

<b>Institution: University of Surrey</b>
<b>Unit of Assessment: UOA 23 Sociology</b>
<b>Title of case study: Improving the quality of life for citizens in the UK through shaping the organization and practice of policing</b>
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b> (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>A University of Surrey-led programme of research on ‘Signal Crimes’, ‘Reassurance’ and ‘Neighbourhood Policing’ has had the impact of improving the quality of life for citizens in the UK.</p> <p>This research produced transferable outputs that have helped to shape the philosophy, organisation and practice of policing at the national and local level.</p> <p>The research was of foundational importance for the development of the National Reassurance Policing Programme, and later the Neighbourhood Policing Programme now used by all police forces.</p> <p>These outputs have had a positive impact on self-reported victimisation, public confidence in policing and in public perceptions of crime at the local level.</p>
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b> (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>The research focus was on the intersections of what Hunter (1985) termed the parochial and public orders of social life. The former deriving from the collective actions of neighbours that are productive of social order, the latter, the interventions of formal agents of social control. We positioned policing as one amongst several modes of social control that are routinely involved in framing citizen experiences of public spaces, whilst at the same time tracing the contours of the limits to what policing can and should be enacted to achieve. We linked Goffman’s (1972) argument that social order in urban environments is a fragile and contingent veneer, with his view that impressions are all that we have in organising our conduct, to argue, perhaps counter-intuitively, that agencies involved in the provision of neighbourhood security must attend to surface appearances, rather than the deep-rooted causes of problems.</p> <p><b><i>Reassurance policing and neighbourhood policing (RP/NP)</i></b></p> <p>In the early 2000s some police services in England and Wales became concerned that citizens perceived that crime was rising in their local areas despite sustained falls in the actual crime rate. Often referred to as the ‘reassurance gap,’ police services began to explore styles of policing to fill that gap, often through tackling crime, anti-social behaviour and quality of life issues of particular concern to local communities. Within this context, Nigel Fielding, Jane Fielding and Martin Innes were initially asked by the Chief Constable of Surrey Police, Denis O’Connor (later HM Chief Inspector of Police) to evaluate the force’s programme of Reassurance Policing. Subsequently, the Metropolitan Police Service asked the team to include MPS areas in the research. Trials began in Surrey and London which would be precursors to the National Reassurance Policing Programme (NRPP).</p> <p>The design of the NRPP was closely allied to the emerging Signal Crimes perspective. After an appraisal of the Chicago Alternative Policing initiative and research on the relationship between public incivilities/disorder and perceived social integration/crime risk in neighbourhoods, the University of Surrey team designed and piloted an ‘environmental scan’ instrument, and developed a methodology to integrate it with quantitative analysis of existing force surveys of public confidence/satisfaction. This work, presented to Surrey Police in 2002, also produced a</p>

conceptualisation of 'Signal Crimes' (Innes and Fielding, 2002) and a systematic analysis of how alignment of police services with other municipal and regional agencies can secure enhanced engagement of disaffiliated minorities and other disadvantaged groups with police, which is then reflected in improved public satisfaction with police services.

In developing the NRPP the University of Surrey team also worked closely with the Police Foundation to ensure that lessons were learned from the failure of previous community initiatives; to monitor progress in the initial trial sites in Surrey and the MPS; and to assess the readiness of six selected forces to join the main NRPP. In addition, the team engaged in the original Reassurance Policing work was centrally involved in the evaluation of the sixteen BCU sites where Neighbourhood Policing underwent pilot implementation under Home Office direction. The field evaluation was led by Innes, with N Fielding contributing on research design, data analysis and data analysis technology. The evaluation team was closely involved in action research mode in training officers at the pilot sites in light of early experience with application of Reassurance Policing principles.

The 'Signal Crimes' conceptualisation captures the way that public anxiety and reassurance are transmitted via the interaction between local social networks, media reportage, and police interventions. Working from core elements of community policing, it suggests that what are received as reassuring police interventions against crime and disorder differ in respect of specific incidents (major crimes) or conditions (abandoned vehicles, broken windows) by the geo-location, socio-economic status and local knowledge in locales. The work on Reassurance Policing also rendered new empirically-based analysis of the much-debated relationship between crime and incivilities (the 'broken windows' hypothesis). Specifically, actions to quell incivilities and signs of disorder do not deter major crime but do engender social capital that is indirectly deployable against crime (the creation of 'capable guardians') as well as being a good in its own right (in terms of community-building). Further analysis focuses on technological and organisational facilitators of effectively-coordinated multi-agency response to deterioration in the built environment and the social disorder that often accompanies it.

*Nigel Fielding, Jane Fielding and Karen Bullock are current members of staff in the Department of Sociology at Surrey. Martin Innes was a member of academic staff until 2006, when he joined the University of Cardiff.*

### 3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

*All references are peer reviewed articles in high quality journals. BJC is one of the world's premier criminology journals, with an impact factor of 1.612. Policing and Society is the leading journal for police studies. Reference 1 was submitted as part of RAE 08. Reference 2 has foundational significance and has been widely cited. Reference 6 is likely to be included in REF.*

- 1) Fielding, N. (2002) 'Theorizing community policing', *British Journal of Criminology*, 42 (1): 147-63.
- 2) Innes, M. and Fielding, N. (2002) 'From Community to Communicative Policing: "Signal Crimes" and the Problem of Public Reassurance', *Sociological Research Online*, 7(2) <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/7/2/innes.html>
- 3) Fielding, N. and Innes, M. (2006) 'Reassurance Policing, Community Policing and Measuring Police Performance', *Policing and Society*, 16 (2): 127-45.
- 4) Fielding, N. (2009) *Ideas in British Policing: Neighbourhood/Community Policing*, London: Police Foundation.

