

The London School of Economics and Political Science

ADAPTING, ACTING OUT, OR STANDING FIRM: UNDERSTANDING THE PLACE OF DRUGS IN THE POLICING OF A LONDON BOROUGH

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Daniel Bear

Abstract

The number of police recorded incidents in England and Wales involving cannabis more than doubled between 2004 and 2009 even though use of the drug was in decline and official policy was geared towards tackling drugs ‘that cause most harm’ (Home Office 2008). Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork carried out in a single London borough during the 12 months leading up to the 2011 riots, this research examines the place of drugs within everyday policing, focusing on the working lives of street-level police officers who are not attached to specialist drug squads. The concept of bifurcation (Garland 1996, 2001) is used to make sense of, “a series of policies that appear deeply conflicted, even schizoid, in their relation to one another” (Garland 2001, pg. 110). Analysis of the ethnographic data shows how the ‘structured ambivalence’ of state responses is evident in relation to front-line policing, including the policing of drugs. We find that the backbone of modern policing, Response Teams, are being pulled towards a ‘classic’ style of policing where officers ‘act out’ and impose order through the visible exercise of their powers, reasserting the authority of the state. This is a far cry from officers in Safer Neighbourhood Teams who work predominantly on Community Policing efforts, adapting their working styles, engaging with community partners, and focusing on ‘damage limitation’ efforts. The thesis charts these different orientations in relation to officers’ general activities, before going onto show how they are visible in the way each team approaches drugs policing. From here it will be argued that the increase in recorded incidents involving drugs reflects the influence of New Public Managerialism and the focus on output-based targets. These performance targets were easily fulfilled by targeting low-level drugs offences, and once met, officers were free to police as they saw fit. Instead of officers evolving their practices as the organisation evolved, NPM allowed officers to stand firm and maintain their culture, policing practice, and sense of mission. The author accompanied both Response Teams and Safer Neighbourhood Teams of the Metropolitan Police Service during their shifts, and also conducted 23 interviews with officers. This research also developed new digital ethnography methods that might be utilised by ethnographers in other disciplines.

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Abbreviations

124D	Domestic Assault Form
ABC	Acceptable Behaviour Contract
APACS	Assessment of Policing and Community Safety
ASB	Anti-Social Behaviour
BCU	Basic Command Unit
BIU	Borough Intelligence Unit
BTP	British Transport Police
BVPI	Best Value Performance Indicator
CAG	Community Advisory Group
CDA	Crime and Disorder Act 1998
CDRP	Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships
CJIT	Criminal Justice Intervention Team
CJPO	Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994
CMG	Stop and Search Community Monitoring Group
CMN	Stop and Search Community Monitoring Network
COP	Community Oriented Policing
CS Spray	A non-lethal aerosol spray carried by police officers
CSP	Community Safety Partnership
CWS	cannabis Warning System
DAAT	Drug and Alcohol Action Team
DDA	Dangerous Drugs Act
DFS	Drugs and Firearms Squad
DIP	Drug Intervention Programme
DPG	Diplomatic Protection Group
DRR	Drug Rehabilitation Requirement
E Call	A call requiring attention within twenty minutes
EDT	A portable alcohol detecting breathalyser
I Call	The highest priority call, requiring response in under 11 minutes
IBO	Integrated Borough Operations
Insp	Inspector, the rank above Sergeant
IRV	Incident Response Vehicle
KIN	Key Individual Network
LAS	London Ambulance Service
LCJB	Local Criminal Justice Board
LCJP	London Criminal Justice Partnership
LFB	London Fire Brigade
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
MDT	Mobile Data Terminal
MoDA	Misuse of Drugs Act 1973
MPS	Metropolitan Police Service of London
Nabbis	cannabis Sativa
NHS	National Health Service

NIM	National Intelligence Model
NPIA	National Policing Improvement Agency
NPM	New Public Managerialism
NRPP	National Reassurance Policing Programme
NTA	National Treatment Agency
PACE	The Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984
PAS	Public Attitude Survey
PC	Police Constable
PCCG	Police Community Consultative Group
PCSO	Police Community Support Officer
PDU	Problem Drug User
PI	Performance Indicator
PIB	Performance Information Bureau
PNC	Police National Computer
POA	Public Order Act
POCA	Proceeds of Crime Act
POP	Problem Oriented Policing
PPAF	Policing and Performance Assessment Framework
PPO	Prolific and Other Priority Offender Programme
PWITS	Possession With Intent to Supply
R Call	A call requiring response within one hour
RT	Response Team
S.1	Section 1 of Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE)
S.23	Section 23 of the Misuse of Drugs Act
S.60	Section 60 of the Public Order Act
SCD	Specialist Crime Directorate
Sgt	Sergeant, the rank above PC
SLT	Senior Leadership Team of Watling
SNT	Safer Neighbourhood Team
SOCA	Serious & Organised Crime Agency
SOCO	Scenes of Crime Officer
Supt	Superintendent
THC	Tetra-Hydro-Cannibol
TP	Territorial Policing
TRA	Tenants and Residents Association
Trident Unit	A unit of MPS officers dedicated to fighting black gangs
Trojan Unit	Firearms officers, officially known as SO19
TSG	Territorial Support Group
UKBA	UK Border Agency
WG	Abbreviation for Watling
WPP	Watling Partnership Programme
WS	Abbreviation for RT4 at Ulverston Station
WW	Abbreviation for RT2 at Farmingham Station
YOT	Youth Offending Team

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Chapter 1- Introduction

I tried to convince myself that my hands were shaking because it was unseasonably cold and my coat wasn't warm enough, but I knew it was a lie. In truth, I was scared and adrenalin was beginning to pump through my body. I'd arrived with two police officers to an incident outside the Bird of Paradise bar on Watling's¹ high street, and was quickly swallowed up by the crowd. I had seen hostility aimed at officers plenty of times since I started my fieldwork with them, but this was the first time it was targeted at me. Despite the bulletproof vest I was required to wear, I felt isolated and vulnerable surrounded by the crowd. A woman screamed at me, "Leave us alone you fucking bastard!", seemingly oblivious to the large cut on her hand. A few seconds later, several other units rushed in, having received a call that there was some action to be had. As these officers pushed their way in, members of the crowd streamed past them in the opposite direction trying to find help. Amidst the confusion and screaming, officers went about sorting out the 'good guys' from the 'bad guys'.

The incident was over in a matter of minutes. Several men were in handcuffs, the crowds began to dissipate, and officers stood in small groups discussing how they subdued these 'thugs', 'bastards', and 'little shits'. One officer, quite young in service, turned to his colleagues and said, "We should search these cunts right now and nab some cannabis or maybe even a bit of Class A." An older officer rebuked him, "There's no need. We've shown them who's in charge in this borough... We need cars on the roads tonight, not people at desks." The officers began filtering back to their IRVs² and dispersed. The officers I was accompanying beckoned me over to our car, and we departed with little fanfare. In those few minutes of bedlam, I had witnessed many of the themes that would find their way in to this thesis.

The primary aim of this thesis is to understand why there was such a dramatic increase in low-level drug seizures in recent years despite the deprioritization of such targets in policy documents, and will do this by examining how drugs policing fits in to the working lives of police officers in a London borough. Particular attention will be paid to understanding how the response I have seen on the street is related to changes in the

¹ All names used in this research are pseudonyms, in order to protect the anonymity of the respondents and the location of the research.

² Incident Response Vehicles

criminal justice system. Discussions of drugs in academic work have difficulty bringing together issues of policy, policing, and the implementation of practice, because they often focus on each area in isolation. I will overcome this problem by first addressing the changing structure of drugs policy, exploring their implementation, and then discussing the forces acting upon local implementation of drugs policing.

The primary research questions driving this project are:

What is the role of drugs in the working practices of street-level police officers not in a specialist drugs unit?

Why did the number of police recorded incidents involving cannabis possession double between 2004 and 2009?

Do we see evidence of Garland's theories on bifurcation in the criminal justice system when examining the previous questions?

To help demarcate the influences on both policing and policy, I will attempt to utilize theories on bifurcation in the criminal justice system as the main conceptual driver for this research (Garland 2001, 1996). I believe the concept of bifurcation is useful as an explanatory device to bridge the gap in current assessments of the role of drugs policing in the larger milieu of police work, and the role drugs policing efforts play in maintaining normative orders in policing (Herbert 1998). Garland describes contradictory changes to institutional reasoning and operations in response to the collapse of the penal-welfarism in postmodernity. He proposes first that as part of adaptive efforts administrative actors have reshaped their focus from retrospectively addressing criminality in an individual, to prospectively managing crime in the aggregate. This is achieved shifting the focus to community partnership, targeted prevention in 'hot spots', and the defining down of deviance. Co-existing alongside these changes Garland describes non-adaptive changes as expressive punitive sanctions in response to the inability to control crime or criminality. These Sovereign State Strategies (Garland 2001), "...conditions criminal justice institutions to act in an exclusionary and punitive manner, exemplified by the incapacitative potential of prisons and 'zero-tolerance' policing strategies..." (Hughes and McLaughlin 2003, pg. 4).

So while the most prominent measures of crime control are increasingly oriented towards punitive segregation and expressive justice, there is, at the same time, a new commitment, especially at the local level, to a quite different strategy that one might call preventative partnerships. Today's most visible crime control strategies may work by expulsion and exclusion, but they are accompanied by patient, ongoing, low-key efforts to build up the internal controls of neighbourhoods and to encourage communities to police themselves (Garland 2001, pg. 17)

Additionally, this work brings empirical focus to the theory of bifurcation as advanced by Garland - a theory most often addressed in the literature at the conceptual level (Shiner 2013). Within the research context, I am able to try to assess if the theory of bifurcation holds when examining the situation at street-level - extending its reach from theoretical to practical. Deployment of Garland's theories in this way may highlight the theory's limitations in describing street-level police activity. Finally, this research has developed and implemented a new form of digital ethnography to improve data collection by increasing the accuracy of recording and recollection of events taking place in the field.

1.1 Why Study This Area

It is important to understand the role that drugs play in a policing landscape that appears, on paper, to be changing significantly. Drug searches make up approximately 50 per cent of the searches conducted by the MPS during the period of fieldwork (HMIC 2013, Eastwood, Shiner, and Bear 2013), and are a regular and growing part of the policing activity undertaken by street-level units. The introduction of community policing initiatives and increased focus on performance management has corresponded with a massive increase in low-level police activity against drugs. I use the term 'massive', because between 2000 and 2010 the number of drug offences brought to justice (OBTJ) jumped by 98.3 per cent (Ministry of Justice 2010c). This shift is unprecedented in the criminal justice system. From previous research, we know that policing efforts to target this type of crime can impact the police/community relationship (Bradford, Jackson, and Stanko 2009, Delsol and Shiner 2006). This relationship is further impacted by the high levels of disproportionality found in analysis of stop and search activity for drugs (Eastwood, Shiner, and Bear 2013). In Watling, black people were 3.3 times more likely to be stop and searched for drugs than their white counterparts, and 3.8 times more likely to be issued a Cannabis

Warning Form³. It should be noted that fieldwork for this thesis concluded only hours before the start of the August 2011 riots in London - an event that provides a stark example of the continued problematic relationship between the community and police even after more than six years of community-based policing efforts (HMIC 2013, Singh 2012).

	Drug offences Brought to Justice (in thousands)	All Offences Brought to Justice (in thousands)	Drugs Offences as a Percentage of All OBTJ
2000	117	1,013	11.58%
2001	117	1,001	11.65%
2002	129	1,031	12.50%
2003	122	1,060	11.54%
2004	119	1,127	10.51%
2005	157	1,274	12.35%
2006	188	1,405	13.35%
2007	220	1,456	15.15%
2008	243	1,404	17.33%
2009	235	1,346	17.48%
2010	233	1,263	18.47%
Percentage Change 2000-2010	+98.83%	+24.71%	+59.49%

Figure 1: Increasing prevalence of drugs offences in OBTJ. Source: (Ministry of Justice 2010c)

When I began designing my doctoral research, I was primarily interested in changes to drugs policy, but I realized that I could not study the resultant figures of drugs policing without understanding how drugs fit in to the new structure of a police service focused on community policing efforts. The changes to drugs policy have been addressed quite thoroughly by several authors (Reuter and Stevens 2008, Stevens 2011, Seddon 2007, Seddon, Ralphs, and Williams 2008, Shiner 2013, Bayer and Oppenheimer 1993, Bennett and Holloway 2010, Caulkins and Tragler 2004, Hunt and Stevens 2004, Maccoun and Reuter 2001), but I felt that their focus missed the intricacies of implementation taking place on the street. Policy documents may have changed, but research suggests officers have little knowledge of policy documents (Bear 2009), and it was therefore necessary that this research explore the role of drugs *in situ*. I will briefly address the changes to both police and to drugs policy that prompted this research.

³ Based on data obtained from the Metropolitan Police Service from a Freedom of Information request.

Two important changes have come to policing in London in the last decade; the introduction of Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs) as part of new community focused policing efforts (Rehman 2009), and the increased emphasis on performance management as part of New Public Managerialism (NPM) (Fielding and Innes 2006). Through these changes, the organisation has tried to develop new practices to suit the community policing focus (Savage 2007). However, operational activities do not necessarily develop to buttress the new organizational priorities (Dean 1995). The police structures may remain disconnected from the new community focus due to its core role as the states' administrator of coercive force (Bittner 1967, Klockars 1988). In addition, many of the performance targets introduced to policing focus on the 'classic' role of officers, and measure outputs such as arrests and sanctioned detections. Within the conflict created by the gap between the stated goal, and the actual work and performance measurement of the job, police risk becoming loosely-coupled from the organization (Knight 2008). Like any public sector organization, officers faced performance pressures that create undue focus on targets emphasizing outputs instead of outcomes, and that only measure part of their role (Munro 2011). In this thesis, I will show how officers responded with unintended changes to their policing practice, and malleable feelings towards drugs.

Unintended outcomes are always a risk when introducing new performance targets, as they may cause the public services to focus on hitting the targets, not on delivering good service (Munro 2004). These evolutions in British policing provide an opportunity to revisit themes of discretion, racism, a focus on action, responses to domestic violence, police culture, and others identified in previous works (Smith and Gray 1983, Collison 1995, Reiner 1999, Manning 1977, Van Maanen 1978, Dorn and Lee 1999, Skogan 1999). However, there is a particular focus placed on how the issue of drugs fits in to the working lives of street-level police officers, and the previous issues are discussed in order to help contextualise the issue of drugs policing.

The problem of drugs and the policies guiding the criminal justice response to them have spurred much debate in recent years. This thesis will not attempt to tell the complete history of British drugs policing. Instead, it will address the current policies to provide context when describing the implementation of drugs laws at street-level and their place within the working lives of officers. Key in the debate about drugs

policy is the question of the ‘criminalisation’ theses. Several authors have pointed out that British drugs policy has evolved a propensity for punitive criminal justice responses that did not previously underpin the welfare based approaches championed in earlier drug policy efforts (Stevens 2011, Seddon, Ralphs, and Williams 2008, Seddon 2012). Other authors argue that this new turn towards expressive penal sanctions has always been a part of British drugs policy, and seen in the efforts by the police to engage in anti-drugs work (Shiner 2009, 2013).

On the policing front, there have been several excellent pieces examining the role of drug detectives (Collison 1995, Bacon Forthcoming, Manning 1980). These sources provide us with an excellent overview of many of the issues that all drugs policing faces, but they are limited as they provide the perspective of a small minority of the officers who actually engage in anti-drugs work. Further, the type of anti-drugs work of detectives is far different from those of general street-level officers. Examining the policy developments in British drugs policing is an important and well-covered topic. However, to understand the staggering statistics emanating from the Home Office regarding drugs (Mulchandani, Hand, and Panesar 2010, Coleman 2011, 2012), we must see the situation on the streets and understand how it connects back to policy developments.

1.2 What Will Be Covered

In Chapter Two, I will examine the literature of several key areas in order to set the scene for the empirical chapters to follow. In the literature section, I will first cover the general policing literature to understand the key changes to the role, structure, and culture of the police over the last thirty years. Key amongst these issues will be the questions of what are officers being asked to do, and how are they being empowered to do it. If we were to examine the culture of officers without understanding the context within they were being asked to operate, we would have little idea if the culture is providing a help or a hindrance to their specified role.

After examining the broader policing literature, I will explore the drugs policy literature. There have been significant changes in this area - whether or not this fits with the criminalization thesis will be discussed at a later point. Importantly, I will examine how there is evidence of a multi-pronged approach to British drugs policy in

recent years. The development of the cannabis Warning System (CWS) provides formal warnings instead of arrest for cannabis possession offences and is a sign of the inability of the state to meet the demands of prohibition. This defining down of deviance is similarly seen in the introduction of arrest referral schemes for drug addicts, and increased focus on treatment instead of incarceration. At the same time, the Coalition Government and its Labour predecessor have ramped up the rhetoric against drugs in order to present the idea of the state being capable of meeting to promise of protection against the risk inherent in the neo-liberal structures of late-modernity British criminal justice. I will show how cannabis, the most widely targeted drug, fails to elicit more than a few scattered sentences anywhere in the drugs policy documents. Further, the policing of drugs at street-level is only discussed in abstract in these same documents, and often only when discussing operations against major drug traffickers.

I will then address Garland's ideas of bifurcation presented in *Culture of Control* (Garland 2001) as the main theoretical concept supporting this work (Garland 2001). I believe that Garland's description of non-adaptive strategies provides an important interpretation of how many actions taken by police against drugs and against local communities represent acting-out by the state in attempt to retain legitimacy. Where the officers reside amidst this bifurcation will be discussed only after we have thoroughly examined the empirical findings.

In Chapter Three, I will cover the methodology used in this research. Ethnographic fieldwork was conducted with five teams, comprised of two Response Teams (RT) and three Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNT) in the London borough of Watling. This fieldwork included more than 500 hours with officers over the course of a year, and was supported by 23 interviews of officers and their commanders. I also attended community events and meetings where the police and community interacted. Throughout the fieldwork, I developed and used a new digital ethnographic data collection method. This method utilized the iPhone 4 to record data in near real-time and with more detail than previous methods allowed.

From here, I move to my empirical findings. Chapters Four and Five explore the bifurcated nature of policing in the borough of Watling through the two types of police units studied during fieldwork. By splitting policing activities by unit type, we can observe the extent of bifurcation at the street-level and the implications of Garland's theories on bifurcation. First, I will examine the activities of Response Teams in Watling, followed by an examination of Community Policing in the borough, with particular focus on the Safer Neighbourhood Teams. My intention in these two chapters is to highlight the challenges, activities, and concerns shaping both RTs and SNTs as they engage in the full context of their policing responsibilities. Each type of unit has been given a set of core tasks that broadly fits within the bifurcated structure identified by Garland. Crudely speaking, RTs fight crime, maintain order, and apprehend suspects through the use of their legal powers and the flashing blue lights of their IRV. They are the 'backbone of policing' (Bennett 1983) and are reliant on non-adaptive efforts to successfully conduct their role. Their ability to respond to crime and their efforts to proactively search for illicit activity supports the myth that the state can stop crime through strong penal-based enforcement. I will pay particular attention to how RTs respond to various criminal behaviours and their use of stop and search as a tool to assert their legitimacy.

SNTs partner with the community to identify concerns, create a reassuring police presence through visible foot patrols, and deal with chronic nuisances⁴ by engaging in partnerships with the community and other organisations. While SNTs rely on adaptive policing tools to successfully achieve their core tasks, these are often only a façade for non-adaptive efforts supporting their public facing activities. The apparent dichotomy represented in the core duties of the two units is evidence of the discrete roles each is slated to undertake as part of the larger policing effort. While there are distinctive differences in the policing activities undertaken by each type of unit, there is actually a surprising amount of overlap in some areas, especially evident in the propensity to use tactics most closely associate with sovereign state strategies. At this point, the reader will have a clear understanding of the role, structure, and activities of RTs and SNTs. Attempting to label RTs as engaging solely in sovereign state type activities and SNTs

⁴ SNTs were also at the forefront of the Met's efforts against crack houses, though this is not widely known by the public, and the efforts were undertaken as a part of wider efforts to clear up local problematic hot-spots of crime.

as engaging in only adaptive strategies, would fail to acknowledge the confused and overlapping demands placed on the units.

