the Birmingham Reducing Gang Violence Project. I do not think that this is very good at all. I think that this is not an effective use of public money. A non-profit making company set up to mediate between gangs? What are we coming to? I can understand mediation in domestic violence but I certainly cannot understand mediating between violent gangs. Surely that is not the solution? I cannot imagine these gangs sitting down and having a cup of tea and a chat.

Sir David Normington: It is better than tearing themselves apart, of course.

Q95 Geraldine Smith: But I cannot imagine them doing that in practice. I think that it is naïve.

Sir David Normington: I personally do not know this project particularly, though I have had it described to me. It is unlikely to be naïve and soft-centred because it is run by the police. The police have taken the lead in trying to find new ways of stopping gangs beating each other up. The West Midlands Police is a pretty serious police force, and if they are leading on this I would expect this to be a really serious attempt to take the aggro out of a local situation. We will have more about this when we publish our report.

Mr King: It was set up by the West Midlands Police following the murders of Letitia Shakespeare and Charlene Ellis in early 2003. They do feel very strongly that it has made a very positive contribution in terms of helping young people resolve their differences in more peaceful ways.

Q96 Geraldine Smith: Surely the solution must be to stop young people joining those gangs? I do not really accept the reason that they do so for their own protection.

Mr King: That is the reason that many young people give when they are asked both why they have joined gangs and why they carry weapons.

Q97 Geraldine Smith: If I was caught carrying a weapon I would say, “Oh, it’s something for my own protection”. I do not think that I would say, “I’m doing it because I might stab someone”.

Mr King: It is not just the reason that they give the policeman arresting them; it is also the reason that they give to people when they are asking them questions anonymously in surveys, and it does seem to be a genuine—

Q98 Geraldine Smith: Over a cup of tea?

Mr King: It does seem to be a genuine concern that many young people have and they do believe, erroneously as it happens but nevertheless sincerely, that either by joining a gang or by arming themselves, either with a gun or a knife, they are somehow safer, when in fact they are not. That is precisely one of the lessons that this project in Birmingham and others in other areas where there are gang issues are trying to convey to people.

Sir David Normington: There has been a lot of interest in this project, partly because of the sort of scepticism you express. As I say, I think we can have confidence that if the West Midlands Police think it is working then it is probably working.

Q99 Geraldine Smith: I have yet to be convinced.

Sir David Normington: We will put it on the database.

Q100 Geraldine Smith: What I would say, however, is that it really is essential to channel young people’s energy into positive things. It is perhaps beyond your control in the Home Office, but I think that other government departments, particularly Education, have to take that on board and have to

provide the facilities—not that middle-aged people think young people want but that young people actually do want.

Sir David Normington: We do work closely with DCSF now. Their Aimhigher—or it may be their Positive Futures Programme—is all under this heading of things to do and places to go: really fruitful activities, sport and other activities for young people. The constant complaint from young people is “I’ve got nothing to do and nowhere to go”. A lot of resource from the DCSF, several hundred million pounds, is going into providing those kinds of facilities. That is a really important bit of prevention, in my view.

Q101 Dr Pugh: I have a few questions on the subject of violent crime in general. Can I start with chart 7 on page 12? It says there that 85% of violent offenders are between the ages of 16 and 29. It is a breakdown by age and a breakdown by gender. Do you have a breakdown by social category or class?

Sir David Normington: I do not, no.

Q102 Dr Pugh: Would it be possible to get such a breakdown?³

Sir David Normington: I do not know. We do have quite a lot of things that are about the characteristics of young offenders; so I can do that, but not by social class. We can provide you with that data. There is quite a lot of good data about that.

Q103 Dr Pugh: In terms of the victims of crime, I see that young men are also the most likely to be victims of violent crime in this case. What percentage of victims do they make up? I see that the risk factor is 13.8 and 6.2.

Sir David Normington: I will have to check this. From memory, about 27% are victims, but I have to check that. If we are breaking again, I would like to check it while I can.

Chairman: I am afraid that we are interrupted by some “gang” divisions in the Chamber downstairs!

*The Committee suspended from
4.43 pm to 4.50 pm for a division in the House.*

Q104 Dr Pugh: I think we had left things with your saying that you are not quite sure what the social complexion is of the average offender and you think that, of the victims, on average about 29% or 30% are young men as well.

Sir David Normington: The figure I quoted is 27%, and that is 27% of young people say that they have been a victim of crime at some point.

Q105 Dr Pugh: Surely we have a breakdown of reported crime, do we not?

Sir David Normington: We do, but I do not think I have it broken down here. I will try to give you that. I think that I can give you the data in due course about income related to crime.

Q106 Dr Pugh: Perhaps you could send us a note on that then. On chart 7 on page 12, it also says that “. . . 17% of violent offenders were thought by their victim to be under the influence of drugs”. Have we any data on precisely what drugs they are under the influence of? Clearly if it was Mogadon you would be very surprised by that, but other drugs rather less so—crack cocaine, for example. Have we any data that enables us to know which drugs are so closely related to violent crime?

Sir David Normington: We do not have that. We cannot relate those things, though I think, anecdotally, more serious drugs like crack cocaine are more likely to lead to violent crime. I think that is a fact, but I do not think that we have the actual, hard evidence.

Q107 Dr Pugh: My next question will therefore probably get that answer as well. Given the profile we have of violent crime in the UK, how does it compare with the profile of violent crime in similar European countries? Do we actually have a higher percentage of young men involved in violent crime or is it possibly just the going rate?

Sir David Normington: It is certainly the case that in most developed countries it is broadly the same issue of male young people. I do not know precisely what the international comparisons are, but it is broadly the same trend in most developed countries.

Q108 Dr Pugh: Your suspicion is that it would not be a very informative comparison if we made it?

Sir David Normington: I do not think it would illuminate anything in particular, no.

Q109 Dr Pugh: When I studied a little bit of criminology many years ago, they used to distinguish between two sorts of gangs: gangs that went looking for trouble, which they called “conflict gangs” and criminal gangs that basically were not looking to be noticed at all, but were involved in lucrative and mercenary pursuits. Is that distinction any longer valid, or are all the gangs or all the gang activity you are familiar with and record connected with further crime apart from violence, such as drugs?

Sir David Normington: Gangs do come in lots of different shapes and sizes. Clearly, organised crime is a completely different issue from the one we are talking about here. Most of the gangs that we are talking about here actually like people to know that they exist. That is the purpose of it. Some of them have websites; they have names and they publicise their existence. That is what they are for really; it is their territory.

Q110 Dr Pugh: Apart from defending a territory, attacking other people and generally putting themselves about in an unnecessary way, are they engaged in further criminal activity? In other words, is the line that used to be drawn between conflict gangs and criminal gangs a somewhat blurred one now?

³ Ev 22

Home Office

Mr King: Yes, I think it is. I think that has blurred increasingly. A lot of these gangs, as well as the territorial aspects of their functioning, are also involved in working for other people who may be involved in organised crime at a lower level; for example, involving themselves in drug-dealing in particular communities. I therefore do not think that we would seek to draw quite the same distinction now as has been drawn in the past.

Q111 Dr Pugh: In terms of the partnerships that address crime and seek to reduce violent crime in particular, some are regarded as effective, some are regarded as ineffective. I do not know whether my question is to you or to the NAO, but in assessing effectiveness you obviously look at how crime rates fall in that area. However, whether they fall or not could be a function of the vigilance of the local police force rather than directly the result of the partnership. The partnership may make little or no difference whatsoever. Can you separate the two? Can you say that quite clearly it is the partnership “wot done it”?

Sir David Normington: Partnerships are only as strong, first of all, as the partners. If the police are no good, then you are in trouble and the partnership will not be able to counteract that. I think that is the starting point. However, if you take what has been some remarkable progress recently on crime overall, that was partly driven by us working with the 44 partnerships where performance compared with others was not good enough in terms of bringing down crime. Making those partnerships work was the key to crime going down faster in those areas than in comparator areas; and that was because the local authority, other emergency services, the police, all—

Q112 Dr Pugh: The local authority is the lead in the partnership in all cases?

Sir David Normington: No, they decide who is in the lead. I think that it is about a third the police, a third the local authorities, and a third others.

Q113 Dr Pugh: Is there any correlation between who leads it and their success? Would the NAO possibly comment there?

Ms Murphie: No, there is not. I think the issue of causality that you have picked on there, between particular activities and particular falls of crime, is a very difficult one to draw. I think that, if you have a partnership that is working well, that has good analysis, good data-sharing, and it is associated with a fall, you can make the assumption that the one is related to the other.

Dr Pugh: My last question is to the NAO. At the end of the report, it says that they toured Liverpool throughout the night-time, had spoken to door staff and others, and had looked at the closed circuit TV control room. I did exactly the same thing many years ago and the worst thing that happened to me was that I got my bottom pinched in a nightclub!

Mr Mitchell: It is tough in the Liberal Party!

Q114 Dr Pugh: Having done all that—having done the tour, which everybody does—can you assess the efficiency of what they are doing?

Ms Murphie: The efficiency of it?

Q115 Dr Pugh: Yes.

Ms Murphie: I think that the in-depth visits are not so much about efficiency: they are about looking for best practice and what works, especially in the bigger—

Q116 Dr Pugh: But you do not know the best practice unless you know that it is efficient, do you?

Ms Murphie: I see what you mean. I think that you make a reasonable assumption that it is.

Q117 Dr Pugh: That it is efficient?

Ms Murphie: Yes. Personally, I did not visit Liverpool; I went to Birmingham and looked at the way that they were implementing the Licensing Act. The way that was set up, they had costed it all; they had particular interventions they were doing. I went out with the police and so on. Yes, I think that you can make an assumption it was a good use of public funds.

Q118 Mr Mitchell: I have to say that I just do not get it. You are telling us that violent crime is down and, since the crime survey records the experience of the victims—and they are likely to feel more upset about violent crime perpetrated on them—it must be true; but fear of crime is up. We all make jokes about “Come to Liverpool, you may not get mugged”! There is a constant series of complaints; it becomes a major political issue. Why is this? Is it the *Daily Mail* terrorising its readers?

Sir David Normington: Fear of crime is down. Actually, in the same surveys fear of crime is down. Fear of specific forms of crime is also down. I am as frustrated as you about this mismatch.

