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CHANGE

Restoring order and rebuilding communities: the need for a new national crime plan

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Executive Summary

Crime barely featured in either of the last two general election campaigns, yet is steadily rising back up in the public's consciousness. The IPSOS MORI Issues Index shows that "crime, order and anti-social behaviour" have in the space of three years risen from the 12th most important concern facing the country to the third, with 22 per cent listing it amongst the most important issues facing the country in June 2019 (up from 8 per cent in March 2016).¹ Dealing with crime should be the bread and butter of government - but it is being neglected in the chaos of Brexit. This undermines confidence in the state. It is also an affront to social justice: crime and the fear of crime disproportionately affects those in the most disadvantaged areas.

As we set out in our paper published last autumn, the statistics clearly demonstrate that patterns of crime are shifting. The big downward trends in "volume crime," which began in 1995, have broadly continued (though it appears burglary is on the rise again), but there has been a sharp increase in lower volume "high-harm" offences, such as knife crime, robbery and gun crime. In particular, a story is emerging of interconnected crime types (including violence, acquisitive crime, and anti-social behaviour) driven by rising demand for and supply of drugs, fuelled by the phenomenon of "county lines" and a lack of effective diversion and enforcement.² This aligns with the spreading of violence outwards from cities into Britain's towns and surrounding rural areas.

The changing nature of crime has been accompanied by an absence of political leadership from the Home Office, which has lost control on crime. In particular, no attempt has been made to understand or address the inter-relationships between different types of crime - anti-social behaviour, violence and organised crime - and its impact on communities. Since the arrival of police and crime commissioners (PCCs) in 2012, the Home Office has largely taken a back seat on crime and policing, treating it as an entirely devolved matter.

Meanwhile, there is a growing disconnect between stated policy on crime and its practice on the ground. Twenty years since the creation of crime and disorder partnerships in 1998, which established the structures for a joint approach to tackling crime, community safety is largely absent from the crime vocabulary and local government has retrenched. Hard-pressed police forces are increasingly left as the only line of defence confronting crime and anti-social behaviour in many areas, and yet funding has been met with increasing demand.

A radically new approach is needed on crime. This report sets out the state of play, argues for an ambitious strategy to disrupt the supply of and demand for harmful drugs, to tackle crime in its inter-connected forms, and meet the challenges and demands of 21st-century Britain.

Key findings

- The crime statistics paint a mixed picture. While the volume of crime continues its long-term downward fall, this masks dramatic increases in several categories of crime, from knife crime to burglary.
- Serious violence is increasingly rapidly. Such violence is increasing in volume and severity; is spreading outside of urban areas; and often involves a blurred line between victims and offenders.
- The long-term decline in acquisitive crime appears to be going into reverse. Recent statistics show rises in burglary and vehicle theft.
- Experiences of anti-social behaviour are at their highest point in over a decade. Thirty-seven per cent of the surveyed public reports experiencing or witnessing anti-social behaviour in the last year, with increases driven heavily by drug-related behaviour.
- These trends are not isolated phenomena, but part of an interconnected story around the demand for and supply of dangerous drugs. The crime types most associated with drugs on both the supply side (e.g. serious violence) and demand side (e.g. acquisitive crime) are rising in threat. Meanwhile, long-term falls in drug offences contrast with markers of increased use, increased purity, and reduced price, for some of the most harmful drugs, such as crack cocaine.
- The people most impacted by crime - both victims and perpetrators - are increasingly among the poorest and most vulnerable communities. Dealing with crime is a social justice issue.

In this context, it is vital that the government utilise all the resources and levers at its disposal to tackle the problem. Instead, the Home Office appears to have lost control of the problem.

- There has been a lack of leadership and grip from the centre on crime. Since the introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners, the Home Office has looked like a department unsure of its role. Government strategies have been limited in scope, and have missed the points of

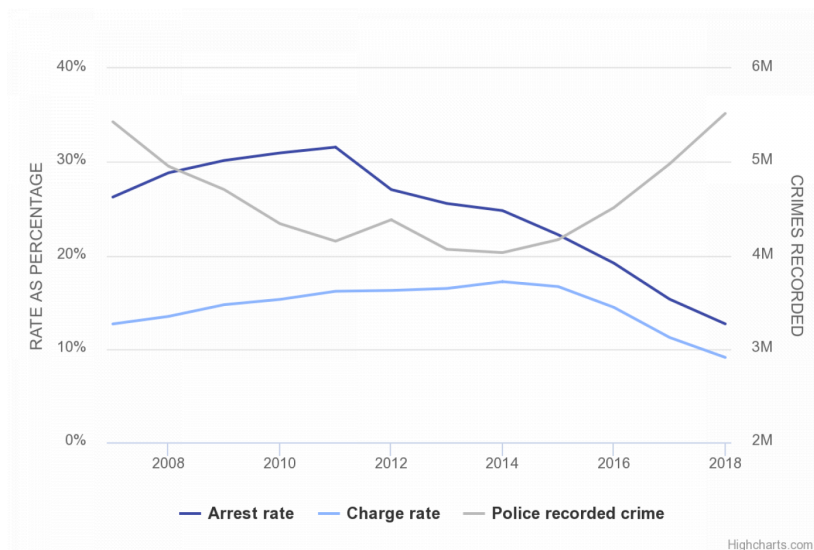
1 <https://www.ipsos.com/ipsos-mori/en-uk/brexit-continues-britains-biggest-concern-and-worry-over-pollution-and-environment-remains-high>.

2 Home Office, Serious Violence Strategy.

interconnection between different types of crime. This absence of vision has been compounded by the political paralysis occasioned in Whitehall and Westminster by Brexit.

- The system for dealing with offending is creaking at the edges. Despite recorded crime being on the rise, the rate at which offenders are arrested, charged and prosecuted has declined rapidly (see Figure 1³).
- Early intervention efforts are piecemeal. The government is unable to say what proportion of young people are at risk of violence and cannot assess the impact of cuts to local preventative services.
- Police funding has been stripped away, with reductions in officer numbers coming at a time of increased demand. The current home secretary now says 20,000 additional police officers are required to deal with rising crime - virtually the exact number that were cut by the Conservative-led coalition government between 2010 and 2015.

Figure 1: Total recorded crime, arrests as a proportion (%) of recorded crime, and proportion (%) of recorded offences leading to charge, years ending March, England and Wales



Principles for reform

The government should respond to this crisis by setting out a five-year plan on crime, backed by serious investment and the political willpower to use all the levers at its disposal to deliver it. This report argues that such a plan should be oriented around the following key principles:

- National leadership, to ensure greater coordination and focus from the centre of government and that police funding keeps pace with demand;

- Getting serious about prevention and early intervention, in particular, by addressing problems in the small numbers of individuals and families responsible for a large share of crime;
- Effective enforcement, by bearing down on the small proportion of offenders who commit the majority of crime;
- Embedding multi-agency partnership working at the local level, with local mayors and PCCs empowered to pool budgets and drive service integration.

Key recommendations

As part of such a plan, government should consider a broad suite of reforms to tackle crime and its root causes in equal measure:

- Stronger leadership from the Home Office, including through the creation of a new National Crime Prevention Board reporting directly to the prime minister and a ‘Police Performance and Standards Unit’ in the Home Office to support local forces’ improvement.
- A long-term funding settlement for the police, which ensures that the number of officers and staff matches keeps pace with demand. At a minimum, this will require an additional 20,000 officers at a cost of £1 billion over the next three years.
- Systematising early intervention backed by a new cross-government Early Intervention Taskforce (chaired by a cabinet minister) to coordinate policy and ensure early intervention is a central focus of the next spending review.
- Reprioritising enforcement activity around the goal of disrupting the supply of harmful drugs into the UK, ensuring the National Crime Agency is focused on the drugs threat and that there is a targeted drugs unit within every force in England and Wales to improve investigation and prosecution of drug dealers.
- Better use of technology underpinned by changes in procurement and regulatory frameworks to ease the use of life-saving technologies.
- Re-invigorating community safety partnerships – empowering city

3 Home Office - Arrest statistics data tables: police powers and procedures, Table A_01a; Home Office - Crime outcomes in England and Wales: data tables, Table 2.1; ONS - Recorded Crime Data at police force area level (including pivot table); Home Office - Crime outcomes in England and Wales: data tables, Table 2.3; *Arrest data for Lancashire has been excluded for all years, due to a lack of data for 2017/18.

mayors and PCCs to pool budgets and drive service integration locally e.g. around probation and prolific offending.

The scope of this paper

This paper focuses on the major categories of domestic crime currently being dealt with by the police, such as acquisitive crime, violence and anti-social behaviour. It does not look at transnational components of crime and/or serious and organised crime, terrorism, nor does it focus on internet-enabled crime, which will be the subject of future work by the Institute. It is also largely addressed to those areas of policy currently falling within the remit of the Home Office: it does not attempt to provide a complete analysis of the courts, probation and prison systems.

Part One – The State of Play: Trends in Crime

Patterns of crime have changed dramatically over the last ten years. While the total volume of crime has continued to decrease, high-harm offences, such as knife and gun crime, have increased significantly since 2014. A growing proportion of crime takes place in “hidden” spaces, away from the public realm, while the cohort of offenders coming before the courts appears to be getting younger and more prolific.

In particular, there is an emerging story of interconnected types of crime driven by the demand and supply for drugs. On the demand side, the need for money to satisfy addiction is motivating acquisitive crime (such as burglary), with over 60 per cent of such crime estimated to be drug-related. On the supply side, shifts in drugs markets are fuelling violent competition between groups, most visibly manifested through the phenomenon known as county lines.⁴ Drug-use is also driving a rise in anti-social behaviour.

The changing nature of crime

The total volume of crime, as measured by the Crime Survey for England and Wales, has been decreasing steadily over the past two decades, falling from a peak of 19,780,600 offences in the year ending December 1995 to 11,041,000 in December 2018.⁵ However, the aggregate trends mask a whole series of ways in which patterns of crime are changing, and crimes are becoming increasingly interconnected. These are explored in more detail below.

Trends in violence

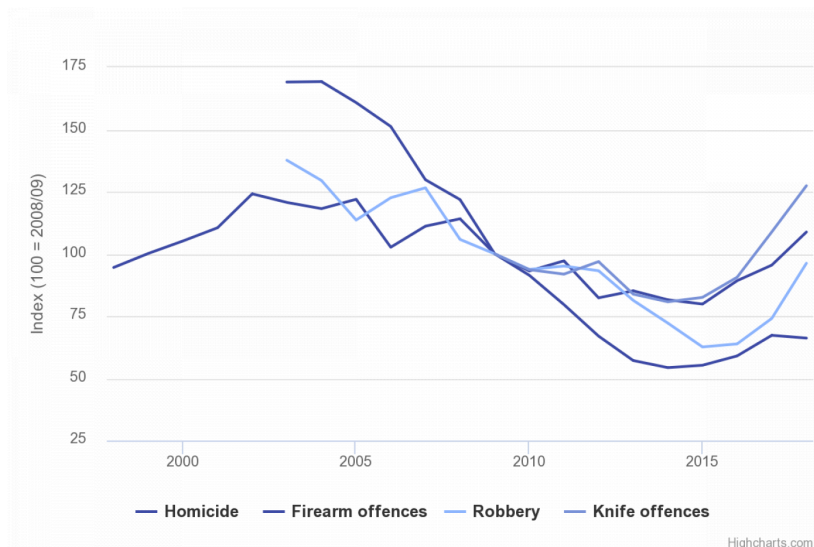
Volume

The evidence on violent crime in England and Wales is mixed, with different sets of figures apparently telling us different things. Total violence recorded by the police has increased dramatically since 2014. However, this may partly be a function of police forces having improved their recording practices, as well as changes in what types of offences are classified as violent (including the recent inclusion of offences such as harassment). For example, the recent rise in the number of sexual and domestic violence offences recorded by the police is believed by the Office for National

Statistics (ONS) to be primarily due to a greater willingness to report offences, coupled with improved recording practices. It is notable that the recorded figures contrast with statistics from the Crime Survey of England and Wales, and Cardiff University’s annual study of violence; both of which suggest overall violence has declined.⁶

On the other hand, there is a subset of low-volume, “high-harm” violence, such as robbery, knife crime, gun crime and murder, for which police figures are thought to be a more reliable indicator of underlying trends (and less affected by recording changes). Between March 2014 and March 2018, the number of recorded homicides rose by 33 per cent, now standing at its highest point since March 2008. Over the same period, recorded robbery offences also rose by 33 per cent, while firearm offences rose by 34 per cent, and selected knife offences rose by 58 per cent⁷:

Figure 2: Indexed trends in police recorded serious violent offences, years ending March, England and Wales



Severity

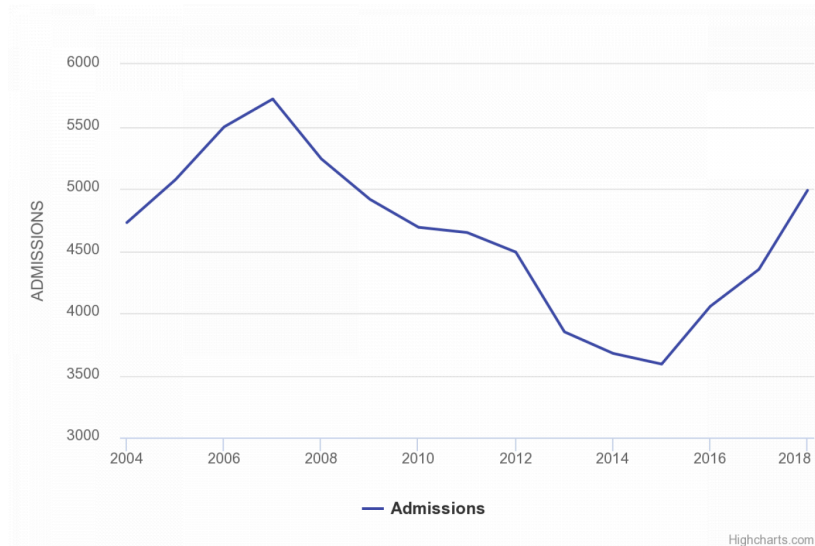
Not only is the volume of serious violence increasing, but the severity of violent offences is increasing too. Hospital admissions data highlights a substantial rise in the number of cases of ‘assault by sharp object’ dealt with by hospital staff over the last five years, rising by 39 per cent between 2015 and 2018.⁸

Figure 3: Hospital admissions in NHS hospitals in England for assault with sharp objects, years ending March 2004 - March 2018

4 Home Office, Serious Violence Strategy.

5 ONS - Crime in England and Wales: Appendix Tables (year ending December 2018), Table A1.

6 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-47902292>.