In Chapter six, I will directly address the policing of drugs by street-level units in Watling. The trends visible from fieldwork observations, MPS data, and Home Office statistics provide a shocking picture of the scale of both adaptive and non-adaptive policing practices against drugs. Although elements of drugs policing will be discussed in addressing the wider actions of each unit type, it is prudent to address the policing of drugs separately to capture the full situation. Far removed from the policy documents and political speeches, drugs policing on the street-level must respond to maelstrom of pressures and organizational demands. Street-level policing of drugs is an amalgamation of policy efforts and mixed messages that result in a chaotic node of activity within a larger and even more chaotic work environment.

The reader should appreciate that policing of drugs is but one part of day-to-day policing, rather than its entirety. Between June 2011 and July 2012, there were 33 crime types that resulted in more males arrested in Watling as a result of stop and search activity than any single drug offence. These 33 crime types resulted in a total of 550 males⁵ arrested. However, there were also more than 1,500 cannabis warnings for males during that same period - almost all of these from stop and search. During the period of fieldwork, the 800+ officers of Watling conducted more than 30,000 searches⁶, of which about 50% were for drugs⁷. Drug offences made up less than 10% of total offences in Watling, while violent crimes made up more than 25% and theft more than 30%⁸. As these numbers show, drugs are a major component of the policing effort in Watling, but drugs policing can only be understood in light of the other efforts police execute.

This work will also show how practices aimed at partnering the police and the community were forced to surmount policing's long-held practices and limited capabilities. While the idea of Neighbourhood Policing had, by the time the fieldwork

⁵ This is admittedly an odd fact to use, but there is limited data available about the scale of activity against specific criminal offences.

⁶ Some of these may have been conducted by units not based in the borough such as TSG.

⁷ MPS Freedom of Information data.

⁸ Watling Safety Partnership Violent Crime Plan, 2010-2015

started in August 2010, been transformed in to a comprehensive network of SNTs and local partnerships, the processes of how the police and community groups interacted and set local priorities did not yet project a comfortable coexistence. As police acclimatized to the idea that they need to work in partnership with the community, they confronted these new tasks with the same powers as before, and without any diminishment of the, “hedonistic love of action” (Reiner 1985) - a core element of police culture. The move towards community policing put pressure on the professional self-image officers had of themselves, and challenged them to change their activities and their idea of what policing should entail. Instead of reaffirming their legitimacy by responding to crime, they had to respond to the community as partners.

If hard enforcement tactics and low-level cannabis crimes were not community concerns, why did street-level police in Watling regularly prioritize these issues in the year leading up to the August 2011 London riots? Although this research is unable to show causality for why the riots occurred, if the experiences I observed whilst in the field are typical of how other boroughs operate, then we might be able to understand the anger that saw the worst rioting in London for 30 years.

1.3 Telling This Story

Deciding how to tell the story of street-level policing of drugs in Watling was a difficult task. The tone of this work must, and will, maintain an academic rigor necessary to fulfil the requirements of a PhD. However, in the author’s perspective, the beauty of using ethnographic methodologies is that they allow the researcher to gain access to the nuanced and intimate perspective of the chosen group. After a year of fieldwork with the teams, not only could I record their expressed thoughts on various topics, but I could also see how their body language changed in certain settings and how they were affected by different incidents. I was able to put these components together to identify how the officers operated within their world. As such, I will attempt to infuse this thesis with a writing style that allows the reader to access the officers’ story without having had to spend a year in the field. I have attempted to ensure the primacy of officers’ thoughts and experiences without the jarring detractions or overly complex structuring of prose that can interrupt the flow of a good story (Fairbairn 2004).

I hope to convey not only the intensity of incidents, but also how the innumerable types of incidents shape implementation of police practice on the street. Additionally, I will add comments in the footnotes to explain certain processes to increase the readers' understanding of the police world in Watling. Appendix G provides additional details on the structure and personalities of the two Response Teams I worked with.

The use of the available academic literature is an essential component of academic writing (Brodkey 1987), and this thesis will not suggest otherwise. However, while many PhD theses feature a chapter devoted to the literature, and then spend a considerable portion of each subsequent chapter specifically addressing the literature relevant to that chapter, this thesis will differ. Chapter Two is devoted to addressing the literature, and each empirical chapter will incorporate the tailored literature throughout. These chapters will not be unbalanced by an overly detailed literature discussion at the beginning of each.

In addition to writing more intimately about the officers I worked with, I will include comments on my perception of situations. Whether a situation made me uncomfortable, scared, excited or giddy, at times I will include such information to help convey how the experiences in the field may engender powerful feelings for those present; officer and researcher alike. Field-notes will be addressed somewhat differently than in previous ethnographies. While many authors endeavour to separate their field-notes from the flow of their text, I will not. The stories, quotes, and descriptions of fieldwork are all based on field-notes, both written and audio, and were analysed extensively. I have decided to use the data to tell a more unified story, and felt that stopping to insert a block of text from my own notes would take away from the flow of the larger story. When an officer is quoted, it can be from interviews or observations in the field; I have elected not to make the situations separate on paper.

A distinguished Professor in the Social Policy Department once told me that academic writing can have difficulty developing a good flow, both for the reader and the writer, because of the need to supplement the paragraphs with citations so prodigiously. Certainly sections of this work will bear this quality, but at times I will step away from this as I attempt to illustrate the world of street-level policing in Watling and the role of drugs within officers' working lives.

Chapter 2- Literature and Policy Review

This chapter will focus primarily on four areas of the literature in order to construct the academic base for the empirical findings. I will first examine the policing literature, with due concentration on the ideas of discretion and policing's working culture. In looking at the ideas of policing I will focus on what policing is intended to be, and how it is actually done, within the evolving roles and constructs of late modernity. From here I will examine drugs policy, its place within the evolving criminal justice system, and the apparent absence of cannabis in drugs policy documents in the UK despite its prevalence in police statistics. A key question when looking at drugs policy literature will be to see how effective it has been in reaching its stated goals. The development and deployment of New Public Managerialism will be my third area of focus, and will help us understand some of the forces acting upon street-level policing. Finally, we will examine the ideas of bifurcation in the criminal justice system that provide a theoretical structure supporting this research (Garland 2001).

I believe that criminal justice theory has been relatively accurate, or at least reflective, when assessing the state of policy responses to the challenges of a criminal justice system tasked with prohibiting the possession, distribution, and consumption of illegal drugs. But these policy responses to drugs are situated within a broader shift in the criminal justice system. The theory presented by Garland (2001, 1996, 2004) of a bifurcated response to criminal justice issues in late modernity appears to be appropriate for examining both the broader justice changes and also those developments in drugs policy and policing.⁹ However, we would be remiss in reaching that conclusion without exploring the developments that brought us to the current situation in the UK. Additionally, it is necessary to appreciate that relocating Garlands ideas from the sphere of policy to that of practice is not automatic or without problems. In the proceeding empirical chapters we will see that while there may by

⁹ Garland is not the only author to note the changing structure of the criminal justice system in late-modernity, and a discussion of Cohen's *Visions of Social Control*(1985) will be discussed as well . His writings are used to define the theoretical constructs of this work in order to ensure a consistency that would be difficult to maintain if this thesis tried to thoroughly address the various idiosyncrasies of each author's take on the subject. Other authors' work will be addressed in order to help define the boundaries of Garland's work. Perhaps Garland's work is the best example of the literature available on this topic; or perhaps I just read his work first.

synchronicity visible between theory and policy in many aspects, they do not necessarily translate in to effective practice.

2.1 The What, How, and Who of Modern Policing

In the midst of all of the policy documents, strategies, and discussion regarding the theory of criminology, there is the Police Constable, working for one of the 43 police services in England and Wales. It is important to address what policing is conceived to be in popular imagination and how it is actually done by the street-level actor in order to understand the place of drugs within policing. Though maintaining order is seen today as the primary overarching goal (Chan 2004, Reiner 2010), original orders to constables stipulated, “The principal object to be obtained is the prevention of crime” (Newburn 2007, pg. 26). Between these two pillars we will construct the current role of police in London.

2.1.1 What Is Policing Today, and How is it Occurring?

Any discussion of policing will quickly dispose of the notion that policing is synonymous with law-enforcement. It was, and is, a profession more often involved in peace-keeping (Banton 1964) and social service (Punch 1979). That said, policing is, at its core, about employing citizens as crime fighters empowered to use coercive force to thwart illegal activity (Bittner 1975). “[Police] are authorized with substantial original powers to intervene in the lives of citizens and can exercise considerable discretion in determining how to use these powers (McLaughlin 2007, pg. 173) This unique position has retained much of its legal power since its inception, losing only small portions with the creation of the Crown Prosecution Service in 1985 (Reiner 2010). It has lost even less culturally (further discussion to follow), engendering a popular myth both within and outside the organisations that officers are tough, cynical, and regularly invoke their legal powers to detain and arrest. But these powers are often kept in the background as officers resolve situations using effective interpersonal skills (Bittner 1967).

In a denial of the limited relevance of crime intervention for modern policing, a flourishing ‘hard cop’ approach has gripped some municipalities (Reiner 2010, pg. 156). This focus on high levels of stop and search, and introduction of zero-tolerance policing aims to reassert tactics that can force away crime problems. This perception

was touted by many influential politicians and police chiefs (Jones and Newburn 2006), but has shown little basis for success (Bowling 1999). This approach ignores the inability of the state to affect crime patterns to the degree once believed (Garland 1996), but provides effective talking points for politicians and police chiefs looking to hire more officers. These approaches still rely on officers using their traditional powers and tactics, but in an amplified manner.

But the reactive ‘fire-brigade policing’ often associated with ‘hard cop’ approaches has its limitations. New ‘smart cop’ (Reiner 2010) initiatives began to try and focus police resources more effectively. Goldstein’s Problem Oriented Policing (POP) focused criminal justice responses on the need to address both social problems as well as criminal problems (Goldstein 1979). POP seeks to go beyond incident driven policing (Stickels 1999) moving to proactively analyse and respond to crime. Research has confirmed that POP brings small but significant improvements in crime and disorder problems in communities (Weisburd et al. 2010). Whatever changes have occurred to policing in the preceding decades, the core functions and roles of the police have not radically altered (Klockars 1988). New ways of policing share roots and a persistent character with old tactics (Loftus 2009), but attempt to integrate the community in to the fold.

2.1.2 A Turn Towards Community Policing and Community Confidence:

Some have thought that integrating community policing in to the current structures of policing is an impossible task given the nature of policing’s authorization to use coercive force (Klockars 1988). However the refocusing away from ‘fire-brigade’ based policing responses was deemed necessary in order to support the continued legitimacy of the police. “[Community Policing] thus aims to restore legitimacy and public support, partly to enhance crime control through encouraging cooperation, partly as good in itself” (Reiner 2010, pg. 156).

Since Goldstein’s call for more proactive policing, community-engagement has been pushed to the forefront through the development of Community Oriented Policing (COP), the focus on the service role (Reiner 1999) and providing accountability to communities (Chan 1999, Bullock and Leeney 2013). Where once the police relegated community members to the periphery of criminal justice activities (such as acting as

witnesses), the new COP methods bring the community's views to the fore, and flatten the hierarchy between the police and the community (Stanko and Bradford 2009). But having a voice in policing comes at the cost of having to bear more responsibility for the defence of the community. While the headline descriptions focus on communicative developments between the two groups to ensure democratically influenced policing (Innes and Jones 2006) the community is also asked to become active in hampering criminal activity (Wakefield, Garland, and Von Hirsch 2000). The new community based efforts not only encourage police to make use of the local resources outside of their own organisation, it also develops a responsabilization ethos¹⁰ (Garland 2001). COP programmes, acknowledge the limitations of the state to control crime, and communities are tasked with taking on responsibility for abating criminal behaviour (Loader 2000). This includes taking part in neighbourhood watch schemes and police sponsored consultative forums, but also less systematized activities like taking steps to burglary-proof one's home. However involved communities and individuals become in police-organized community policing programmes, accountability for the reduction of crime rests with the police, and becomes even more pronounced as officers create situations for communities to voice concerns over the organisation's performance. Of course, this all assumes that there is a single unified voice with which the community speaks, a situation not readily found once these efforts are employed (Sklansky 2005).

2.1.3 A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing: The Role of Community Policing

The main goal COP efforts was not primarily to reduce crime, but rather to reduce the fear of crime, decrease disorder, and provide opportunities for police to move away from the classic enforcement efforts that were failing to impede the high crime figures seen between the 1970s and late 1990's (Skogan 2006a). Additionally, the Scarman report (1981) had identified the poor coordination and communication between police and the black community in particular, as an important factor in the Brixton riots (Savage 2007). The subtext of the report was that the legitimacy of policing was waning. COP provided an opportunity for police to bolster their legitimacy by accepting the mantle of authoritative service provider (Reiner 1999) in prescribed

¹⁰ As will be discussed elsewhere, Garland identifies many other adaptive strategies such as defining deviance down and changing how success is measured. These ideas are not discounted here, but the issue of responsabilization takes precedent in examining these community initiatives.

interactions with the community. These new partnerships would be seen as giving the community a voice in how they wished to be policed (McLaughlin 2005), but in doing so it also reasserted the pre-eminence of policing. Wary of being labelled ‘soft on crime’ the Home Office said, “Neighbourhood policing is not a soft option, it is a hard edged strategy that recognizes the importance of visible, accessible, responsive and intelligence-led policing to combat all crime, from nuisance neighbours to drug dealers” (Home Office 2005c).

The most prominent form of COP today is the Neighbourhood Policing Team, launched in 2004 to bring dedicated sets of officers to every community in England (Home Office 2004a). In London they were developed using slightly different nomenclature, and are referred to as Safer Neighbourhood Teams (Rehman 2009). In developing the idea of community policing through the SNTs, the Home Office appears to have not tried to promise too much to communities:

We are not harking back to some mythical bygone age of policing. There never was, in reality, a bobby on every street corner in Britain. But we do want policing to be more visible and accessible – and to make the absolute best use of the record numbers of police officers we have now. (Home Office 2005b, pg. 7)

SNTs are but one part of the community/neighbourhood focused apparatus within the MPS and the wider policing apparatus of England and Wales. Bolstered by £1 billion from the then Labour Government to expand across the country, and focused on the ‘Single Confidence Target’ that scrapped all performance measures other than community confidence (HM Treasury 2009), SNTs were to be the forefront of visible, proactive policing efforts that would, “build confidence and trust in the police, and through that compliance with the law” (Home Office 2010f, pg. 11).

The ideas underpinning COP helped form the basis for Reassurance Policing (RP), a programme whereby officers and communities would work together to identify signal crimes (Innes 2004) and promote activities that improved the community’s perception of those problems, and increase their confidence in the police. Instead of addressing the ‘fear of crime’ as the result of the rate of crimes, signal crimes theory identifies perceptions of disorder and how they effect changes in the beliefs and actions of

individuals within the community. By focusing on community confidence the police, local authority, and other agencies are joined together (Stanko and Bradford 2009) in a more horizontal structure (Considine 2002) in an effort to better manage issues that trigger a lack of confidence in policing. However, the drive to achieve confidence made some police worry that the direct role of crime fighting was being overlooked and that police forces were being stretched to accommodate roles they had not been designed to fulfil (Barnes and Eagle 2007).

The gaps in the literature mean that it is hard to see how these practices are actually changing policing at the street level (Maguire and King 2004, Shilston 2008). Fear of crime issues and the measurement of ‘community confidence’ only served as the benchmark for local success for a short time (Dann and Hinchliff 2009, Keenan 2009, Rehman 2009, Stanko and Bradford 2009). Theresa May dispensed with many of the new developments in community confidence measurement when she announced that under the Coalition Government police were to focus on cutting crime, and nothing else (May 2011). While the infrastructure supporting community policing remains, and the Met remains committed to measuring community confidence and fear of crime (MPS 2012b, 2011c, 2010a), the national policy has stagnated in the area of community confidence.

2.1.4 The Constable and Police Culture

With the increasing complexity of their roles, police are expected to be able to switch from covert surveillance and strong enforcement tactics to humane and less punitive approaches (Povey 2001). The danger becomes that the introduction of policing priorities based on community feedback can damage morale by making street-level police view the changes as more accountability, an attempt to thwart their traditional discretionary powers, and preparation by senior officers pre-emptive defence against criticism (Chan 1999). Whilst some see refocusing on community policing as a potentially positive step for policing (Sergeant 2008), Simon (1964) points out that proceeding towards new organisational goals will entail adapting elements of any new policy in order to meet internal organizational constraints. This is not a new phenomenon, and adaptive behaviour has been witnessed in police research for many years (Bevan and Hood 2006, Collison 1995, Reiner 1999, Smith and Gray 1983). As Garland (2001) points out,

Socially situated, imperfectly knowledgeable actors stumble upon ways of doing things that seem to work, and seem to fit with their other concerns. Authorities patch together workable solutions to problems that they see and can get to grips with. Agencies struggle to cope with their workload, please their political masters, and do the best job they can in the circumstances. There is no omnipotent strategist, no abstract system, no all-seeing actor with perfect knowledge and unlimited powers. Every 'solution' is based upon a situated perception of the problem it addresses, of the interests that are at stake and of the values that ought to guide action and distribute consequences. (Garland 2001, pg. 26)

Strategic emphasis on improving confidence leads to targeted efforts to combat identified problems, but may not address 'low level' policing practices still reliant in part on measures such as 'sanctioned detections'. Policing activity strategically targeting criminality identified in partnership with community groups requires that the tactical implementation actually reflect the contribution from outside groups, or the community contribution becomes an 'empty ritual' (Arnstein 1969).

With each structural change to department activities comes new targets - both in the statistical and criminal sense of the word (Mastrofski, Worden, and Snipes 1995, Wilson 1968). This requires officers to narrow the gap between their personal work limitations and the service ideal. Lipsky argues that while perversions to service ideals may regularly take place, the officers will attempt to find a path that meets the structural setup of the organisation, their own psychological wellbeing, and the needs of the community (Wilson 1968, Lipsky 1980).

Operating on the edges of society, Bittner describes the modern police officer as:

...a character who is ambivalently feared and admired, and no amount of public relations work can entirely abolish the sense that there is something of the dragon in the dragon-slayer. Because they are posted on the perimeters of order and justice in the hope that their presence will deter the forces of darkness and chaos, because they are meant to spare the rest of the people direct confrontations with the dreadful, perverse, lurid, and dangerous, police officers are perceived to have powers and secrets no one else shares. (Bittner 1975, pg. 7)

Police officers see the social world and their unique role in it through a subculture traditionally referred to as ‘cop culture’ (Reiner 1999), which has been commented on similarly in many research papers (Collison 1995, Manning 1977, Van Maanen 1974, Reiss 1971, Skolnick 1966). Police culture is by no means monolithic (Reiner 1999, Waddington 1999b); some have argued that only a subset of officers ascribe to that culture (Cochran and Bromley 2003) and that it varies between urban and rural settings (Christensen and Crank 2001).

There has also been acknowledgment that different operational duties and the officer’s rank will create different subcultures in policing (Chan 1992, 1996). Still others would define ‘cop culture’ as a series of normative states (Herbert 1998) that guide officer interactions within the community of police officers (Wilson 1968). Although this culture may prominently affect behaviour in informal situations, some research suggests the more chauvinistic and racist expressions fail to appear when involved in application of police powers (Snipes and Mastrofski 1990, Smith and Gray 1983). Acknowledging the difference between what is said in the canteen and the actions officers take on the street helps us identify the potential for ‘canteen culture’ to be used as a form of stress release (Waddington 1999b).