Q119 Mr Mitchell: Has any research been done as to whether coverage today in the newspapers and on television of violent crime is more extensive and more bloodcurdling than it used to be, say 10 or 20 years ago?

Sir David Normington: I do not know.

Q120 Mr Mitchell: Would it be useful to know?

Sir David Normington: It might be. It is certainly the case that you can track anxiety in a community to a major incident. The Rhys Jones case in Liverpool, which was a terrible case, obviously raised anxiety in that community enormously. Whether those are more prevalent now than in the past or whether they get more publicity, I think it is difficult to say. I think that major crimes have always had a lot of publicity.

Q121 Mr Mitchell: Yes, but I do not know why the coverage should be more obsessive now than it was then. Zero tolerance used to be the fashion, did it not? This was Bratton in New York and, if you stopped people peeing in the streets, you eventually stop murders or whatever. While that was the

Home Office

fashion, are we now moving Home Office attention away from what you might call “volume crime” to serious crime, which is falling?

Sir David Normington: Yes, but overall crime has fallen.

Q122 Mr Mitchell: Yes, but why has attention been shifted up the ladder when, on zero tolerance, it should be shifted down?

Sir David Normington: We are not going to stop being concerned about all crime but, because overall crime has been falling so fast and some elements of serious crime like gun crime and knife crime are not, it seems sensible for us to focus on those very serious crimes. Partly because they are catastrophic in their effects, partly because their impact on community confidence and safety is enormous, it seems right, I think, for us to be focusing more of our effort there; but I do not think that we would be able to do that if the overall position had not improved so much.

Q123 Mr Mitchell: You are going to make a lot of *Daily Mail* journalists unemployed if you succeed in this endeavour! Tell me why, with domestic crime or domestic violence, put it that way, which is a private matter on the whole—it has always been difficult to get wives to report it—have you been more successful in getting that down than what you might call “public crime”?

Sir David Normington: Simon may want to come in on this, but because, I think, of the efforts that have been put in to give people confidence that, if they do report it, something will be done; and that will include support for the victim, who will swiftly, if needed, be removed from that dangerous situation.

Q124 Mr Mitchell: Is it also because more agencies or more sympathetic agencies are involved?

Sir David Normington: Yes, but I think that the police have become more understanding of that as well. If we go back to partnerships, one of the most successful forms of partnerships are the partnerships, which are becoming national now, between all the people who have an interest in and can support the victim of domestic violence, which will also include the voluntary agencies. Those partnerships, which include the police, have been particularly successful in supporting victims of domestic violence. Of course, that word spreads and people are then willing, maybe after years of suffering from crime and suffering from violence, to report it.

Q125 Mr Mitchell: I wonder if you could supply us with some statistics. I do not know whether it is a North-South problem. The image of Scotland always used to be rough and tough and the image of the North used to be that we were rough and tough too—although we are very polite people. Is it worse in the North than in the South?

Sir David Normington: As someone coming from the North, I am very reluctant to—

Q126 Mr Mitchell: Well, come over here and I’ll punch you one!

Sir David Normington: I am very reluctant to make those comparisons.

Q127 Mr Mitchell: Is it mainly a city phenomenon? I notice that the four areas singled out for alcohol abuse programmes are big cities.

Sir David Normington: Of course, domestic violence occurs in lots of places. I do not think that is a particularly city phenomenon.

Q128 Mr Mitchell: But per capita is the incidence greater in cities?

Sir David Normington: Yes, for most types of violent crime, and it is certainly the case that, when we started out with our programmes on alcohol and also on domestic violence, we focused on 50 areas of the country. I have to look again at how those mapped. Certainly some of them would be in London, of course, and most of them would be in the big cities.

Mr King: Yes, they were.

Q129 Mr Mitchell: How about class? It is difficult to get at that, of course, and Mr Davidson is not here to tell us that the upper classes are going to do more mugging than the working classes! However, you could tell something from poverty and deprivation—Super Output Areas, for instance. I was driving through one last week, exhorting people to come out and vote Labour—and there was a singular incidence of deafness around as far as I was concerned!—when somebody chucked a bottle of beer at me. I do not know whether it was a 10p tax rate payer who was making his own protest, or whether it was the fact that this was an area of great deprivation that I happened to be in. Is there any correlation between deprivation and violence?

Sir David Normington: Yes, there is certainly a connection between deprivation and crime, and also violent crime. Also, lower income families but also families that are very vulnerable, at-risk families, and so on. Obviously, a family where the parent, usually the father, is already an offender, is likely to be a family in which the children also become offenders themselves. You can therefore draw those patterns. They are quite complex but yes, generally, is the answer.

Q130 Mr Mitchell: We have figures here in tables six and seven, which are reports of the victims, are they not? There seems to be a greater incidence of young people, but that is the victims.

Sir David Normington: Yes.

Q131 Mr Mitchell: Not the perpetrators. We do not know if the people who were doing it were similarly young people. Similarly, we do not know about the reports of alcohol and drugs being involved. That is coming from the victims. We do not know whether it was greater or lesser. I just wonder why there are no figures on ethnic violence.

Sir David Normington: I think that we can provide those actually, but they are not in the report. It is certainly the case that young people are more likely to commit crime and that a lot of crime is what the

 Home Office

police call “youth-on-youth”. In other words, you are more likely to be a victim and also to be a perpetrator of crime. We can, I think, provide you with that, but I do not think that I have it in front of me.

Q132 Mr Mitchell: Can you provide us with that? My experience seems to indicate a real problem of black-on-black violence.⁴

Sir David Normington: Yes, and in some parts of London black-on-black crime is a particular issue, particularly with Operation Trident. That is what it was set up to deal with.

Q133 Mr Mitchell: Why cannot knives be dealt with more effectively? My grandson reports that somebody produced a knife on him on a train in Dulwich, which I would have thought is a fairly respectable area. Certainly the house prices they pay would mean that it would be respectable! Do we not have stop-and-search powers?

Sir David Normington: Yes.

Q134 Mr Mitchell: And are they extensively used?

Sir David Normington: Yes. Of course, it is just a fact that it is easier to get a knife. That is the starting point. Even if you take knives away, you can go and get another one. Something like 12% of people with knives have knives that they have got from their kitchen.

Q135 Mr Mitchell: What are the penalties of carrying a knife in a public place?

Sir David Normington: It can be up to four years.

Q136 Mr Mitchell: It can?

Sir David Normington: Yes, but in fact there is an escalating set of offences. One of the things that we are trying to do is to ensure that it is much more common for people to be prosecuted for carrying a knife, rather than just warned. Because we have these powers on the statute book, but there is an issue about whether they are being used enough and we think that they should be used more.

Q137 Mr Mitchell: Presumably that varies from area to area and police force to police force?

Sir David Normington: Yes.

Q138 Mr Mitchell: Do you have figures on that?⁵

Sir David Normington: We could try to give them to you. We do not have them here. It is certainly true that it is variable, because it is about prosecutors, police, and then how the courts react as well.

Q139 Mr Mitchell: Yes, but, given public concern, there is a strong case for a crackdown on knife-carrying, is there not? If some areas are shown from your statistics to be laggard, it will accumulate pressure.

Sir David Normington: Yes, exactly so. You want a proportionate response because obviously you do not want everybody put in prison at the first offence, but you do want the laws we have put in place properly used everywhere.

Q140 Mr Mitchell: We have talked about School Partnerships but, from the report, there are only 450. The number of actual schools is enormously greater than that. Why are there so few?

Sir David Normington: You do not need them everywhere. Some of the conversation we have just had is about trying to target your efforts in particular places. Obviously, there are some places and some schools where the likelihood of crime or the likelihood of violent crime is greater. Some of it is therefore making sure that it is targeted on the places where it is needed most.

Q141 Mr Williams: We are told in the report that senior police officers highly value the Safer School Partnerships. Why do they highly value them?

Sir David Normington: Because it gives them a chance to get to young people before they commit the crime. In other words, to begin to build a relationship with them in a safe environment before they are having to deal with them on the streets. There is quite a lot of evidence that that works, in terms of what the young people then do. It is also very good at reinforcing school discipline. There is nothing like a policeman turning up at the school for people to behave.

Q142 Mr Williams: Does the Home Office share the view of the senior police officers?

Sir David Normington: Yes.

Q143 Mr Williams: Then why is it that we are told that the Home Office has not been able to promote Safer School Partnerships effectively because they have not collected basic data on the number of safer schools in existence or their location? Why is that?

Sir David Normington: I think I said earlier that we are going to do that now, prompted by the report. However, we did take an earlier decision that we would let local schools and the local police get on with it, which we are often being encouraged to do. We are often being told not to tell people what to do. Earlier, in 2002, we put this arrangement in place and encouraged schools to use it, but then did not actively monitor what happened. I think that there is sometimes a good case for letting local people get on with it and make things work. Safer School Partnerships come in different shapes and sizes. Sometimes the police work out of the school for quite a lot of the day; sometimes they just come in the morning; sometimes they are at the school gate. It is quite variable.

Q144 Mr Williams: One of the problems with letting people get on with it is that we are told that not all head teachers would admit to having problems with violence with violence in their schools.

⁴ Ev 24

⁵ Ev 25

Home Office

Sir David Normington: That is true.

Q145 Mr Williams: What evidence is there of that, NAO? What hard data did you find to substantiate the claim that head teachers do not admit to having problems with violence?

Ms Murphie: The police officers that we interviewed when we went out to visit who were part of the partnerships—it was their view that some head teachers were more reluctant than others to say that there was a problem in their schools, because of the reputational damage that it would do to the schools themselves. I think that it is more about trying to solve the problems themselves.

Sir David Normington: In some places it is not a selling point for you to say that you have that sort of problem.

Q146 Mr Williams: I can understand that. Does that mean they deliberately mis-categorise it, or what?

Ms Murphie: I think that it is more about not wanting that visible police presence in the school, because that is the sort of thing—we were talking about media representation—that can be blown up in the local media, is it not?

Q147 Mr Williams: We are also told that the Home Office has increased its funding, but we are told that the effectiveness of Home Office funding distributed to partnerships to reduce violent crime is substantially undermined by its lateness and its poor administration. First of all, why is it late and, secondly, what can you tell us about the poor administration?