There has been a similarly significant increase in knife-enabled robbery offences, rising by 45 per cent between March 2014 and March 2018 - and at a faster rate than the comparable increase for all recorded robbery offences (33 per cent).⁹ As a result, it is reasonable to infer that robbery is becoming more violent in general.¹⁰

Location

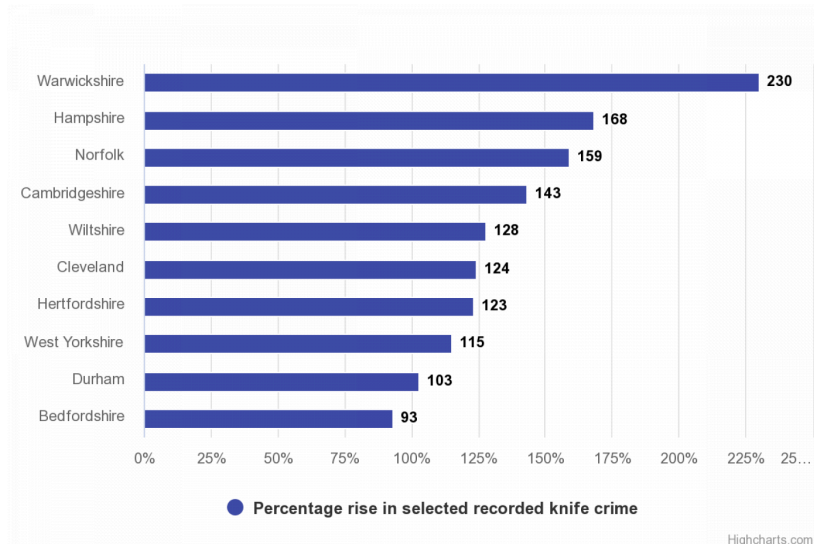
Contrary to popular perception, the escalation in serious violent offences is occurring most quickly outside of urban city centres. For example, increases in knife crime in London between 2014 and 2018 were more pronounced in outer-London boroughs such as Enfield (43.6 per cent) and Harrow (76.6 per cent) than they were in inner-London boroughs such as Southwark (38 per cent) and Lambeth (26.6 per cent).¹¹ Across the country, the three English forces experiencing the largest percentage rises in recorded knife crime offences between the years ending March 2014 and March 2018 were Warwickshire (230 per cent), Hampshire (168 per cent) and Norfolk (159 per cent), albeit from a much lower base¹².

Figure 4: Ten police force areas with the largest percentage rise in selected recorded knife crime offences, years ending March 2014 - 2018, England

7 ONS - Offences involving the use of weapons (Tables 2 and 15), Recorded crime data at Police Force Area level, Appendix tables: Homicide in England and Wales (Table 1). *Figures for homicide exclude the victims of exceptional/terror attacks. Figures for knife crime exclude West Midlands and Sussex due to data collection issues prior to 2014.

8 NHS Digital - Hospital Episode Statistics, ONS - Offences involving the use of weapons: data tables (year ending March 2018), Table 17.

9 Though the number of firearm-enabled robberies did decrease by 296 in this period, the comparable increase for knife-enabled robberies was 5409. Source: ONS - Offences involving the use of weapons: data tables (year ending March 2018).



This could be connected with the county lines phenomenon, involving the exportation of drugs (and associated violence) out of urban areas and into surrounding counties. While estimates of drug consumption are not produced at police force area-level, area classifications from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) do show a significant increase in class A usage in rural areas, with the proportion of adult residents reporting use in the last year doubling between 2014 and 2018¹³:

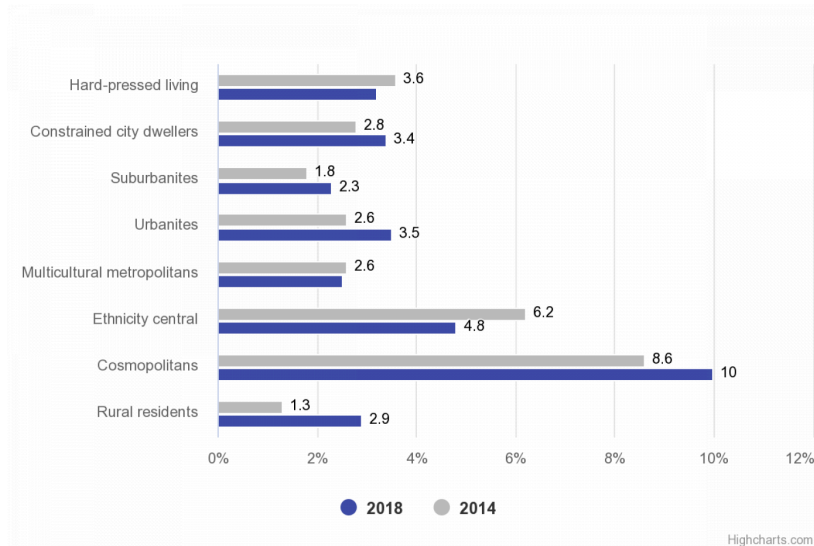
Figure 5: Increase in the proportion (%) of 16 to 59 year-olds reporting use of any Class A drug in the last year by Output area classification, 2013/14 - 2017/18

10 ONS - Recorded crime by police force area (years ending March 2014/March 2018).

11 Metropolitan Police - Hate crime or special crime dashboard (rolling 12-month total). *Figures for Southwark and Lambeth spiked in 2017, but fell significantly in 2018, leading to little overall impact on the overall proportional increase.

12 ONS - Recorded crime by police force area (year ending December 2018), Table 5. Northumbria has been excluded due to changes in data quality for 2017 and 2018.

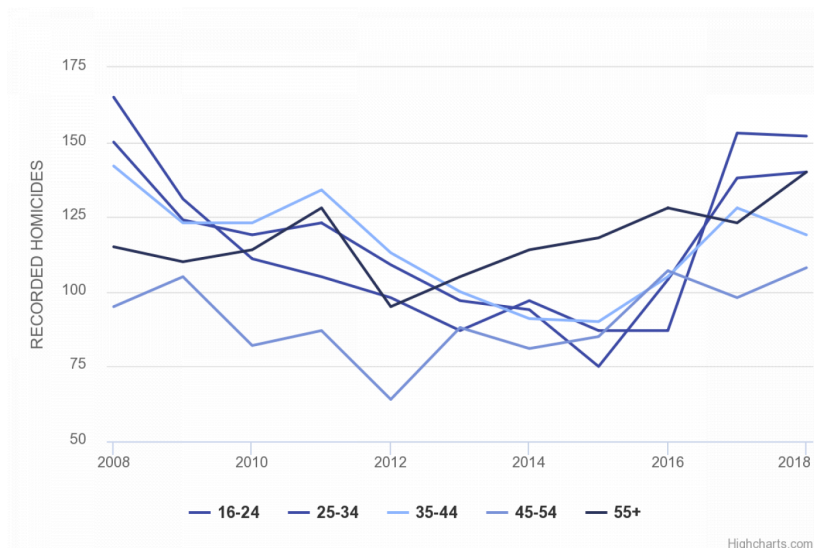
13 Home Office - Drug misuse: findings from the 2017 to 2018 CSEW: data tables (26 July 2018), Table 3.12.



Victims and perpetrators

Violence is increasingly affecting younger individuals, many of whom are being used by drugs gangs in exchange for financial reward.¹⁴ Incidences of violence with injury against children aged between 10 and 15 have increased over the last year from 330,000 to 383,000.¹⁵ And as the chart below demonstrates, a significant proportion of the increase in homicides since 2014 has been driven by victims in the 16-24 age bracket¹⁶.

Figure 6: Number of recorded homicides by age group of victim, England and Wales, year ending March



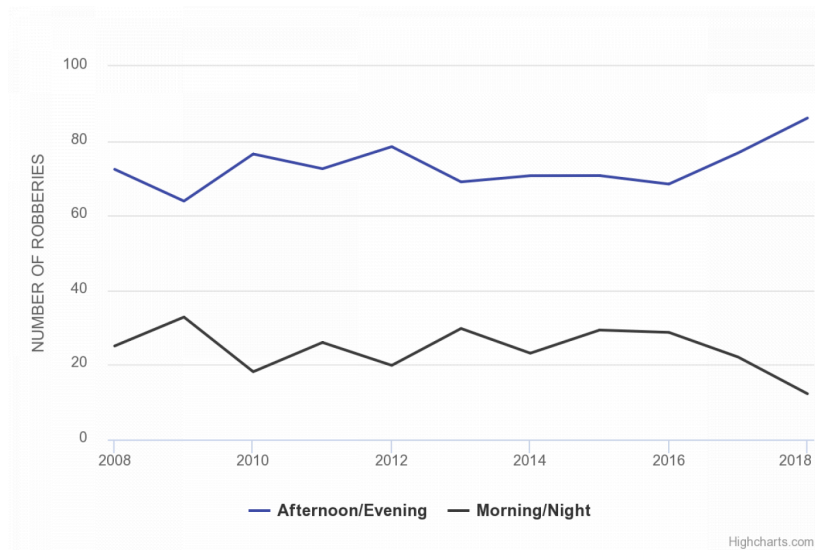
There is also a considerable overlap between victims and offenders within serious violence. In London, 220 of the 306 suspects named in 2017 homicide investigations had previously been a victim of crime (72 per cent); furthermore, 26 per cent had been a victim of knife crime specifically prior to the investigation.¹⁷ This chimes with anecdotal evidence from the police,

suggesting that many individuals become stuck in cycles of tit-for-tat violence that move rapidly upwards in severity.

Circumstances

Analysis of when robberies are committed suggests a shift towards robberies committed after school, increasingly enabled by knives. This trend tallies with our qualitative research - the police have made clear that a large proportion of knife crime is linked to robbery against young people.^{18,19}

Figure 7: Proportion (%) of CSEW incidents of robbery by time of day, years ending March



14 The National Crime Agency states that the majority of referrals through the National Referral Mechanism for county lines activity (see ‘Drug offences’) relate to individuals between the ages of 15 and 17: National Crime Agency (2018), County Lines Drug Supply, Vulnerability and Harm 2018, p. 3.

15 ONS - Crime in England and Wales: Appendix Tables (year ending December 2018), Table A9a.

16 ONS - Appendix tables: homicide in England and Wales (year ending March 2018), Table 3. Figures include victims of terrorism/exceptional events, due to limits of published data.

17 Metropolitan Police Service homicide analysis 2017, referenced in the Home Office Serious Violence Strategy (p. 29). A study of Leicestershire police records from 2014 to 2016 also found that of the 417 most harmful and harmed individuals, 208 were both victims and offenders (accounting for 49.9 per cent of the total); likewise, almost one-in-five offenders go on to become victims themselves (17.9 per cent): Sandall, David; Angel, Caroline M.; White, Jonathan (2018). ‘Victim-Offenders’: a Third Category in Police Targeting of Harm Reduction’, Cambridge Journal of Evidence-Based Policing, 2, pp. 95–110.

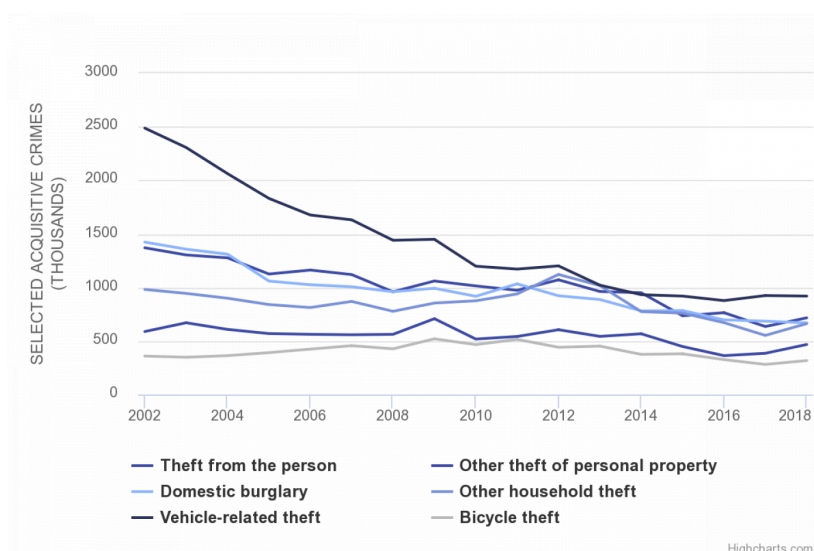
18 For example, the South Yorkshire Knife Crime Strategy states that “youth offenders are prevalent in terms of threats, public order offences, common assault, ABH and attempted robbery” (p. 20): https://www.southyorks.police.uk/media/2349/1517_south_yorks_knife_crime_strategy_03.pdf.

Trends in acquisitive crime and drug offences

Acquisitive crime

In addition to rising serious violence, there are signs that the long-term decline in acquisitive crime is reversing. Statistics from the Crime Survey (CSEW) indicate a stabilisation in the number of offences for acquisitive crime types over recent years, with a slight increase in the last year for vehicle offences. These trends are supported by police-recorded data, which show a recent increase in theft, burglary and vehicle offences, following many years of reductions.²⁰

Figure 8: CSEW incidents of selected acquisitive crimes (thousands), years ending March (2002 - 2016) and December (2017 - 2018)



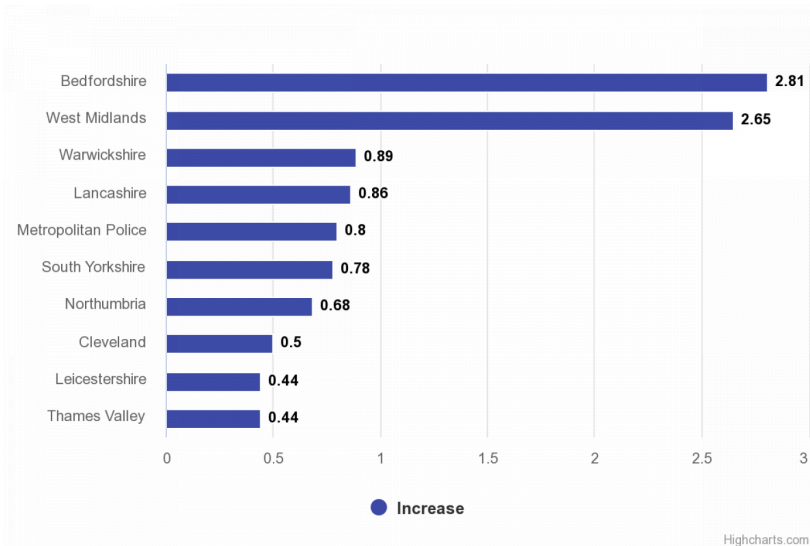
There is also huge geographical variation. As the chart below shows, Bedfordshire and the West Midlands have experienced approximately three times the increase in rate for recorded burglary – a generally well-recorded offence – as other forces.²¹

Figure 9: Ten police force areas with the largest increase in the rate of recorded burglary offences per 1,000 population, years ending December 2015 - 2018, England and Wales

19 ONS - Nature of crime: robbery (year ending March 2018), Table 1. *Figures do not total 100, as offences where the time of day was unclear have been excluded.