Whatever the variances in its perceived ubiquity amongst police, patterns of culture specific to police officers are routinely observed by researchers, and show similarities that have remained for generations despite large shifts in the role of police. According to Loftus (2009), this can be the case because the pressure of being a police officer has remained largely the same despite changes to a variety of expectations, activities, and roles. Even if changes to operational activities do occur, the popular image of policing is portrayed as remaining constant, and so creates an image to live up to for new officers (Reiner 2010). Foster (2003) argued that the influx of police recruits who were not white, heterosexual men may help diversify the culture as they diversify the ranks. However, Chan has rightly pointed out that the doxa (Brodeur 1983) of policing remains as crime fighters even with the introduction of a more diversified recruit base and the strategic prioritization of community policing. Reiner describes it best when he says:

The core of the police outlook is this subtle and complex intermingling of the themes of mission, hedonistic love of action and the pessimistic cynicism. Each feed off and reinforces the other, even though they may appear superficially contradictory, they lead to a pressure for 'results' which may strain against the legalistic principles of due process. (Reiner 1999, pg. 91)

Within that hedonistic love of action the stress of knowing officers may be seriously injured or killed while carrying out their duties. Skolnick (1966) observed that officers spoke regularly about the dangers of policing, the potential for harm to the officer, and the participation in practices to reduce the chance of injury during routine encounters. Officers' daily encounters with unpleasant situations may produce manageable levels of stress that can be dealt with through the expressive talk of the canteen (Waddington 1999b). However, when compounded by Critical Incident Stress, occurring from "... any event that has unusually powerful, negative impacts on police personnel" (Miller 2008, pg. 11) such as an incident involving serious injury to a fellow officer or the traumatic deaths of children, officers may test the limits of their cognitive defences (Miller 2008). These stressors may be more or less common for different officers, but their potential presence for anyone with a warrant card helps reinforce the idea that policing is a dangerous profession.

Henry (2004) has described policing as 'civilian combat' in reference to the similarities the stresses encountered in both policing and military based combat. This notion of 'combat' is in contrast to the reality that most policing is a form of peace-keeping based social service that only rarely involves arrest and formal investigation (Punch 1979). Still, lack of actual 'combat' does not diminish the stress of attending to these social calls and the often distasteful scenes that we will examine in the empirical chapters. Accounting for the stresses faced by police, both in everyday tasks and the shock of traumatic incidents, allows a greater appreciation for the use of dark humour and canteen culture observed regularly in policing literature (Waddington 1999b). Beyond organisational control issues, there remains the officer concerned with making it home at the end of their shift.

2.1.5 Discretion: The Heart of Policing?

Policing policies that seek to mandate tactics, targets, or outcomes must contend with the traditional application of discretion in policing. *Definitionsmacht*, the German word for police discretion, does not invoke the ‘discernment’ aspects of the word ‘discretion’, but rather the officer’s power to define the response to criminal activity (Kleinig 1996)¹¹. This initial distinction helps focus our look at how discretion is used, Lipsky’s ideas on the subject, factors influencing its application, and its effects on criminal justice policy. Even Rowan and Mayne (1829) understood that the guiding instructions of their police force could, “...not be understood as containing rules of conduct applicable to every variety of circumstance that may occur in the performance of [officer’s] duty;” (Kleinig 1996, pg. 81). A century and a half later, this tenet was still prominent when Lord Scarman (1981) said:

The exercise of discretion lies at the heart of the police function. It is undeniable that there is only one law for all: and it is right that this should be so. But it is equally well recognized that successful policing depends on the exercise of discretion in how that law is enforced... Discretion is the art of suiting action to particular circumstances. It is the policeman’s daily task. (Scarman 1981, pg. 63)

More recently, discretion was directly incorporated into the reclassification of cannabis from a Class B to a Class C drug (Warburton, May, and Hough 2005). The Association of Chiefs of Police officially stated that officers’ *presumption* should be against arresting individuals for simple possession of cannabis as a Class C drug, barring aggravating circumstances (ACPO 2003, pg. 2.1). By using the word ‘presumption,’ ACPO officially recognized officers’ discretion to define the nature of their official response to crime. However, police are not afforded discretion in all aspects of their duties. Every time an officer makes a choice in the field, he/she is not exercising their professional discretion (Kleinig 1996). While police do not exercise discretion regarding the pursuit of high profile criminals involved in a murder, they are often able to use this power in what Goldstein (1960) refers to as ‘low visibility’ aspects of police

¹¹ This ability to define their response will become an important factor in the empirical chapters when examining how officers shifted their response to cannabis after the advent of the Cannabis Warning System.

work. These ‘low visibility’ aspects are the unsupervised and unregulated¹² tasks commonly prescribed to street-level officers away from central control and oversight. Klienig (1996) describes police discretion as being part of a ‘normative condition’ used to make a ‘practical determination’.

The need for this practical determination is due to the fact that policing exists in a, “...corrupted world of service... with insufficient resources and vague policy goals,” (Lipsky 1980, pg. xiii). Low-level actors mould policy through individual responses guided by the structural norms of their institutions; even if this is sometimes an attempt to subvert institutional objectives born out of frustration over the policy disconnect between capabilities and objectives. Furthermore, Lipsky argues that the situations faced by SLBs are too complex to ever fully dispense with professional discretion through increased managerialism. Provided the culture of the organisation promotes shared understandings of appropriate uses of discretion, Lipsky upholds the idea of maintaining discretion amongst SLBs, and chastises what he sees as attempts to hamstring discretion. It is widely recognized that officers do not simply follow the formal rules and regulations of policing, but adhere to a normative practice engendered from within the ranks (Herbert 1998):

...the formal and informal commingle in ways that merit investigation. Legal and bureaucratic rules do partially determine police activity, but officers are able to interpret these rules in particular ways. One needs, therefore, a way to examine how formally constructed rules become real in the daily practices of officers. (Herbert 1998, pg. 344)

Evans and Harris (2004) point out that Lipsky (1980) perceives discretion as being good. However, they argue that discretion is neither good nor bad, and that it can cloak misconduct or be an ‘important professional attribute’ (Evans and Harris 2004, pg. 871). Moreover, their central point is that routinization does not necessarily mean a corresponding decrease in discretion. Evans and Harris seem to give credence to Howe’s (1991) belief that Lipsky’s notions on the fundamental and continuous nature of discretion cannot hold in settings where power is transferred away from the practitioner level to high-level authorities. However Howe’s (1991) focus on policy

¹² This is not to assume that there are not regulations guiding things like car stops or other police activity. ‘Unregulated’ refers to the ability of the officer to adopt their response based on the unfolding situation.

level changes to discretion circumvents the truism that social policy only becomes policy when employed by the SLB, and that SLBs will continue to manipulate the implementation of policies in order to meet their needs in the field (Lipsky 1980). While Howe is not wrong, he does fail to grasp the basic tenet that ‘low visibility’ work is largely unaccountable, and that no project designed to increase accountability, whether to the community or to central management, has been able to also fundamentally improve the other Lipsky-defined drivers of SLB’s reality. Policing is one of the only SLB organisations where discretion increases down the chain of command (Wilson 1968, Novak et al. 2002) and efforts to constrain discretion may just displace it or cause it to remain unacknowledged. Even when discretion exists and is not under threat, officers may deny its existence in order to simplify their responsibilities and make the job more palatable (Evans and Harris 2004). Lipsky acknowledges the challenges faced by providing officers discretion when he says,

At best, street-level bureaucrats invent benign modes of mass processing that more or less permit them to deal with the public fairly, appropriately, and successfully. At worst, they give in to favouritism, stereotyping and routinizing – all of which serve private or agency purposes. (Lipsky 1980, pg. xii)

2.2 An Analysis of UK Drugs Policy: Hugs By Way of Handcuffs?

Tracing the history of UK drug policy could be an entire PhD in itself and is a topic well covered directly and indirectly by many previous authors, (Kohn 1992, Seddon, Ralphs, and Williams 2008, Shiner 2009, Stimson 1987, Strang and Gossup 1994, Hunt and Stevens 2004, Stevens 2011, Reuter and Stevens 2008). I will not attempt to replicate their efforts, but rather will focus on the national and local drug strategies in place at the time this research took place, in order to create a framework within which drugs policing was intended to operate. While few police officers know of the existence of drug strategy documents or their prescribed focus, these policies are supposedly translated in to practice on a daily basis, and therefore it is important that we briefly examine them here. It appears to some that a distinct bifurcation is occurring in policy documents (Home Office 2008, 2010c, Soca 2009, MPS 2007a, 2010a), and while implementation may not play-out on the street exactly in the way it

is written, an appreciation of these guiding documents will allow us to later observe the misapplication of their intent when implemented.

2.2.1 National Level Drug Strategies

The 2010 UK drug strategy (Home Office 2010c) has moved away from previous drug strategies that supported the use of methadone maintenance for Heroin addicts, and instead promotes abstinence based recovery and strict conditionality on benefits. Some have argued that this document represents the high-water mark of a ‘creeping moralization’ of British drug policy (Monaghan 2012, pg. 29). In the 27 page strategy, police and policing receive less than one page to have their role defined. At least half that space is taken up promoting the National Crime Agency, Police and Crime Commissioners, Interdiction efforts by the UK Border Agency, and new crime maps¹⁶. The limited section detailing policing’s focus suggests that police will work with Community Safety Partnerships (CSP) and other drug treatment groups to, “Deter those who would otherwise terrorise our communities” (Home Office 2010c, pg. 15). The focus of this section seems to be on Class A drug use and distribution, but officers ‘in some areas’ may target drugs outside of Class A if there are ‘significant problems’ associated with such drugs. Localism, ‘recovery’, and a harsh penal response for distribution networks are the order of the day in the 2010 strategy. Police crop up everywhere in the drugs strategy, except when it comes to discussing how they can implement the policy on the street.

Policy documents reflect a managing of the drugs problem and are, “...scaling down expectations, redefining their aims, and modifying the criteria by which success is judged” (Dorn and Lee 1999, pg. 92). The 2008 Drug Strategy makes a bold pronouncement that is telling in its aim: “Our ambition is clear. We want a society free of the problems caused by drugs” (Emphasis Added, Home Office 2008, pg. 4).

¹⁶ The Crime Maps, launched in February 2011 originally did not contain information about drug related offences. “We will not classify drug problems at a local level as anti-social behaviour – drug dealing and drug possession is a crime” (Home Office 2010c, pg. 14). This was altered in September 2011, though information about the type of drug or type of offence is still omitted.

In another attempt to focus attention on the harm caused by drug users, the Prolific and Other Priority Offender Programme (PPOP) pushed increased police focus on the small number of offenders who significantly contributed to overall crime rates. At one point it was estimated that problematic drug users (PDUs) were responsible for 99% of the £15.4bn total cost incurred by society because of drug use, of which 90% of that figure was directly attributable to their associated criminal activity (Gordon et al. 2006). These figures may over represent the impact of drugs use on society, and the inflated figures may be used to push an agenda where drugs are treated as a criminal matter and not a health matter (Stevens 2008).

The current drug strategy represents a mixed message of policy objectives. It calls on police to partner with community organisations in providing drug education, offer access to treatment services as soon as offenders enter custody suites, and to keep, “bearing down relentlessly on those involved in the drugs trade” (Home_Office, 2010, p. 2). When it comes to cannabis the strategy only calls on better community policing to identify and disrupt the markets affecting the communities, and does not mention targeting small time users, even though they are most often the target of police activity in Watling (Bear 2011, Bear and Shiner 2011). In fact, the Cannabis Warning System is not mentioned at all in the strategy, and a defined role for law enforcement is only listed in the ‘Reducing Supply’ chapter of the strategy.

2.2.2 Metropolitan Police Strategy Documents

The MPS 2007-2010 drug strategy identified their goal as, “Disrupt the supply and reduce the use of illegal drugs” (MPS 2007a, pg. 2). They appeared quite keen on this, with 28% of all drug UK seizures in 2011/12 taking place in London even though it boasts only 13% of the total UK population²⁰. The strategy document is vague on quantifiable goals or specific operational activities, and uses words like, “disrupt”, “tackle”, and “reduce” frequently, reflecting the new managerialism and redefinition of organisational success highlighted by Garland (1996). Though linguistically related to NPM and its redefinition of success, those words still described a classic police response to drugs. The MPS strategy lays out seven key areas for the MPS to focus on,

²⁰ Drug usage rates for adults in the last year are 10.5% in London, while the English average is only 9%.

including, “Disrupting open markets – tackling blatant use in public places” and, “Working together in partnership – supporting communities” (MPS 2007a, pg. 4). However, even if police manage to ‘disrupt’ criminal drug dealing organisations, researchers have found that after an initial gain, sustained improvements are rarely due to the resiliency of distribution networks (Mazerolle, Soole, and Rombouts 2005, Mcsweeney and Turnbull 2008). These classic enforcement efforts based on arrests, raids, and drug searches may in fact cause harm to the community (Aitken et al. 2002, Maccoun and Reuter 2001, Reuter 2009). The 2007-2010 strategy focused a great deal of time to the harms of ‘crack houses’, and discussed how Safer Neighbourhood Teams would be used to identify and shut down the locations. Though it largely discussed the crack houses in terms of community safety and locally identified priorities, the strategy still essentially called for drug raids on the locations.

By the time the most recent MPS drug strategy was released in 2010, the headline ideas of reducing supply and demand for drugs in the 2007 edition had expanded to require the MPS to “...improve safety and security and to increase public confidence by working with communities and partners to disrupt the supply of and reduce the demand for, controlled drugs.” This clear limit of the sovereign state and the “defining of success in such limited terms” (Shiner 2009, pg. 168) showed a clear dent in the armour of prohibition. Many of these enforcement efforts may in fact cause harm to the community (Aitken et al. 2002, Maccoun and Reuter 2001, Reuter 2009). Taylor (1999) argues that the current system of punitive sanctions against drugs facilitates an ‘outsider culture’ against certain aspects of the community, reflecting Garland’s (2001) criminology of ‘the other’.

The current MPS strategy seems disconnected from the reality underlying drug policing, failing to mention cannabis in any context outside of commercial cultivation despite the fact that there were more than 12 times the number of possession offences compared to trafficking offences between 2010-2012 in the Met, and cannabis has in both 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 comprised 70% of all drug possession offences²¹ (2012). In the second sentence of the current drug strategy the MPS sets itself towards, “...a renewed focus on reducing the harm caused by illegal drugs to communities”

²¹ This has been fairly consistent since at least the late 1990’s. (May et al. 2007)

(MPS, pg. 3). Only inches later it reiterates the call for partnership (though does not identify with whom they should partner) and cites that officers will, “Target drugs crime from a law enforcement, crime prevention, and harm reduction perspective.” (pg. 3). Pulling back from any hope of completely removing drugs from the streets of London, the strategy identifies that, “...The most important deliverables are community confidence, safety and security. Our activities and the resource we commit, must be targeted at those aspects of drugs crime which cause local communities most concern.” (pg. 6). The document takes an unambiguous approach on prioritizing resources to drug crime that is most harmful to communities, focusing largely on Class A drugs and their distribution. The report manages to feature a picture of police officers helping a tourist in a tube station, and an unremarkable shot taken of the view from the Drug Squad’s window at New Scotland Yard, but it fails to mention low-level cannabis use.

Additional police strategy documents would allow us to more clearly identify the message being given to unit commanders, but unfortunately such documents appear to either not exist, or have been lost in the system. When I requested, “...any policy, tactical, or strategic guidance documents that deal with police enforcement of drug laws, and are issued to leaders of SNT, Drug Squads, or Response Teams in the borough of [Watling] between 2004-2012” in a FOI request in August of 2012, I was told that no such documents existed. Instead, the MPS sent over digital copies of both the 2007-2010 and 2010-2013 MPS Drug Strategy documents²².

2.2.3 *He Who Must Not Be Named: cannabis and cannabis Warnings*

Though largely absent from strategy documents, cannabis possession made up 65% of all drug seizures at minimum²³ in 2011/12. Police were involved in more than 113,000 incidents involving cannabis possession in 2011/12, down from more than 130,000 in 2008/9²⁴. Despite the frequency of engaging with cannabis, only a very limited number of MPS, MPA or Home Office documents discuss the issue. Until 2004 cannabis was a

²² It should be noted that these documents are easily accessible on the MPS website, and the research already had both hard and digital copies of both documents. Further requests for previous drugs strategies went unfulfilled. The MPS information team admitted that while previous MPS strategies did exist, they were unable to locate a copy, digital or physical, anywhere in their systems.

²³ Total seizures for cannabis are measured separately for possession disposals. It is also possible that multiple seizures only lead to a single prosecution, thereby skewing the numbers.

²⁴ Fun fact: In 1999 there were only 112,000 drug offences recorded for all drugs (May et al. 2002)

Class B drug, subject to arrest and a two year prison sentence, though many officers would use their discretionary powers to informally deal with minor cannabis possession incidents (MPA 2002). Cannabis was reclassified from Class B to Class C at the end of January 2004 in an effort to reduce the time and cost of arresting and then cautioning adults in possession of small amounts of cannabis (MPA 2002). At the time of the change it was estimated to cost £350 million a year to deal with cannabis infractions, and consumed the time equivalent of 500 full-time officers (May et al. 2002). The most drastic legal ramification to occur as a result of the change was that officers were given the power to issue a cannabis Warning²⁵ to adults in possession of cannabis.

The warning scheme was first trialled in the borough of Lambeth in July 2001 and set to run for six months²⁶. Lambeth was short on officers, suffering an increasing crime rate, and when borough Commander Brian Paddick surveyed his officers he found they were frustrated at having to spend so much time dealing with minor cannabis possession cases. Instituting what became known as the ‘Brixton Experiment’, Paddick gave officers the ability to issue warnings to offenders, greatly reducing the officer’s time spent engaging with the case, and saving more than 4,000 hours of officers’ time despite the fact that there was a 110% increase in cannabis related incidents resulting from the new trial (MPA 2002). Upon finding a personal amount of cannabis on an individual, officers were to confiscate the cannabis, take the details of the person, and record that information into the Police National Computer (PNC). When the policy was formally adopted across the MPS, guidance notes stipulated that the officer should inform the offender that continued illegal activity may result in punishment.

The changes to cannabis regulation also instilled a presumption against arrest, something not specified in policy documents relating to any other drug (UKDPC 2008). To preserve officers’ discretionary powers, the option to arrest for possession of

²⁵ Originally the warnings were referred to as ‘formal warnings’ and were only renamed ‘cannabis Warnings’ in 2007. For the sake of ease and because the only thing that changed was the name, I will use cannabis Warning to refer to all of the warnings issued since 2004.

²⁶ Interestingly, the BBC reported that while police had arrested 278 people for cannabis from July to November in 2000, under the trial of the warning scheme they had issued 381 warnings during that same period in 2001, a 72% increase. The Met spokesperson commented that, “The number of warnings is higher than the number of arrests which shows that our officers are not ignoring cannabis possession. (BBC 2001)”

Class C drugs was introduced when cannabis joined the class. The Home Office praised the initial effects of the change in classification, citing that in the first year alone they had saved nearly 200,000 police person-hours and reduced arrests by 1/3 while an increased focus on Class A drugs allowed them to close 155 crack houses (Home Office 2005a). Even while praising a liberalization of drugs policy, a Home Office press release ended by saying, “we are continuing to take tough action to tackle drug users, dealers and the organised criminals who supply the drugs which end up on our streets” (Home Office 2005a, pg. 1). The introduction of cannabis Warnings also appear to have significantly reduced the number of individuals fined or given ‘other’ sentences²⁷ (Reuter and Stevens 2007). From the outset in 2004, ACPO guidelines dictated that issuing a cannabis warning would result in a Sanctioned Detection (ACPO 2003), the impact of which will be discussed in detail in Chapter Seven. As a preface to that discussion it is worth noting here that previously it took an average of five hours to arrest and caution someone for cannabis (Home Office 2002, May et al. 2002), but the cannabis warning scheme allowed the entire process to consume less than an hour, with only a few minutes of actual contact between the officer and civilian (Warburton, May, and Hough 2005).