Sir David Normington: What most partnerships are complaining about is that the funding is for one-off projects; it is not sustained funding over a period. That is deliberate, in that what we are trying to do is to get the mainstream funding, which is hugely more than the small amounts we put in from the Home Office, focused on these problems and trying to demonstrate through one-off project funding how that can be done. Partnerships do not like that, though we think that can be successful. I think that the administration point is about lateness of notification, *i.e.* not being told in good time that they are getting the money and then being expected to spend it very quickly. There has been some of that in the past, but we are putting that right. I hope that in the future that will not happen.

Q148 Mr Williams: You seem to rate amnesties quite highly, yet the partnerships regard them as ineffective. Why the difference of viewpoint?

Sir David Normington: Personally, I have mixed views about amnesties. The latest knife amnesty took 90,000 knives off the street, but I think that several partnerships would say that that was just a one-off; it did not have a long-term effect, and that it would be better to put your efforts into trying to have a long-term impact than a one-off impact. In fact, in the Home Office we are not promoting amnesties at the moment; we are going to leave it to local people to decide whether they are useful or not. I do not think that you will see us having a sort of

national amnesty. I also have to say that sometimes national amnesties raise anxieties, because you see police officers standing in front of piles of weapons and that feeds a view, which we have been talking about, that the country is lawless, which it is not.

Q149 Mr Williams: I understand the motivation and the message they are trying to get over but, at the end of the day, what is collected in an amnesty is a minuscule proportion of the weapons in circulation.

Sir David Normington: It can be. It is the guns that we have not got at that are the problem, of course.

Q150 Mr Williams: Replica guns—you made a point, which I agree with entirely, that at least if they are a danger they are a danger to the person who has it. He or she may end up getting knocked about or even shot for possessing it. Is there any evidence that, in criminalising these pseudo-weapons, young people turn to the real thing?

Sir David Normington: I do not think so. What we have criminalised, of course, is the supply and the sale of those weapons. It is very early days, because that has only just been done; but I do not think there is. Basically, it is very hard for young people to get hold of guns and mostly they do not. It has not been so hard to get hold of a replica gun, and that is why we are trying to cut off that supply. It is not very easy for most young people, fortunately, to get hold of a gun.

Q151 Mr Williams: You said in answer to Dr Pugh that gangs come in different shapes and sizes. What difference is there in the groups that go heavily for knives? Is there any characteristic that differentiates them from other gangs?

Mr King: No, I do not think we have the detail broken down in that sense; but we do know that there are many different ways in which gangs work, and different gangs will use different weapons, for example. We do know that there is great variation in practice.

Q152 Mr Williams: You have area gangs.

Mr King: Yes.

Q153 Mr Williams: You also have, I suppose, racial gangs, ethnic gangs, as well.

Mr King: Yes.

Q154 Mr Williams: Are some of those more predisposed to weaponry than others?

Sir David Normington: Some of the black gangs in London, slightly older gangs, are more serious and are more likely to have guns; but I would not like to make an ethnic point beyond that. That is just a fact. I do not know that generally there is a difference in how gangs behave otherwise.

Q155 Mr Davidson: I apologise for being late and for having missed some of this; so I am not sure if some of these points have been covered. I wanted to pick up chart 14 on page 29, about using the details from the ambulance service and accident and emergency data and that really quite substantial proportions do

Home Office

not seem to use that. To what extent does that not give you a complete distortion of the actual crime rates, as distinct from the reported crime rates?

Sir David Normington: I was explaining earlier the importance of persuading every PCT to bring its data to the table. Otherwise, you have only a partial story in an area. Hospitals are seeing the real effects of some of these crimes, in terms of woundings and the real cost it is to the Health Service. Unless they do that, therefore, we have only a partial picture in an area, and a lot of work is going on to try to ensure that they do that. Where they do it, of course, you can see the benefits. There are real benefits in cutting crime, and therefore savings to the hospital.

Q156 Mr Davidson: Is this not something that there ought to be a clear line about? I get the impression that when, for example, 55% do not use ambulance data figures, it is almost as if it is voluntary then, is it not?

Sir David Normington: We have now made it, as a last resort, a statutory requirement to share data and we are now training partnerships in how to do that, to show them it can be done. Also, improving the analytical capability locally to look at all the data and say, "This is what is happening in my area".

Q157 Mr Davidson: It is a question of what is happening in my area, and the charts we have give crimes by age and by gender but they do not give us anything by social class. I am wondering whether or not you have clear figures about that. It is my impression that working-class youngsters tend to be the worst victims of crime and that there are clear class distinctions in terms of who suffers most from it. Is that supported by the figures you have?

Sir David Normington: We can certainly do that. It is certainly true that young people from low-income families are more likely to be both the victims of crime and to commit crime. I do not know whether I would read that right across the social class, but it is a reasonable proxy in some cases for social class. It is not the only thing that makes people likely to commit crimes.

Q158 Mr Davidson: No, but in terms of correlation.

Sir David Normington: There is some.

Q159 Mr Davidson: Can I also ask about the geographical location of crime? Am I right in thinking that crimes are committed disproportionately in poorer areas, particularly crimes like assault? There will be some that take place in city centres, but you are much more likely to find crimes taking place in the poorer areas. Is that also the case?

Sir David Normington: For most crimes that would be so, yes.

Q160 Mr Davidson: Is there evidence that policing resources are reflecting that pattern of crime, or are they tending to be divided much more equally, either according to population or geographical area or anything else?

Sir David Normington: We have been strongly encouraging the mapping of where crime is. Most police forces now have very good, what they call "e-maps" of where the hot spots are, and they try to concentrate their resource more in those areas. I cannot say that happens everywhere but—

Q161 Mr Davidson: It is up to a point, though, is it not?

Sir David Normington: Yes, because some resources, like having a neighbourhood policing team in every place, is a national coverage; so there is some coverage that is completely national and there is some that is targeted. I think that you will find that violent crime the police do try to target very precisely, on the basis of the data they have.

Q162 Mr Davidson: In terms of allocation of policing resources, to what extent is it numbers of complaints as distinct from incidence of crime? I remember being on a placement with Strathclyde Police, when people in the more prosperous areas were phoning in if somebody was wearing a loud shirt; whereas lots of people in the poorer areas were putting up with a level of misbehaviour that would not have been condoned for a moment in some of those other areas. Then the police resources were responding to the complaints rather than to the need. To what extent has that been overcome?

Sir David Normington: I cannot say that it has been overcome everywhere, but I believe that this much more sophisticated mapping of where the crimes are is now influencing where police resources are going; but, of course, you are reliant on crimes being reported. That is an issue.

Q163 Mr Davidson: Yes, but the sophisticated mapping is only as good as the stuff that is going in.

Sir David Normington: Yes, of course.

Q164 Mr Davidson: If 55% of those feeding it in are not, for example, taking ambulance service data—55% are never using ambulance data and 14% have not used it in the last year. That is 70%.

Sir David Normington: That is precisely right. That is exactly why it is important that all the people who have data are putting it on the table and that there is analysis of all of it. Otherwise, it is susceptible to what you describe as somebody shouting loudest. This is why we are putting so much effort into the PCT data. This is a very important additional bit of evidence as to where those people come from.

Q165 Mr Davidson: I am very sympathetic to the line I heard you giving somebody earlier about not pressing everybody to report everything, but how do you strike this balance between not asking them to report things to you and then not knowing when they are not doing it? This 55% is the most striking figure, but in terms of the accident and emergency data it is 42% and 13%, so there is 55% there. The evidence in Strathclyde, and certainly in the hospital in my area, was that the vast majority of stabbings and so on were not being reported.

Home Office

Sir David Normington: This is an area where we are both working with the partnerships to show them how to do it and what the benefits are, and also monitoring whether they are doing it; because, I agree with you, this is so important. This does make a difference in terms of what you know about your area. Since this report and partly as a result of the work done here, we have been, with the Department of Health in the lead, putting a lot of effort into this issue. The evidence is here. There is really good evidence of what happens when the hospital participates. Both in Manchester, and I think in Cardiff and other places, there is really good evidence of that.

Q166 Mr Davidson: The final point I want to make relating to this is that we recently had Jobcentre Plus people in front of us, and they were talking about how they had introduced the Change Programme, and so on. One of the real factors that was effective in that was that people had been there for a while and they were seeing the whole project through. To what extent is the leadership of these initiatives constantly changing, and to what extent is it consistent?

Sir David Normington: I would like to say to you that it is consistent and I think that it is likely to be more consistent locally, but I am afraid that I just do not know for sure whether I can reassure you about that. You are quite right, though, that you need that consistency of leadership. In fact, the case studies here show that. I think you will find that in the community safety and in local authorities, for instance, there is consistency of leadership; generally there is in the police as well. However, I cannot reassure you completely about that, because I do not know.

Q167 Mr Davidson: Arising from that and in terms of police, I do not know whether or not the English and Welsh police are different from the Scottish police, but we seem to go through chief superintendents and inspectors on something like a two-year rota. They spend the first six months learning where the streets are, they do a wee while and then they are preparing to leave. Is that the same in England and Wales?

Sir David Normington: Yes, it is broadly the same in Scotland and England and Wales. Police do move around quite a bit. That is true.

Q168 Mr Davidson: It makes them more difficult to hit. I can understand that. By the time they have done anything, they have moved away before they can get blamed for it. Does that apply to all the elements of this?

Sir David Normington: It is certainly true that really good partnerships work when there are good relations by people who know each other. Some of what we are trying to do here is to try to ensure that those things continue because there are systems in place when people move on. I cannot force people to stay, of course.

Q169 Mr Davidson: No, I understand that, but you can have norms established that somebody in that sort of position is expected to be there for four years as distinct from two years. Do you have anything like that, to indicate that postings to these sorts of positions are meant to be more than the usual “Magic Roundabout”?

Sir David Normington: No, but I think that it is an interesting idea and I will take that away.

Q170 Mr Mitchell: I just want to ask about guns. We have been through a lot of restrictions. We have abolished leisure guns; we have closed down the gun clubs; we have made it very difficult to practise shooting as a sport; and yet gun crime is rising. It is paradoxical. We are now banning replicas. Where are the guns coming from and what sorts of guns are used in gun crime? What do we know about the sources and the power? Because the Americans are trying to ban assault weapons, as far as I can see. We have not got to that stage.