- 5) Bullock, K. (2013) 'Community, Intelligence-led Policing and Crime Control', *Policing and Society* 23 (2): 125-144.
- 6) Bullock, K. and Leeney, D. (2013) 'Participation, 'responsivity' and accountability in neighbourhood policing', *Criminology and Criminal Justice* 13 (2): 199-214.

#### 4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Surrey's research on Signal Crimes, Reassurance (RP) and Neighbourhood Policing (NP) had tangible impact in improving the quality of life for citizens in the UK. This results from development of outputs, such as the National Reassurance Policing Programme (NRPP) and the national Neighbourhood Policing Programme (NPP), which have shaped the philosophy of policing and its delivery at local level.

The NRPP had a positive impact on outcomes including self-reported victimisation and public confidence in the police (measured by the Crime Survey of England and Wales). The NRPP evaluation found confidence in policing increased in the trial sites by 15 percentage points over a 12-month period, compared to a three point increase in the comparison sites (Tuffin et al, 2006). The same research revealed a high degree of consistency between the NRPP delivery mechanisms, police activity on the ground, and impact. The increase in public confidence was predicated on a reduction in the crime and anti-social behaviour problems identified by local communities as a priority for police action ('signal crimes') rather than an overall reduction in volume crime (Innes and Fielding, 2002). The design of the NRPP was directly linked to the Signal Crimes perspective developed at Surrey. Transferable tools, such as the Environmental Scanning Tool, which officers use to record indicators of crime and disorder, facilitated it.

There is evidence that the NPP, which was informed by the Signal Crime perspective and operates in all police services in England and Wales, is associated with the improvements in confidence in local policing observed between 2003/04 and 2011/12 (ONS, 2012). There is, as the head of research at the College of Policing, noted 'a strong case that the focus on tackling local issues informed by the Signal Crimes perspective lies behind the change in the trend in public confidence, linked to perceptions of the crime rate'. A three-year NPP was officially launched in April 2005. Every neighbourhood in England and Wales had a dedicated team by April 2008.

Guidance derived from the RP work prioritised attention to community influentials (those at pivot points in the formation of local public opinion at neighbourhood level), the role of community informants (not paid informants but individuals motivated to exchange reliable information with police), and the need for connected action with other municipal agencies (e.g., equipping police vehicles with online facilities with which citizens can report problems in the physical environment, such as a broken streetlamp, to the relevant council department). The NPP had a central presence in the Flanagan Review of Policing in 2008, and the Casey Engaging Communities in Fighting Crime Review. The then Labour Government renewed its commitment to sustaining NP. The 2011 Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act reaffirm commitment to the principles. A driver of these policies was the research conducted at Surrey. Research that the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) lead on the Home Office 'Prevent' strategy described as 'influencing [one of] the two most significant developments in police policy in the last decade'.

Findings on the interaction between minor public incivilities and perceived crime risk at neighbourhood level were among the first to emerge from research in the UK. Via work with Surrey Police they underpinned the first application of the 'broken windows' approach to UK policing. This formed the basis of N Fielding's knowledge exchange work with the police (ESRC Public Policy seminars at House of Lords, Police Foundation/Oxford University academic/chief officer seminars, and reference 4 in section 3). Innes established and directs the Universities' Police Science

Institute at Cardiff University, continuing work on NP. The 'environmental scan' work continues. In 2010 and 2011 N and J Fielding applied an enhanced instrument in geo-referenced fieldwork (with ESRC funding) involving Surrey Police that assessed the latent criminogenic effects of local authority housing and education policy in a mixed residential area. The team provided residents, community influentials, and police with tools to assess risk; evaluation of impact is in progress.

Based on our work in 2010 and 2011 on the interaction of the NPP and intelligence-led policing, Surrey Police have re-oriented aspects of practice, including:

- consulting with citizens through social media, email and website
- reviewing how officers record and communicate their decision making processes
- encouraging officers to resolve problems in ways other than the enforcement of the criminal law

Improvements in policing and public safety are testament to the benefits partnerships between universities and police service can produce. The partnership, as the Head of Operational Development at Surrey Police put it, 'resulted not only in a significant contribution to the academic literature, but it translated the resulting theory into significant and sustained improvements in the quality of policing delivered to the public'.

#### 5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

- C1)** Head of Unit, Research, Analysis and Information, College of Policing (Provided statement)
- C2)** Detective Chief Superintendent, Surrey Police (Provided statement)
- C3)** Head of Learning and Development Support Services, Surrey Police (Contact details provided)
- See also possible sources (human and documentary) in impact section
- C4)** Cabinet Office (2010) *The Coalition: our programme for government*. London: HM Government.
- C5)** Casey, L. (2008) *Engaging Communities in Fighting Crime Review*. London: HM Government.
- C6)** Fielding, N. (2009) *Ideas in British Policing: Neighbourhood/Community Policing*, London: Police Foundation.
- C7)** Flanagan, R. (2008) *The Independent Review of Policing*. London: HM Government.
- C8)** ONS (2012) *Focus on Public Perceptions of Policing, Findings from the 2011/12 Crime Survey for England and Wales*. London: HM Government.
- C9)** Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.
- C10)** Tuffin, R., Morris, J. and Poole, A. (2006) *An evaluation of the impact of the National Reassurance Policing Programme. Home Office Research Study 296*. London: Home Office.