The MPS official policy on cannabis²⁸ contains a very compelling section.

A police officer finding an adult person in possession of cannabis who is satisfied that the drugs is intended for that person’s own use should give a cannabis warning and not arrest the offender unless additional factors necessitating arrest apply. The drug must be seized but no further action should be taken in respect of the offence **other than completing administrative procedures**. Where it can be verified that an offender has received two previous cannabis warnings, a further warning should not be considered. This policy is not intended to interfere with the discretion of a police officer, but to provide direction and focus towards Governmental and policing priorities. This policy provides a framework to allow seizure of cannabis without arrest, **protecting the officer and the offender**. This approach to cannabis assists in removing a source of friction between the police and young people. It will reduce the amount of time devoted to policing the possession of a drugs which is undoubtedly harmful to individual health but does not cause harm to the community on the scale of crack cocaine, cocaine or heroin (Emphasis added, MPS 2007c)

²⁷ This can include a conditional discharge of the charge.

²⁸ The policy was developed before cannabis was moved back to a Class B drug in 2009, but was reviewed in 2011 and remains in effect.

The quote is compelling for a number of reasons. Perhaps most importantly, the policy does not compel any specific action other than seizing the cannabis, and phrases the bulk of the process as being an administrative procedure. The second area of note is that the policing of cannabis is recognized as a potential friction point between officers and the community, and as such paints the reduced interaction between the two groups as a potential benefit, with the subtext that this might help improve community confidence. Finally, it positions cannabis as the less harmful cousin of Class A drugs, giving cover to the idea that potentially pulling back on cannabis would allow for the focus on more harmful drugs. This idea, that you can more effectively manage one drug in order to free the resources to crack down on more harmful drugs, embodies the interlocking nature of Garland's ideas of bifurcation.

Cannabis was moved back to Class B in January 2009, though the Cannabis Warnings System (CWS) remained in place. Under the changes announced by Home Secretary Jaqui Smith in May 2008 and implemented in January 2009, there would no longer be cannabis Warnings issued to people found in possession of cannabis multiple times. Instead, a new power to issue a Penalty Notice for Disorder (PND) with a fine for £80 was to be instituted for people found with cannabis a second time within 12 months. Additionally, the MPS added conflicting information to their cannabis Monitoring Report, stating that, "It is important that, in applying this escalation policy, officers retain their operational discretion, albeit arrest should remain the first presumption, taking into account all relevant circumstances" (MPS 2010b, pg. 3). While it is unlikely that street-level officers are reading the monitoring reports coming from New Scotland Yard, this highlights a potential problem. Is there confusion within the MPS as to what the presumed action should be when dealing with cannabis possession, or is this a case of the MPS deliberately showing that enforcement mechanisms remain robust and available to officers, even if they are infrequently used?

ACPO noted at the introduction of the CWS that many officers currently did not prosecute individuals for cannabis possession, though they did not elaborate as to the reasons why. ACPO pitched the change in powers as a smarter way to be tough on drugs, justifying this by highlighting that individuals caught with cannabis would have their details recorded, and they may still be arrested if circumstances dictated. ACPO denied any liberalization of drug laws when cannabis was reclassified from Class B to

Class C, and even increased the penalties for trafficking cannabis to a maximum of 14 years imprisonment (Reuter and Stevens 2007). When cannabis was reclassified back to Class B in 2009, the potential penal penalty for possession of a Class B drug increased from two to five years, and the fine increased from £1,000 to £2,500 (Home Office 2009a).

ACPO guidance suggests that officers can still arrest offenders if they feel the offender won't change their ways after receiving a warning form, or if there is a community concern about anti-social behaviour associated with cannabis use (Byrne 2009). The number of arrests and cautions has fallen somewhat since the 2004 introduction of cannabis warnings, but it has been more than offset by a near doubling of the overall number of cannabis related police incidents (Coleman 2011).

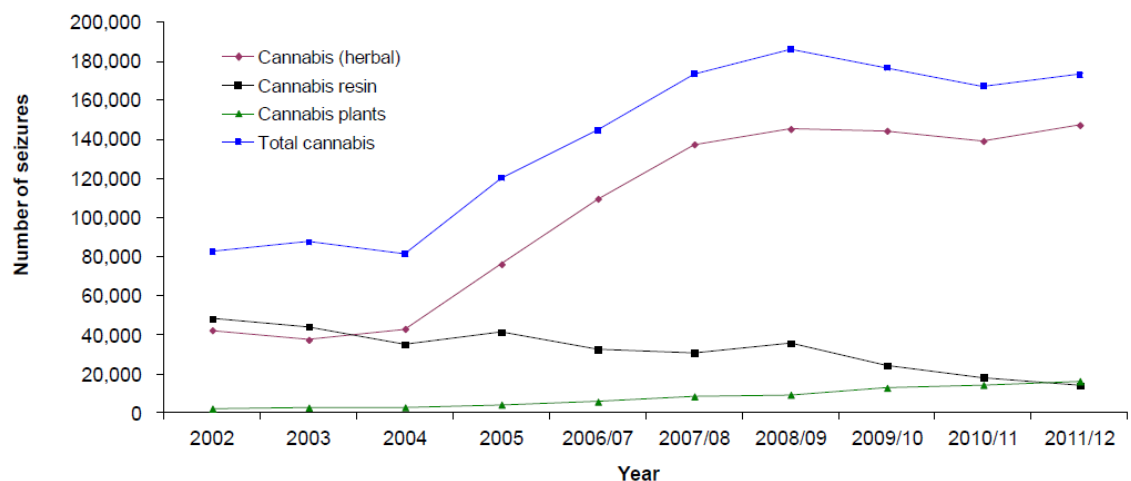


Figure 2: cannabis and Policing, (Coleman 2011)

2.2.4 A Drugs Predicament

Overall the emphasis of UK drugs policy is on containing the damage from drugs and their associated harms (Shiner 2006), with a strong but undefined role for police on the street. As part of the increasingly bifurcated national levels drug policies, officers have been given an increased role to use their powers to reduce the harm of drugs, both on the community and also on the user (Midford et al. 2002). Some of this power is directed towards amelioration and management; some towards the classic drug war tactics of taking down doors. Focusing police resources towards the criminal behaviour of drug users was seen as a way of more effectively engendering a positive impact on

the community through direct street-level action due to the inability to catch high level drug dealers (Sutton and James 1996). The shifted focus represents an opportunity to have direct impact on the quality of life for the community, but requires that as targets for prosecution change, so must the definition of success. Whereas once the nomenclature used was ‘war’, more recent policy documents emphasize ‘disruptions’ to drug dealing operations (Dorn and Lee 1999) while also calling for seizing of all assets related to drugs dealing (Home Office 2008). But where health and rehabilitation of the individual were once a constant theme alongside the penal elements of anti-drug work, Stimson points out that, “Drug policy has now focused down on the link between drugs and crime’ leading to ‘the introduction of a punitive and coercive ethos” (Stimson 2000, pg. 260). State control is strengthened under the ‘threat’ posed by increasing crime trends and the desire to protect society from the harmfulness of drugs (Elvins 2003). However, misidentifying police as the sole units capable of protecting society from the harm of drugs fails to appreciate the contextualized nature of drug related offending (Midford et al. 2002) and the myriad of supporting agencies and practitioners needed if the goal is rehabilitation.

2.3 New Public Managerialism and Policing

New Public Managerialism began under the Conservatives in the 1980’s, but gained prominence with the election of New Labour in 1997. Such was the inculcation of NPM that by 2000 Dorn argued, “...[drugs policy] performance management and auditing will not lightly be brushed aside” (2000, pg. 300). The key principles of NPM involve streamlining, marketization, and managerialism. In ‘streamlining’, public sector bodies are reconfigured or trimmed to operate more efficiently, while ‘marketization’ opens up new avenues of control and competition (Legrand 2003). Managerialism focuses on measuring the application and success of public sector bodies against a set of performance indicators (PI). The police have been most affected by managerialism (Knight 2008), though they have also faced pressure to streamline their operations in the ‘age of austerity’ (HMIC 2012).

For managerialism to be effective, performance indicators are needed. There are four common types of statutory performance indicators: Input, Process, Output, and Outcome (Collier 2006). Input indicators look towards what the police are being asked to do, such as the number of crimes occurring and calls for assistance. Process

indicators refer to how police engage in the acts of policing. These include things like how quickly they respond to calls, and time spent in public view. Output indicators focus on arrests and sanctioned detections, and show the impact if not the effectiveness of police efforts. Outcome indicators measure satisfaction with policing, and are intended to highlight the positive impacts of police efforts. How and which performance indicators are used can be part of efforts to shape developments in how policy is perceived and designed (Johnsen 2005).

Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI) was formally incorporated in to policing with the 1999 *Crime Reduction Strategy* (Home Office 1999). The BVPI developed specific targets for the decrease of specific criminal activity (Kornicki 2000). Eventually this target based approach would become the Policing and Performance Assessment Framework (PPAF), led by HMIC. The PPAF introduced statutory performance indicators directed at ‘citizen focus’ and ‘local policing’. This led to the Assessment of Policing and Community Safety (APACS), in 2008. This measured not just the police efforts at fighting crime, but all partner elements. PPAF came about because, “...the UK police service was considered to have lagged behind many other public services in terms of the extent, robustness and transparency of their performance measurement”(Willis and Homel 2008, pg. 312). These were all eventually replaced by the Single Confidence Target (SCT) that sought to remove the complex web of performance management regimes so that all policing efforts would be focused on improving community confidence (HM Treasury 2009). In all of these cases the decision to focus on decisively measuring the performance of public sector bodies, “...ignores the long-established understanding that public sector goals are ambiguous, multiple, complex and frequently in conflict with one another” (Jackson 2011, pg. 15).

In addition to targets developed for performance management efforts, new frameworks were developed to categorise the activities police were engaging in, including Offences Brought To Justice (OBTJ) in 2002 (Neyroud 2008). “An offence is brought to justice if it results in either a caution, a conviction, a penalty notice for disorder, a formal warning for a cannabis offence, or is taken into consideration by a court” (Ministry of Justice 2010a, pg. 79). Given the options to bring offences to justice without necessarily arresting an individual, the OBTJ was intended to more accurately

catalogue the number of individuals coming before the CJS. The OBTJ reframed the way police recorded crime, but also introduced additional targets based on the new framework. Initially the OBTJ sought to document increases across all crime types, but in 2008 the OBTJ was amended to focus on only serious crimes (Ministry of Justice 2010a). This was in part because:

The current system of measuring police performance has distorted operational priorities, criminalised many individuals for trivial misdemeanours, and prevented forces from focusing on what is important locally.... Generic targets for offences brought to justice and sanction detections, which encouraged forces to focus on the easiest crimes to resolve rather than those which have the most significant impact on public safety, have been removed from the 2008/09 statutory performance indicators. These changes should be reflected in local practice and must be reinforced by an alignment in performance measures between the police and the Crown Prosecution Service. (Select Committee on Home Affairs 2008, pg. 40)

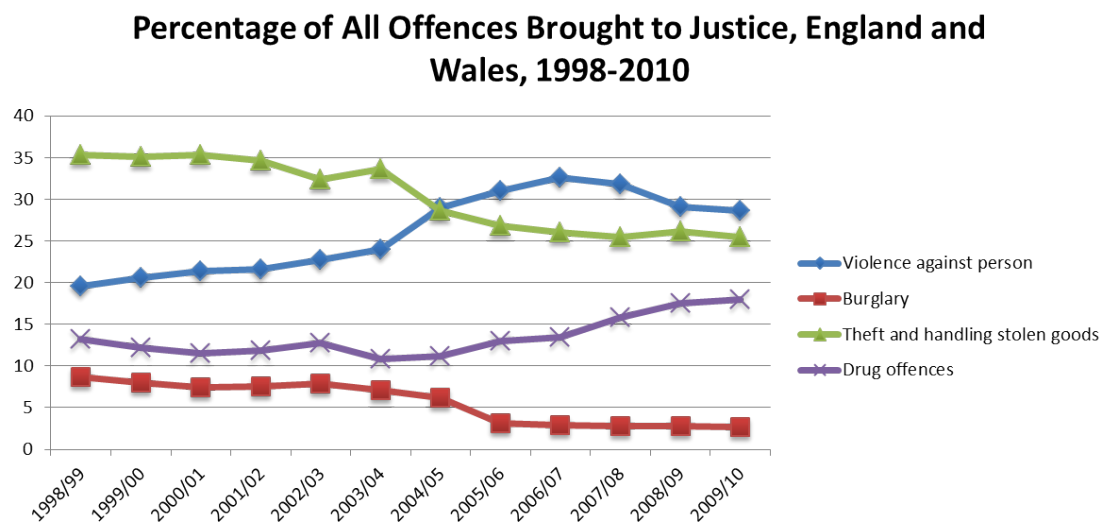


Figure 3: Percentage of All Offences Brought to Justice (Ministry of Justice 2010b)

2.3.1 Why Agencies and Governments Use Performance Management

While this research will highlight the unintended consequences of performance management, there are good reasons to implement performance management frameworks in to policing. Implementation of these schemes is often begun at the highest levels of the police service in the hopes that it will trickle down the organization (Barber 2008) and correct the failings plaguing a police service (Chan 1999). Using guidelines and crime reduction targets is thought to clarify the

organizational goals and associated core values (Bratton and Knobler 2009). The targets can be seen as goals for the organisation to achieve, and structure how they will achieve them. Having these goals can help to justify the continued existence of the organisation in the current form, and further strengthen organizational direction amongst staff (Zhao, Lovrich, and Robinson 2001). Targets can also reinvigorate the public sector, giving them a *raison d'être* in situations that are often conflicting and full of misaligned objectives (Bevan and Hood 2006). Not only can these efforts unite the organisation, they can help generate information to confirm the ability of the organization to itself and to others.

If agencies cannot generate performance information, then they cannot perceive themselves, or be perceived by others, as professional or properly managed, they cannot demonstrate that they are deploying their resources rationally, and they risk political pillory and economic damage. (Dorn 2000, pg. 301)

The above reasons tend to focus on a theoretical concept of how performance targets will impact the criminal justice organisations themselves. But governments implementing performance management efforts often are thinking of the impact on crime and the perception of the criminal justice system, not the wellbeing of the criminal justice organisations themselves. To that end there are three main reasons to implement performance management efforts.

Firstly, there is strong incentive to improve the financial efficiency of public sector bodies (Rogerson 1995). This can involve the actual trimming of staff and budgets, but a larger concern is that criminal justice systems are processing individuals efficiently. Non-adaptive practices require constant monitoring and control of a deviant sub-population of 'others', and this must be done with efficiency given constraints on money and manpower (Brownlee 1998). It is no coincidence that the initial programme of efficiency was called 'Best Value Performance Indicator'. But public sector bodies are defined by their service to the citizenry, not the profit margin that guides private sector entities (Hughes 2003).

The second reason often cited for enacting performance management regimes is accountability (Chan 1999). Accountability schemes can aim to improve democratic

control, provide bureaucratic means of assessing performance to one's superiors (Stenning 1995), or horizontally with collective self-regulation (Somerville 2009). In most cases, the performance management frameworks offered in UK policing serve to notify the public and senior managers of performance, but limit ability for democratic oversight (Delsol and Shiner 2006). While the task may be to shed light on an agency's practices, the fear of public criticism from this new accountability can engender overly cautious performance management techniques (Lees, Meyer, and Rafferty 2011). The development of performance management techniques that ascribe to improve the accountability of public services require auditing mechanisms, but these are, "...in danger of being destructive, creating a simplistic description of practice and focusing on achieving service outputs with little attention to user outcomes" (Munro 2004, pg. 1075). In short, accountability is often about managing risk, not improving practice (Chan 1999).

Finally, a driving factor in adopting performance management techniques is to improve the appearance of an organisation's performance. This differs from the idea of accountability in that accountability is about providing mechanisms to audit and learn from organisational performance, while improved appearance is entirely about projecting a positive image without any liability to act on what comes forth. The actions of NPM can be interpreted as building a buffer for the organisation, protecting it from criticism and giving it space to operate as it sees fit provided the numbers tell the story the public and Government wants to see.

Simply stated, organizational change can reflect the purposeful organizational effort to both generate public support and build 'legitimacy' by making the organization simultaneously look good to outsiders and appear stable to insiders. This means that organizational change can take the shape of a process of creating new programs and increasing the use of new symbols, and rituals, while at the same time the core mission of an organization and functional priorities remain substantially intact. (Zhao, Lovrich, and Robinson 2001, pg. 368)

Manning (1988) refers to this as putting 'old wine in new bottles'. In focusing on representation of police responses to crime, any limited focus on accountability may turn in to nothing more than an exercise in superfluous image management (Chan 1999). As Reiner pointed out, the legitimacy necessary for the police to operate in a

democratic society is constantly being renegotiated with the community (2010), and the use of NPM provides public evidence of the effectiveness -and therefore legitimacy- of policing organisations.

2.3.2 *The Challenge for NPM in Drugs and Community Policing*

Measuring activity around drugs is problematic, and community policing efforts are not necessarily compatible with the need to hit specific crime reduction targets (Moore and Braga 2003, Herrington and Millie 2006). As discussed earlier, arrests and drug seizures may misconstrue the problem and are too ambiguous to be effective tools. These are output measures that demonstrate effort, not impact. The disruptions, arrests, and confiscations are all based on figures that fail to account for, “drugs not seized, persons not captured, and organisations not disrupted or dismantled, etc” (Dorn 2000, pg. 310). And yet, these output measurements are exactly what the officers, especially RT officers, are being guided by. These top-down measurements may miss the ‘low culture’ aspects of pragmatism and discretion in policing (De Lint 1999, Goldstein 1960) as they attempt to enhance accountability to an outside audience not versed in police practice

Police agencies are inclined to measure outputs even while outcomes can be seen as a, “direct measure of the value that police seek to produce. Unless we can see the value, we cannot be sure that police efforts are worthwhile” (Moore and Braga 2003, pg. 443). Communities rarely call for more arrests, but they often want to see less crime or feel more secure. These require outcome measurements. The CWS attempts to show output, in the form of detections and helps push up the overall sanction detection rate for all crime types. In 2010/11 drug offences had a 94 per cent detection rate²⁹, while offences against vehicles had just 11 per cent, and the overall figure for all crime was 28 per cent (Home Office 2011a)³⁰. The Home Affairs Select Committee had called

²⁹ It is worth noting that there is an enormous number of drugs offense that remain unknown to the police and which are never reported, so the detection rate is artificially high because offences tend only to be known about or recorded when they’ve been cleared up

³⁰ The official definition for sanction detection is as follows. 'A sanctioned detection occurs when (1) a notifiable offence (crime) has been committed and recorded; (2) a suspect has been identified and is aware of the detection; (3) the CPS evidential test is satisfied; (4) the victim has been informed that the offence has been detected, and; (5) the suspect has been charged, reported for summons, or cautioned, been issued With a penalty notice for disorder or the offence has been taken into consideration when an offender is sentenced.' This is different than a simple ‘detection’ which indicates a case resolved through administrative means.

for police forces to hit a 25 per cent sanction detection rate for all crimes in 2008, but acknowledge in the same report that, “in order to meet this kind of quantitative target, it is easier for officers to pursue minor offences than the more complex crimes, and to abandon their professional discretion in how they might best deal with these incidents” (Select Committee on Home Affairs 2008, pg. 23). Fully 35% of all drug related sanctioned detections in England and Wales were cannabis warnings, representing 7% of all sanctioned detections that year. The next best percentage for formal outcomes not involving arrest in the criminal justice system, at only 6% of the total, is for Penalty Notices for Disorder for drugs possession (Home Office 2011a).