Sir David Normington: We do know quite a lot about the nature of the guns. In fact, I think we have the detailed breakdown, because I was looking at that this morning. Shotguns, handguns, rifles, imitation firearms. To give you an example, in the last year firearms offences by type of weapon in England and Wales: 609 shotgun, 4,163 handgun, 77 rifle, 2, 663 imitation firearms.

Chairman: You can always put this in written evidence.

Q171 Mr Mitchell: I would like some written evidence.⁶

Sir David Normington: I can certainly provide you with that.

Q172 Mr Mitchell: Do we know the sources?

Sir David Normington: Quite a lot of it is from overseas. We have not talked about the supply, but the Serious and Organised Crime Agency is, at our request, putting a lot more effort into cutting off the supplies, because quite a lot of it is coming from overseas—plus the Customs are putting much more focus on gun-smuggling.

Chairman: Sir David and Mr King, thank you. That concludes our hearing. I am sure that we will be making recommendations about the more effective sharing of information between agencies, the better analysis of information and a more reliable funding. When we return to this, we would very much hope that, having accepted our recommendations, as I am sure you do, progress will have been made. You yourself mentioned the progress you have made on domestic violence. I am sure that more effective intelligence-gathering and sharing of information is the key to this. Thank you very much. That concludes our hearing.

⁶ Ev 26

Supplementary memorandum from the Home Office

Question 27 (Nigel Griffiths): *On which partnerships have been successful and less successful in tackling violent crime.*

1. The table at Appendix A sets out police recorded violence against the person rates for the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships and Community Safety Partnerships. The data table provides an indication of partnerships' success in tackling violence against the person. The table is based on data from 2006–07 which is the latest available.

The recorded crime figures are published information.

2. EXAMPLE OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICE DEVELOPED BY A PARTNERSHIP

OPERATION CALL TIME ON GLASS

This project, undertaken by the Bournemouth Alcohol Licensing Enforcement (ALE) team aimed to address the high volume of glass related serious assault injuries taking place in town centre licensed premises during 2004–05. Identified as a problem by the analyst assigned to the team, 46% of all glass related assault injuries in the town centre were found to be of a serious nature (26 such assaults, 12 serious injuries) in the financial year 2004–05. The approach taken was the glaringly obvious but difficult solution. Removal of the glass item from circulation in the first place in late night venues, no glass drinking vessel or glass bottle equates to no “at hand” offensive weapon.

Three stages were necessary to reach the desired outcome of replacing glassware with a suitable non breakable product:

- (i) Influence manufacturers by assuring them that there was a need, and therefore a market, for a complete range of quality polycarbonate drinking vessels to satisfy the requirements of the trade as suitable alternatives to glassware. Desired outcome—Full range of products developed.
- (ii) “Marketing” the voluntary change from glassware to polycarbonate to local licensees as a responsible measure to take. Until the Licensing Act 2003 came into force in November 2005 Police ability to force or persuade a change was virtually non-existent. Desired outcome—Voluntary change by licensees.
- (iii) Enforcing the change from glassware to polycarbonate in premises that displayed a history of violence involving glass related injuries, particularly where licensees displayed reluctance to undertake the change voluntarily. Desired outcome—Change from glassware to polycarbonate in all problem premises. Evaluation was ongoing at each stage by checking against the desired outcomes. All were reached beyond our expectations. Glass related injuries fell from 26 in 2004–05 (12 serious injury) to 10 in 2006–07 (1 serious injury). Over half of town centre late night venues have switched from glassware to polycarbonate and the drive to do so continues.

There have been many tangible benefits achieved by this project:

- Number of glass related crimes have greatly reduced, meaning fewer victims
- Police and Health staff now deal with fewer glass related assaults thus saving substantial amounts of time and money
- Visitors to town centre licensed venues can feel safer
- Fewer glass injuries as a result of broken glass on dance floors
- The product far outlasts traditional glass, can be reused if dropped with no likelihood of chipping and cracking
- Less damage to floors—wooden floors would not require refurbishing or polishing so often
- Less staff costs due to fewer glass collectors being required
- Reduction in insurance premiums
- Drinks stay cold longer

The following case studies, while not directly related to violent crime, are illustrative of how partnerships can work together to share information and best practice about particular issues within their local area. This way of problem profiling and joined up working will be promulgated in relation to the new PSAs.

CASE STUDY—KINGSTON UPON HULL

The Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy for 2005–08 recognised that there were substantial issues relating to crime and disorder in the city and to that end stretching targets were set across all the British Crime Survey (BCS) comparator crimes.

- PSA 1 crime reduction target of 30%
- October 2006 Hull Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) was not on trajectory to deliver their target
- CDRP recognised they need additional support and approached the Government Office and Home Office (HO)
- Two week Support Programme delivered in December 2006 by a joint HO and Government Office Team
- Key areas of improvement identified and implemented:
 1. Stronger and more effective management of crime and disorder
 2. Put in place common joint tasking arrangements
 3. More effective community engagement and communication
 4. Bringing all crime and disorder work under one management structure
 5. Implement local problem solving arrangements
 6. Implement transparent performance management
- As part of the Priority 44—they delivered several “weeks of action” focusing on crime and disorder hot-spot areas.

RESULTS

Home Office is very confident that Kingston upon Hull will now deliver their PSA1 crime reduction target

The CDRP has demonstrated use of resources and tactical deployment has impacted on outcomes and performance measures.

Vehicle crime in Hull has fallen significantly through a combination of approaches from target hardening and increased use of “Smartwater” to increased car park checks and awareness raising.

Dwelling House burglary and all acquisitive crimes have fallen substantially again through a concerted effort to target harden and deal more effectively with the “prolific and priority” offenders through the PPO route and DIP following arrest and positive test on a trigger offence.

The sanction detection rate has also increased showing that more offenders are being brought to justice and crimes whilst falling are being detected.

The night time economy has seen improvement in the way in which early issues are dealt with by the police and with the introduction of council funded Street Marshalls.

This improved performance is a tribute to both the hard work of individuals and their contributions within a strong partnership. This success could not have been delivered by one organisation alone.

CASE STUDY—STOKE ON TRENT

- Stoke on Trent have reduced crime against the 2003–04 baseline by 19.2% and are only 186 crimes away from target which they are expected to meet. This is a remarkable reduction given that in February 2007 they had achieved only a reduction of 5.7% and were still 3400 from target. As a result of this under performance the Home Office offered to support the CDRP through a Partnership Support Programme.
- In April 2007 a Partnership Support Programme (comprehensive root and branch review of the Community Safety Partnership arrangements) was undertaken against the National Standards and Hallmarks of Effective Partnerships.
- The structure of the community safety and drug and alcohol action officer teams have been integrated and include both strategic and operational functions.
- The structure of the Community Safety Partnership has been streamlined, with a strong focus on leadership, delivery and accountability.
- The data/analytical capacity of the Partnership has been improved, with the establishment of a central data repository function, supported by information sharing protocols.
- Short-term actions plans have been established based on analysed data to focus on areas of concern, ie criminal damage, vehicle crime and violence with supporting action groups—they have adopted the volume crime management model approach to help them focus efforts and deploy resources.

- Anti-Social Behaviour-related tools are in the process of being amended; Anti Social Behaviour Order, Alcohol Restriction Zones, High Hedges, Gating Orders and Section 30 Dispersal Order have been completed to date.
- Respect Action Weeks have been delivered in nearly all of the 16 identified priority neighbourhoods in the city.

Question 59 (Mr Curry): *On international comparisons of good practice.*

1. It is difficult to make any meaningful comparisons between countries for a number of reasons:
 - (i) Research considering or comparing the whole-system approaches of different countries to this type of crime, and evaluating their effectiveness is not readily available;
 - (ii) Social, economic, cultural and other factors mean that the nature and existence of violent crime problems vary considerably between countries, as do the strategies required to tackle them;
 - (iii) Crime statistics from different countries are often not directly comparable due to differences in offence classifications (for example what is regarded as a violent crime may vary between countries—possession of weapons may be a violent offence in England & Wales but not in Scotland) and recording practices—so that for example homicide figures may vary as one country includes homicides of nationals who are killed abroad while another country excludes them, or one country may retrospectively re-record a homicide when it is subsequently discovered to be a suicide or a death by natural causes while another country may not.

As a further example of differences in practice, the age of criminal responsibility in England and Wales is 10 while in Scandinavian countries (Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Norway) it is 15.

2. Example of practice from another country:

OPERATION CEASEFIRE

Originally developed by the Boston Police Department, Operation Ceasefire is a problem-solving police strategy that seeks to reduce gang violence, illegal gun possession, and gun violence in communities. The program is just one element of a collaborative, comprehensive strategy (which also includes the Boston Gun Project and Operation Night Light) implemented in Boston to address escalating gang activity and rising violent crime rates.

The key strands of the programme are firstly deterrence and prevention, and secondly suppression and enforcement. The prevention strategy is centered on an ambitious communications campaign involving meetings with both community groups and gang members. Everyone in the community is informed that gang violence will provoke a zero-tolerance approach, and that only an end to gang violence will stop the targetting of gang members for law-enforcement. The objective is to convince offenders that the costs of offending outweigh the benefits. For those who go on to offend, there are aggressive law enforcement and prosecution efforts aimed at recovering illegal handguns, prosecuting dangerous offenders, securing long sentences for repeat offenders, aggressive enforcement of probation restrictions and deployment of Federal rather than state enforcement powers. Simultaneously, service providers, probation and parole officers, and faith and other community groups offer gang members services and help in avoiding offending.

Operation Ceasefire was officially implemented in May 1996. Boston had averaged 44 youth homicides per year from 1991 through 1995, and in 1996 the number of youth homicides decreased to 26 and further decreased to 15 in 1997. A comparison of Boston's youth violence trends with other cities during the program period suggests that Operation Ceasefire may have been effective in reducing youth homicides, gun assault incidents, and shots fired. The intervention was associated with a statistically significant decrease (63 percent) in the monthly number of youth homicides. However, Operation Ceasefire was but one element of a collaborative, comprehensive strategy implemented in Boston, and it is not possible to fully isolate the effect of the project. The Operation Ceasefire programme has been replicated in other cities, including Minneapolis, St. Louis and Los Angeles.