20 ONS - Crime in England and Wales: Appendix tables (year ending December 2018), Table A1.

21 ONS - Crime in England and Wales: Police force area data tables (year ending December 2018), Table 3.



Fraud, computer misuse and cyber crime

In recent years, a growing proportion of crime is thought to have shifted online, though the data paints a mixed picture. For example, while the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) shows a fall of 28 per cent in computer misuse offences, there has been a rise of 12 per cent in fraud offences over the last year.²² Recorded data on referrals to the National Fraud Inspection Bureau does show a 42 per cent rise in fraud offences from 476,403 offences in the year ending March 2012 to 675,952 in the year ending December 2018.²³

Beyond fraud and computer misuse, internet-enabled crime is clearly a growing driver of police demand. The number of offences across all crime types flagged by police as online-related has increased by 117 per cent from the years ending December 2016 to December 2018, rising from 44,872 to 97,538.²⁴ This has been driven by a significant expansion in harassment and stalking offences, though this is likely to reflect a growing effort by the police to proactively tackle such crimes.²⁵

The extent to which the internet is facilitating crime will be the subject of more detailed future work by the Institute.

Drug offences

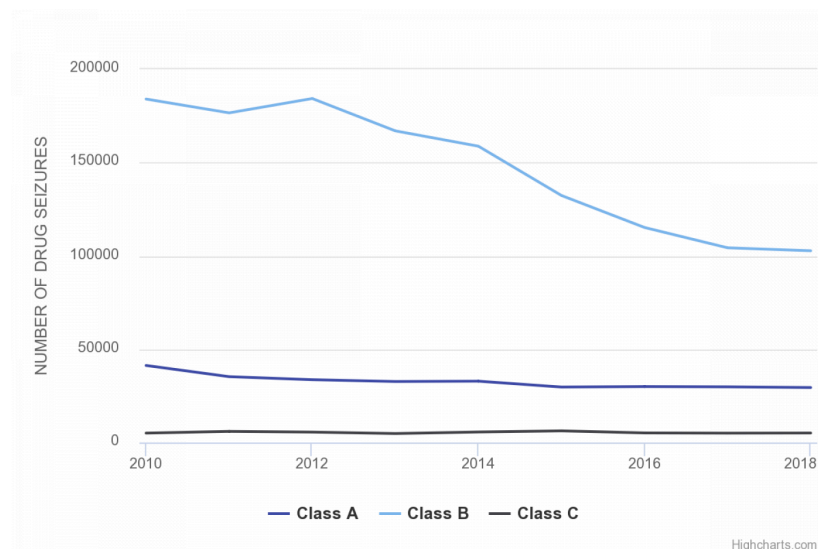
We might expect to see rises in acquisitive crime mirrored by an increase in drug offences. In fact, the opposite appears to be true: fewer drug offences are being recorded by the police, with a 19 per cent drop in England and Wales from the year ending December 2014 to the year ending December 2018.²⁶ However, there are solid reasons to believe that this reflects lower levels of detection and enforcement on the part of the

police, rather than a genuine reduction in drug dealing and use. These are explored in more detail below.

The aim of drugs supply disruption by law enforcement agencies should be twofold. By increasing drug seizures, it aims to cause supply shortages that theoretically will drive up prices (assuming reasonable elasticity) and/or reduce purity, leading to a reduction in demand. In parallel, it attempts to force dealers to leave the market, resulting in reduced overall harm. However, neither of these aims is currently being achieved.

Firstly, figures indicate that police forces and the Border Force are conducting fewer seizures, with a fall of 40 per cent between 2010 and 2018.²⁷

Figure 10: Number of drug seizures made by police forces and the Border Force, England and Wales, years ending March 2010 - 2018



This trend is borne out by responses to a recently commissioned government inquiry into the increase in the use of crack cocaine, which stated that:

Treatment workers and service users observed that there were generally fewer police on the streets, and there appeared to be less capacity to target

22 ONS - Crime in England and Wales: Appendix tables (year ending December 2018), Table A1.

23 ONS - Crime in England and Wales: Bulletin tables (year ending June 2017), Table F18a. ONS - Crime in England and Wales: Appendix tables (year ending December 2018), Table A5.

24 ONS - Crime in England and Wales: Additional tables on fraud and cybercrime (years ending December 2016 and December 2018), Table E4.

25 https://www.cps.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/publications/Stalking-and-Harassment-Protocol-2018_1.docx.

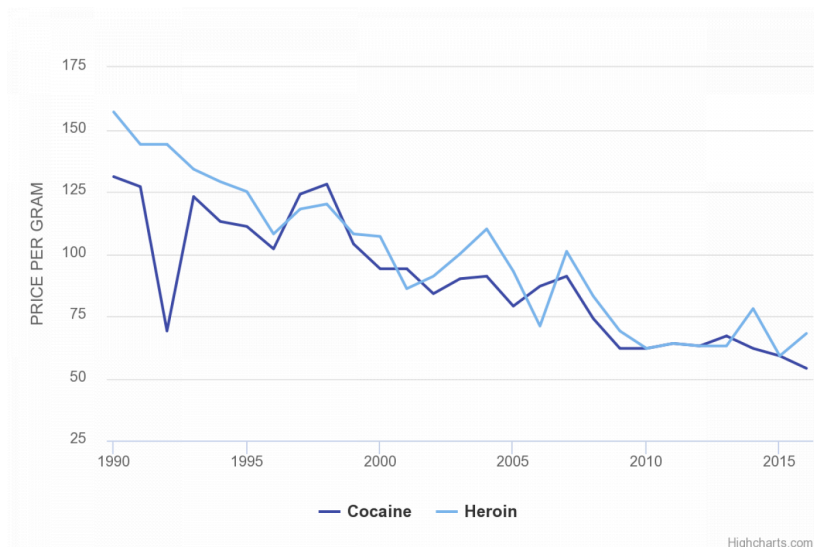
26 ONS - Recorded crime by police force area.

drug dealers or people carrying small amounts of drugs. Also, some police officers reported that their forces no longer had dedicated drugs squads.

Participants in several areas said that deals were often carried out quite publicly, and some dealers made little effort to hide their activities. Police officers also commented that a lack of capacity made it difficult to prioritise drug-dealing, as they had to prioritise serious violence or crimes with a safeguarding element, such as those involving children and vulnerable adults.²⁸

Secondly, evidence from drug markets suggests a substantial increase in availability and purity of certain drugs. As the chart below demonstrates, retail prices for cocaine and heroin have been steadily decreasing over recent decades.²⁹

Figure 11: Standardised UK street price (£) of cocaine and heroin per gram, 1990 - 2016

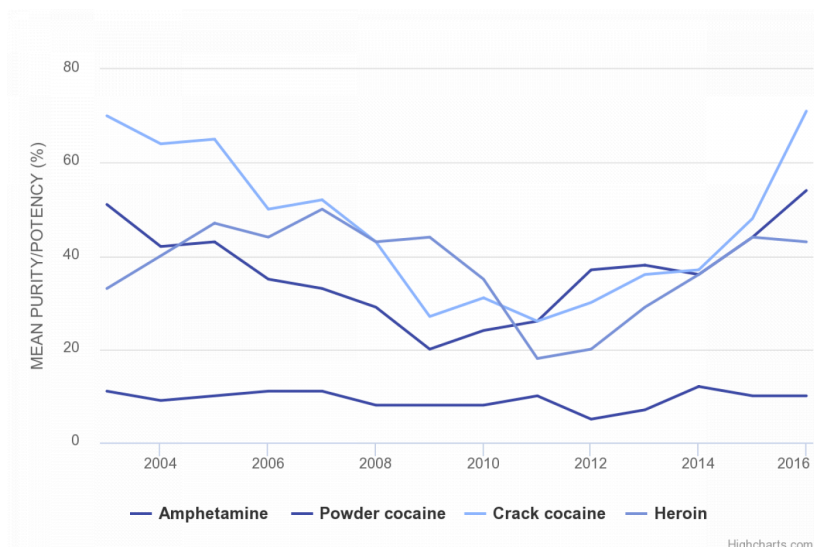


In previous years, cocaine retailers have maintained revenues by adjusting purity, allowing them to keep street prices relatively consistent. However, the last few years have bucked this trend, with increases in the purity of powder and crack cocaine. This suggests a flooding of the cocaine market with cheap, high-quality product that has disrupted the practice of established UK retailers.³⁰

Figure 12: Mean purity/potency (%) of small quantity drug seizures of certain illicit drugs in England and Wales, 2003 - 2016

27 Home Office - Seizures of drugs in England and Wales, financial year ending 2018: data tables, Summary Table A.

28 Home Office/Public Health England, *ibid.*



These shifts are driven by both domestic and international factors. For example, the widespread use of social media and improvements to communication technology have opened up new channels of opportunity for those involved in drug supply to quickly and easily shift drugs around the country. “County lines” is a phenomenon in which gangs and organised criminal networks export illegal drugs into new markets around the country, facilitated through dedicated mobile phone or social media ‘lines’ by which individuals may order new provisions. In 2018, there were approximately 1,000 branded lines within the UK, primarily supplying crack cocaine and heroin (accounting for 69 per cent of all drugs supplied by branded lines).³¹

Alongside that, there have been substantial changes in global and European cocaine markets in recent years that have led to a glut of cheap and high-purity product.³² In 2016, global coca bush cultivation is estimated to have increased for the third consecutive year, rising by 76 per cent since 2013, due in part to an expansion of activity in Colombia. The presence of cocaine has become more widespread geographically, whilst sophistication in cocaine manufacturing methods has increased.³³

Meanwhile, organised crime groups are establishing increased control over the UK market, exploiting the aforementioned county lines to rapidly distribute cheap, pure product, and reducing retail costs by establishing direct relationships with suppliers and cutting out wholesalers. Recent police intelligence suggests that Albanian gangs, in particular, are sourcing cocaine from cartels at some £17,000 per kilo less than rivals paid through wholesalers.³⁴

29 Source: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime - Standardized prices of cocaine and heroin in the United States and Western Europe.

30 United Kingdom Focal Point on Drugs (1 March 2017). United Kingdom Drug Situation: Focal Point Annual Report 2017, Table 7.4*Original source: Personal communication - National Crime Agency

Thirdly, consumption of Class A drugs and drug-related illnesses are on the rise. According to the most recent Crime Survey for England and Wales, 3.5 per cent of adults had taken a Class A drug in the last year, an increase of 0.5 per cent compared with the previous year and one decade ago.³⁵ Class A drug use among 16-to-24 year olds has been steadily increasing from 2011/12, with a substantial rise in the proportion claiming to have used such drugs up from 6.2 per cent to 8.4 per cent in the space of six years. The proportion of 16- to 24-year olds reporting cocaine use in the same period doubled from 3 per cent to 6 per cent.

Deaths related to poisoning by drug misuse have increased by 38 per cent since 2007, and hospital admissions for drug-related mental and behavioural disorders have increased by 9 per cent over the same period.³⁶ The National Crime Agency (NCA) reports particular concern with the emerging use of fentanyl, carfentanyl, analogues and precursors (FCAP).³⁷ These products have already contributed to an ongoing synthetic opioid epidemic in the US and Canada. According to the ONS, deaths related to fentanyl have increased by 29 per cent in the last year (from 58 to 75), with deaths from fentanyl analogues rising sharply from 1 to 31 per cent.³⁸

The impact of increasing drug availability and consumption stretches beyond acquisitive crime. Academics have long recognised the link between overly-saturated drugs markets and serious violence, for example, through competition between rival criminal groups for market dominance. A recent government inquiry into crack cocaine use found that:

Dealer-on-dealer violence sometimes involved ‘turf wars’ between London-based groups in areas where county lines dealing was taking place. There were also reports of violence between county-lines groups and local drug-dealing groups, as the county-lines groups tried to move into the local drugs market.³⁹

Given this context, the fall in recorded drug offences would appear to disguise highly concerning trends for crime and violence in particular, rather than being a cause for celebration.

Anti-social behaviour

31 National Crime Agency (2018), County Lines Drug Supply, Vulnerability and Harm 2018, p. 2

32 European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (December 2018). Recent changes in Europe’s cocaine market

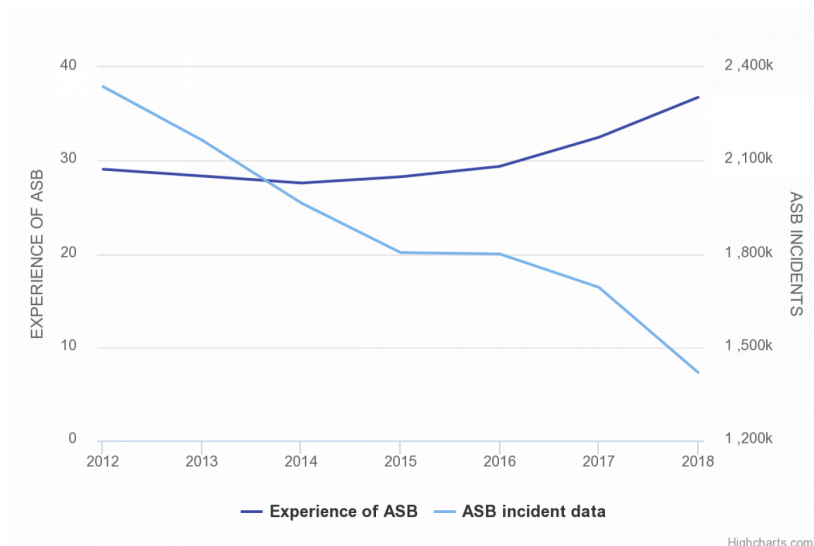
33 Mallette, J. R., Casale, J. F., Colley, V. L., Morello, D. R. and Jordan, J. (2018). ‘Changes in illicit cocaine hydrochloride processing identified and revealed through multivariate analysis of cocaine signature data’, *Science and Justice* 58(2), pp. 90-97.