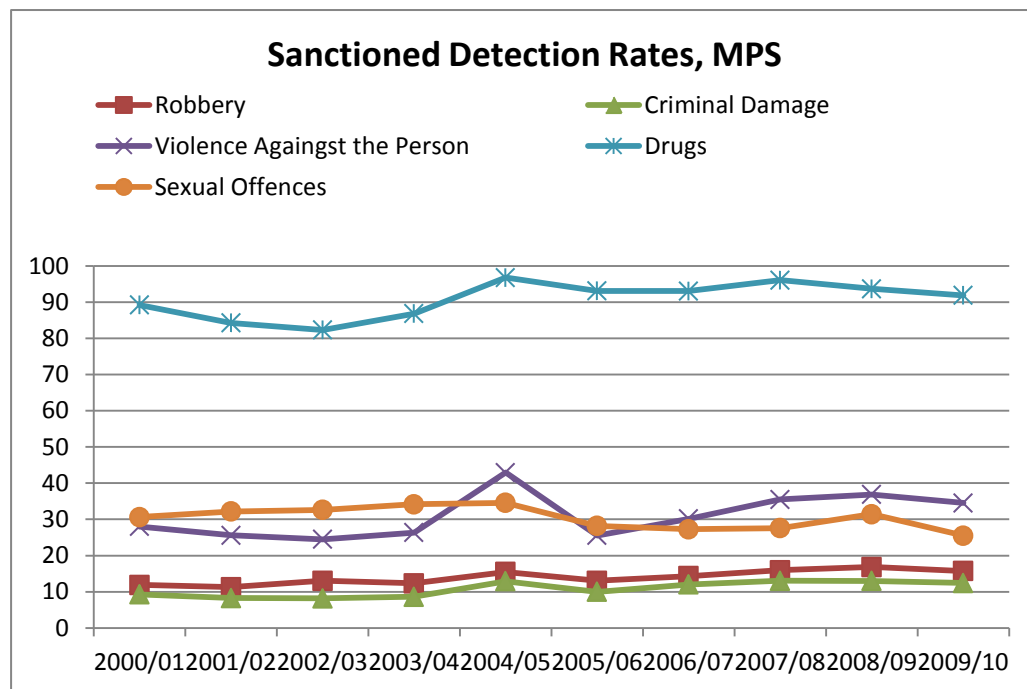


Figure 4: Sanction Detection Rates, MPS, 2011

2.4 The Criminological Predicament:

The ideas of bifurcation are used as my main conceptual driver in this research, and in this section we will examine those ideas. The concept of bifurcation rests on the idea that the penal-welfarism of yesteryear has transformed into a new criminological predicament based on, “the normality of high crime rates and the acknowledged limitations of the criminal justice state” (Garland 2001, pg. 106). Other authors have identified similar changes to social control mechanisms (Simon and Feeley 1995, Cohen 1985), though they have interpreted the structure of these changes differently. According to Garland (2001) this predicament brought about a new bifurcated structure to criminal justice policies. Adaptive responses that define deviance down

and measure success in terms of input instead of outcome were wielded at the same time as non-adaptive strategies (also known as sovereign state strategies) attempted to reassert the power of the state through punitive enforcement based measure. With administrative state actors still mired in maintaining effective policy solutions based on their scarce resources, politicians react to 'shocking but atypical media stories with 'impassioned' partisan pressure (Garland 2001, pg. 112). The tension between the two responses becomes more polarized, and actors who are both politicians and administrators (often Ministers leading a department) are stuck in a structured ambivalence where they must balance the need to pursue an agencies' mission whilst adhering to political platforms.

2.4.1 A Bifurcated Approach:

Adaptive strategies stress prevention and partnership as criminal justice agencies seek to retain their legitimacy despite a normalization of the criminal behaviour they are chartered to thwart. These strategies often take the form of 'low-visibility administrative decisions, but can also be seen in the wider efforts to reshape policing through development of high-visibility reforms to accountability for criminal justice organisations. Garland says that in adaptive strategies,

... the state works through civil society and not upon it, and emphasizes proactive prevention rather than the prosecution and punishment of individuals. Adaptive solutions of this kind are politically difficult and institutionally radical. (Garland 2001, pg. 348)

Adaptive responses are often formulated far from the media spotlight at the 'shallow' end of the criminal justice process, and is perhaps most evident in the New Public Managerialism (NPM) that swept through Britain during the New Labour government from 1997-2010. In its most basic form, NPM is an attempt to convey the management practices of private corporate enterprise into the realm of public agencies (McLaughlin 2007, Kirchener 1998), bringing efficacy, efficiency and accountability to the forefront of performance measurement. Bringing market based measures of success to public bodies created a target mentality that sought to identify singular causes of crime within the rational criminal (Sergeant 2008). This idea developed alongside the idea that success can be had in successfully managing problems if not abating them (Shiner 2009).

At the same time sovereign state strategies were employed, representing expressive punitive endeavours based upon a denial of the state's ability to tackle high crime rates. Penal welfarism gave way to expressively punitive sanctions that emanated freely from political actors as they responded to populist sentiment. According to Garland, the state was forced to act out with ever increasing punitiveness in an effort to reassert its dominance over crime. For Garland, the changes bringing about 'late modernity' (changes to the family structure, city structures, and electronic mass media), brought with them criminal problems associated not with deprivation, but with the lack of internal and social controls. The policy response to this is to ratchet up the perceived missing control. As the neo-liberal state pulled back from providing the welfare safety net, it had to provide control over those who were unable to integrate into successful self-reliance. Current sentencing laws are focused on the incapacitation of the offender, and in doing so protect the community from their destructive ways. In fact, in Garland's world, the entire community becomes the victim of the criminal, and, "today the interests of convicted offenders, insofar as they are considered at all, are viewed as fundamentally opposed to those of the public" (Garland 2001, pg. 181). Even if rehabilitation has maintained a foothold in aspects of penal policy (see drugs strategy discussion) populist demand for strong punishments for offenders is well documented (Bottoms 1995, Garland 1996).

Garland also sees the state adopting two 'schizoid' roles about the actors involved in crime. The first is the criminology of the self, portraying the actor as a rational deviant whose actions are calculated. The criminology of the other is focused on the stranger, the outside who invades the community. "... this figure is no longer the poorly socialized misfit in need of assistance, but instead an illicit, opportunistic consumer, whose access to social goods must be barred"(Garland 1996, pg. 451). These roles allow the state to push the notion that the rational actor is beyond the control of the state and is the responsibility of private actors to contain, whilst the outsider allows the state to invigorate its role in protecting society. Garland believes that the criminology of the self is, "...invoked to routinize crime, to allay disproportionate fears and to promote preventative action." While the criminology of the other, "...functions to demonize the criminal, to act out popular fears and resentment and to promote support for state punishment" (2001, pg. 137).

When examining the bifurcated approach, Garland says, “One strategy seeks to build institutions better suited to the conditions of late modernity, another cranks up the old powers of the state in an attempt to overcome these same conditions” (2001, pg. 138). Perhaps not intentional in design, Garland believes these new criminal justice policies, and the gulf between them, are the result of a chaotic response by the state to the normalization of high crime (Matravers and Maruna 2004). However, Garland does not see this setup as decisively new, rather it is a, “...reconfigured complex of interlocking structures and strategies that are themselves composed of old and new elements, the old revised and reoriented by a new operation context” (Garland 2001, pg. 23). This is a key idea in Garland’s work, and its relevance will remain evident throughout this discussion. The idea of bifurcation does not necessarily suggest a clearly demarcated split between different types of policing activity. Criminal justice policy making, when presented to the public at least, can produce a tangled mess of ideas that represent input from a whole host of stakeholders disconnected from the eventual implementation of said policies. What may seem to be an adaptive policy on the surface may still rely on strong penal enforcement mechanisms, and may in fact significantly widen the net bringing more people in to the criminal justice system. One need only look at Anti-Social Behaviour Orders to see the problems of a bifurcated response.

The development of Antisocial Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) and Dispersal Orders were tools developed to support criminal justice responses to the demands generated by community partnership in police prioritisation. These tools are a cornerstone of the shift towards adopting expressive punitive strategies to show that the criminal justice system has a response to unyielding criminality, while actually serving manage an unbeatable problem (Garland 2001). The national level strategies developed under New Labour guided a turn towards community confidence but often increased assertive control by the state for problematic citizens (Reiner 2007). For example, the ASBO can be seen as an extension of state control, criminalizing behaviour that previously would not have been punished by formal action. Sumner described the increased reach of the state as creating a ‘sociology of censure’ where social regulation has a distinct, “...political character... reliance on value judgments, and their formal bureaucratic character” (Sumner 1990, pg. 35). The aim of many of these efforts was

to reassure the public that the police could and would take care of the issues that were identified as being persistent and harmful in their community.

2.4.2 *Structured Ambivalence:*

The ‘interlocking principles’ of rehabilitative interventions that characterized the penal welfare structure in place by the 1970’s gave professionals and experts a ‘central place’ to guide a system intent on restoring the criminal and stopping crime (Garland 2001). But increasingly, formulated policy is the result of political actors, while administrative experts cobble together workable policies for front line staff. Those political actors who are also administrators and are caught between the administrative role that requires sure-handed management of a department (including not only its resources but also its role and mission), and being responsive to their political responsibilities of party and platform. “They need to look both ways... To put in place viable policies but also to minimize the political risks entailed in doing so” (Garland 2001, pg. 112). Previously the rehabilitative ideal was, “an all-embracing conceptual net that could be cast over each and every activity in the penal field, allowing practitioners to render their world coherent and meaningful...” (Garland 2001, pg. 35). While it would be foolish to claim political influence was non-existent, formulation of policy was, at one time, based on expert opinion that reported to politicians. But what may be seen as common sense approaches by practitioners may often appear far uglier when caught in the full lights of the media. Politicized responses can put pressure against practical solutions, stalling both in their tracts and constructing an unofficial ambivalence.

Garland notes that a new ‘sociology of punishment’ (1991) developed whereby criminal actors and criminal justice policy are no longer just at the periphery of society. Instead, penalty has become central to our everyday life, a part of our daily consciousness. In trying to both manage and punish criminality, administrators of the system have had to make the general citizenry acutely aware of the problem and then find ways of visibly attacking the perceived assailants in a way that still allowed the system to function.

Where once Penal welfarism understood the role society played in offending and tried to rehabilitate the offender, now we find that new penology blames the offender for their rational choice to offend, and tries to protect society from the outsider seeking to harm them (Reiner 2007, pg. 125)

2.4.3 *Criticisms of Garland:*

Of course, Garland's theories are not without criticism. Zedner (2002) points out that welfarism was never completely in vogue, and that throughout modernity there was a continued and steady growth in penal based responses. This was because there was never a uniform or even all-encompassing state of welfarism obtained. For Zedner, the political ideal of welfarism that Garland draws upon was never able to meet the implemented reality of a rapidly transforming post-war society, and Garland may have been too idealistically portraying the strong push of the welfare state. Matthews (Matthews 2005) rejects the punitive turn proposed by Garland, identifying that while incarceration may increase, this can be due to iatrogenic impacts caused by modern policy, not necessarily an aim towards punitiveness. Reiner points out that, "...there has not been an unbroken and unilinear march towards the 'culture of control' since the 1970s" and that "The change was not a reversal but rather a sharp accentuation of a trend towards harder crime control discourse and policies, embedding them much more deeply" (Reiner 2007, pg. 118). Indeed throughout the post-war period the use of fines in the penal system increased dramatically whilst the use of the more rehabilitative focused probation actually dropped (Bottoms 1983).

Nor was Garland alone in labelling the changes from a progressive penology that sought to rehabilitate, to what Feeley and Simon have dubbed 'New Penology' (1995, 1992). They identified the development of risk based penal policy that forgoes rehabilitation and instead relies heavily on imprisonment and monitoring of offenders to protect society via an, 'actuarial consideration of aggregates' (1992, pg. 449). For Simon and Feeley:

"The New penology is neither about punishing nor about rehabilitating individuals. It is about identifying and managing unruly groups. It is concerned with the rationality not of individual behaviour or even community organisations, but of managerial processes. Its goal is not to eliminate crime, but to make it tolerable through systemic coordination" (1995, pg. 455)

Other authors have examined the topics covered by Garland and come to a different interpretation. Wacquant (2009) describes the transformation in the neo-liberal state as an attempt to use mass incarceration in place of the welfare state. What Garland (2001) sees as an expressive penal response to an inability to control, Wacquant sees as a new way to control the poor through the retraction of welfare through 'reform'. Where Garland sees bifurcation in the types of responses, Wacquant sees it in the populations targeted; a libertarian state for the rich, and an all-encompassing penal state for the poor (Lynch 2011).

Stanley Cohen (1985) also addressed many of the changes identified by Garland. Where Garland sees bifurcations, Cohen saw official oscillation between policies that build extra social control and those that tried to weaken control. For Cohen, even programs aimed at diversion are actually empowered to extend coercion through iatrogenic feedback loops (1985). Cohen's iatrogenic processes are less about expressive penal sanctions, and more oriented towards maintaining control through classification. Cohen was writing more than 15 years before Garland, and so it is possible that his observations see less demarcation between what Garland described as adaptive and non-adaptive because they had not yet fully blossomed. That said, Cohen's work provides a demystification of the of the changing nature of social control and could have provided a valuable alternative conceptual driver for this research.

Another common criticism of Garland's work is the lack of focus on the street-level. In an effort to discuss the broader theoretical elements in his work, the intricacies of street-level implementation are sometimes overlooked by Garland. As Lipsky (1980) has pointed out, street-level implementation is often far removed from the original policy formulations. Garland fails to fully appreciate that the schizophrenic nature of policymaking may extend into the street-level implementation by criminal justice organisations. Garland's perceptions of a bifurcated approach also leaves out situations where non-punitive sanctions, like coerced drug treatment, are tied to threats of imprisonment (Matthews 2005). In recent decades the use of community sanctions (seen as a non-punitive form of penal intrusion) has grown at similar rates to the prison populations (Matthews 2005). So where Garland may be correct in highlighting the

neo-liberal state's desire to control, the situation may not be so clearly biased towards the punitive elements.

Additionally, whilst Garland understands these changes to be a response to the reactive nature of the public in late modernity, Hough and Roberts (1999) find that the public opinion is generally in line with sentencing practices at the time, albeit that the public often is unaware of what sentencing policy actually looks like. "Populism is seen to fuel the 'punitive turn' because the public harbours deep-seated punitive sentiments. These sentiments, it is argued, were once kept in check by a benign and enlightened group of experts" (Matthews 2005, pg. 188). But populism may not intrinsically seek blood, and has been a part of progressive movements throughout history. What Garland hits upon, though perhaps not centrally enough, may be the role of the media so widely disseminating the concerns created by structural changes in late modernity.

Finally, it is worth considering disconnect between Garland's ideas about the dismantling of the welfarism of yesteryear and the managerial practices supporting that transition. Managerial practices themselves are not capable of creating expressive penal sanctions, they are merely capable of performing those new functions (Cheliotis 2006). Garland has suggested that the role of administrative actors may have only limited impact on trends in the criminal justice system (1985). As I will show in later chapters, the administrative direction imposed on the street-level actors can radically mutate the intended effects of criminal justice policies.

Whatever the case, Garland's work has struck a chord with many scholars. Reiner described *Culture of Control* as having, "...deservedly become exceptionally influential" (Reiner 2007, pg. 117). Garland sees a bifurcated system populated by chaotic responses to maintain the role of the state, and given the growing assertion of the role of drugs in both criminality and the degradation of the state, it is important to examine the situation at street-level. Garland's high altitude view paints the picture whereby the main actors are organisations, political institutions, and bureaucratic entities. While the accuracy of his ideas is, in this author's opinion, quite high, engaging with those changes at the level that Garland explores leaves us without a more detailed view portraying street-level actors who take policy and transform it into practice. Garland does begin to touch on the professionalism engendered within these

organisations, but a more detailed exploration of the sharp end of the stick is required. Hopefully Garland's work will be helpful in attempting to understand the role of drugs in street-level policing.

2.5 Conclusion:

A clear trend is emerging from the literature; policy is becoming bifurcated, politicians are keen to clamp down on dealers while helping addicts, community policing remains despite its associated measurement tools being dismantled, and policy documents avoid discussing what police will actually do on the street. We are left with a situation where the ferocity of politicians' denouncement of criminality is tempered by administrative actors. The practicalities of implementation, limits to organisational capabilities, and execution by administrative actors all serve to distort the final picture of street-level activity.

Chapter 3- Methods

Too often social analysts offer generalizations about organizational and government actions without concretely explaining how individual citizens and workers are affected by the actions, how the behaviour of individuals, when aggregated, give rise to the actions, or how and why the actions in question are consistently reproduced by the behaviour of individuals. (Lipsky 1980, pg. xi)

The best advice I could offer to a researcher just entering a police system would be precisely the same were he a recruit: simply keep quiet and to himself virtually everything he hears and sees... (Van Maanen 1978, pg. 341)

This project employed ethnography, observational data, formal and informal interviews, and document analysis, in order to produce a case study of the role of drugs in street-level officers' policing activity. The research took place in the London borough of Watling, with officers from the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) of London, and involved work with Response Teams and Safer Neighbourhood Teams from August 2010 to August 2011³¹. The research included spending nearly 600 hours³² with officers in five different units, observing more than 300 incidents, and conducting 25 in-depth interviews. This chapter will examine the logic of choosing these methods, how data was analysed, the process of gaining access, the conduct of the researcher, and the ethical quandaries faced in the field. The research questions guiding this project are:

What is the role of drugs in the working practices of street-level police officers not in a specialist drugs unit?

Why did the number of police recorded incidents involving cannabis possession double between 2004 and 2009?

Do we see evidence of Garland's theories on bifurcation in the criminal justice system when examining the previous questions?

³¹ Fieldwork actually ended on the morning of August 6, 2011 after completing an overnight shift with officers. Not 12 hours after I turned in my radio and said my final goodbye's to the officers, rioting began in Tottenham. It would spread across England for the next four nights.

³² It should be noted that Mastrofski and Parks (Mastrofski and Parks 1990) took two years and had several researchers in the field in order to compile 500 hours of field observations. That being said, my time was insignificant compared to Smith and Grey (1983).

3.1 Methodological Approach

Ethnography is by no means a new method for researching police systems, and the multitude of previous efforts using this approach provide a strong base from which to develop this research (Collison 1995, Behr 2002, Richman 1983, Smith and Gray 1983, Skolnick 1966, Manning 1980, Herbert 1997, Foster 1989). This research examines the role of drugs in street-level policing through observing those officers. The approach of working with street-level officers as an observer is based upon the idea that, “Any comprehensive assessment of what police accomplish must account for the actions of personnel at the lowest rungs of the organizational ladder—the rank-and-file police officers and civilians in whom most of the organization’s resources are invested.” (Mastrofski 2004, pg. 100).

It should be noted at the onset that even while a detailed methodological plan was developed, flexibility is an important part of the evolution of a qualitative case study (Robson 2002). I was required to refine aspects of the fieldwork in order to, “...progressively focus the study on the features of the case which gradually appear to be most significant.” (Marby 2008, pg. 216). The methodologies selected allowed this project to obtain what might be considered a typical case study (Fine 1991) wherein the subject is limited the role of drugs in the working lives of police officers in the borough of Watling. As a case study, the focus is on, “a system of action rather than an individual or group of individuals” (Tellis 1997). A case study may be limited to a single location or process (Bryman 2001), but the need to understand the different perspectives contributing to the phenomena under study may require the research to address multiple cases. Integrating multiple perspectives allows the case study to be, “holistic, comprehensive and contextualized” (Ritchie and Lewis 2003, pg. 52).

Though a case study is not necessarily generalizable, it, “...allows investigator to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events such as individual life cycles, small group behaviour, organization and managerial processes.” (Yin 1993, pg. 4). In this situation, the research is described as a case not because of the number of locations studied, but because the focus of the research is on role of drugs within the larger context of street-level police work. To try and separate drugs policing from its place within the current policy reality would potentially leave us with a myopic view. The research aims to provide practical and functional analysis of a specific situation

that can, in aggregation with other research, develops a well-rounded picture of drugs policing (Stake 1980). Watling's experiences with drugs allow us to see it as an exemplification of issues facing many inner-London boroughs.