Operation Ceasefire has been adapted for use in the UK, and forms the basis of Manchester's Multi-Agency Anti-Gang Strategy (MAGS). It has also been adopted by the Five Borough Alliance (FBA) in south London. The FBA is a best practice project and focuses on the prevention of group offending and serious violence. It includes Southwark, Lambeth, Lewisham, Croydon and Greenwich. The FBA are currently developing work to implement their own version of this model.

3. Example of practice from another country:

CO-ORDINATED COMMUNITY RESPONSE—DULUTH, MINNESOTA, USA

The Duluth Domestic Abuse Intervention Project (DAIP) was developed in 1980. It was the first project of its kind to coordinate the intervention activities of every criminal justice agency in one city. This project has served as a model nationally and internationally. It is based on these principles:

Coordination of the responses of those in the community who come into contact with domestic violence issues can significantly increase victim protection and perpetrator accountability. The primary goal of coordination should always be increased victim safety. Coordinating responses without focusing on victim safety can, in fact, be harmful to victims. Coordination that is based on increased victim safety can be beneficial in four different ways:

- The effectiveness of many responses depends on the effectiveness of others. For example, court orders are not effective if police do not respond to calls about violations. Police response to these calls is, in turn, more effective when prosecutors prosecute violations. The effectiveness of prosecutors' response is likewise dependent on the quality of police work.
- Different agency may encounter victims at different points and in different settings. Each has opportunities others may not have to help victims locate the resources they may need. For example, women who may not be willing or able to contact an advocate or shelter may still seek medical assistance; consequently health services may be a critical avenue through which victims might access support or assistance.
- Reaching out to different members of the community to ask for their participation in a coordinated community response can increase the effectiveness of the response. The legal system is a critical part of any response. However, other community institutions (religious, economic, medical, media, education) may have a more powerful impact than the legal system.
- A comprehensive community response can address related social problems that work to prevent women from gaining protection. Emergency shelter and criminal prosecutions are not the only needs that victims may have. Coordinated response programs increasingly focus on related social problems that make it difficult for women to seek protection from abuse, such as poverty and unemployment or the lack of affordable housing.

This model forms the basis of the co-ordinated community response which is being developed and promulgated in this country as the way to tackle domestic abuse in local areas.

4. Example of practice from another country:

The Committee specifically referred to the Scandinavian countries. The Government's coordinated prostitution strategy, developed following a comprehensive consultation process, follows the principles of the Swedish model for tackling prostitution. The strategy aims to tackle the demand side of the market, whilst supporting those who sell sex to develop routes out. However, Sweden have gone one step further than the UK by criminalising paying for sex in any situation and we are in the process of looking again at whether this option would enable us to tackle demand more effectively.

Question 102 (Dr Pugh): *On characteristics of young offenders.*

1. Most youth offending in England and Wales is committed by young men, the majority of whom are White and aged between 15 and 17 years of age. The most common offences committed during 2006–07 were:

- theft and handling
- violence against the person
- criminal damage
- motoring offences

The number of offences resulting in a disposal in 2006/07 by children and young people aged between 10 and 17 years of age was 295,129. This is an increase of 7,246 (2.5%) since 2003/04, but a decrease of 6,731 (2.2%) from 2005/06. This rise, is attributed, in part, to a police target to increase the number of offences brought to justice (including adult offences) to 1.25 million by March 2008. It is likely that a number of high-profile crimes committed by, and on, children and young people has affected the public's perception of youth crime and their confidence in the youth justice system.

2. AGE

The age distribution of violence against the person offences by young people resulting in disposals is:

<i>Age</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>Total</i>
Offences	534	1,479	3,338	6,049	9,079	12,635	12,327	10,145	56,226

3. GENDER

During 2006–07 the number of offences committed by young men fell by 2% when compared to 2003–04. However, over the same period, the number of offences committed by young women rose by 25%. However, young males are still responsible for 80% of the offences committed by young people.

The gender distribution of violent against the person offences resulting in disposals is 40,554 by males, 15,672 by females. Most of the violent offences by females recorded were minor fights between girls, sometimes in school playgrounds. The rise in violence is likely to be due to a media focus on crimes involving girls and to a growing unwillingness among the public to intervene. The population has increased, so more offences would be expected and there may be some link between girls using alcohol and the increase in offences.

It is also likely that the response to girls by agencies—schools, police, other people—has changed, so that girls are perhaps being prosecuted for offences they weren't being prosecuted for before:

(Note paras 1 to 3 are from data in The Youth Justice Annual Workload Data 2006–07 publication).

4. SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUP

The best proxy indicator of income we have is the ACORN classification. This classifies households according to the demographic, employment and housing characteristics of the surrounding neighbourhood and is useful in determining the social environment in which households are located. Although there are a total of 56 ACORN types, a five-group breakdown has been constructed from the 56 types and has been used here. The main ACORN groups are characterised as follows:

Wealthy achievers—wealthy executives, affluent older people and well-off families.

Urban prosperity—prosperous professionals, young urban professionals and students living in town and city areas.

Comfortably off—young couples, secure families, older couples living in the suburbs and pensioners.

Moderate means—Asian communities, post-industrial families and skilled manual workers.

Hard pressed—low-income families, residents in council areas, people living in high-rise, and inner-city estates.

Findings from the Offending, Crime and Justice Survey 2005, a survey of offending among young people aged 10–25 years. The following table show the proportions of each of these groups who identified themselves as offenders. Overall, three-quarters (75%) of young people had not offended in the last 12 months. Of the 25% that committed at least one of the offences in the last 12 months, many had offended only occasionally or committed relatively trivial offences. The proportion of young people committing an offence remained stable across all three waves of the survey. This pattern held for serious offenders.

<i>ACORN category</i>	<i>% of category who are offenders (10–15 year-olds)</i>	<i>% of category who are serious offenders (10–15 year-olds)</i>	<i>% of category who are offenders (16–25 year-olds)</i>	<i>% of category who are serious offenders (16–25 year-olds)</i>
Wealthy achievers	23	10	26	11
Urban prosperity	26	16	25	11
Comfortably off	27	13	25	12
Moderate means	28	15	20	10
Hard pressed	31	16	25	14

Note: offenders are those who say they have committed an offence in the last 12 months. Serious offenders are those who say they have committed one of the following: theft of a vehicle; burglary; robbery; theft from the person; assault resulting in injury; selling Class A drugs

Question 132 (Mr Mitchell): *On the ethnicity of those involved in youth-on-youth violent crime.*

1. The Home Affairs Select Committee second report on over-representation of young black people in the CJS 2007 said that:

- Statistics show that young black people are overrepresented at every stage of the criminal justice system. However, it is important to place this in perspective. In 84.7% of offences in 2004-05 involving young offenders aged 10-17, the young people involved classified their ethnicity as white. Over 92% of young black people in the year 2003-04 were not subject to disposals in the youth justice system. Robbery offences, for which young black people are particularly overrepresented, constitute only 1.8% of juvenile offending. Robbery offences committed by black young people represent less than 0.5% of all offences overall.
- Patterns of offending which are commonly attributed to black groups are found among young people from other ethnicities. In the words of Deputy Assistant Commissioner Cressida Dick of the Metropolitan Police, “much of what you will say about young black people in the criminal justice system could also be applied to other young people from a variety of different communities, but probably not all of it”. Like black groups, for example, people of “mixed” ethnic origin are more likely than white people to be convicted of drugs offences and robbery. Asian young people are twice as likely to be stopped by the police as white people. Research by the Youth Justice Board has found young people of mixed parentage experience higher rates of prosecution and conviction and are less likely to receive a pre-court disposal than black, Asian or white males.
- Evidence from the Home Office’s OCJS suggest white young people and those from mixed ethnic origin are more likely to report offending behaviour than young males in other ethnic groups, including black people. The findings from the Home Office self-report surveys have been similar over time. The most recent sweep of the survey found white males aged 10-25 were “far more likely” to have committed an offence with in the last year than young males in other ethnic groups (28% compared with a range 12% to 19% for other ethnic groups. The survey found that once young black people had committed an offence, they were more likely to come to the attention of the police. The Youth Justice Board MORI survey of young people have, however, produced different results. The discrepancy between self-report surveys is a warning against relying too heavily or drawing simplistic conclusions from only one indicator involving crime.
- Young black people’s over-representation must be placed in the context of youth offending as a whole, which has not increased since 2001 according to a survey commissioned by the Youth Justice Board from MORI in 2004. Public perceptions of rising crime among young people may not reflect reality. NACRO stated that:
 “There remains a gap between perceived and actual levels of crime. As with crime overall, youth crime appears to have been falling in recent years, although the predominant perception among the public is of a rise”.

2. The breakdown of violence against the person offences by young people resulting in disposals is:

<i>Ethnicity</i>	<i>Asian</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Mixed</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>n/k</i>	<i>Total</i>
Offences	1,659	3,365	161	1,838	47,830	1,373	56,226

Against an overall rise in offences resulting in a disposal of 2.5% from 2003-04 to 2006-07, numbers of offences rose by 3.5% for White young people, and by 2.5% for the Asian ethnic group, while for Black young people they fell by 0.5%. There was a large increase in numbers of offences for the small Mixed Ethnicity group, and large decreases for the small “other” and “not known” groups. The performance indicator for 2006-07 is to ensure that any significant difference between the ethnic composition of offenders on all pre-court and court disposals and the ethnic composition of the local community is reduced year on year. The indicator focuses on achieving a significant reduction (with a 90% confidence interval) in the disproportionality of the ethnic group most over-represented in 2005-06.

Nationally, the Black ethnic group is the most over-represented ethnic group in the youth justice system. Black young people account for 2.8% of the 10 to 17-year-old general population, but 5.8% of the 10 to 17-year-old offending population.

Asian young people are the most under-represented in the youth justice system. Asian young people account for 6.1% of the 10 to 17-year-old general population compared to 3.4% of the young offender population.