34 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jan/13/kings-of-cocaine-albanian-mafia-uk-drugs-crime>

35 Source: Home Office - Drug misuse: findings from the 2017 to 2018 CSEW

Statistics on anti-social behaviour demonstrate the effect that increased drug supply and use can have on communities, another critical point of interconnection with other crime trends. Anti-social behaviour incident data recorded by the police shows a consistent downwards trend over the past decade, with a 39 per cent drop over the past seven years (years ending December 2012 to December 2018). However, public experience does not bear out the same trend. For example, the Crime Survey for England and Wales records 37 per cent of respondents experiencing or witnessing anti-social behaviour in the last year - the highest proportion since the data was first collected in March 2012 - while the proportion of respondents to a poll by BMG Research who state that crime and anti-social behaviour is either a “very big” or “quite a big” problem in their local area has increased by 10 percentage points over the last year:^{40, 41}

Figure 13: Number of recorded anti-social behaviour incidents and personal experience/witnessing of anti-social behaviour in the last year ending December, England and Wales



The discrepancy between recorded incidents and public experience may be due to a change in the way anti-social behaviour is categorised. The ONS suggest that some anti-social behaviour incidents are now classified by police forces under “public order offences”, a category for which

36 NHS Digital - Statistics on Drug Misuse, England, 2018 (November update)

37 National Crime Agency (2018), National Strategic Assessment of Serious and Organised Crime: 2018, p. 55

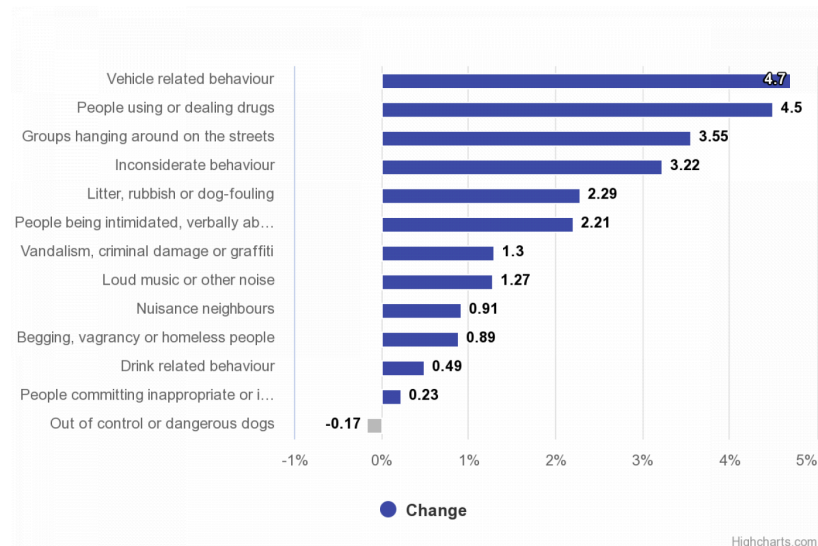
38 However, these statistics only count substances listed on the death certificate. It is likely that the true number of deaths involving FCAP in some form is higher; for example, the detection of FCAP in some post mortems within the North East in early 2017 led to toxicology retesting that subsequently identified 122 linked deaths in the area (as at March 2018), not all of which will have been counted within ONS statistics.

39 Home Office/Public Health England (25 March 2019), Increase in crack cocaine use inquiry: summary of findings

recorded crime has increased by almost 200 per cent over the last five years.^{42, 43} If true, this would fit with public experience, and would represent an important upwards trend in overall levels of anti-social behaviour.

The most significant rises in personal experience of anti-social behaviour relate to vehicle-related behaviour, drug use and dealing, and groups hanging around on the streets. This appears to reinforce the trends for acquisitive crime and drugs identified above, and highlight the cross-cutting effects of increased drug supply and demand on communities.⁴⁴

Figure 14: Change in the proportion (%) of CSEW respondents personally experiencing/witnessing individual types of anti-social behaviour, years ending December 2014 - 2018



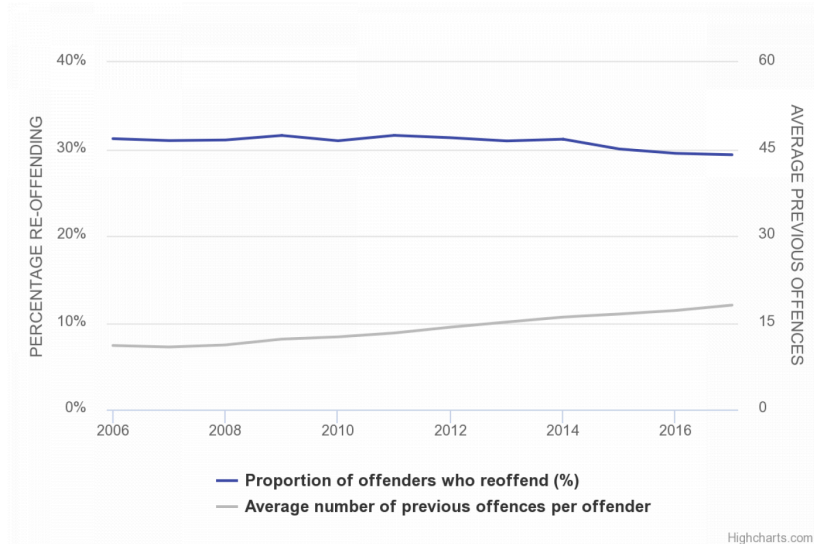
Prolific offending

The profile of offenders being dealt with by the police and courts has changed considerably over the last decade. While the proportion of offenders who reoffend has fallen since 2008, those who do reoffend have become significantly more prolific over the past decade, with a higher number of previous offences.⁴⁵

Figure 15: Reoffending statistics for cohorts in years ending March 2006 - 2017, England and Wales

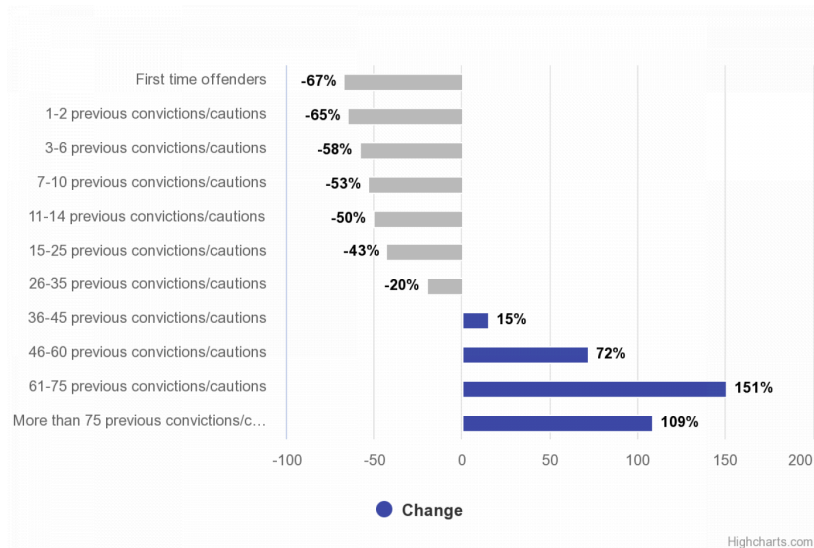
40 From 30 per cent to 40 per cent: BMG Research/Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services, Public Perceptions of Policing in England and Wales 2018.

41 ONS - Crime in England and Wales: Other related tables, Figure F1/Table F8 (2017 - 2018). ONS - Crime in England and Wales: Bulletin tables, Table 25 (2012 - 2016). *ASB incident data excludes British Transport Police. Cheshire Police data was not provided between March 2018 and September 2018.



Similarly, while the number of offenders cautioned or sentenced for indictable offences with no previous convictions or cautions has decreased by 67.1 per cent since 2008, the number of those with 36-or-more convictions or cautions has risen substantially.⁴⁶

Figure 16: Change in the number of offenders cautioned or sentenced for indictable offences by number of previous convictions/cautions, years ending December 2008 - 2018, England and Wales



42 ONS - Crime in England and Wales: year ending September 2018 (bulletin).

43 ONS - Recorded crime by police force area, years ending September 2014 - September 2018.

44 ONS - Crime in England and Wales: Other related tables (year ending December 2018), Figure F1/Table F8. ONS - Crime in England and Wales: Bulletin tables (year ending December 2014), Table 25.

45 Ministry of Justice - Proven reoffending tables, January 2017 to March 2017 (31 January 2019), Table A1. *Data for the 2016 and 2017 cohorts uses a three-month period instead of a yearly average, and incorporates different sources, so is not directly comparable to previous years.

Conclusions

The statistics explored above paint a concerning picture, with increases in serious violence, acquisitive crime and anti-social behaviour suggesting government has lost a grip on crime. These trends are not isolated phenomena, but part of an interconnected story regarding the role of the drugs market in fuelling both the “demand” and “supply-side” of crime. On the demand side, patterns of rising drug use appear to be fuelling rises in acquisitive crime and anti-social behaviour. On the supply side, an increasingly brutal drugs market is playing its part in an epidemic of serious violence, with low fear of enforcement and a ready supply of pure and cheap cocaine facilitating the spread of drug-related violence outside of urban areas. The commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service, Cressida Dick, recently reiterated this point, stating that “undoubtedly, the drug markets are a big part of the problem”, and telling the Home Affairs Select Committee that “the vast majority of those young people [perpetrating and becoming the victims of serious violence] are engaged in drug activity one way or another.”^{47, 48}

Why it matters

Policymakers should be concerned by these trends for several key reasons:

Impact on wellbeing

The highlighted crime types can exercise a particularly deleterious effect upon personal well-being and health. In a 2012 study, Christian Dustmann and Francesco Fasani identified a “significant, and negative, impact of overall local crime rates on the mental distress of residents in urban areas”, driven by property crime and “routine” violent crime.⁴⁹ Increased fear of crime can lead to psychological consequences and “constrained behaviours”, including curtailed exercise and even criminalisation through weapon-carrying.^{50, 51, 52, 53} Recent research also indicates that this fear is contagious, meaning that generalised feelings of insecurity can be spread quickly even if the rate of crime slightly decreases.⁵⁴

Loss of control

Serious violence and acquisitive crime and anti-social behaviour fuel a narrative of the state having lost control. A pervasive sense of physical

⁴⁶ Ministry of Justice - Offending History Data tool: Sanction statistics (16 May 2019).

unsafety is likely to affect economic growth, as businesses, investors and shoppers are deterred.⁵⁵ This is concerning in a UK context, especially given that 57 per cent of respondents to a July 2018 ComRes poll agreed with the statement: “Police officers have lost control of our streets and criminals no longer have any fear of being caught and brought to justice.”⁵⁶

Cost to public services

Thirdly, rises in crime incur significant costs to society at large, including through lost output and the cost of increased personal security. They incur particularly high costs for public services (e.g. police, the courts, and the NHS), all of whom are forced to meet demand increases usually through a reallocation of existing resources that can lead to decreases in the quality of provision elsewhere, for example, through the deprioritisation of “lower-harm” offences that feed serious offending further down the line.

Statistics published by the Home Office demonstrate the impact of these costs. For example, each homicide results in a cost of £819,530 to public services, while each robbery incurs a cost of £5,450. Using calculated crime statistics for 2015/16, the Home Office estimate these costs for all crime and for selected offence types to be as follows:⁵⁷

Offence	Overall cost (public services)
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All crime	£16.5 billion
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47 Dodd, Vikram (The Guardian) (2 May 2019). Met police chief hails fall in violent crime in London

48 Home Affairs Select Committee (26 March 2019). Oral evidence: Serious Violence, HC 1036, Q. 326

49 Dustmann, C., Fasani, F. (2012). The effect of local area crime on the mental health of residents. University College London/IAE-CSIC.

50 Rader, N. (2017). Fear of crime. Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Criminology.

51 Cossman, J. S., Porter, J. R., & Rader, N. E. (2016). Examining the effects of health in explaining fear of crime: A multi-dimensional and multi-level analysis. *American Journal of Criminal Justice*, 41, 565–582. Whitley, R., & Prince, M. (2005). Fear of crime, mobility, and mental health in inner-city London, UK. *Social Science and Medicine*, 61, 1678–1688.

52 Stafford, M., Chandola, T., Marmot, M. (2007). Association between fear of crime and mental health and physical functioning. *American Journal of Public Health*, 97(11), 2076-2081.

53 Rader, N. E., & Haynes, S. H. (2014). Avoidance, protective, and weapons behaviors: An examination of three types of constrained behaviors on fear of crime. *Journal of Crime and Justice*, 37(2), 197–213.

54 Prieto Curiel, Rafael; Bishop, Steven (2017). Modelling the fear of crime. 473. *Proceedings of the Royal Society A: Mathematical, Physical and Engineering Sciences*.

55 See, for example: Detotto, Claudio; Otranto, Eduardo (August 2010). ‘Does crime affect economic growth?’, *Kyklos* 63(3), pp. 330 – 345.

Offence	Overall cost (public services)
Homicide	£470 million
Robbery	£1.1 billion
Violence with injury	£3.8 billion

Troublesome cohort of offenders

The rise in prolific offending indicates the presence of an increasingly difficult cohort for whom prison is not working. Moreover, the trends identified in this section suggest that this cohort may expand and become more problematic in the future. Home Office research shows that most prolific offenders begin their criminal careers with minor offences such as theft (shoplifting in particular), and that prolific offending is strongly associated with drug use.⁵⁸ Given the signs of an end to the decline in acquisitive crime, coupled with evidence of increased drug use (especially for acquisitive crime-related drugs such as crack cocaine), a future increase in prolific offending appears to be likely. This makes it especially important that the government intervene.

Disproportionate impact on poorer communities

Finally, crime and the fear of crime disproportionately affect the poorest communities within society. Modelling of the indices of multiple deprivation (IMD) identifies a strong correlation amongst local authorities between general deprivation and crime deprivation (comprised of indicators for violence, criminal damage, theft, and burglary).^{59, 60}

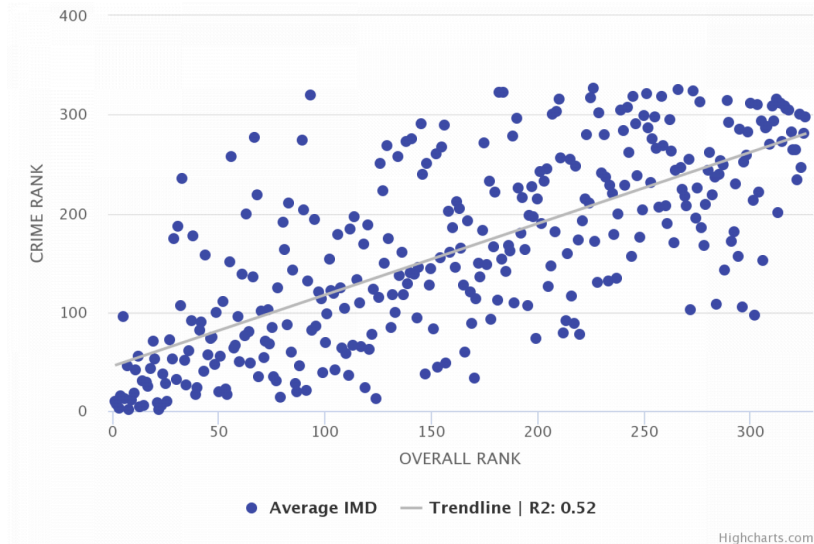
Figure 17: Rank of average rank of overall IMD with respective deprivation rank for IMD (crime)

⁵⁶ ComRes/We, the People (July 2018). Crime poll.