The focus of analysis in this thesis rests largely on the organisational factors impacting the delivery of policing in Watling. This could have easily been otherwise. The decision could have been made to place class, gender and ethnicity in the foreground of officers' words and actions. Certainly this would have also produced thought provoking research. I have decided not to focus on these elements for two reasons. First is that it was much easier to ask officers about their role in the context of the wider profession and organisation than it would have been to pursue questions about class and ethnicity. As I will discuss in detail in this chapter, I have to carefully conduct myself at all times during fieldwork or risk exclusion. I felt that pursuing questions of ethnicity, gender and class outside of naturally occurring incidents would have jeopardised my access.

Second is that the issues of class, ethnicity, and gender emerged holistically during the course of this research. Though they are not put at the forefront, they are included as contextualising features of the analysis. In Chapter Four (section 4.3.5) I have included a discussion of how officers attempted to justify the disproportionality seen in stop and search activity, shedding light on their ideas of ethnicity and class. This is perhaps less robust than others (Miller 2010, Lee, Steinberg, and Piquero 2010, Bradford, Jackson, and Stanko 2009, Bowling, Parmar, and Phillips 2008, Newburn, Shiner, and Hayman 2004, Fitzgerald 1993), but it is that extensive availability of research focusing specifically on the questions of ethnicity that provides this work with the space to direct much its focus elsewhere. The primary aim of this research was to understand why there was such a dramatic increase in drug seizures in recent years by examining how drugs policing fits in to the working lives of police officers. The overriding component that impacted police activity in the area under examination seemed to be the use of performance measurement targets, and so this issue is placed at the forefront of analysis.

3.1.1 Interviews

This research also made use of data gleaned from 23 semi-structured in-depth interviews³³. Though a more challenging method than a fully structured interview (Wengraf 2001), the openness of the questions and structure allowed the researcher to amend their line of questions as the interview progresses, in order to expand on issues brought up by their respondent (Kvale and Brinkmann 2008). “It takes training and practice to write open-ended questions... and then keep from transforming them into closed-ended questions, especially with a resistant subject, when actually conducting the interview” (Sofaer 2002, pg. 334). The interviews only began in April 2011, eight months after joining the teams. The delay was done intentionally so that I would have time gain the trust of the officers, and to work through many basic questions during informal chats with officers. Waiting to begin interviews paid dividends visible in the comfortability and eagerness officers had to take part.

Officers were selected using a process that fell somewhere between heterogeneous purposive sampling (Robson 2002) and a ‘typical case’ purposive sampling. By seeking out typical cases it was hoped that the research sample took account of the key dimensions of policing in Watling, providing an overview of the issues at hand. Given the largely homogenous ethnic makeup of the teams, heterogeneity across rank, and time in service, the officer’s style of policing became the prime purposive criteria. While officers all start out on a Response Team³⁴ at the beginning of their career, the 32 different boroughs and numerous different roles they might take on over the course of a 30 year career meant that seeking heterogeneity across those dimensions, to find normality, was the best option.

The precise timing of interviews and the selection of respondents took on an opportunistic element. With Response Teams I would generally try to interview officers between 1am-4am on a weeknight shift when the borough had less calls, so as to minimise the impact on the team’s ability to respond to calls. I sought permission from the Inspector to hold interviews during a specific shift, and once approved, would let at least two officers know that I was interested in interviewing them that shift.

³³ See Interview Schedules in Appendices D and E

³⁴ Response Teams patrol boroughs and respond to calls from the dispatch communications centre. See the ‘Units’ section located in this chapter for a more in-depth explanation of what Response Teams do.

Ideally interviews would occur when the officer's partner was completing paperwork. Often I would go out on patrol with the officers I intended to interview that shift so that I would be nearby when they became free. Patrolling with an officer during the shift in which they were interviewed provided a built in element of triangulation³⁵. It also gave the shift a purposive conversation that often extended well past the end of the formal interview. I did not interview officers when they were on their official meal breaks.

I did not hide the fact I was asking some officers to do interviews and not others, and several times upon completion of an interview, officers would jokingly announce to the team the traumatic nature of the encounter they had just had with me. This prompted two officers to say that they thought they would be able to handle the interview process, and even though I had not specifically sought to interview these officers, I did so to maintain the working relationship. The teams were largely male and white, but I sought to interview women and minorities on the team in order to ensure the full-breadth of perspectives were acknowledged.

Interviews were usually conducted in an empty office at the police station or an otherwise private space, excluding the interrogation room known as 'the fishbowl'. Due to the large windows that made up one wall of the room, I felt that the visibility and connotation as places of interrogation might sour any interview conducted in the fishbowl. Once seated, officers were given a consent form³⁶ to sign and return to the researcher, and an additional copy of the form to keep for their records. The officers were also asked to fill out a basic demographic questionnaire³⁷ that asked for their age, ethnicity, and religious affiliation. This sheet was not designed to capture a wide breadth of descriptive information in order to draw inferences, but was a tool used largely to reinforce that the formality of the interview experience. While this might be seen as creating a barrier to rapport, I felt that rapport had already been established through eight months of interaction, and this symbolic gesture would highlight the formality of the interview. Officers were asked to confirm they had read the consent form, if they had any questions, and if recording could begin. I then reiterated the

³⁵ See the next section for a further discussion of triangulation.

³⁶ See Consent Form in Appendix A

³⁷ See Demographics Sheet in Appendix B

anonymity the officers were being provided, their ability to terminate the interview at any point, and their right to refuse to answer any question for any reason. I also made sure they were aware that participation was entirely voluntary.

The consent form, data sheet, recorder, notebook, and symbolic positioning across from one another were efforts to remind officers that I was a researcher. I was torn between wanting to get the best possible data and the knowledge that an officer might inadvertently reveal highly sensitive information to me. I erred on the side of caution. This action was taken in direct response to Wengraf's (2001) suggestion that the power dimension can easily be overlooked in preparing for an interview, and despite the power afforded to police officers to enforce the law, they may be just as vulnerable to exploitation in the interview process as any other respondent. Was this the correct decision? I think so, and believe that my PhD would be tainted if I had not ensured appropriate protection for all participants.

I designed the interview topics and delivery of the questions to reduce the appearance of asymmetries in power between myself and interviewees, though this may not be ever completely possible (Kvale 2006). Before beginning the interview officers were told that I had topics I wanted to explore but not a specific set of questions to complete³⁸. I described the interview as a conversation where we could explore some of the issues they encountered while working as police officers. Interviews needed to balance the need for a formal structure and also my desire to diminish the "monopoly of interpretation" (Kvale 2006, pg. 484) often found in overly hierarchical interview formats. Officers had been shaping my understanding of their perspective for eight months by the time we began formal interviews, and while I wanted the interviews to delve in issues not always palatable over a plate of kebab, I didn't want to lose the banter that had already engendered a relationship where sharing one's views with a researcher were a regular occurrence. I tried to provide space for interviewees to elaborate on their answers and engaging in 'membership checks' (Kvale 2006). This

³⁸ It is true that I possessed an interview guide with full-sentence questions written out, but this was written as a requirement for the upgrade to PhD Candidacy. The interview schedule was utilised before interviews to help me determine how to word some key questions, but was not referred to during the course of an interview.

meant that I would summarise the ideas shared over the course of several questions on the same topic to ensure my interpretations were valid.

I also used the numerous informal discussions occurring during a shift with an officer to take a directed turn towards issues I was interested in. Discussions about drugs policing wove their way in between discussions about a variety of topics. Football, food, and spouses were frequent topics of conversation during the long hours spent driving around Watling. Manning (Manning 1980, pg. ix) reflected on his time with police officers as “Human moments, suffused with the problematic of drug policing” , and this research attempted to use similar methodologies to bring out the contextualized role of police officers and an intensive examination of the drugs policing efforts in Watling.

3.1.2 *Validating the Data*

It has been said that,

...qualitative sociology lacks methodological rigor and, accordingly, truly reliable or generalizable findings. Some social scientists view qualitative sociology, in no uncertain terms, as methodologically and empirically “soft” and highly subjective, if not completely solipsistic—a characterization that a few qualitative researchers have ironically embraced. (Goodwin and Horowitz 2002, pg. 33)

Qualitative data utilizes the interpretive tradition’s emic perspective and discovery-based focus to bring forth hidden phenomena, accessing data that may be concealed from researchers utilizing methods focused on supporting external validity (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995)³⁹. Various attempts have been made to systematize qualitative methods, (King, Keohane, and Verba 1994), including the formal adoption of rules of scientific inference akin to those found in quantitative research practices. King et al. argue that, “Precisely defined statistical methods that undergird quantitative research represent abstract formal models applicable to all kinds of research, even that for which variables cannot be measure quantitatively” and that, “... the rules are relevant to all research where the goal is to learn facts about the real world” (King, Keohane, and Verba 1994, pg. 6). This research does not attempt to abide by their

³⁹ Thankfully we are no longer constrained by such archaic notions that, "All science is either physics or stamp collecting" (Birks 1963) (Attributed to Ernest Rutherford).

rules in mass; however two of their rules were part of the data-collection and analysis of this project⁴⁰; namely their suggestion to, “collect data on as many observable implications as possible” and that, “The more evidence we can find in varied contexts, the more powerful our explanation becomes...” (pg.24)

Some authors have argued that alternatives to the terms ‘reliability’ and ‘validity’ should be used to more accurately reflect the different purpose of qualitative research compared to quantitative (Stenbacka 2001). In that vein, the term ‘dependability’ may be more accurate in assessing the reliability of this research (Lincoln and Guba 1985). Dependability is the ability to show that the findings are consistent and could be repeated, and in conjunction with transferability and conformability, generate trustworthiness for the research study (Lincoln and Guba 1985). Conventional ideas of validity and reliability are encompassed by the idea of trustworthiness, bridging the lessons from multiple research paradigms (Seale 1999). According to Stenbacka (2001), this research should be considered reliable if generates understanding of an issue but is unable to show causal explanation, as that is an entirely separate goal. We must remain mindful that the complexity of drugs-enforcement may be a result of contextually altered causal mechanisms; what Ragin (1987) refers to as ‘multiple conjectural causation’. To combat against the possibility of muddying the waters with unsupported, overly biased, or idiosyncratic observations, data triangulation is at the heart of the multi-methods ethnographic approach taken in this research.

According to Mathison (1988), triangulation allows qualitative researchers to control bias and, “...establish valid proposition because traditional scientific techniques are incompatible with this alternate epistemology” (Mathison 1988, pg. 13). This is accomplished by investigating multiple sources, utilizing multiple methods, which bring additional breadth and depth to qualitative research (Fielding 1986) and help corroborate each other (Bryman 2001). This research benefited from access to government data sources, and a limited amount of data from the MPS itself, allowing us to triangulate trends in policing with information from the fieldwork (Yin 2003).

⁴⁰ The two rules were adopted as a formal construct only after data collection ceased. The ideas put forward by those two rules were rather self-evident, and a part of the project’s goals from the very beginning. Credit goes to those authors for penning an authoritative scholarly article, but not for any invigoration to the already thriving practice in qualitative thought and practice engaged in by this an many other researchers.

The UK produces detailed analysis of drug seizures, usage rates, and crime levels. Additional information was received through the use of a Freedom of Information Request to the MPS⁴¹ in line with the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Though triangulation with qualitative and quantitative data seeks to unify multiple sources, it often results in inconsistencies which the researcher must account for, but that do not necessarily negate the worthiness of the data (Mathison 1988). The lack of total convergence in the data may be the result of the type of data each source will yield (Ritchie and Lewis 2003) and should be considered a positive attribute of the technique provided it does not lead to ‘epistemological incoherence’ (Olsen 2004, pg. 8). In addition to seeking outside quantitative measures to compare to fieldwork data, this research made use of multiple avenues of qualitative inquiry to explore street-level drugs policing. By interviewing officers in the middle of the period of fieldwork, I was able to observe if their actions in the field aligned with their answers during interviews. I was also able to see if the ideas from an officer on one team resonated with officers on another team. Finally, I kept in contact with three other doctoral researchers engaged in research with police officers around the UK to identify if our experiences married up.

Vast amounts of data were obtained by just interacting with the participants on a regular basis (Gelsthorpe 1989), and documenting their comments and reactions to incidents. Cultural ‘rich points’ (Agar 1996), where the ethnographer realizes that they do not understand the way in which the world works, occurred quite regularly at the initial stages of the research. Though I had some previous experience with police response and Safer Neighbourhood Teams, the extended interactions with a set of teams over the course of the year allowed greater intimacy, trust, and insights than my limited previous fieldwork had allowed. These experiences deciphering meaning from the respondents helped develop a frame from which I could then measure against information gathered at later encounters and interviews. The interpretation of data from ethnography is made up of these ‘rich points’, but Agar is quick to highlight that:

⁴¹ See Appendix G

The representation you build is neither ‘theirs’ nor is it ‘yours’. Instead, it is built to fill the initial space where rich points occurred between you. It is a representation of the spaces between, built in collaboration by ethnographer and locals. (Agar 1996, pg. 36)

3.1.2.1 Researcher Created Bias and Bias From the External Environment

Aspects of Structured Observation (SO) technique (Bryman 2012, Riess 1968), an effort to enhance the reliability and validity of qualitative fieldwork, was briefly considered, but deemed incompatible with the restrictions of time and funding facing this research project. SO methodology involves having multiple researchers in the field at the same time comparing each other’s findings and developing coding frameworks together. Additionally, the SO structure seeks to limit what data is taken in and coded, a process too constrained for the inductive nature of this work. While unable to engage in comparative analysis with other researchers on this data, I used interactions with colleagues at both the British Society of Criminology and International Society for the Study of Drug Policy conferences to compare experiences in the field with their own.

I must also address reactivity. “Reactivity involves changes in persons’ responses that result from being cognizant of the fact that one is participating in a research investigation” (Onwuegbuzie and Leech 2007, pg. 236). Commonly referenced as the ‘Hawthorne Effect’, individuals will change their behaviour when they know they are being observed (Wickstrom and Bendix 2000). Though eliminating this effect completely is impossible (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995), over time officers grew more accustomed to my presence. Initial outings with officers sometimes would focus on drugs talk because they were aware of my research focus, but amidst the numerous tasks that beset officers each day there was plenty of policing topics to discuss. One officer did try persistently to get me to see a dead body, including once taking an otherwise ‘boring’ call to see if a person was dead or just sleeping in the park. This was similar to what was experienced by Jeremy Gray (Smith and Gray 1983) when he accompanied officers nearly 30 years ago, and my stomach was tested at the sight of several gruesome crime scene photos. Evidence of the reactivity of officers to my presence is visible throughout this research, but that effect is generally quite minimal compared to the effect on their actions created by the settings themselves (Becker 1977).

3.2 Gaining Access

Initial efforts to gain access began in February 2010, and attempted to use the same route utilized during my MSc work with the MPS; namely to seek approval from the Strategy, Research and Analysis Unit (SRAU)⁴² at the MPS. I was asked to submit a research proposal, and this was done in April 2010. Initial response to the proposed research plan was positive, but at the final stage it was rejected by a Commander who deemed work focused on drugs policing to be out of line with MPS priorities. After meeting with the head of the SRAU in May 2010 it was decided that I would submit a revised proposal that focused on the development of community confidence policing, and that such work would find a welcome reception in the borough in Watling.

Attending this meeting was PC Callum. He was based in Watling, but was on secondment to the SRAU, and was already working on a report to commanders about community confidence issues in the borough. A compromise was reached whereby it was agreed I would execute the research for the PhD, and use the data obtained to prepare a report on community policing for the MPS. I was informed that failure to focus on community confidence would result in access being denied.

The phrase ‘value for money’ was bandied about regularly by MPS staff, even though they were not actually funding this research. At one point, I was sent an Excel spreadsheet with the various pay bands for officers of different ranks, and was asked to calculate the cost to the MPS for the amount of time officers would spend in interviews or otherwise not being at their most productive. This of course was an impossible task given the complexities and unknown variables that might influence such a costing, and a number was roughly sketched out, quite literally on the back of a large envelope.

The experience was useful in that it highlighted what was sacred and what was profane for the organization (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995). The tone taken by the organization laid out the boundaries of our relationship: they were doing me a favour, and I should be grateful for the opportunity. These bumps along the road to accessing the field were at times quite frustrating, but I took comfort in the idea that, “the

⁴² The unit was renamed during the course of the research and is now called the Strategy and Performance Unit, located within the Directorate of Strategy, Performance and Professionalism at the MPS.

negotiations themselves are data” (Pearson 1993, pg. xii). Furthermore, the disregard for drugs related research unless explicitly under the umbrella of community confidence was insightful as to the organisation’s focus. This was the beginning of a process of interpreting the normative order of the organization in an effort to avoid the, “significant and perhaps crippling resistance” (Herbert 1997, pg. 172) that one would face if attempting to work with police in a mode blind to their reality.

The SRAU requested that the research examine how local units incorporate strategies to build community confidence in to their tactical responses, how they work with community partners to implement these new endeavours, and how the actions of police officers change as a part of this new assignment. The result was to be an internal report of undetermined length, and unspecified content, provided it addressed the topics described above. The stimulus for the MPS to commission such research comes from the rapid expansion of community policing initiatives taking place in Watling and across the MPS. Though the community initiatives were dominated by the SNTs, a series of similarly focused programs had been rolled out over the previous few years. Officers are well supplied with information on changes in community confidence, the crime rate, and various additional quantitative measurements. Much of this work has been carried out by members of the SRAU in conjunction with academics from the London School of Economics (Bradford, Jackson, and Stanko 2009, Jackson and Gray 2009, Jackson and Sunshine 2007, Hohl, Bradford, and Stanko 2010). While these works have been key in developing theory and policy, research exploring the execution of community policing plans outside of experimental conditions is lacking. In short, the MPS knows if certain programs are improving the numbers, but not how officers are incorporating the community confidence focus in to their work.

3.2.1 Completing a Background Check

After agreeing to produce a report for the MPS, I was asked to undergo a full background check. This process dragged on from May through mid-July 2010, when I was notified that I had failed the background check because I had not been in the UK for three years. This is a standard applied to all Met background checks, and while the temporal issues were known to the MPS staff before beginning the process, no action was taken to notify me of the impending rejection. The problem was quickly overcome when it was determined that I would be able to fulfil all aspects of the work without

the need to access any MPS computer systems directly. This had never been part of my request. The background check process was very upsetting for me. I had just turned over full medical records, financial statements, and detailed accounts of my personal history as part of the background check. I had laid bare any and all past indiscretions, even explaining each and every hospital visit I had ever had. It was quite disturbing to think that someone had been given that privileged information when it was both known that I could not pass, and that the background check was not even necessary. I would remember this frustration during fieldwork when observing civilians who were left frustrated by an officer's action or lack thereof.

The lack of a full background check did end up creating one problem. Without an MPS ID (available only after a background check was successfully completed), I was unable to enter police stations at will, and therefore had to call a member of whatever team I was coming to work with upon arriving at the station each time. This produced a clear sense of being an outsider to the organization. Only after about six months of regularly appearing at stations was I let in to the building without escort, and this only happened if a few select station officers⁴³ were on duty at the front counter.

The front door of a police station was not the only time or place I felt a degree of 'otherness' while in the field. The issue would raise its head from time to time during the 'messy business' (Maher 1997, pg. 232) of ethnographic fieldwork. By not being fully adopted by the organization I felt my position within the teams I went to work with was precarious. While I doubt that my position as an outsider would have changed much if I had an ID card, I know that I would have felt slightly more secure in my initial footing if there had been some sense of organizational support. While I could not overcome the historical differences (Maher 1997) that had brought me to be in the position of a researcher and my research subjects in the position of being police officers, I embraced that 'otherness' when necessary during the fieldwork. The lack of an ID card meant that I could play naïve, or unaccustomed to violence and gore. This allowed the officers to feel they had a role in teaching me about their job, something

⁴³ A Station Officer is the person manning the front counter at a police station. Sometimes this is a member of staff, sometimes a PCSO, and sometimes a PC, depending on the station and what time it is. Station officers control access to the station, and handle public enquiries. They also open the back gate to the car park.

that greatly improved my ability to understand their perspective. Maintaining a level of ‘otherness’ and working with five different teams also meant that I avoided having officers become less informative because they did not know what information I was gaining from my time with other teams (Agar 1986).