These figures are for all offences, not just for violent offences though the proportions are broadly similar for violent offences and all offences:

(Note para 2 is from The Youth Justice Annual Workload Data 2006-07 publication)

Question 138 (Mr Mitchell): *On the breakdown of knife crime possession by police force area.*

Number of defendants found guilty at all courts for the offence "Having an article with a blade or point in a public place", in each police force area, England & Wales, 2006⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾⁽³⁾

<i>Force</i>	<i>Found guilty</i>
Avon and Somerset	168
Bedfordshire	61
Cambridgeshire	67
Cheshire	83
City of London	11
Cleveland	75
Cumbria	39
Derbyshire	77
Devon and Cornwall	119
Dorset	66
Durham	91
Essex	173
Gloucestershire	38
Greater Manchester	389
Hampshire	160
Hertfordshire	84
Humberside	123
Kent	6
Lancashire	143
Leicestershire	111
Lincolnshire	68
Merseyside	218
Metropolitan Police	1,680
Norfolk	61
North Yorkshire	57
Northamptonshire	1
Northumbria	215
Nottinghamshire	144
South Yorkshire	149
Staffordshire	91
Suffolk	106
Surrey	37
Sussex	138
Thames Valley	177
Warwickshire	30
West Mercia	96
West Midlands	380
West Yorkshire	170
Wiltshire	67
Dyfed-Powys	29
Gwent	56
North Wales	113
South Wales	153
England & Wales TOTAL	6,320

(1) Every effort is made to ensure that the figures presented are accurate and complete. However, it is important to note that these data have been extracted from large administrative data systems generated by the courts and police forces. As a consequence, care should be taken to ensure data collection processes and their inevitable limitations.

(2) The statistics relate to persons for whom these offences were the principal offences for which they were dealt with. When a defendant has been found guilty of two or more offences the principal offence is the offence for which the heaviest penalty is imposed. Where the same disposal is imposed for two or more offences, the offence selected is the offence for which the statutory maximum penalty is the most severe. are taken into account when those data are used.

(3) This data is a further breakdown of that published in the Criminal Statistics, England and Wales for 2006.

Source; CJEAO-CJR, MOJ

Question 171 (Mr Mitchell): *On the breakdown of types of firearm weapons.*

Please see below table of firearm offences (excluding air weapons) by type of weapon: England and Wales (Published April 2008):

<i>Weapon type</i>	<i>Year ending Dec 06</i>	<i>Year ending Dec 07</i>	<i>% change</i>
Shotgun	600	609	+2
Handgun	4,213	4,163	-1
Rifle ¹	62	77	+24
Imitation firearm ²	2,502	2,663	+6
Unidentified firearm	1,262	1,346	+7
Other firearm ³	955	1,109	+16
Total	9,594	9,967	+4

1 Because of the small number of offences involving rifles, the percentage change should be treated with caution.

2 Imitation handguns, which are converted to fire bullets like handguns, are counted as handguns.

3 Other firearms include CS gas, disguised firearms, machine guns, pepper spray, stun guns and other specified weapons (majority are paintball guns).

APPENDIX A

LOCAL AUTHORITIES—POLICE RECORDED VIOLENCE AGAINST THE PERSON OFFENCES 2005–06 TO 2006–07

<i>Force</i>	<i>LA name</i>	<i>Violence against the person offences recorded 05/06</i>	<i>Violence against the person offences recorded 06/07</i>	<i>Violence against the person change 05/06-06/07 (%)</i>	<i>Violence against the person offences per 1,000 population 06/07</i>
Avon & Somerset	Bath and North East Somerset	2,877	3,000	4	17
Avon & Somerset	City of Bristol UA	13,372	12,746	-5	32
Avon & Somerset	Mendip	1,473	1,578	7	15
Avon & Somerset	North Somerset	3,358	3,640	8	19
Avon & Somerset	Sedgemoor	1,513	1,631	8	15
Avon & Somerset	South Gloucester	3,563	3,720	4	15
Avon & Somerset	South Somerset	2,354	2,336	-1	15
Avon & Somerset	Taunton Deane	1,635	1,804	10	17
Avon & Somerset	West Somerset	351	426	21	12
Avon & Somerset	Total	30,496	30,881	1	20
Bedfordshire	Bedford	2,451	2,410	-2	16
Bedfordshire	Luton	4,835	4,397	-9	24
Bedfordshire	Mid Bedfordshire	884	785	-11	6
Bedfordshire	South Bedfordshire	1,636	1,547	-5	13
Bedfordshire	Total	9,806	9,139	-7	16
Cambridgeshire	Cambridge	2,009	2,173	8	18
Cambridgeshire	East Cambridgeshire	525	527	0	7
Cambridgeshire	Fenland	1,222	1,273	4	15
Cambridgeshire	Huntingdonshire	1,533	1,623	6	10
Cambridgeshire	Peterborough UA	4,156	4,017	-3	25
Cambridgeshire	South Cambridgeshire	713	808	13	6
Cambridgeshire	Total	10,158	10,421	3	14
Cheshire	Chester	2,536	2,392	-6	20
Cheshire	Congleton	879	896	2	10
Cheshire	Crewe	2,351	1,983	-16	17
Cheshire	Ellesmere Port & Neston	1,661	1,694	2	21
Cheshire	Halton	2,805	2,697	-4	23
Cheshire	Macclesfield	2,125	2,055	-3	14
Cheshire	Vale Royal	2,259	1,858	-18	15
Cheshire	Warrington	3,901	3,694	-5	19
Cheshire	Total	18,517	17,269	-7	17
Cleveland	Hartlepool	2,919	2,653	-9	29
Cleveland	Langbaugh (Redcar & Cleveland)	2,957	2,739	-7	20
Cleveland	Middlesbrough	4,560	5,119	12	37
Cleveland	Stockton	3,876	3,417	-12	18
Cleveland	Total	14,312	13,928	-3	25

<i>Force</i>	<i>LA name</i>	<i>Violence against the person offences recorded 05/06</i>	<i>Violence against the person offences recorded 06/07</i>	<i>Violence against the person change 05/06-06/07 (%)</i>	<i>Violence against the person offences per 1,000 population 06/07</i>
Cumbria	Allerdale	1,634	1,476	-10	15
Cumbria	Barrow-in-Furness	1,947	1,654	-15	24
Cumbria	Carlisle	2,341	2,135	-9	20
Cumbria	Copeland	1,389	1,297	-7	18
Cumbria	Eden	577	559	-3	11
Cumbria	South Lakeland	1,318	1,066	-19	10
Cumbria	Total	9,206	8,187	-11	16
Derbyshire	Amber Valley	1,764	1,853	5	16
Derbyshire	Bolsover	1,132	1,318	16	18
Derbyshire	Chesterfield	2,121	2,399	13	24
Derbyshire	Derby	5,300	4,790	-10	20
Derbyshire	Derbyshire Dales	685	742	8	11
Derbyshire	Erewash	1,675	1,601	-4	15
Derbyshire	High Peak	1,436	1,474	3	16
Derbyshire	North East Derbyshire	972	1,004	3	10
Derbyshire	South Derbyshire	875	884	1	10
Derbyshire	Total	15,960	16,065	1	16
Devon & Cornwall	Caradon	920	884	-4	11
Devon & Cornwall	Carrick	903	984	9	11
Devon & Cornwall	East Devon	1,240	1,303	5	10
Devon & Cornwall	Exeter	2,570	2,305	-10	20
Devon & Cornwall	Isles of Scilly	26	23	-12	11
Devon & Cornwall	Kerrier	1,119	1,040	-7	11
Devon & Cornwall	Mid Devon	836	710	-15	10
Devon & Cornwall	North Cornwall	1,080	1,072	-1	13
Devon & Cornwall	North Devon	1,702	1,780	5	20
Devon & Cornwall	Penwith	876	896	2	14
Devon & Cornwall	Plymouth	6,198	6,209	0	25
Devon & Cornwall	Restormel	1,299	1,261	-3	13
Devon & Cornwall	South Hams	771	732	-5	9
Devon & Cornwall	Teignbridge	1,688	1,474	-13	12
Devon & Cornwall	Torbay	2,863	3,023	6	23
Devon & Cornwall	Torrige	722	854	18	14
Devon & Cornwall	West Devon	492	477	-3	9
Devon & Cornwall	Total	25,305	25,027	-1	15
Dorset	Bournemouth	4,892	4,692	-4	29
Dorset	Christchurch	579	469	-19	10
Dorset	East Dorset	429	479	12	6
Dorset	North Dorset	519	504	-3	8
Dorset	Poole	2,520	2,376	-6	17
Dorset	Purbeck	463	405	-13	9
Dorset	West Dorset	867	987	14	10
Dorset	Weymouth & Portland	1,661	1,893	14	29
Dorset	Total	11,930	11,805	-1	17
Durham	Chester-le-street	764	875	15	16
Durham	Darlington	1,708	1,791	5	18
Durham	Derwentside	1,391	1,460	5	17
Durham	Durham	1,166	1,340	15	15
Durham	Easington	1,690	1,707	1	18
Durham	Sedgefield	1,699	1,533	-10	17
Durham	Teesdale	152	162	7	7
Durham	Wear Valley	1,329	1,149	-14	19
Durham	Total	9,899	10,017	1	17
Dyfed-Powys	Carmarthenshire	2,737	2,824	3	16
Dyfed-Powys	Ceredigion	992	1,045	5	13
Dyfed-Powys	Pembrokeshire	1,897	2,045	8	17
Dyfed-Powys	Powys	2,085	1,780	-15	14
Dyfed-Powys	Total	7,711	7,694	0	15
Essex	Basildon	2,162	2,403	11	14
Essex	Braintree	1,571	1,485	-5	11
Essex	Brentwood	904	908	0	13
Essex	Castle Point	773	708	-8	8
Essex	Chelmsford	2,243	2,157	-4	13
Essex	Colchester	2,983	2,462	-17	15
Essex	Epping Forest	1,627	1,609	-1	13
Essex	Harlow	2,187	1,990	-9	26