⁵⁷ Data on the number of crimes has been maintained at 2015/16 levels to allow for consistency across offence types, and for the purposes of demonstration. Source: Home Office (July 2018). The economic and social costs of crime - Second edition.

⁵⁸ For example, in a 2007 evaluation of the Prolific and Priority Offending (PPO) scheme, all interviewees had used drugs, and three-quarters stated that their main reason for committing a crime was to fund a drug habit. Home Office (15 February 2017). Prolific offenders - Characteristics of Prolific Offenders <http://library.college.police.uk/docs/hordsolr/rdsolr0807.pdf>.

⁵⁹ These are not entirely independent variables, as a community's score for crime deprivation affects its overall deprivation score. However, the strength of the correlation alongside several other deprivation indicators suggests that crime and other forms of deprivation are closely associated.



Fear of crime also appears to be concentrated around the most deprived areas. The most recent findings from the Crime Survey show that concern about violent crime is ten percentage points higher in the 20 per cent of most deprived areas than in the 20 per cent of least deprived areas, and is five points higher amongst households with an income of less than £10,000 than any other income group.⁶¹

⁶⁰ 1 = most deprived. Source: Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government - English indices of deprivation 2015.

⁶¹ ONS - Crime in England and Wales: Annual supplementary tables (year ending March 2018), Table S31.

Part 2 – Fixing a broken system: the loss of control and principles for reform

Part 1 identified a challenging picture for crime and disorder, with interconnected increases in serious violence, anti-social behaviour and acquisitive crime aggravated by shifts in drug markets, and the presence of a small group of increasingly troublesome offenders. The effects of these trends are wide-ranging and severe, with the impact falling disproportionately on those communities most in need.

However, while these trends reflect deep-rooted and complex problems, they were not inevitable. Part 2 will chart the ways in which the current system has failed to rise to the challenge.

Lack of leadership and grip from the centre

The most significant reform to policing structures over the past decade has been the introduction in 2012 of directly-elected police and crime commissioners (PCCs), replacing police authorities, with a remit to set police force priorities and agree the budget. While PCCs have introduced much-needed local accountability into policing, this has been accompanied by a ‘stepping back’ by the Home Office, which appears to have become a department without a clear sense of vision or purpose on crime, treating it as an almost entirely devolved matter.

To give one relatively small but significant example, research and analytical outputs that inform policy development appear to have withered, particularly on areas such as policing, drugs, and alcohol. The last research paper to be published by the Home Office’s alcohol and drug research team dates to November 2016.⁶² Meanwhile, the policing research team has published just three papers since 2012.⁶³

This absence of analysis is symptomatic of a broader lack of strategic direction within the Home Office. The closest the Department has come to a “vision” on crime is the publication of a “crime prevention strategy” (2016), which is largely a list of ongoing programmes, and a series of individual crime-specific strategies with varying levels of ambition.⁶⁴ Similarly, despite an increased level of threat, the Strategic Priorities set by the home secretary for the National Crime Agency (tasked with disrupting

⁶² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications>.

drug networks) fail to mention significant challenges including the supply and demand for drugs.⁶⁵

As a result, police forces and PCCs lack a clear conception of what the government wants to achieve on crime, and problems (e.g. stark rises in knife crime) are only identified and addressed when it is far too late. During the 1990s and 2000s, a series of landmark pieces of legislation were passed, establishing new powers to tackle anti-social behaviour, organised crime and violence, underpinned by a clear vision for criminal justice originally set out in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. In recent years, such vision and legislation has been absent. Instead of being ahead of the game, the government has been playing catch-up.

This absence has been noted by senior police leaders. In October 2018 the chair of the National Police Chiefs' Council, Sara Thornton, told the Home Affairs Select Committee that "the recent focus has been on the local", adding, "accountability is local" and "most budgets are local". But she observed that this "does beg the question about what is the role of the centre and how do the various pieces at the centre work together." Similarly, Metropolitan Police Commissioner Cressida Dick said that the police service's relationship with the Home Office "sometimes feels as if there is not much central push; it is, 'Get on with it and good luck.'"⁶⁶ In an interview in November 2018, the Commissioner went further, stating that "the Home Office has stepped back a lot?... I do see a greater leadership role for the Home Office than the one they have chosen to take recently."⁶⁷

The legislation that has been passed has failed to have its desired effect, hamstrung by the aforementioned lack of strategy and resources to drive their use. For example, the 2014 legislation relating to anti-social behaviour introduced a "community trigger", which was to be activated when complaints made about anti-social behaviour were not addressed. The power was intended to give local residents some leverage to galvanise action, but its success was dependent on an informed and empowered community and an integrated community safety response from the local authority. However, neither of these components have accompanied the introduction of the legislation. In a 2016 survey, only 3 per cent of the population was aware of the existence of the community trigger, and the

63 These dealt with stop and search, deaths in police custody, and attrition in fraud/ cybercrime respectively.

64 Alcohol Strategy 2012, Strategic Policing Requirement 2012, Serious and Organised Crime Strategy 2013, Draft Modern Slavery Bill 2013, Modern Slavery Strategy 2014, Counter Extremism Strategy 2015, Forensic Science Strategy 2016, Modern Crime Prevention Strategy 2016, Serious and Organised Crime Strategy 2018, Strategy to end violence against women and girls: 2016 to 2020.

65 National Crime Agency (16 April 2019). Annual Plan 2019-20, p. 9.

most recent available data shows that the average number of community triggers activated per year is just 2.6 per local authority.^{68,69}

This absence of vision has been compounded by the political paralysis occasioned by Brexit. Promised reforms from the current prime minister on issues from childhood obesity to long-term plans for social care have been shelved, as Civil Service resources have been diverted to preparations for different Brexit scenarios.

Legislation on crime: 1997 - 2010

The previous Labour government took an active role in driving forward crime policy from the centre, in areas cutting across both prevention and enforcement.

1998

- Passage of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, introducing civil powers covering anti-social behaviour, sex offending, and parenting, and compelling local authorities to establish local strategies and partnerships geared toward crime reduction (eventually developing into Community Safety Partnerships).
- Introduction of a ten-year drug misuse strategy, establishing a programme of treatment for drug-related crime, including Drug Treatment and Testing orders, and enforcing police focus on drug-related offending.

2003

- Passage of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003, strengthening existing anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs) and introducing new provisions on areas including dispersal zones and closure orders for premises involved in the dealing of Class A drugs.
- Launch of the Drug Intervention Programme (DIP), pioneering partnership aimed at getting offenders who misuse drugs out of crime and into treatment.

2004

- Introduction of the Prolific and Priority Offender programme, integrating DIP and related initiatives to tackle both prolific offending (through enforcement) and its causes (through prevention).

⁶⁶ House of Commons Home Affairs Committee (Oct 2018), Policing for the Future <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmhaff/515/515.pdf>.

⁶⁷ <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/11/09/scotland-yard-chief-says-politicians-have-left-police-lagging/>.

- Introduction of the Neighbourhood Policing Programme (NPP), scaling up elements of the former National Reassurance Policing Programme to target ‘signal crimes’ that increase fear within local communities, including through the provision of 25,000 PCSOs.
- Passage of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004, including legislating for the introduction of a Victims’ Code to regulate the experience of victims within the criminal justice system.

2006

- Establishment of the Serious and Organised Crime Agency (SOCA), tasked with tackling organised and transnational crime. Later subsumed into the existing National Crime Agency (NCA).

2009

- Introduction of the Integrated Offender Management approach.
- Introduction of the Policing Pledge, committing neighbourhood teams to: spend 80 per cent of their time ‘visibly working’ in target communities; respond promptly to enquiries; and minimise staff turnover.

A creaking system

One of the most visible manifestations of this lack of grip has been an inability to listen to practitioners and act accordingly. In May 2015, then Home Secretary Theresa May told the police to “stop crying wolf” over cuts, accusing officers of “scaremongering”. Repeated warnings from the front-line about a system close to collapse have been ignored. The consequences can be perceived at every stage of the “offender journey”.

Efforts to prevent crime are piecemeal and not systematic

There is substantial evidence to suggest that many of those who get caught up in crime have experienced significant adversity in childhood. A longitudinal cohort study carried out by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) in 2012 found that 24 per cent of prisoners claimed to have been in care at some point during their childhood.⁷⁰ Twenty-nine per cent had experienced abuse and 41 per cent had observed domestic violence; meanwhile, 37 per cent of surveyed prisoners reported having family members convicted of a criminal offence.

68 ASB Help (2016). *The Community Trigger: Empowerment or Bureaucratic Exercise?*

69 ASB Help (March 2019). *The Community Trigger: Where We Are Today.*

The failure to intervene early can be measured and quantified. The most recent estimates from the Early Intervention Foundation (EIF) suggest that the cost of late intervention (measured in terms of the impact on crime) is £5.9 billion.⁷¹

Government ministers have often lauded the benefits of early intervention work in improving overall life chances, with Theresa May herself arguing in August 2017 that “we know that early intervention, along with giving young people the confidence to access support, is key”.⁷² However, the government’s actions on early intervention have not matched its rhetoric.

While a number of (relatively small) grants have been allocated specifically toward early intervention, these have not been accompanied by any wider attempts at system reform, to ensure that schools, social services and local authorities have both the incentives and the means to intervene at the right point in children’s lives i.e. before they start offending. The Home Office’s Serious Violence Strategy (published in 2018) earmarked £22 million for early intervention. This equates to just £1.67 per young person under the age of 18.⁷³

At the same time, significant pressure on local authority budgets, along with an increase in the number of children in care, has resulted in a major reorientation of spending on children services. Around half of total children’s services spending now goes to the 75,420 looked-after children (whose numbers have increased by 25 per cent since 2006).^{74,75} A further 38 per cent is spent on safeguarding and family support, with the number of children on child protection plans increasing from 43,190 to 53,790 between 2012/13 and 2017/18.⁷⁶ This has led to very significant cuts to non-statutory children’s services with the total funding spent on Sure Start children’s centres and youth services (including youth offending teams) cut by 60 per cent in real terms between 2009/10 and 2017/2018⁷⁷.

As a result, children are currently unlikely to get help until they are on the cusp or (already involved in) offending, by which point it is often too late. As the Children’s Commissioner points out: “Children do not arrive in extreme need overnight and many could be prevented from getting to that point if we helped them sooner in a more effective way. We are, in effect, attempting to manage and contain crises in children’s lives after allowing it to escalate.”⁷⁸

Similarly, police-related prevention initiatives remain piecemeal and inconsistent. An investigation by Schools Week found that at least 13 police

70 Williams, Kim; Papadopoulou, Vea; Booth, Natalie (March 2012). Prisoners’ childhood and family backgrounds: Results from the Surveying Prisoner Crime Reduction (SPCR) longitudinal cohort study of prisoners.

forces do not possess any dedicated police officers in schools, with one academy using its own resources to fund the presence of an officer.⁷⁹

One of the few government initiatives focused on systematic early intervention is the Troubled Families Programme, established by David Cameron in 2012, under the leadership of Dame Louise Casey. The programme, which built on efforts by the previous Labour government to build respect within communities, was designed to improve the way that services are delivered to families with multiple problems, including crime, anti-social behaviour, school attendance, domestic violence, employment and health problems. A recent evaluation suggests the programme is achieving promising results. For example, when compared to a matched comparison group, the programme was found to have reduced the proportion of children on the programme going into care by a third and reduced the proportion of adults on the programme going to prison by a quarter and juvenile convictions by 15 per cent.⁸⁰ However, the programme remains dependent on the investment of local partners, and without strong and visible government backing, faces an uncertain future.

Government's approach to enforcement has been incoherent and half-hearted

In recent years, some politicians on the left have hesitated to call for tougher enforcement, preferring to focus on issues such as police numbers that command a broader base of political support. However, for these additional resources to be effective, they must be accompanied by genuine powers of enforcement to tackle criminality at all levels; if not, the presence of more officers will do little to deter criminality. What is more, there is strong evidence to show that the likelihood of being caught is more of a deterrent than the severity of punishment given.⁸¹

71 Early Intervention Foundation, The costs of late intervention 2016.

72 <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/08/16/100000-teenagers-year-get-mental-health-training-help-cope-exam/>.

73 ONS - UK mid-year population estimates (mid-2017), England and Wales (ages 0-18 inclusive).

74 Cost estimates from Public Spending on Children in England: 2000 to 2020, June 2018 IFS: <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Public-Spending-on-Children-in-England-CCO-JUNE-2018.pdf>.

75 Department for Education - National tables: children looked after in England including adoption 2017 to 2018 (and earlier releases), Table A1.

76 Department for Education - Characteristics of children in need: 2018, Table A6.

77 <https://www.ifs.org.uk/uploads/publications/bns/BN250.pdf>.

78 Public Spending on Children in England: 2000 to 2020, June 2018 IFS: <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Public-Spending-on-Children-in-England-CCO-JUNE-2018.pdf>.

79 <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/investigation-schools-lose-access-to-police-officers-as-cuts-bite/>.