3.2.2 *Access to the Field Site*

The head of the SRAU suggested that Superintendent Anera in Watling might be receptive to the new research focus, and that his borough would be an ideal setting. Indeed, Watling was already one of several boroughs I had identified as a possible location for the fieldwork due to a number of factors discussed in greater detail below. Watling was eventually selected as it provided an experience similar to many other inner-London boroughs and would be easier to obtain permission from local commanders. Research approval from the SRAU meant only that I could work with officers, but it in no way guaranteed access to them; such was the discrete nature of each unit within the MPS.

Superintendent Anera was Watling’s Territorial Policing lead, and a member of the boroughs’ Senior Leadership Team (SLT). A meeting was arranged with representatives from the SRAU and Supt Anera for August 1, 2010. At that meeting Superintendent Anera gave his approval to the research focus and methodology after a lengthy discussion and many questions. He offered to put me in contact with Inspectors from two Response Teams⁴⁴ in the borough, and three safer neighbourhood teams.

It appeared that the two response teams were selected by Supt Anera based on two factors. The first was that the Inspectors leading each team were in the good graces of Supt Anera. It was made apparent that to be in Supt Anera’s good graces, one needed to be a good leader of strong character, but also had to be able to produce the arrest and detection figures he needed each month. The second factor, at my request, was to follow one team from each of the two stations in the borough where RTs were based.

⁴⁴ The borough operated response teams out of two of the six stations located in the borough, each station having four Response Teams on a rotation, numbered 1-4, and working 12 hour shifts. This was later switched to five lettered teams working 8-10 hour shifts in April of 2011.

The three SNTs were not selected at that time, and we agreed to start with one SNT and decide on others in the future.

I had proven Van Maanen and Kolb were correct when they said, “Gaining access to most organizations is not a matter to be taken lightly, but one that involves some combination of strategic planning, hard work, and dumb luck” (1985, pg. 11).

3.3 Watling, “A Jewel in God’s Crown”

Watling is an inner-London borough, and like many it encompasses varied socio-economic groups. There are vast tracks filled with soaring blocks of council housing that help to push up the population density of the borough. Unlike a borough such as Westminster, there are no roving bands of street sweepers with high-visibility vests and rolling trashcans, and as such the borough has many areas where it feels grimy, dirty, and choked with vehicle exhaust on the old and narrow streets. Its history of manufacturing and heavy commercial activity are visible in the many of the older buildings and sporadic workers’ cottages that still stand near the old warehouses, many of which have been developed into expensive condos.

Watling has a population of around 250,000 residents. Of the residents, about 60% are white, 25% African Caribbean, and the rest comprised of small groups of various south Asian and mixed ethnicity individuals. The white residents are the most numerous ethnicity in all but one of the wards, but make up a significant majority in several of the wards in the north part of the borough, and in a small affluent pocket in the south. Of the black population, there were about twice as many black Africans as black Caribbeans in Watling. Combined black populations were present in every ward, and made up a significant majority in Farmingham and a plurality in the surrounding neighbourhoods of Lettsom and Bunnington. The rate of employment in the borough is in the bottom quarter of all London boroughs, and it has one of the highest conception rates in London for girls under 18 years old (Piggott 2009).

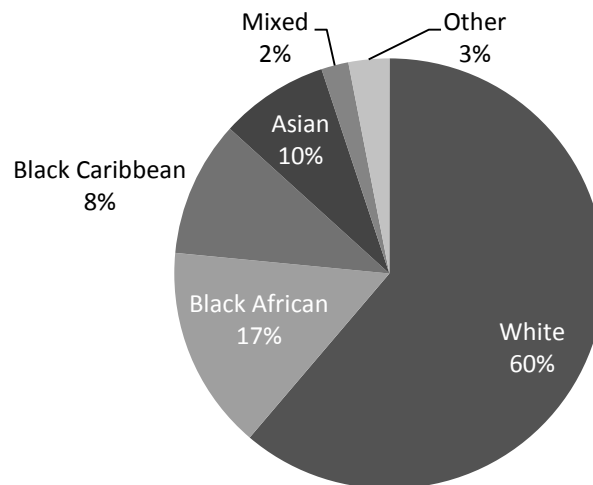


Figure 5: Ethnicity in Watling

Along the high street in Farmingham sits a small brick church, squeezed between an all-you-can-eat Chinese restaurant and a hair salon that stays open until 4am. The church dates from the 1840's, and was built to serve the needs of a community rapidly expanding due to the new canals and industrial works that quickly transformed open fields in to expanses of soot belching factories. The steam power and canal boats are long gone now, but the small church remains, having survived bomb damage in the war, and sits now alongside a busy thoroughfare unimaginable to its builders. Strung across its stained glass windows is a brightly coloured sign that reads, "Farmingham and Watling! A Jewel in God's Crown!" Looking at the surroundings the old church now finds itself amongst, many would find the description overly enthusiastic.

Farmingham is a notorious area of Watling, and aside from a few footballers it is known mostly for its poverty and gangs to people outside of the area. However, the residents of Farmingham have developed strong intercommunity organizations with vocal community organisers. Several prominent youth centres create after-school activities for children, and the community. Amongst the neo-Dickensian squalor there is an energetic community that vibrates with sounds, smells, and colours of the dozens of countries from which the residents have immigrated. Small markets cater to the various communities. On the main shopping street in Farmingham a west-African

grocery store sits just a few doors down from an east-African grocery store, and in between there is a halal butcher.

Watling, having similar characteristics, problems, and population as some of its neighbouring boroughs, is an ideal location to carry out this research. Watling had similar numbers in a variety of police statistics to many of its neighbours. Though generalization was not the goal in presenting the data, when picking a research site I did hope to find one that was not experiencing policing issues dramatically different than others nearby. An added bonus was that it took less than an hour to reach the police stations of Watling via public transport from my home. This may sound like an inconsequential factor in the pursuit of scholarly research, but it is hard enough to wake up early and be at the station in time for a 6am roll-call, or to make your way home after a 12-14 hour day without having to factor in a long journey to and from the research site.

3.3.1 Police and Crime statistics of Watling

Watling is in the top five London boroughs for 'I Grade' calls to police and total number of reported crimes. 'I Grade' calls are the most serious emergency calls, with about 1,900 received by the MPS each day (Piggott 2009). Police aim to respond to an 'I Grade' in less than 12 minutes, and are authorised to use their lights and sirens when responding to such a call. This is also known as being 'on the hurry-up' or using 'blues and twos'. MPS officers deal with nearly 150,000 CAD incidents each year. The borough is one of the top ten boroughs, both in the number of problem drug users and also the rate of problem drug users. Between 2004-2008 the borough averaged more than 300 drug possession arrests, cautions and fines each month.

3.4 In the Field

Observing police activity alongside uniformed officers is not new in social research, and there were many excellent examples available to provide guidance on how to conduct such an endeavour. According to Mastrofski and Parks:

Trained observers accompanied patrol officers during their tours of duty, observed what happened, and recorded their observations in field notes. Observers were instructed to minimize intrusion into the police officer's work. They were admonished to "fit in," to maintain objectivity, to avoid as much as possible influencing the play of events, to limit conversation to neutral topics, and to avoid direct participation in police work if at all possible. Observers were told not to inquire about the officer's choice of action, lest the officer feel self-conscious about both being observed and judged. The purpose, of course, was to avoid creating artificial police or citizen actions in reaction to the observer's presence. (1990, pg. 476)

While some of their ideas were utilized, when it came to inquiry about an officer's choice of action I took a different approach intended to grasp not just what officers were doing, but why. This required questioning their motivation and intent. This was undertaken extremely carefully as each interaction had the potential to nullify my position as a trusted observer (Emerson and Pollner 2003). Questioning an officer had to be in a manner free from judgment or disagreement or it risked alienating the officer. Early in my time with the teams I played up my naiveté to make the questions less threatening. This developed over the course of the fieldwork, eventually allowing me to ask more directed questions about specific actions situations. Even with the trust, my questions were always aimed at seeking understanding, not judgment. In this respect I employed the idea of an unstructured 'debrief' (Mastrofski and Parks 1990) in an attempt to learn, and my efforts were generally positively received⁴⁵. It is well documented that officers may mistrust outsiders (Skolnick 1966) and questioning took place only if the situation felt appropriate. I never questioned officers' tactics during an incident, in front of suspects, or around colleagues who were not present at the initial incident.

3.4.1 Appearance

Gaining trust was one of my primary goals during the first few shifts, and maintaining it a background concern at all times. The first step in gaining trust was to make sure that my outward appearance would fit within a police culture, since having similar personal characteristics to others helps improve their attitude towards you (Park and Lennon 2008). To this end, my normal dress consisted of dark blue-jeans, a button

⁴⁵ The other benefit of naiveté was that it allowed opportunities to hear different officers describe the same law, policy, or procedural component of policing, thereby generating data as to how that officer interpreted their role and activities.

down shirt, and police style boots. My boots were the only clothing items that closely resembled police issued uniforms, and this was done for two reasons. Firstly, the boots provided protection and stability in the variety of environments that I found myself in during the course of fieldwork. Secondly, the boots were a subtle symbol that I was not just some wimpy civilian wearing loafers in my office based job, but rather someone who was ready to hit the streets⁴⁶. I purposely kept the boots mildly scuffed up, never fully polishing them so that they appeared more well-worn than they really were. The goal was to appear similar to officers without mimicking their uniforms.

Observing officers to make sure my appearance fit with theirs, I came to understand that the way an officer wears their boots says quite a bit about them. Some officers spend several hours building up a shiny toe cap of their boot, buffing it regularly so that a few square centimetres are mirror-like. Officers with shined boots tended to wear a heavy combat style boot, be ex-military, and were more aggressive in their policing style. Some officers wore a lighter style boot, and typically left it unpolished. Their shoes were in good order, but like their belt or vest, it was treated as just another piece of kit. A few officers, mostly older, wore Doctor Martin's loafers. Officers had many ways in which they manipulated their uniforms, and talk about the 'new kit' that was supposedly going to be issued was a regular point of discussion. MPS officers still wear a clip-on tie, and many would unclip it as soon as they were in the station. Some officers preferred to carry a large baton normally reserved for public order incidents. They cited that it was more reliable than the collapsible batons normally worn by officers. As it was not collapsible, the larger baton served as a poignant reminder that the officer was carrying a weapon normally not permissible to those they were interacting with.

I wore a Level IIa bullet-proof vest whenever in the field with officers. The vest was a different model than what officers wore and did not bear the patches identifying me as a police officer, though was generally similar in appearance. The MPS refused to issue

⁴⁶ As discussed in chapter 2, policing often requires more paperwork and engagement than action, but the perception of an action based career led most officers to wear 'combat' style boots. The symbolism and intricacies of footwear choices by officers could probably be a full chapter if one felt so inclined.

me a bullet proof vest, and I was forced to buy my own online⁴⁷. While initially frustrated by the extra expense, the MPS penny-pinching actually proved helpful. Officers could tell the vest was not MPS issued kit. They had a good laugh whenever I explained to them that I had to purchase my own personal protective equipment (PPE)⁴⁸, and that as a student I could only afford to purchase a used vest. When it was discovered that my vest was actually more heavily armoured than theirs, it was suggested by some that I might be useful to take cover behind should we encounter a particularly dangerous situation. I did not agree with that plan.

Regularly wearing a bullet-proof vest is quite a remarkable experience, and gave me great insight in to a key tactile and psychological element of police work. The rigid structure of the vest's 6.5kg Kevlar armour plates make you 'carry the vest', not just wear it. You have to keep good posture so that the weight does not throw off your balance, and as consequence the wearer appears to have a stiffer gate. A Velcro panel ensures it is snug against you, and I found it reassuring to feel that slight pressure around my chest. The vest also provides a convenient place to rest your arms if you hook your thumbs in to the armpit holes. This allows you to keep your hands warm while also not affecting your ability to quickly bring them to use. The position engenders a relaxed but slightly aggressive stance, and is a favourite of officers across the MPS. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, there is the relief of taking your vest off. Coming in from the street, the simple act of unzipping the vest represents that you're back in safe territory. It certainly feels good not to be carrying the extra weight, but it feels even better to know that you are 'safe' again⁴⁹.

In early January 2011 I was issued with a MPS radio after I had a charged encounter with an angry civilian. Officers had entered a building in pursuit of a fleeing suspect and asked me to stay near the car to keep an eye on another suspect already in handcuffs. A resident of the tower block, thinking I was a police officer, started screaming at me and the situation escalated nearly to the point of him assaulting me. I

⁴⁷ If you ever want to have an interesting experience, go online and try to figure out how much you're willing to spend on a bullet-proof vest for yourself, and what level protection you can afford...

⁴⁸ It should be noted that while it is mandatory for all officers to wear their vest when on duty, several officers at RT2 regularly flouted this rule. These were, with one exception, officers with more than 20 years on the job, and I never saw them admonished by any Sergeant of Inspector for their lack of PPE.

⁴⁹ The perception of a lack of safety outside the station is an important element in officer's psychology when interacting with civilians.

was spared when the officers returned and defused the situation. Having been unable to call for assistance, it was decided that I needed a radio in case I ever became separated again. I had been with the team for four months at that point, but no one had ever thought to obtain a radio for me. Holding my ground against the enraged resident solidified my access with the team, and indicated that I had earned a place, like all new recruits, whereby I was guaranteed the mutual protection afforded to colleagues by other officers (Van Maanen 1974). It was good to know that I had that protection, but it was hard earned, represented access to the inner workings of policing, and was constantly subject to renegotiation.

Though I never had to use the radio to call for help, having it was certainly helpful. For one thing I could now clearly hear calls as they came out over the radio, instead of straining to hear updates on an officer's radio⁵⁰ in the front seat. Secondly it was a symbol of belonging I could display at will. When in a police station or crime scene where there were officers who didn't know me, having a radio poking out of my bullet proof vest pocket might as well have been a MPS staff card hanging from my neck. When in someone's home, or other situation where I didn't want to give the impression I was a police officer, I could easily hide it.

3.4.2 *Building Trust*

Trust is key to obtaining access to the hidden dimension of policing (Hunt 1984), and building a relationship with the officers was not going to be accomplished by simply wearing the right clothes and equipment. While I was afraid of getting the cold-shoulder (Chan 1996), this was, perhaps, less of an issue because I was not considered a full outsider (Brown 1996, pg. 179) due to my previous research with police, something I mentioned to each unit early on. My previous experience with the police also helped prevent most of the 'culture shock' experienced by researchers upon entering fieldwork with a new group (Dewalt 2011). This outsider/insider status

⁵⁰ There are actually two types of radios used by officers in an Incident Response Vehicle (IRV). The first is their personal radio, a small hand-held device that is primarily tuned to the local dispatch channel. Most borough level communication takes place using this radio. In addition to the personal radio, officers have access to a 'main-set' located in every vehicle. The main-set is usually tuned to the MPS-wide dispatch channel. Officers rarely actually broadcast on the main-set, but they keep it on to listen for major incidents or vehicle pursuits that may be headed their way. The main-set channel will often stay quiet for extended periods, but when it picks up you are often treated to a rush of adrenaline fuelled voices calling in 'real' police emergencies.

afforded me some breathing space in my first few weeks, allowing me to establish my identity and relationships within the team. My efforts to build trust with the teams were assisted by several things. Just as Rowe (Rowe 2005) experienced, I had the advantage that I was a white male in my mid to late twenties, a description that fit most of the team members I worked with. This similarity, especially in gender and age meant that officers and I 'spoke the same language', and so my questions to them may not have felt as alien as they might have been from a more senior researcher (Williams and Heikes 1993). I could relate to the same music, TV, and sports they talked about, and often did to help build my relationship with them. Copies of *The Daily Mail* and *The Sun* were always available in the canteens, and I took to reading them online before a shift in order to be able to relate to the news they would be reading. Also, I was also taller than any other officer, an American, and didn't ask too many stupid questions in my first few weeks. In short, I wasn't like what they expected a researcher to be like.

There were other things that also helped develop trust with officers. Though I was not a smoker, I would sometimes go outside of the station with an officer and have a cigarette with them. This was usually only done during night shifts, and was one of the few times outside of a formal interview when an officer might be alone to speak to during their shift. Going outside for a smoke, even when other smokers were present, provided access to a different social context of the officer. Police are not allowed to smoke in view of the public, so the smoke breaks take place in the car park. The space is away from prying eyes or listening ears, and it was my sense that the officers used the time to shed their official roles, stepping away from the stress of their jobs⁵¹. Research has shown a predictive relationship between repeated exposure to violence and smoking (Cisler et al. 2011), so it is perhaps not surprising that approximately 35% of the officers I worked with smoked⁵² (Bonnet et al. 2005), substantially higher than the national rate of 21% of adults in England (Eastwood 2010). Smoking was especially useful in soliciting knowledge after a challenging incident. In the car park the confident and blustery persona that was often on display in the writing room tended

⁵¹ Officers did not smoke in public except for the very rare 4am smoke in some out of the way place. These were special moments I was only done in front of me after a few months with a team.

⁵² This is my estimate, though it is in-line with previous research about police substance use and misuse. (Richmond et al. 1999)

to give way to a more introspective demeanour that engendered thoughtful discussions about what had just transpired. The quote from PC Jack that launches Chapter Four came during one such moment.

Tea and food were constant points of discussion and interaction when out with officers. What one was having on ‘refs’⁵³ was a topic of conversation during every shift. Kebab and Chinese were the two dominant options in the take-away category, though pizza and a quick trip to Tesco’s were a good fall-back. Occasionally McDonald’s made the cut as well, though this was seen by many officers as being the ‘unhealthy’ option. I never brought anything more substantial than some trail-mix with me so that I could buy refs wherever the officers were buying theirs. One of my biggest successes in trust building came when I introduced an officer on an RT to a small kebab shop called Turkish Delight. I had not actually found the place, but had been taken there by an officer from an SNT, and I tried to tell the RT officer that. It didn’t matter. From then I was given credit by that officer and many others for introducing them to what quickly became the team’s favourite dinner location. It was close to the station, service was quick, and you got a delicious de-boned half chicken, chips, salad, and a drink for £5. The place was open late, and seemed to be neutral territory, because the officers never searched anyone in and around the shop no matter how unscrupulous they looked. Standing inside the narrow shop, officers had consistently positive interactions with the other customers waiting for their food. Given the shop’s late hours and location between a busy bus stop and a large night, it tended to draw a large number of drunken patrons; but this never resulted in a negative encounter between the two groups.

Making tea was the duty of rookies or one of the female officers. Senior male officers almost never offered to ‘make a brew’. Being asked how I took my tea at the same time as the officers were asked was a noted accomplishment in my field-notes. After I had been with a unit for a few weeks I would tend to offer to help make the tea. Apparently the trick to ‘proper police tea’ is to never wash the kettle. Ever. “You’ll know it’s no longer fit for use when the bottom rusts out and just gives way one day. Then we’ll just get a new one.” (PC Gary, RT2). This participation in the mundane

⁵³ ‘Refs’ is the term used for meal breaks, and is short for Refreshments.

elements of policing helped dismantle officers' apprehension about my presence (Van Maanen 1988). Their reduced apprehension was, in part, visible when I noticed that stories about family and life outside policing increased in depth. Officers who had previously described 'the misses' when talking about their wives started actually using their names. This inclusion in the mundane activities by no means guaranteed my continued standing in their good graces. Even with this level of access I faced the real possibility that officers were not presenting their true working practices me (Waddington 1999b).