<i>Force</i>	<i>LA name</i>	<i>Violence against the person offences recorded 05/06</i>	<i>Violence against the person offences recorded 06/07</i>	<i>Violence against the person change 05/06-06/07 (%)</i>	<i>Violence against the person offences per 1,000 population 06/07</i>
Essex	Maldon	593	573	-3	9
Essex	Rochford	605	603	0	8
Essex	Southend	3,111	2,989	-4	19
Essex	Tendring	1,950	1,916	-2	14
Essex	Thurrock	2,601	2,426	-7	17
Essex	Uttlesford	570	594	4	8
Essex	Total	23,880	22,823	-4	14
Gloucestershire	Cheltenham	2,923	2,765	-5	25
Gloucestershire	Cotswold	703	874	24	11
Gloucestershire	Forest of Dean	1,024	1,098	7	14
Gloucestershire	Gloucester	3,249	3,333	3	30
Gloucestershire	Stroud	1,463	1,694	16	15
Gloucestershire	Tewkesbury	1,134	1,067	-6	14
Gloucestershire	Total	10,496	10,831	3	19
Greater Manchester	Bolton	5,685	6,180	9	23
Greater Manchester	Bury	3,163	3,345	6	18
Greater Manchester	Manchester	13,654	14,403	5	33
Greater Manchester	Oldham	3,693	4,260	15	19
Greater Manchester	Rochdale	4,520	4,340	-4	21
Greater Manchester	Salford	4,515	5,891	30	27
Greater Manchester	Stockport	4,409	4,571	4	16
Greater Manchester	Tameside	5,714	5,346	-6	25
Greater Manchester	Trafford	3,275	3,740	14	18
Greater Manchester	Wigan	4,167	4,738	14	15
Greater Manchester	Total	52,795	56,814	8	22
Gwent	Blaenau Gwent	1,436	1,510	5	22
Gwent	Caerphilly	3,441	3,435	0	20
Gwent	Monmouthshire	1,249	1,167	-7	13
Gwent	Newport	3,691	3,933	7	28
Gwent	Torfaen	1,686	1,672	-1	19
Gwent	Total	11,503	11,717	2	21
Hampshire	Basingstoke & Deane	3,213	3,460	8	22
Hampshire	East Hampshire	1,160	1,611	39	14
Hampshire	Eastleigh	1,821	2,147	18	18
Hampshire	Fareham	1,576	1,859	18	17
Hampshire	Gosport	1,898	2,146	13	28
Hampshire	Hart	976	914	-6	10
Hampshire	Havant	3,149	3,069	-3	27
Hampshire	Isle of Wight	3,197	3,057	-4	22
Hampshire	New Forest	2,065	2,265	10	13
Hampshire	Portsmouth	6,797	6,172	-9	33
Hampshire	Rushmoor	2,159	2,042	-5	23
Hampshire	Southampton	7,745	8,515	10	38
Hampshire	Test Valley	1,620	1,722	6	15
Hampshire	Winchester	1,310	1,590	21	14
Hampshire	Total	38,686	40,569	5	22
Hertfordshire	Broxbourne	1,532	1,404	-8	16
Hertfordshire	Dacorum	1,939	2,155	11	16
Hertfordshire	East Hertfordshire	1,499	1,565	4	12
Hertfordshire	Hertsmere	1,199	1,300	8	14
Hertfordshire	North Hertfordshire	1,629	1,612	-1	13
Hertfordshire	St Albans	1,597	1,713	7	13
Hertfordshire	Stevenage	2,049	2,075	1	26
Hertfordshire	Three Rivers	942	853	-9	10
Hertfordshire	Watford	2,285	2,606	14	33
Hertfordshire	Welwyn / Hatfield	1,535	1,607	5	16
Hertfordshire	Total	16,206	16,890	4	16
Humberside	East Riding of Yorkshire	4,112	4,628	13	14
Humberside	Kingston upon Hull	9,405	9,692	3	39
Humberside	North East Lincolnshire	5,165	5,717	11	36
Humberside	North Lincolnshire	3,833	3,832	0	24
Humberside	Total	22,515	23,869	6	27
Kent	Ashford	1,548	1,499	-3	14
Kent	Canterbury	1,965	2,021	3	14
Kent	Dartford	1,744	1,998	15	23

<i>Force</i>	<i>LA name</i>	<i>Violence against the person offences recorded 05/06</i>	<i>Violence against the person offences recorded 06/07</i>	<i>Violence against the person change 05/06-06/07 (%)</i>	<i>Violence against the person offences per 1,000 population 06/07</i>
Kent	Dover	1,747	1,773	1	17
Kent	Gravesham	2,007	2,043	2	21
Kent	Maidstone	2,202	2,389	8	17
Kent	Medway	5,347	5,536	4	22
Kent	Sevenoaks	933	962	3	9
Kent	Shepway	1,746	1,800	3	18
Kent	Swale	2,280	2,180	-4	17
Kent	Thanet	2,885	2,759	-4	22
Kent	Tonbridge & Malling	1,260	1,287	2	11
Kent	Tunbridge Wells	1,127	1,269	13	12
Kent	Total	26,791	27,516	3	17
Lancashire	Blackburn with Darwen	3,306	2,973	-10	21
Lancashire	Blackpool	5,392	5,206	-3	36
Lancashire	Burnley	2,561	2,331	-9	27
Lancashire	Chorley	1,489	1,460	-2	14
Lancashire	Fylde	801	764	-5	10
Lancashire	Hyndburn	1,492	1,354	-9	17
Lancashire	Lancaster	2,885	2,502	-13	18
Lancashire	Pendle	1,724	1,357	-21	15
Lancashire	Preston	3,710	3,419	-8	26
Lancashire	Ribble Valley	471	426	-10	7
Lancashire	Rossendale	1,056	898	-15	14
Lancashire	South Ribble	1,448	1,578	9	15
Lancashire	West Lancashire	1,187	1,290	9	12
Lancashire	Wyre	1,319	1,233	-7	11
Lancashire	Total	28,841	26,791	-7	19
Leicestershire	Blaby	982	986	0	11
Leicestershire	Charnwood	3,044	2,994	-2	19
Leicestershire	Harborough	750	767	2	10
Leicestershire	Hinckley and Bosworth	1,601	1,612	1	16
Leicestershire	Leicester	11,156	10,662	-4	37
Leicestershire	Melton	660	638	-3	13
Leicestershire	North West Leicestershire	1,534	1,586	3	18
Leicestershire	Oadby & Wigston	932	875	-6	16
Leicestershire	Rutland	341	285	-16	8
Leicestershire	Total	21,000	20,405	-3	21
Lincolnshire	Boston	1,125	1,098	-2	19
Lincolnshire	East Lindsey	2,096	2,157	3	16
Lincolnshire	Lincoln	2,878	2,777	-4	32
Lincolnshire	North Kesteven	813	703	-14	7
Lincolnshire	South Holland	1,144	985	-14	12
Lincolnshire	South Kesteven	1,876	1,821	-3	14
Lincolnshire	West Lindsey	794	716	-10	8
Lincolnshire	Total	10,726	10,257	-4	15
London, City of	City of London	942	967	3	105
Merseyside	Knowsley	3,074	1,906	-38	13
Merseyside	Liverpool	16,430	12,073	-27	27
Merseyside	Sefton	4,439	3,688	-17	13
Merseyside	St. Helens	4,578	3,400	-26	19
Merseyside	Wirral	6,276	4,927	-21	16
Merseyside	Total	34,797	25,994	-25	19
Metropolitan Police	Barking & Dagenham	5,288	5,150	-3	31
Metropolitan Police	Barnet	6,393	5,512	-14	17
Metropolitan Police	Bexley	4,373	3,742	-14	17
Metropolitan Police	Brent	8,253	6,216	-25	23
Metropolitan Police	Bromley	5,499	5,697	4	19
Metropolitan Police	Camden	7,370	6,586	-11	29
Metropolitan Police	City of Westminster	9,445	8,413	-11	34
Metropolitan Police	Croydon	7,763	6,741	-13	20
Metropolitan Police	Ealing	7,878	7,641	-3	25
Metropolitan Police	Enfield	5,256	5,342	2	19
Metropolitan Police	Greenwich	7,713	7,486	-3	33
Metropolitan Police	Hackney	7,471	7,148	-4	34
Metropolitan Police	Hammersmith & Fulham	5,041	5,054	0	28
Metropolitan Police	Haringey	6,921	5,651	-18	25
Metropolitan Police	Harrow	3,028	2,870	-5	13

<i>Force</i>	<i>LA name</i>	<i>Violence against the person offences recorded 05/06</i>	<i>Violence against the person offences recorded 06/07</i>	<i>Violence against the person change 05/06-06/07 (%)</i>	<i>Violence against the person offences per 1,000 population 06/07</i>
Metropolitan Police	Havering	4,172	3,639	-13	16
Metropolitan Police	Hillingdon	6,261	5,911	-6	23
Metropolitan Police	Hounslow	6,434	5,502	-14	26
Metropolitan Police	Islington	7,002	6,289	-10	34
Metropolitan Police	Kensington & Chelsea	3,325	3,597	8	18
Metropolitan Police	Kingston upon Thames	3,240	3,003	-7	20
Metropolitan Police	Lambeth	8,991	8,344	-7	31
Metropolitan Police	Lewisham	8,463	8,062	-5	33
Metropolitan Police	Merton	3,664	3,361	-8	17
Metropolitan Police	Newham	8,421	7,578	-10	31
Metropolitan Police	Redbridge	3,976	4,323	9	17
Metropolitan Police	Richmond upon Thames	2,345	2,122	-10	11
Metropolitan Police	Southwark	9,065	8,435	-7	33
Metropolitan Police	Sutton	3,161	2,989	-5	17
Metropolitan Police	Tower Hamlets	7,455	7,727	4	36
Metropolitan Police	Waltham Forest	6,831	6,052	-11	27
Metropolitan Police	Wandsworth	6,139	5,647	-8	20
Metropolitan Police	Total	196,637	181,830	-8	24
Norfolk	Breckland	1,440	1,351	-6	11
Norfolk	Broadland	814	739	-9	6
Norfolk	Great Yarmouth	2,276	2,156	-5	23
Norfolk	Kings Lynn & West Norfolk	1,826	1,628	-11	12
Norfolk	North Norfolk	1,133	1,083	-4	11
Norfolk	Norwich	3,971	3,641	-8	29
Norfolk	South Norfolk	1,044	984	-6	9
Norfolk	Total	12,504	11,582	-7	14
Northamptonshire	Corby	1,427	1,523	7	28
Northamptonshire	Daventry	747	668	-11	9
Northamptonshire	East Northamptonshire	842	782	-7	10
Northamptonshire	Kettering	1,434	1,315	-8	15
Northamptonshire	Northampton	4,308	4,103	-5	21
Northamptonshire	South Northamptonshire	459	390	-15	5
Northamptonshire	Wellingborough	1,275	1,332	4	18
Northamptonshire	Total	10,492	10,113	-4	16
Northumbria	Alnwick	249	363	46	11
Northumbria	Berwick	443	422	-5	16
Northumbria	Blyth Valley	1,011	1,268	25	16
Northumbria	Castle Morpeth	460	521	13	10
Northumbria	Gateshead	2,655	2,961	12	15
Northumbria	Newcastle upon Tyne	5,289	6,019	14	22
Northumbria	North Tyneside	2,452	2,917	19	15
Northumbria	South Tyneside	2,637	2,711	3	18
Northumbria	Sunderland	5,472	5,492	0	19
Northumbria	Tynedale	449	499	11	8
Northumbria	Wansbeck	878	1,076	23	17
Northumbria	Total	21,995	24,249	10	17
North Wales	Conwy	2,119	2,513	19	23
North Wales	Denbighshire	2,113	2,475	17	26
North Wales	Flintshire	2,217	2,619	18	17
North Wales	Gwynedd	2,268	2,581	14	22
North Wales	Isle of Anglesey	1,117	1,405	26	20
North Wales	Wrexham	2,496	2,830	13	22
North Wales	Total	12,330	14,423	17	21
North Yorkshire	Craven	674	603	-11	11
North Yorkshire	Hambleton	841	683	-19	8
North Yorkshire	Harrogate	1,922	1,586	-17	10
North Yorkshire	Richmondshire	601	548	-9	11
North Yorkshire	Ryedale	413	394	-5	8
North Yorkshire	Scarborough	2,030	1,969	-3	18
North Yorkshire	Selby	1,182	1,019	-14	13
North Yorkshire	York	3,810	3,285	-14	18
North Yorkshire	Total	11,473	10,087	-12	13
Nottinghamshire	Ashfield	1,914	1,881	-2	17
Nottinghamshire	Bassetlaw	1,984	2,226	12	20
Nottinghamshire	Broxtowe	1,386	1,415	2	13
Nottinghamshire	Gedling	1,465	1,488	2	13