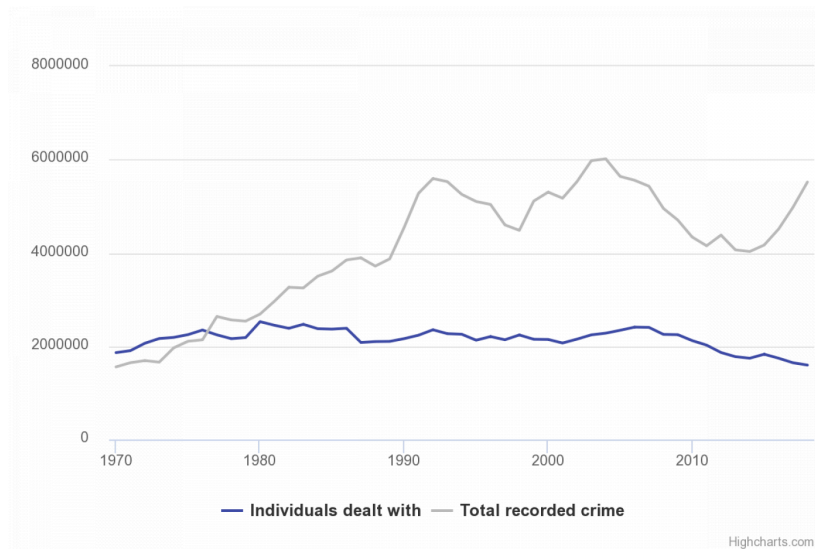
The dramatic fall in drug-enforcement activity has already been described. However, we can assess this further by looking at four examples of specific enforcement techniques: arrests/charges, stop and search, civil justice and police technology.

Detection

Over recent years there has been a consistent decline in the number of arrests made by police and the proportion of offences leading to charge, in spite of rising levels of police recorded crime. In the year ending March 2018, only 12.9 per cent of total recorded crime led to arrest, while only 9.1 per cent of offences led to charge (see Figure 1 in the Executive Summary).⁸² This has fallen from 31.6 per cent and 16.2 per cent respectively in 2011.

Moreover, the number of individuals being dealt with formally by the criminal justice system is at its lowest point since 1970 (1.59 million), while the gap between this figure and total recorded crime is at its highest point since that same year⁸³:

Figure 18: Total recorded crime (years ending March) and number of individuals being dealt with formally by the criminal justice system (years ending December), 1970 - 2018, England and Wales



80 Ministry of Housing (2019), communities and Local Government, National evaluation of the Troubled Families Programme 2015-2020: Findings, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/786889/

National_evaluation_of_the_Troubled_Families_Programme_2015_to_2020_evaluation_overview_policy_report.pdf.

81 For example: Wright, V. (2010). Deterrence in Criminal Justice. Evaluating Certainty vs. Severity of Punishment.

82 As referenced above, the arrest rate excludes arrest data for Lancashire.

83 Home Office - A summary of recorded crime data from 1898 to 2001/02, Recorded crime data at Police Force Area level (including pivot table). Ministry of

Not all of this decline is about poor performance. For example, some of it is likely to be explained by the growing complexity of crimes being dealt with by the police and the additional investigative burden incurred through the need to download and sift vast amounts of digital evidence. Nonetheless, there is considerable evidence that crime is responsive to police presence - and that the fear of detection can deter potential offenders.⁸⁴ As such, the decline in those being caught, arrested and prosecuted is a worrying development.

Stop and search

This reduction has also been witnessed with regards to stop and search. Stop and search can be an effective tool in preventing and deterring certain types of crime.⁸⁵ However, limitations on its use have proven to be one of the few areas in which the Home Office (under former Home Secretary Theresa May) have taken a proactive role. The effects have been dramatic. Arrests have fallen by 56 per cent from 108,161 to 48,014 between 2014 and 2018. Looked at another way, each year approximately 50,000 offences now go unpunished where they would otherwise have been subject to sanction.

While policymakers should avoid measures which unnecessarily “widen the net” (for example, by incentivising the police to arrest offenders for relatively minor offences) the falls that have occurred in recent years have been just as likely to be for serious offences. For example, the number of arrests for offensive weapons has decreased by 5,768.⁸⁶ This is especially concerning given the fact that all else being equal, falls in drug stops result in fewer knives being taken off the streets:^{87, 88}

Figure 19: Number of searches (under section 1 of PACE and associated legislation) and resultant arrests, and proportion (%) of searches resulting in an arrest, England and Wales

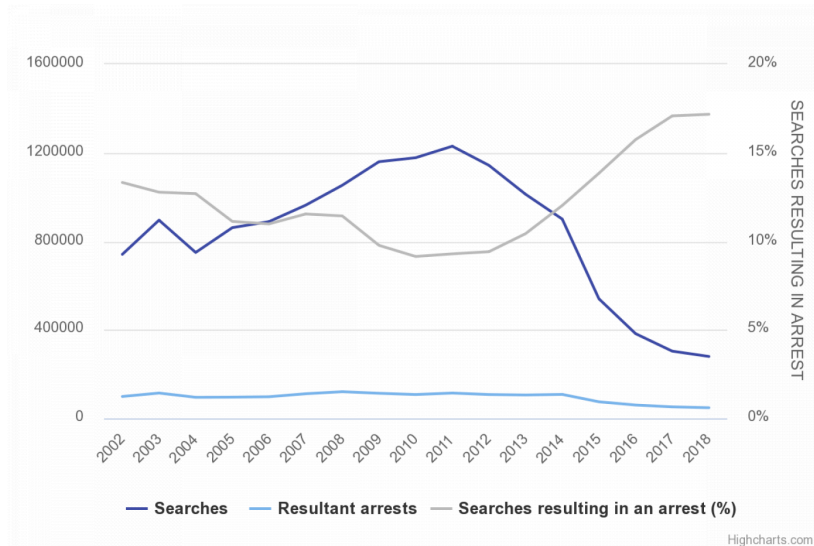
Justice - Criminal justice system statistics quarterly: December 2018 - Overview tables, Table A1.1. * Changes in the Home Office Counting Rules for recorded crime limit the comparability of figures before and after 1 April 1998. Similarly, recorded crime figures are subject to changes in recording practices.

84 https://eml.berkeley.edu/~jmccrary/chalfin_mccrary2017.pdf

85 https://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/SS_and_crime_report.pdf.

86 Home Office - Stop and search statistics data tables: police powers and procedures year ending March 2018 Numbers calculated by using the historic figures for resultant arrests (Table SS.02) and the historic proportions of arrests by reason for arrest (SS.05).

87 See, for example: Hales, Gavin/Police Foundation (20th December 2016). Stop and search and knife crime revisited: a small piece of the bigger picture. See also: <https://twitter.com/gmhales/status/1126071352354537472>.



Civil orders

The use of civil orders has long been a means of restricting illicit or undesirable patterns of behaviour, outside of the formal criminal justice system. The last Labour government introduced anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs) to tackle anti-social behaviour from 1998 onwards.⁸⁹ The Conservative government committed to a dual system of anti-social behaviour injunctions (ASBIs) and criminal behaviour orders (CBOs) in 2014, and in response to significant public pressure, the home secretary recently announced his intention to legislate for new “knife crime prevention orders”.

Used appropriately, civil powers provide relief for victims, and protection against criminal activities. However, statistics on convictions for breaches would suggest that the use of civil powers has been steadily decreasing overall.⁹⁰ This is not surprising as civil orders are often issued by local authorities, who are increasingly shrinking away from community safety-type activity. The graph below demonstrates that despite the introduction of CBOs in 2014, total use of civil powers has continued to decline (though earlier data and data on issuance of civil injunctions is not consistently published)⁹¹:

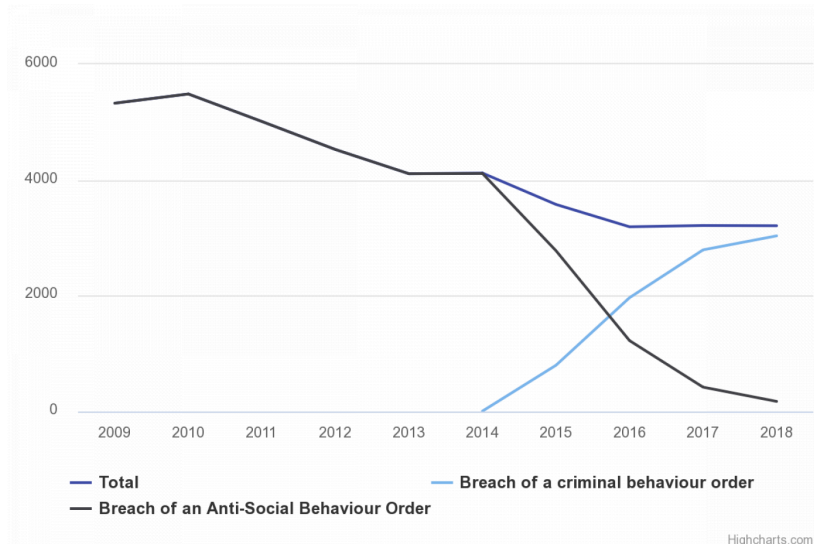
Figure 20: Number of convictions for breaches of anti-social behaviour orders and criminal behaviour orders, 2009 - 2018

88 Ibid., Table SS.02. *Data from 2009/10 onwards includes British Transport Police.

89 Through the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003, and the Policing and Crime Act 2009 respectively.

90 Through the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014

91 Ministry of Justice - Criminal justice system statistics quarterly (December 2018): Outcomes by offence data tool.



Technology

In October 2018 the Home Affairs Select Committee reported that “police forces’ investment in and adoption of new technology is, quite frankly, a complete and utter mess”.⁹² Forces are facing rapidly-evolving threats from criminals who exploit new technology in advanced and innovative ways, yet their own technological solutions are not always up to the task. There are enormous opportunities for policing, including greater use of artificial intelligence and the exploitation of data, but the service is often failing to take advantage of them.

This is not only about a lack of investment. There has been a systematic lack of coordination and leadership around the use of technology within policing over many years. For example, many police forces still struggle to get crucial real-time information from each other, which is a serious impediment to effective investigations. Despite repeated commitments from government, police databases and communications systems are not unified. While fully integrated systems risk large-scale IT failure, an alternative way forward could adopt common standards for data entry and publish application programming interfaces (APIs), providing police forces with real-time updates of other systems without the need to unify them into one system.

This has been compounded by the government’s failure to kick-start a public discussion about the merits (and risks) of allowing the police to deploy technologies such as face-recognition and predictive policing. In fact, the police have largely been left to try and have that debate on their own. Meanwhile, limits on police capability have meant that existing enforcement-based technology has not been utilised to its maximum capacity; for example, while forces possess vast quantities of data, they lack

the sophisticated data-mining tools and infrastructure needed to analyse it.⁹³

The architecture for gripping prolific and drug-related offending has been stripped away

The arrangements pioneered by previous governments in an effort to divert prolific offenders away from crime (such as the Prolific and Priority Offender scheme) were abandoned by the Conservative-led coalition government.⁹⁴ As highlighted above, this has been accompanied by a significant upwards turn in the number of previous convictions per offender.

Diversion and treatment schemes for drug-related offending have been similarly hollowed out. In particular, having wound down and removed central funding for interventions specifically addressing the overlap between drugs and offending, central government has failed to set a new direction or examples of best practice, even in the face of changing patterns of drug misuse.

As part of its ten-year strategy to tackle drugs misuse, the previous Labour government introduced an initiative specifically focused on the intersection between drugs and crime. Implemented in 2003, the Drugs Intervention Programme (DIP) aimed to get adult drug-misusing offenders who misuse heroin and cocaine/crack cocaine out of crime and into treatment.⁹⁵ This was delivered locally through integrated partnership teams (Criminal Justice Integrated Teams) with a case-management approach, offering treatment from arrest through to sentencing and resettlement into the community, and functioned closely alongside other initiatives such as the Prolific and Priority Offender scheme. Research from the University of Liverpool indicates that DIP programmes “reduce crime, improve quality of life and reduce subsequent drug use”, resulting in an average net saving of £668 to broader society (through costs including crime response and reduced emotional/physical impacts on victims).⁹⁶

Home Office funding for DIP programmes ceased in 2013, with responsibility for drug-related provision devolved to local areas. This has led to variation in the level of provision and in the quality of service. For example, a RAND evaluation of equivalent liaison and diversion schemes for mental health also funded locally found that local control was “resulting in variable coverage and content of services, and potential missed opportunities for identifying needs and improving mental health and other outcomes”.⁹⁷

92 House of Commons Home Affairs Committee (Oct 2018), Policing for the Future <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmhaff/515/515.pdf>.

The government's 2017 Drugs Strategy failed to provide a meaningful alternative to the previous DIP model. Instead, the commitments made on treatment were broad; the strategy promised to "encourage wider use of drug testing on arrest", and to "build on and expand" existing signposting to relevant services from within the criminal justice system. Similarly, no new commitments were made on 'problem-solving courts' (involving judges overseeing treatment progress through court reviews), or on reinstating central direction for the drug-offending aspect of Integrated Offender Management schemes (IOM), themselves also devolved to local areas. The damage this has done to drug-related offending is already clear. Furthermore, a recent government inquiry highlighted the need to develop the same kind of intervention measures abandoned by the current government some years earlier:

This inquiry has highlighted the need to explore more effective methods of getting crack users into treatment and to provide a more attractive treatment offer which is tailored to their specific needs.

It has also identified the need for more effective links from the criminal justice system into treatment services for these individuals, for example through greater availability of arrest referral schemes and improved monitoring of drug rehabilitation requirements.⁹⁸

Victims' needs are not addressed

Codified support for the victims of crime was first placed on a statutory footing in 2004 (through the Victim's Code), and subsequently evolved into the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime.⁹⁹ This code explains the service that victims ought to receive from involved agencies at all stages in the criminal justice process. For example, clause 1.5 of chapter 2 states that adult victims are entitled to be informed within five working days of a suspect being arrested, interviewed under caution, released without charge, or released on bail, with full reasoning given by police. Similarly, clause 1.13 provides victims the opportunity to make a Personal Statement, whilst clause 1.1 allows for an assessment of victim need, with relevant information offered on support services.

93 See, for example: Babuta, Alexander (RUSI) (September 2017). *Big Data and Policing: An Assessment of Law Enforcement Requirements, Expectations and Priorities*, p. 1.

94 See, for example: <http://library.college.police.uk/docs/APPref/Integrated-Offender-Management-Key-Principles-2010.pdf>.

95 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/118069/DIP-Operational-Handbook.pdf

96 Collins et al (2016). 'Assessing the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of drug intervention programmes: UK case study', *Journal of Addictive Diseases* 36.1, pp. 5 - 13

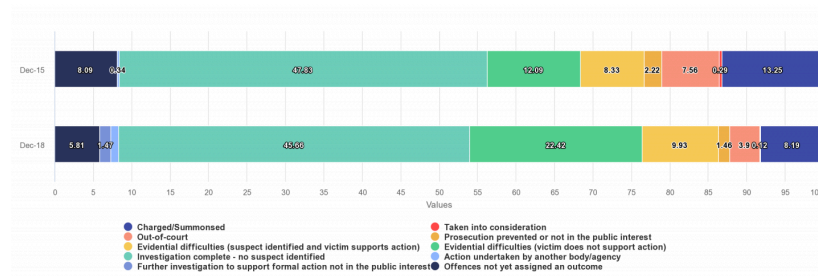
97 <https://www.rand.org/randeurope/research/projects/offender-liaison-diversion-trial-schemes.html>

However, although the Code is statutory, its provisions are not legally enforceable and no single agency is responsible for monitoring compliance. In 2015, research from Victim Support found that six out of ten victims nationally were not receiving their due entitlements, while only one in six were given the opportunity to make a Victim Personal Statement in 2018. A recent review by the independent victims' commissioner for London, Claire Waxman, found that:

...the Victims' Code of Practice (VCOP) is failing to deliver the improvements and sense of change required because of fundamental, systemic problems that need fundamental, systemic change to resolve. Victim needs are not being met by it and agencies are struggling to deliver it. Reform is urgently needed.¹⁰⁰

The impact of poor provision for victims is clear from statistics on crime outcomes. While other factors may play a role, the proportion of offences for which investigations yield no charge/disposal due to evidential difficulties related to victims not supporting action has almost doubled since 2015. This is critically important, as it shows that the failure to engage victims is harming conviction and prosecution rates¹⁰¹:

Figure 21: Proportion (%) of recorded offences by outcomes assigned, years ending December 2015/December 2018, England and Wales^{101*}



The Victims Strategy 2018 promised a strengthening of the provisions within the Code, with an increased role for PCCs in monitoring compliance and a consultation promised for early 2019 on enshrining rights in legislation through a Victims Law.¹⁰² However, little progress has been made since publication, with the promised consultation yet to launch.

The broader criminal justice system is at crisis point

This paper is focused on crime and policing, and does not attempt an overview of the entire criminal justice system. However, the story of a loss of central government control has been reflected across courts, probations

98 Home Office/Public Health England (25 March 2019), Increase in crack cocaine use inquiry: summary of findings

99 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/470212/code-of-practice-for-victims-of-crime.PDF

and prisons, where profound problems are likely to be further exacerbated by the increases in serious violence. For example, courts are taking longer to resolve criminal cases, with the average number of days between offence and completion in the Crown Court having risen by 42 per cent between 2011 and 2018.¹⁰³ Her Majesty's Inspector of Prisons has referred to "some of the most disturbing prison conditions we have ever seen", with increases of 114 per cent in assaults and 120 per cent in self-harm incidents between 2008 and 2018.^{104, 105} Similarly, the number of offenders recalled for breach of licence in the three months ending December 2018 stood at 6,413, a 43 per cent increase on the comparable period in 2013.¹⁰⁶

The "Transforming Rehabilitation" reforms introduced by former Justice Secretary Chris Grayling, which broke up the probation service, are widely considered to have failed, and a decision was taken by the current justice secretary to terminate the private contracts with Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) 14 months early and to re-nationalise probation. A report by the National Audit Office found that the reforms did not yield the expected progress or innovation; led to significant increases in the number of people being recalled to prison; and created ineffective services to support transition from prison back into the community.

Lack of police funding

Despite increases in costly types of offences in recent years, officer numbers have fallen dramatically. In the year ending September 2010, there were 145,015 full-time equivalent police officers across all forces; by the year ending September 2018 this number had dropped to 122,395, a fall of 16 per cent. Amongst police community support officers (PCSOs) the decrease is even more stark, with a fall of 40 per cent in numbers nationally.¹⁰⁷ This has left over half of all police forces with fewer than two officers per 1,000 population¹⁰⁸.

Figure 22: Number of police officers per 1,000 population by police force area, at 30 September 2018¹⁰⁸

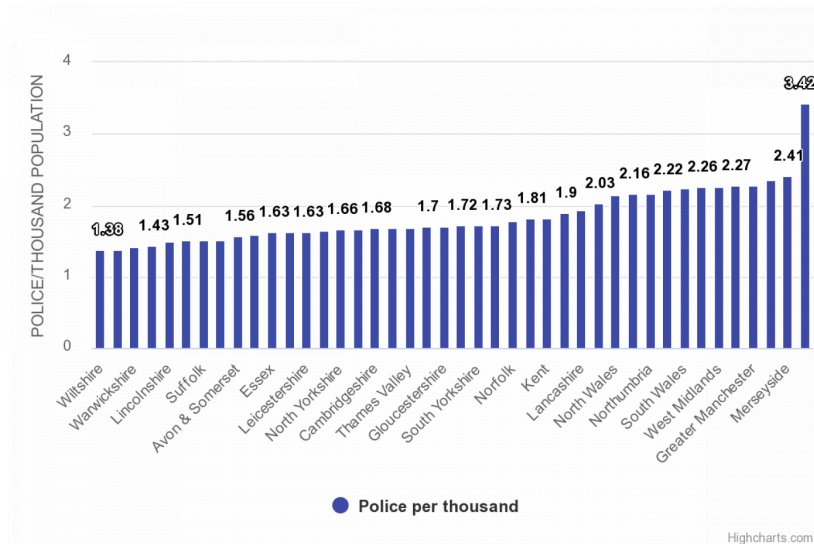
100 Waxman, Claire (March 2019). Review of Compliance with the Victims' Code of Practice (VCOP): Findings, recommendations and next steps

101 Home Office - Crime outcomes in England and Wales, year to December 2015/December 2018: data tables, Table 2.2/2.1. *Figures may not total 100 per cent due to rounding.

102 HM Government (September 2018). Victims Strategy.

103 Ministry of Justice - Criminal courts statistics bulletin: January to March 2019 (main tables), Table T4.

104 https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2018/07/6.5053_HMI-Prisons_AR-2017-18_revised_web.pdf.



According to leaked Home Office research, cuts to police funding “may have encouraged” violent offenders, as the fear of enforcement diminished. This is reflected in charge rates; for example, while 76,154 robbery offences were recorded in 2017-18, only 14,976 arrests were made.¹⁰⁹ This reflects an arrest rate of 19.7 per cent, below half the comparative rate for 2009-10 (43.3 per cent).¹¹⁰

Furthermore, police funding per head of population has been decreasing while recorded crime in general, and serious violence in particular, is on the rise. Her Majesty’s Inspectorate has repeatedly warned that this has caused a reallocation of resources away from preventative policing and towards a focus on the more reactive elements of policing¹¹¹:

Figure 23: Central government revenue funding in real terms (2018/19 prices) per head (£) and total police recorded crime (years ending December 2010 - 2018)¹¹¹

105 Ministry of Justice - Safety in custody summary tables to December 2018, Table 1.

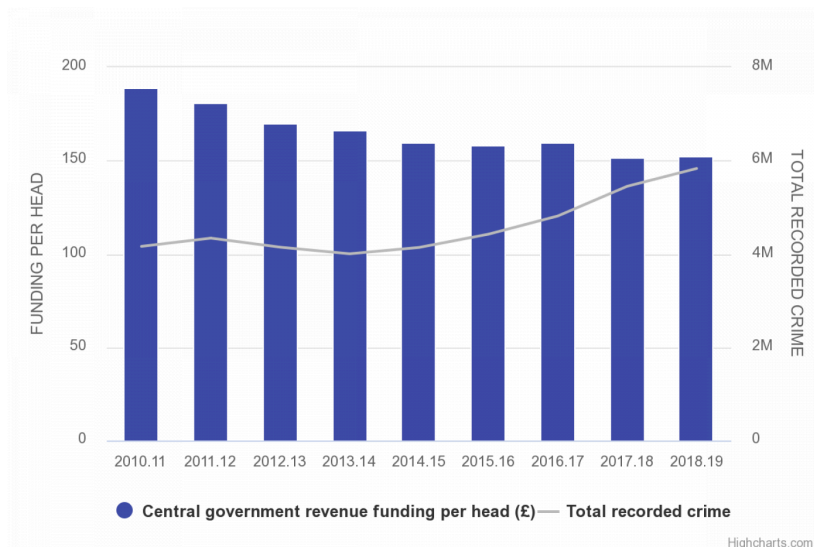
106 In particular, probation has suffered from the botched implementation of the Transforming Rehabilitation programme, criticised by the National Audit Office and others. See: <https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Transforming-Rehabilitation-Progress-review.pdf>.

107 In 2010 there were 16,376 PCSOs across all forces and 4,387 in the Metropolitan Police; by 2018, this had fallen to 9,791 and 1,263 respectively.

108 Home Office - Police workforce, England and Wales, 30 September 2018: data tables (Table 1), ONS - Crime in England and Wales: Police Force Area data tables (year ending December 2018) (population estimates). *Excluding City of London.

109 Excluding data for Lancashire, due to quality issues. Source: Home Office - Police powers and procedures, England and Wales (year ending 31 March 2018)

110 Home Office - Police powers and procedures: Arrests open data tables, England and Wales (year ending 31 March 2018); ONS - Recorded crime at Police Force Area level



Mental health demands on policing

There is compelling evidence that mental health-related incidents are having a significant impact on police demand. Overall 3.5 per cent of all incidents handled through command and control rooms have a mental health dimension.¹¹²

The volume and complexity of acute or urgent cases is increasing and there are gaps in local health arrangements, particularly in the provision of accessible support for those whose mental health is significantly deteriorating, and in respect of acute 24-hour mental health emergency response, including access to beds. Underinvestment in mental health services means that NHS capacity issues are impacting on the police and hindering efforts to shift from a police to a health-based response. Such cases are placing a disproportionate weight on police resources.

The number of people in contact with NHS secondary mental health, autism and learning disability services in the UK has almost doubled since 2010/11 and stood at 2.5 million in 2017/18.¹¹³ The proportion of these admitted to hospital halved between 2010/11 and 2016/17, which means that more were being treated in the community.¹¹⁴

Police forces are, in the words of Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS), left to “pick up the

111 National Audit Office (NAO) - Financial sustainability of police forces in England and Wales 2018 (Figure 1)*, ONS - Mid-year population estimates**, ONS - Recorded crime data at Police Force Area level *NAO analysis of Home Office figures. Central government revenue funding includes transformation funding but excludes the local council tax support grant and money raised by PCCs through the council tax precept. Changes to funding data in 2015/16 also limit direct comparison before that year. **Population figures for 2010/11 - 2017/18 taken from the mid-year estimates for the earlier of the two respective years. Estimates for 2018 have not yet been published, so 2017 estimates have been re-used in their place.

pieces” for a crumbling system.¹¹⁵ In a November 2018 inspection, HMICFRS found that police investment in mental health training is inconsistent, and that forces lack a clear understanding of the demand issues arising from mental health issues. For example, the top five individual repeat callers to the Metropolitan Police Service in 2017 called a combined total of 8,655 times, costing the service £70,000 just to answer the phones.¹¹⁶

As part of his pitch for the Conservative leadership, Home Secretary Sajid Javid pledged to prioritise £1 billion towards the cost of an additional 20,000 police officers by 2023 - almost the exact number that had been cut as a result of George Osborne’s deficit reduction programme between 2010 and 2015. It is impossible to read Javid’s intervention as anything other than an implicit acknowledgement that the cuts in policing budgets have contributed to an upsurge in crime.

Principles of reform

Reform of the system should be underpinned by four clear principles:

1. National leadership, to ensure greater coordination and focus from the centre of government and that police funding keeps pace with demand;
2. Getting serious about prevention and early intervention, in particular, by addressing problems in the small numbers of individuals and families responsible for a large share of crime;
3. Effective enforcement, by bearing down on the small proportion of offenders who commit the majority of crime;
4. Embedding multi-agency partnership working at the local level, with local Mayors and PCCs empowered to pool budgets and drive service integration.

National leadership

As the lead department for policing, the Home Office must step up to the plate and play a much stronger role in crime and policing policy. While the creation of PCCs has strengthened local accountability and enabled greater innovation locally, many of the challenges outlined in this report - whether it be the lack of coordination on drugs policy between forces, or around the lack of strategic direction on serious violence - national

112 Crest Advisory (November 2018). Rethinking Police Demand, p. 29

113 NHS Digital - Mental Health Bulletin: 2017-18 Reference Tables, Table 1.1

114 Police Foundation. Unpublished document

leadership is required. When it comes to influencing or partnering with global internet companies, the NHS or the education system, individual police forces cannot match the power and influence of a central government department.

In recent years, the Home Office has been institutionally nervous about taking a more proactive role on policy, for fear of being accused of excessive central interference. However, there are signs that Ministers have recognised the problem and are beginning to shift departmental policy. For example, when asked about the role of the Home Office, including its ability to instruct forces to sign up to national programmes, the policing minister responded:

“That has not been our model, but we are moving into a different phase now where the Home Office is considering our role in relation to the system. As many in the police system, my view is that the Home Office needs to take a stronger view on a number of things.”

Such a shift - assuming it is carried through - is to be welcomed, rather than feared. Sitting back and leaving it to individual police forces is irresponsible.

Getting serious about prevention and early intervention

A core principle should be to shift the balance of public spending away from costly reaction towards early intervention and prevention. There are some challenges around delivering this in practice. For example, investment in early intervention rarely produces “cashable savings” in the short-term, and those agencies bearing the initial costs are rarely the same agencies realising the benefits later on, thus reducing the incentive to prioritise front-end spending.¹¹⁷

However, these barriers, while significant, are not insurmountable. With greater central coordination, it would be possible to ring-fence departmental budgets for front-end work, and drive departments to demonstrate how their spending plans will assist long-term crime prevention efforts. Equally important, given what we know about the impact on victims of serious violence, is a more integrated support system for victims that addresses the psychological, emotional and physical harms and bespoke services for those caught in up cycles of violence, as both offender and victim.

Moreover, rather than seeing “prevention” and “enforcement” as separate approaches, they should be viewed as two sides of the same coin.

115 HMICFRS (November 2018). Policing and Mental Health: Picking Up the Pieces

116 Ibid., p. 9

Enforcement should be used as a trigger for intervention, for example, with restored neighbourhood policing involved in ensuring that arrests of gang leaders are followed through with automatic wraparound support for the siblings and family members of those in the immediate vicinity.

Effective enforcement

The government's incoherence on enforcement (from changes around stop and search to weakening of anti-social behaviour orders) stems in part from a fundamental failure to listen to those on the frontline about the tools they need to tackle problems in their communities. The current home secretary appears to be improving in this regard, unpicking many of the positions of his predecessor, encouraging greater use of stop and search, and introducing new tools such as knife crime prevention orders to restrict the movements and activities of known knife-carriers.

A more coherent approach to enforcement would entail an expansion of both police and civil powers, as well as reforms to unlock the potential for greater use of police technology.

Case Study: Technology and enforcement

The technological and data revolutions offer tremendous opportunities to police forces in their effort to prevent crime and enforce the law. However, a bold commitment is required on the part of the Home Office in order to drive technological solutions across all forces, and to ensure existing technology is exploited to its maximum capacity.¹¹⁸ Below we explore two areas particularly ripe for greater use of technology.