<i>Force</i>	<i>LA name</i>	<i>Violence against the person offences recorded 05/06</i>	<i>Violence against the person offences recorded 06/07</i>	<i>Violence against the person change 05/06-06/07 (%)</i>	<i>Violence against the person offences per 1,000 population 06/07</i>
Nottinghamshire	Mansfield	2,518	2,669	6	27
Nottinghamshire	Newark & Sherwood	1,435	1,480	3	13
Nottinghamshire	Nottingham	9,516	9,865	4	35
Nottinghamshire	Rushcliffe	1,098	914	-17	8
Nottinghamshire	Total	21,316	21,938	3	21
South Wales	Bridgend	1,990	1,757	-12	13
South Wales	Cardiff	6,101	6,121	0	19
South Wales	Merthyr Tydfil	1,016	1,145	13	21
South Wales	Neath & Port Talbot	1,948	1,781	-9	13
South Wales	Rhondda Cynon Taff	4,144	3,809	-8	16
South Wales	Swansea	4,105	3,480	-15	15
South Wales	Vale of Glamorgan	1,744	1,740	0	14
South Wales	Total	21,048	19,833	-6	16
South Yorkshire	Barnsley	4,350	4,158	-4	19
South Yorkshire	Doncaster	9,897	8,494	-14	29
South Yorkshire	Rotherham	5,117	5,260	3	21
South Yorkshire	Sheffield	9,811	10,043	2	19
South Yorkshire	Total	29,175	27,955	-4	22
Staffordshire	Cannock Chase	2,169	2,443	13	26
Staffordshire	East Staffordshire	2,336	2,365	1	22
Staffordshire	Lichfield	1,380	1,375	0	14
Staffordshire	Newcastle-under-Lyme	3,080	2,968	-4	24
Staffordshire	South Staffordshire	1,347	1,369	2	13
Staffordshire	Stafford	2,431	2,516	4	20
Staffordshire	Staffordshire Moorlands	1,601	1,541	-4	16
Staffordshire	Stoke on Trent	7,758	7,937	2	33
Staffordshire	Tamworth	2,125	2,214	4	30
Staffordshire	Total	24,227	24,728	2	23
Suffolk	Babergh	725	724	0	9
Suffolk	Forest Heath	798	1,072	34	17
Suffolk	Ipswich	2,878	2,940	2	25
Suffolk	Mid Suffolk	599	608	2	7
Suffolk	St. Edmundsbury	1,454	1,509	4	15
Suffolk	Suffolk Coastal	1,265	1,054	-17	9
Suffolk	Waveney	2,298	2,283	-1	20
Suffolk	Total	10,017	10,190	2	15
Surrey	Elmbridge	1,216	1,554	28	12
Surrey	Epsom & Ewell	788	1,046	33	15
Surrey	Guildford	1,659	1,850	12	14
Surrey	Mole Valley	632	778	23	10
Surrey	Reigate and Banstead	1,495	1,952	31	15
Surrey	Runnymede	728	737	1	9
Surrey	Spelthorne	1,353	1,553	15	18
Surrey	Surrey Heath	717	1,033	44	13
Surrey	Tandridge	599	712	19	9
Surrey	Waverley	826	898	9	8
Surrey	Woking	1,225	1,410	15	16
Surrey	Total	11,238	13,523	20	13
Sussex	Adur	797	777	-3	13
Sussex	Arun	2,158	2,422	12	17
Sussex	Brighton & Hove	7,069	7,628	8	30
Sussex	Chichester	1,141	1,202	5	11
Sussex	Crawley	2,694	2,564	-5	26
Sussex	Eastbourne	2,450	2,381	-3	26
Sussex	Hastings	2,947	3,139	7	37
Sussex	Horsham	1,148	1,337	16	11
Sussex	Lewes	1,563	1,388	-11	15
Sussex	Mid Sussex	1,445	1,449	0	11
Sussex	Rother	1,193	1,178	-1	14
Sussex	Wealden	1,428	1,204	-16	9
Sussex	Worthing	1,834	1,955	7	20
Sussex	Total	27,867	28,624	3	19
Thames Valley	Aylesbury Vale	2,367	2,746	16	16
Thames Valley	Bracknell Forest UA	1,750	1,776	1	16
Thames Valley	Cherwell	2,332	2,600	11	19

<i>Force</i>	<i>LA name</i>	<i>Violence against the person offences recorded 05/06</i>	<i>Violence against the person offences recorded 06/07</i>	<i>Violence against the person change 05/06-06/07 (%)</i>	<i>Violence against the person offences per 1,000 population 06/07</i>
Thames Valley	Chiltern	1,100	1,265	15	14
Thames Valley	Milton Keynes	5,373	5,975	11	27
Thames Valley	Oxford	3,503	4,228	21	28
Thames Valley	Reading UA	4,052	4,567	13	31
Thames Valley	Slough UA	2,886	3,468	20	30
Thames Valley	South Bucks	756	972	29	15
Thames Valley	South Oxfordshire	1,431	1,578	10	12
Thames Valley	Vale of White Horse	1,334	1,693	27	14
Thames Valley	West Berkshire	1,565	2,288	46	16
Thames Valley	West Oxfordshire	934	1,281	37	13
Thames Valley	Windsor & Maidenhead UA	2,309	2,552	11	18
Thames Valley	Wokingham UA	1,358	1,418	4	9
Thames Valley	Wycombe	2,937	3,014	3	19
Thames Valley	Total	35,987	41,421	15	19
Warwickshire	North Warwickshire	588	647	10	10
Warwickshire	Nuneaton & Bedworth	2,001	2,318	16	19
Warwickshire	Rugby	1,155	1,378	19	15
Warwickshire	Stratford-upon-Avon	1,096	1,115	2	9
Warwickshire	Warwick	1,729	1,933	12	14
Warwickshire	Total	6,569	7,391	13	14
West Mercia	Bridgnorth	407	426	5	8
West Mercia	Bromsgrove	1,020	982	-4	11
West Mercia	Herefordshire	2,389	2,417	1	14
West Mercia	Malvern Hills	600	619	3	8
West Mercia	North Shropshire	567	649	14	11
West Mercia	Oswestry	397	558	41	14
West Mercia	Redditch	1,619	1,663	3	21
West Mercia	Shrewsbury & Atcham	1,180	1,185	0	12
West Mercia	South Shropshire	237	284	20	7
West Mercia	Telford & Wrekin	3,016	2,795	-7	17
West Mercia	Worcester	2,041	2,048	0	22
West Mercia	Wychavon	960	979	2	8
West Mercia	Wyre Forest	1,266	1,405	11	14
West Mercia	Total	15,699	16,010	2	14
West Midlands	Birmingham	25,267	26,280	4	26
West Midlands	Coventry	7,512	7,592	1	25
West Midlands	Dudley	4,631	4,975	7	16
West Midlands	Sandwell	5,049	5,437	8	19
West Midlands	Solihull	3,480	3,149	-10	16
West Midlands	Walsall	5,599	5,059	-10	20
West Midlands	Wolverhampton	5,448	5,298	-3	22
West Midlands	Total	56,986	57,790	1	22
West Yorkshire	Bradford	11,389	9,647	-15	20
West Yorkshire	Calderdale	5,318	3,933	-26	20
West Yorkshire	Kirklees	8,448	7,729	-9	20
West Yorkshire	Leeds	15,800	14,628	-7	20
West Yorkshire	Wakefield	7,924	7,330	-8	23
West Yorkshire	Total	48,879	43,267	-11	20
Wiltshire	Kennet	651	836	28	11
Wiltshire	North Wiltshire	1,150	1,344	17	10
Wiltshire	Salisbury	1,269	1,578	24	14
Wiltshire	Swindon	2,789	3,185	14	17
Wiltshire	West Wiltshire	1,629	1,733	6	14
Wiltshire	Total	7,488	8,676	16	14
England and Wales		1,044,405	1,029,506	-1	19

General notes:

All crime rates are based on mid-2005 population estimates supplied by the Office for National Statistics.

Caution needs to be taken when considering crime rates of city centre areas, due to the very small population and household levels in these areas. The very high reported crime rates in city centres are partly due to the small resident populations

See Crime in England & Wales 2006-07 for detailed definition of the offence types included in recorded violence against the person