“Predictive policing” encompasses machine-learning algorithms that synthesise existing data to predict future crime: geospatial mapping and individual mapping. The former uses street-level crime data to map crime “hotspots” and as more data is fed into the model, the model becomes better at predicting future offending. Police forces can then use the evolving geographical maps to deploy officers to streets and places most at risk.

Individual mapping relies on similar feedback loops, but instead assesses risk of offending for a cohort of individuals. Durham Constabulary have developed a Harm Assessment Risk Tool (HART) to guide custody decisions through tracking the risk of reoffending, using forecasting to assess the likelihood of committing violence within the next two years.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts, *Early Action: landscape review* (Second Report of Session 2013-14)

While predictive models (both geospatial and individual) are not currently embedded in policing practices within the UK, they have led to substantial reductions in crime within the US.¹²⁰ Furthermore, it is expected that the use of such mapping within direct policing will expand: Norfolk Constabulary are currently trialling an algorithm designed to test the “solvability” of burglary cases, and “individual mapping” could be used to identify those at risk of going missing, or of becoming victims of crime.^{121, 122} It is also hoped that, in the context of rising demand and limited budgets, predictive models will help to optimise where resources are focused.

“Automated facial recognition surveillance” is already deployed by certain forces; for example, South Wales Police deployed the technology to identify offenders at an arms fair in 2017.¹²³ Though existing systems have so far had limited success rates, more effective versions of the technology could improve the capability of the police to locate offenders who go to substantial lengths to conceal their identity.

The widespread use of such surveillance by police forces, and of police technology more generally, has been subject to criticism and/or concern from a variety of quarters, including from civil liberties groups.¹²⁴ This opposition most often relates to the potential for new technologies to further entrench disproportionate police action against minority groups through the use of predictive models built from biased datasets, or to concerns over privacy relating to inaccuracy, intrusive state use, and the ownership and sharing of data. Likewise, concerns have been raised about the risk that predictive models could be gamed by forces attempting to demonstrate effectiveness, or the safety of a specific area.¹²⁵

While these criticisms should not derail police innovation, they could best be dealt with by coupling transformational investment with a progressive framework for police technology that secures public consent. To secure public consent, a progressive approach would, at minimum, need to balance the opportunities for crime prevention and prosecution against risks to privacy, equality, fairness, accountability and transparency.

A framework for assessing the ethical implications of facial recognition trials has already been mooted by the London Policing

118 The Home Affairs Select Committee have recognised this in a recent inquiry, stating that “stronger national leadership from the Home Office on technology is essential”: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmhaff/515/515.pdf>.

119 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-39857645>.

Ethics Panel, who found 83 per cent support amongst Londoners for using the technology to identify serious offenders.¹²⁶

Multi-agency working at the local level

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998, passed over 20 years ago, explicitly set out to recognise the role of local public services in community safety, rather than relying solely on the police. Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (now known as Community Safety Partnerships) - comprising health, local councils, police and probation - were the most visible manifestation of that approach, underpinned by a statutory duty to cooperate. In recent years, those partnerships have been allowed to wither and in many parts of the country have become inactive. They need to be reinvigorated.

This has been partially recognised by current Home Secretary Sajid Javid, who in April 2019 announced his intention to consult on the creation of a new “duty to cooperate”, albeit focused solely around violence and additional funding for a “public health approach”. However, the creation of new legal duties - overlaid onto existing local governance arrangements - will not itself be sufficient to achieve the kind of step-change required in multi-agency working.

To achieve sustainable change, reforms at the national level need to be accompanied by a commitment to empower city mayors and PCCs with the tools they need to drive service integration locally. For example, while many of the policy levers for reducing reoffending lie at the local level – such as housing and homelessness support, substance misuse and mental health provision - the current system of offender management is highly centralised and fragmented. Local agencies lack the incentive to invest in services to tackle reoffending, because they do not financially benefit from it, while services are split across a range of structures with overlapping geographical jurisdictions. Now that the government has announced its intention to reverse Chris Grayling’s probation reforms, there is an opportunity to give local areas both the means and incentive to pool budgets and join up services.

120 For example, see: <https://www.predpol.com/results/>.

121 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-norfolk-45388717>.

122 Babuta, Alexander (September 2017). *Big Data and Policing: An Assessment of Law Enforcement Requirements, Expectations and Priorities*, p. 39.

123 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-44928792>.

124 See, for example: Couchman, Hannah (Liberty) (January 2019). *Policing by Machine: Predictive Policing and the Threat to Our Rights*.

125 <https://www.fastcompany.com/90249924/reply-all-podcast-nypd-compstat>.

126 <https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/future-framework-for-facial-recognition-software>.

Similarly, government should be seeking to support and scale up multi-agency schemes to target the small number of offenders who drive a large proportion of total crime. Some forces have proactively adopted models of neighbourhood policing that involve co-locating the police with other public services. In Greater Manchester, for example, Integrated Neighbourhood Teams comprise PCSOs and/or neighbourhood officers working in the same office as a number of other practitioners, such as housing officers and mental health professionals, who work together on multi-agency interventions for individuals who repeatedly come into contact with a range of public services.

Part 3 – Policy recommendations

Below we identify a series of policies that would begin to restore order to our communities and reduce crime. Implementing them would certainly incur an upfront cost to the Exchequer, though we believe that the net effect would improve outcomes (in the form of lower crime) and thus deliver savings over the long term.

In truth though, solving the current crisis is as much about the level of leadership, focus and grip as it is about resources. That is not measured in individual policies, but in a clear and visible determination to use every lever at government's disposal to tackle the problem over a sustained period.

National leadership

The crime and disorder challenges facing the country require the Home Office to play a more proactive role in shaping and driving crime and policing policy.

The Home Office should publish a Crime and Policing Five Year Forward Plan, which sets out how policing will evolve to meet new challenges, such as shifts in drugs markets and the rise in serious violence. Such a plan would set the strategic framework and vision in which individual police forces operate, the steps (and hard choices) needed to get us there, and the actions required of others.

The plan should be coordinated and driven forward by a new National Crime Prevention Board - reporting directly to the prime minister - involving leaders from the police, local government, probation and health services. The Board should be specifically tasked with influencing other parts of government - the NHS or schools - as well as the private sector and global internet companies.

This should be underpinned by a long-term funding settlement for the police, which ensures that the number of police officers and staff keeps pace with demand. The current home secretary has said the police require an additional 20,000 police officers by 2022 at a cost of £1 billion. This needs to be the starting point for any settlement.

The Home Office should create a new Police Performance and Standards Unit to support local forces in driving improvements. Rather than a crude command and control-type body, this Unit should be dedicated to working with local forces in identifying and unblocking barriers to delivery, becoming a repository of good practice, and enabling national benchmarking, for example, around better use of technology.

Early Intervention and Prevention

Government should make early intervention a central objective for the next Spending Review - with an explicit commitment to steadily increase the proportion of total expenditure devoted to early intervention. This should be informed by a comprehensive review of how much local authorities currently spend on early intervention services.

The government should establish a new Early Intervention Taskforce - headed by a cabinet minister - to coordinate and drive system change across government, through:

- More systematic identification of children most at risk of offending, such as those excluded from school or persistently truanting and those who have been victims of crime;
- A particular focus on children experiencing domestic abuse in their family;
- Whole-family support for children at risk of violence including siblings of those already caught up in violence;
- Recognising the threats from outside families that can draw children into criminal and other risky behaviour through exploitation.

The Home Office and Department of Health should jointly pilot a new and expanded Drug Intervention Programme to address the underlying causes of those whose criminality is driven by drug misuse. Such a programme needs to be comprehensive, addressing emerging drug trends and changes to drug markets and should ensure:

- Community safety partnerships are proactive in minimising the harm caused by street-level drug dealing;
- Enforcement is a trigger for intervention, with offenders routinely triaged and diverted into treatment (from arrest through to sentence);
- Investment in front-line drug workers with expertise in, and responsive to, the increased range and potency of new/emerging drugs.

Drug legalisation: a panacea?

Some commentators and campaigners have advocated for decriminalisation of drugs possession, along the lines of the 2001 policy pioneered by Portugal.¹²⁷ This would mean that possession of drugs of all class types (including cocaine and heroin) for personal use would no longer be deemed a criminal offence, with the respective “administrative violation” generally leading to voluntary participation in diversion services.

There are three main arguments for legalising possession:

1. The desire to restrict the size of the illicit market;
2. Limiting the incarceration of vulnerable drug users;
3. To regulate drug use in a safer way.

These arguments deserve to be considered seriously and in an evidenced-based way, rather than dismissed out of hand. However, there are reasons to be sceptical that such an approach would offer a panacea to drug-related harms. For example, decriminalising possession would not necessarily eradicate the illicit market. Despite the legal status of tobacco, the selling of fake cigarettes is estimated to cost the UK taxpayer £2 billion a year in lost revenue.¹²⁸ Similarly, there is little evidence that decriminalisation would make a significant dent in our prison population. Analysis of MoJ sentencing data shows that out of all those committed to immediate custody in 2018, only 1.17 per cent had been found guilty of drug possession offences.¹²⁹

Perhaps more importantly, decriminalisation of the possession of all drugs would do little to address the supply-side situation relating to drugs such as crack cocaine and heroin, which are driving serious violence and the exploitation of vulnerable children. In this context, legalisation of the possession of such drugs can be seen as something of a distraction, aside from the merits of any potential legalisation of cannabis.

Notably, despite the 2001 reform, Portugal has adopted a tough approach on disruption of the supply-side of the drugs market, with the total number of drug seizures increasing significantly since 2007.¹³⁰

The MoJ should develop a new programme of support for victims of violence which addresses psychological, emotional and physical harm. This programme should form a core part of the MoJ contribution to a new Early Intervention Taskforce (see above) to ensure that this work is linked to protecting those victims who are at risk of being drawn into crime. This programme should also consider the development of alternative responses to group violence, such as services to de-escalate violence working closely with the police and voluntary sector.

Enforcement

The Home Office should support the police to reprioritise enforcement activity around the goal of disrupting the supply of harmful drugs into the UK, including through:

¹²⁷ For example, see: Jones, Owen (The Guardian) (10 May 2019). It's time for Labour to experiment with new drugs policies

- Re-focusing the Strategic Priorities of the National Crime Agency (set by the home secretary) so that they explicitly include the disruption of harmful drugs markets, such as heroin and crack cocaine;
- Ensuring there is a targeted drugs unit within every force in England and Wales, to strengthen local intelligence around shifting drugs markets;
- Encouraging the police to work with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) to improve investigation and prosecution of drug dealers;
- Making better use of existing civil orders and injunctions to control drug-related anti-social behaviour, and consider introducing further injunctions to limit county lines activity (including through restrictions on travel).

Government should use the recently announced reforms to probation as an opportunity to review and strengthen current approaches to managing prolific offenders. Specifically, this should look to learn from the approach pioneered in Greater Manchester, where “integrated neighbourhood teams” (comprising police, housing, mental health, probation officers) work together on multi-agency interventions for individuals who drive much of the demand across local public services.

The Home Office should extend the range of tools and powers available to tackle new and emerging threats, such as the criminal exploitation of young people, and to restrict the movements of those involved in criminal activity. This should include a national consultation on:

- Extending police and local authority enforcement powers, focused on stop and search and civil injunctions, e.g. by limiting travel of those involved in moving/ dealing drugs across multiple locations;
- Using civil orders as a trigger for wraparound support - protecting victims of criminal exploitation;
- Building trust in enforcement powers (such as stop and search) through compulsory community review panels, evaluated to ensure faithful community representation and meaningful feedback channels to officers.

Government should publish a national strategy on police technology, providing the investment, guidance, and legislative clarity needed to

128 Local Government Association (26 January 2019). Illegal tobacco trade harming efforts to cut smoking, councils warn.

129 Ministry of Justice - Court outcomes by Police Force Area data tool (December 2018).

130 European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction. Portugal Drug Report 2018.

maximise crime prevention opportunities while securing public consent. This should provide:

- Targeted transformation funding for police forces and PCCs to ensure the police are in a position to maximise new technologies;
- A nationally-coordinated approach to procurement of technology;
- Robust governance and oversight to facilitate public understanding and consent for the use of new police technologies, such as predictive policing.

Multi-agency working embedded locally

The new National Crime Prevention Board should be tasked with rebuilding capability and capacity to drive action locally and empowering mayors and PCCs to drive service integration. This should include:

- Reinvigorating Community Safety Partnerships - supporting police forces and local authorities on taking a place-based approach to tackling crime and disorder in their communities;
- Empowering city mayors and PCCs to pool budgets and drive service integration locally. In particular, there is an opportunity to grant city mayors (in London, Greater Manchester, Merseyside and the West Midlands) the ability to shape and commission probation services in their region, enabling them to coordinate probation with other key services in the local area and invest in early intervention.

Conclusion

Tackling crime in all its forms and keeping people safe is a fundamental role of government. From the ‘high-harm’ offences that leave victims, families and loved ones bereaved, to the anti-social behaviour that disrupt communities and leave residents feeling unsafe, the effects of criminality are as severe in damage as they are extensive in scope. The psychological effects are particularly acute. Adverse childhood experiences from episodes of trauma (including domestic abuse) are strong predictors of future offending. Meanwhile, public anxiety at rising crime constrains behaviour, and damages trust.

In recent years communities have been let down by inattention at the highest levels of a government that has lost direction on crime. Positive moves towards devolution have offered the Home Office a cover with which to absent themselves on crime, settling for a piecemeal approach to policy and research. This has been accompanied by a reactive approach to emerging trends that has allowed serious problems from drugs to prolific offending to become embedded. Laudable language on tackling crime and its causes only helps when it translates into genuine change. Failure to provide that change leaves the victims of crime and practitioners on the ground out in the cold.

There is another way forward. Progressives should champion a long-term plan on crime, underpinned by common principles and a clear understanding of what works to tackle offending in all of its connected forms. By championing community safety, low-level criminality can be tackled at source, with proactive intelligence fed upstream to assist enforcement against complex, “high-harm” crimes. By laying out a progressive governance framework for police technology coupled with genuine investment, government can bring enforcement into the 21st century, supported through reasonable expansion of effective enforcement powers to tackle knife possession and drugs. By supporting Early Intervention and victim services, coupled with a commitment to modern drug and offending diversion programmes informed by cutting-edge analysis, the routes to criminality could be cut off at source. All could be underwritten by a long-term funding settlement, insured against unreasonable demands for immediate results.

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