The effort to build trust has to be balanced against the potential for the researcher to 'go native' if they are not careful and become too closely involved in the phenomenon under study, taking for granted that which they should be critically engaging with (Adler and Adler 1987). I was fortunate that my need to work with each of the five different teams meant I was able to switch teams regularly, building necessary distance into the relationship. Still, at points I considered attempting to join the MPS as a Special Constable. Discussions with my supervisor helped me see where that desire was emanating from, and I decided against taking that path. The intensity of policing creates a camaraderie within the ranks that is quite seductive. I must admit that it felt good to know the inside jokes, to have people who can share in the experiences you're observing, to talk of the challenges that shape one's life; these connections, however tenuous, were desirable when I felt alone in an alien environment. Though I could share stories of foot chases with friends, discuss my feelings with my partner, and talk about my research with my supervisor, in the field I felt a strange sense of isolation throughout the fieldwork.

Even when not in the field, I felt like I lacked the vocabulary to fully describe the way the fieldwork was changing me, and did not know how to share that with my partner or supervisor. While I could not share those feelings out loud with the officers I worked with, I knew that when I was with them, they might be going through some of the same things, and maybe by listening and observing them I could better understand what I was feeling. I met regularly with my supervisor to discuss my feelings, and he provided a valuable outside perspective that could appreciate the feelings in the context of doing good research. These discussions proved valuable in helping me see

past the quandaries I was encountering, and identifying how they fit in to my research question.

I avoided going to events or parties with the team outside of the shifts, and luckily my busy schedule outside of fieldwork provided a reasonable excuse. On one occasion however I felt uncomfortable at the level of trust I had developed with the officers. PC Jack had given me a ride home at the end of a very long night shift. We chatted about his days in the army on the ride, and when we got to my building he told me to wait a moment before jumping out. He pulled out his iPhone and brought up a picture to show me. It was an image from a sonogram. He beamed with pride as he said, “It’s three months today. I can finally share the news that I’m going to be a father! I wanted to let you know now, and I’m going to tell the team when I get back.” I smiled and congratulated him. But once inside my flat I felt angry that at such a joyous moment my first thought had been to evaluate the implications that such a level of sharing entailed. In my effort to avoid going native I felt like I had inadvertently removed some of the beauty available in life. I knew my job was to, “grasp the native’s point of view” (Malinowski 2002, pg. 25), and doing so required I become close enough to earn their trust and protection. But I felt that I was in some ways a liar as I could never reciprocate what I hoped to engender in officers.

3.4.3 *Risk*

The work carried out with police units entailed a significant amount of risk, and more than 150 Met officers died in the line of duty in the 20th century (Kyriacou et al. 2006). During the fieldwork I was nearly assaulted, was involved in a moderately serious car crash, and was present in many other situations where there was clear potential for harm. There was also a significant risk of psychological trauma from the work due to routinely being exposed to violent incidents. I will forever remember the sight of the young male victim with a bullet wound in his chest, laying on the pavement only moments after being shot⁵⁴. The look on his face was initially calm, but turned ever more concerned as his breathing became more laboured. Even with an officer applying a thick bandage, the wound produced a mixture of foam and blood that ran down his

⁵⁴ We had come upon the victim unexpectedly while driving an officer home. The shooting had taken place less than a minute before, and the smell of cordite still hung in the air when we arrived.

side. The scene, and the fact I could do nothing to help this person, were difficult to process. I tried to disconnect from my emotional response by forcing myself to remember that I was a researcher there to observe, not to gawk. Every available precaution was taken to ensure both physical and psychological safety throughout the research.

A ‘Hazard and Risk Assessment for Fieldwork’ was completed in October 2010 in accordance with LSE guidelines. In it I described the risks entailed in undertaking fieldwork with police, and how we would attempt to limit those risks. Beyond wearing a bullet-proof vest and a seatbelt, I made sure to keep myself in positions where I would be protected during encounters with suspects and citizens⁵⁵. For psychological preparation I met with the LSE’s Mental Health and Wellbeing Manager, Jane Sedgwick, once before the fieldwork, once while in the field, and once after I had completed fieldwork. At our first meeting we discussed the signs of post-traumatic stress, how to deal with difficult situations, and access to resources should the need arise. Our further meetings involved discussions about how I was coping with some of the more troubling incidents. These meeting proved quite helpful because to talk about concerns about emotional processing of tragic events is often suppressed within police culture (Pogrebin and Poole 1991), and my role as an observer left me in even less of a position to seek support from the officers I was with.

Each police unit also conducted a risk assessment in accordance with MPS regulations, and I went over this assessment with each team leader before my first shift. I also made sure to renew my CPR and First Aid training, and was taught how to use the emergency button on the police radio. When triggered on either the main-set or personal radio, the emergency button creates a ‘hot mic’ for ten seconds so that the officer can call for help without having to keep one hand on the transmit button.

3.5 Digital Ethnography: Creating New Methodologies with a Smartphone

Until recently pen and paper was the medium of choice for ethnographic field-notes. Every classic example of ethnography with police officers has relied upon the timely transformation of thoughts into written field-notes. It has been considered good

⁵⁵ For additional information on this, please see Appendix F

practice to do this directly after a shift or session was completed so that the ideas would still be fresh in the researcher's mind. Researcher objectivity in the collection of data is addressed elsewhere in this chapter, but we must address the concerns relating to the recall capability of the human brain, especially evident in the literature identifying the imperfections of eye-witness testimony (Wade et al. 2002, Pogrebin and Poole 1991, Morgan III et al. 2004). From this literature base we know that witnesses' memory is, "usually incomplete, fallible, subjective and malleable" (Ainsworth 2002, pg. 161). Even when notes are written shortly after the shift, a researcher faces issues of distortion during the encoding, storage, and retrieval of memories. Additionally, short term memory is only able to retain about seven items at a time (Miller 1956), and this means there that a researcher may quickly use up their available memory capabilities while witnessing a protracted encounter between police and civilians. Stressful periods of activity encountered alongside police may also serve to push the researcher past an optimum level of stress (Yerkes and Dodson 1908) where the intensity of the situation diminishes the researcher's ability to accurately recall information at a later date (Hope et al. 2012, McMorris et al. 2011, Morgan III et al. 2004). The natural tendency to focus on central details, to the exclusion of peripheral items during these stressful encounters (Christianson 1992), further limits the comprehensiveness of field-notes written from memories recalled well after the event. Further to all of the neurological limitations, the issue of prejudice amongst witnesses (Duncan 1976) is well documented, and may affect even the most well intentioned researcher.

With these limitations in mind, I set out to develop new ethnographic practice that might reduce inaccuracies introduced into field-notes by current practices. Creating copious handwritten notes during a shift can be both unnerving to the respondent and also be impractical given the physical demands placed on the researcher (Rowe 2005). Approaching the problem with tools already at my disposal, an iPhone seemed to present the most promising option. Armed with an iPhone 4 and the iOS 4 operating system (later iOS 5 beginning in June 2011), I had at my fingertips a device capable of capturing audio, video, still pictures, GPS information, time, and a keyboard to input any typed notes. Unfortunately there was no piece of software specifically designed to support ethnography in the UK market. There was one ethnographic software application available to US iPhone users, but upon further investigation it became

apparent that the software offered by the US firm Everyday Lives⁵⁶ was designed for commercial and marketing research and was not suitable. Much of the literature on technological innovation in qualitative research is focused either on the use of video (Shrum, Dunque, and Brown 2005, Rieken 2013), or on uses of digital technology to better understand consumer behaviour (Wood and Solomon 2009, Lantos 2010). I have not found any academic literature that describes using the powers of a smartphone to create new approaches to recording primary field-notes and other important contextualising data during empirical scholarly research.

3.5.1 *Software Selection*

Two important elements were needed to successfully incorporate the smartphone into field research: I needed to be able to take personal audio notes discretely while in the field, and wanted to be able to note the location and basic details of each incident I encountered in real time. I wanted to use audio based notes for several reasons. Firstly, the speed at which English can be spoken is far faster than it can be written.

Conversations in British English tend to average around 210 words per minute (Tauroza and Allison 1990), compared to less than 30 words per minute when written by hand (Baron 2002)⁵⁷. The first problem was, from a technological standpoint, easily solved with software built in to the iPhone. A ‘voice memo’ function in the iPhone allowed for recording of any audio picked up by the iPhone’s built in microphone, and recorded it into an M4A digital audio file at 64kbs⁵⁸.

The problem of accurately tracking my activities with officers was more difficult. The software would need to produce an accurate GPS reading, useful coding options, keep all data private, and be stored in a suitable format. There were numerous offerings in the iTunes App Store that provided one’s current GPS location, but lacked the input

⁵⁶ An additional concern about using this software was that it automatically uploaded all data to servers operated by the publishing company, thereby jeopardising the confidentiality and anonymity of the data I would be obtaining if I used the software.

⁵⁷ Given the more than 24 hours of audio notes I made, even at a moderate pace I would have recorded more than 300,000 words of notes, the equivalent of nearly 700 pages of A4 text. This is in addition to the written field-notes I took as well.

⁵⁸ Kbs stands for kilobytes per second, and is a measure of the data transfer rate of digital files. Music CD’s are recorded at 256kbs, and online streaming radio stations typically broadcast at between 64-128kbs. The 64kbs rate is achieved by compressing the audio as it is recorded, which results in the loss of the very high and very low ends of the audio spectrum. This is not a problem if you are simply recording someone talking.

fields required to code and label multiple GPS coordinates. Eventually I purchased the GPS Log software developed by William Denniss as it needed only minor adjustments to the default settings to meet my needs. One of the key features available in GPS Log was the ability to ‘tag’ events. A tag was simply a designation for an event that could be quickly added to an incident’s files. I created a list of tags, but could also create new ones as needed. For example, I had tags that marked an incident as a stop and search, a drugs stop, and also if a cannabis warning had been given. This allowed for quick searches of incidents through the software during the analysis stage.

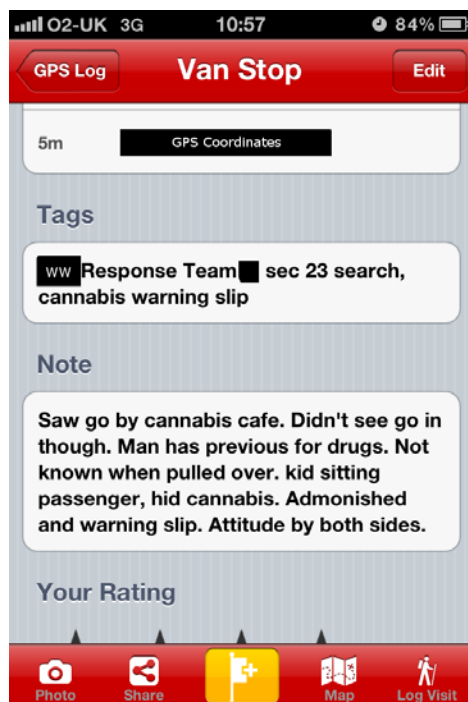


Figure 6: Image of GPS Log notation

3.5.2 *Updating Old Field Practices*

Pen and paper were not abandoned as a method of taking field-notes during this research. I took written notes often, including after shifts were completed, and sometimes while officers were doing paperwork. I avoided doing so while out in a car or on foot patrols, but outside of those times the written word was always an option. If there was a room full of officers in the writing room I would usually partake in the conversations, but if only a few were present I would open my notebook and write field-notes so as not to be sitting around appearing bored. Though writing notes might have marked me as an observer (Emerson 2011) at other times, it was a natural activity in a quiet, and appropriately named writing room. Like my predecessors in the

policing literature, written field-notes make up an important part of data from the observational fieldwork. Mine just happen to have been written with a digital pen.

This research made use of a Pulse Smartpen produced by Livescribe Inc. The smartpen uses a camera located just above the ink cartridge to read micro-dots covering the page of a specially produced notebook. The camera can see exactly where the ink has covered, and captures that information to be transmitted to the Livescribe Desktop software package on a laptop when plugged in via a USB port at a later time. From this an exact copy of written notes can be uploaded, and kept secure to analyse at a later point. The pen can also convert the pages in to a PDF document suitable for printing. The digital storage allows for password protection of all notes. The pen also incorporates a microphone that can be activated by tapping on a small section of the notebook. If this is engaged it is possible to have audio that is synced precisely to the notes as they are written. Instead of having to write what the respondent just said, the researcher can write their thoughts, able to hear the audio that prompted such thoughts with a mouse-click whenever they want. The pen's audio features were not utilized in everyday field work, but proved exceedingly helpful during formal interviews. Though I only took limited notes during a formal interview, the pen served as an unobtrusive backup recording device. The physical research notebook could burn in front of me, and I wouldn't lose a minute of sleep. This is an invaluable luxury given the breadth of possible challenges a researcher can face during fieldwork.

Officers noticed that my pen was a bit odd, and on several occasions asked about it. I explained how it was a digital pen, and ran through its various features with them. Most seemed to find it quite interesting and wanted to give it a try. While several scribbled away, one officer decided I should suffer the same fate as anyone who left their pocketbook lying about. Since an officer's pocketbook contains a detailed record of their actions it can be called upon in court to be examined. The punishment for being careless with your pocketbook and leaving it about is that you have a penis drawn in it to embarrass you the next time a judge asks to examine your pocketbook. I suffered the same fate, and page 21 of my field-notes contains a detailed depiction of a man's external reproductive elements, captured in full digital detail. Oddly, perhaps, I welcomed this defacement as another sign that I had been accepted by the team.

3.5.3 *Developing New Field Practices: Audio*

Employing the new software required careful consideration of how it might be viewed by officers and civilians. Luckily the sight of an iPhone was and is a common occurrence on the streets of London. Nearly half the UK population owns a smartphone, and of those nearly 20 per cent are iPhones (Arthur 2011) . More than half the officers I worked with owned an iPhone and had it on them during their shifts. Physically, the iPhone remained exactly the same no matter what application it was running.

Since I did not have to be directly involved in incidents as they occurred, my position nearby was not the focus of attention. Whenever I wanted to record information I could engage the voice memo function on the iPhone and speak in to it as though I was talking on the phone. I could also conceal the device in my hand, and bring it close to my mouth to quietly speak in to it without drawing attention to my actions. This proved to be quite useful for taking notes during an incident. On some occasions I was able to record several short comments over the course of an incident. By speaking for a few seconds, pausing the recording to observe, and then resuming the recording to update what had transpired, I could take down a detailed description in near real time without influencing the incident at hand beyond being present at the situation. This increased the accuracy of the encodings stage of memory creation, but also had the advantage of creating a cued recall situation that helped me remember additional details when accessing my field-notes after fieldwork was completed (Tulving and Pearlstone 1966).

The voice memo function was also used in between incidents. When we stopped to let an officer go to the bathroom, return to the station to do paperwork, or for any other of the many possible reasons, it was quite easy to slip away for a minute to record notes. With the phone always by my side, I was able to engage the recording function within a few seconds. I was able to record notes on conversations or incidents within minutes of them occurring, and in a format more quickly delivered than handwritten notes. Over the course of a 12 to 14 hour shift, there could be dozens of occurrences that were noteworthy, and by being able to capture them in detail only moments after they had occurred I was less constrained by the limited capabilities of short term memory. An officer stepping outside to make a call in the car park was a common occurrence,

and so my habit of taking a few minutes to myself during downtime in the station was not seen as unusual. At the end of a shift I would also use the voice memo function to record between 6 to 10 minutes of audio observations for the shift.

On rare occasions the audio recording capabilities of the iPhone were used to conduct informal in-car interviews with officers. After becoming comfortable with my presence, some officers responded quite well to detailed questions about police practice while driving around on a slow shift, particularly late at night. The depth and breadth of these conversations would have been difficult to remember in sufficient detail, especially given the late hour and the numerous instances occurring both before and after the in-car conversation. On half a dozen or so occasions I asked the officers if -since we were having such an interesting discussion- I could record our conversation in the same manner that I was recording formal interviews. In all instances officers agreed, and the request proved no more than a momentary pause in the conversation. I should add that the practice of informal interviews rarely ever took place with SNTs due to the nature of the work⁵⁹. In all of these instances I obtained the express verbal consent of the officers present. It should be noted that those officers had already received at least two separate briefings on the privacy protections and ability to decline participation in the research. There was a common joke floating around the station that I might really be an undercover reporter for *The Sun* newspaper, and when such jokes were made I would laugh it off and then tap my chest and loudly whisper in to my bullet-proof vest, 'end transmission, mission compromised'. With the issue of secret recordings clearly on their mind, I only used the in-car recordings sparingly and with express consent.

3.5.4 *Developing New Field Practices: GPS*

The use of GPS Log to track incidents helped bring an additional layer of information to the audio memos. Upon arriving at the scene of an incident I would create a new event in the software which was already running. This would trigger the device to begin obtaining a GPS 'fix', and open a screen that allowed me to give the incident a title. The unit I was with would be pre-tagged at the beginning of the shift, and I

⁵⁹ You can't get to the same level of inane chatter walking around London that you can in a police car at doing laps around the borough at 4am on a quiet Tuesday.

could add additional tags with a few finger flicks. Within ten seconds I could usually obtain a GPS fix accurate to within 50 metres, and that could be refined to accuracy within 10 metres in another ten seconds. On rare occasions the system would have trouble obtaining a precise fix on my location. While this is unfortunate, having the general location is still helpful because tags and shorts notes in each event provided important information.

All of this could be taking place within my pocket, so the phone only was exposed for a few seconds while emerging from the car, rendering it an invisible assistant. This helped avoid the previously mentioned Hawthorne Effect. Additional notes could be added to the event at a later point, but I tried to get a few basic facts down before leaving each incident. When adding notes via the keypad my actions were indistinguishable from someone sending a quick text message. Although the software had the capacity to add a photo or high definition video from the iPhone's camera directly into the entry, I did not engage this feature out of privacy concerns.

The information from GPS Log provided a list of incidents that was searchable, and also a map that showed every incident by a pin at its location. Unfortunately the number of pins so accurately maps the entirety of the borough and its boundaries that I cannot share that picture without giving away the identity of the borough. The GPS data was time stamped, and this proved useful when trying to figure out how long an incident had lasted, or what exactly I was referring to in an audio note. This was assisted by the Google Maps Street View tool. Street View uses camera and GPS equipped vehicles to take 360 degree photos as they travel along every street in an area. The service was brought to the UK in March 2009. If I need to clarify the physical layout of an area where an incident took place I would have the map open the pinned location with Street View, and instantly I have an exact picture of the physical layout of an area. This is limited in situations that took place entirely within building, but having that trigger has proven to be quite helpful.

3.5.5 Combining Audio, Visual, and GPS to Engender Episodic Memory Recall

By harnessing the technological capabilities of the audio recordings, Street View information, and GPS data, I was creating an ideal trigger for episodic memory recollection. Episodic memory is, "... a system that receives and stores information

about temporally dated episodes or events, and temporal-spatial relations among them.” (Tulving 1984, pg. 223). The process of creating field-notes has always been necessary to overcome the weaknesses of human memory (Bryman 2001), but this new technologically supported method is able to take experiences in the field beyond the jotted notes of a few words scribbled on scrap paper (Atkinson 1997, Ditton 1977) and bring thick description to the recorded experiences of the researcher.

Episodic memory places us in the memory, marking the memory’s position on our personal, autobiographical, timeline. Retrieval of episodic memories constitutes a form of time travel in which we recover the encoding context of the previously experienced event. (Kahana, Howard, and Polyn 2008, pg. 467)

Using this recall technique helps avoid some of the pitfalls of retrieval induced forgetting as it provides re-exposure to information with the context and key data of the event (Wimber et al. 2009). Written field-notes, without the breadth of contextualizing information contained in the added dimensions of GPS and Street View, are more prone to the natural retrieval inaccuracies of the mind. The benefit of episodic memory recollection proved invaluable during the analysis and writing periods of this project. Listening to one section of audio recorded while at a very chaotic and violent scene, I was struck by the magnification of my feelings when I opened up the Street View image of the location and could suddenly remember all the individuals that populated the situation. It was like having a canvas to which I could add the figures of my mind, free to use my mind’s resources on that element instead of to recreate the basic scene.

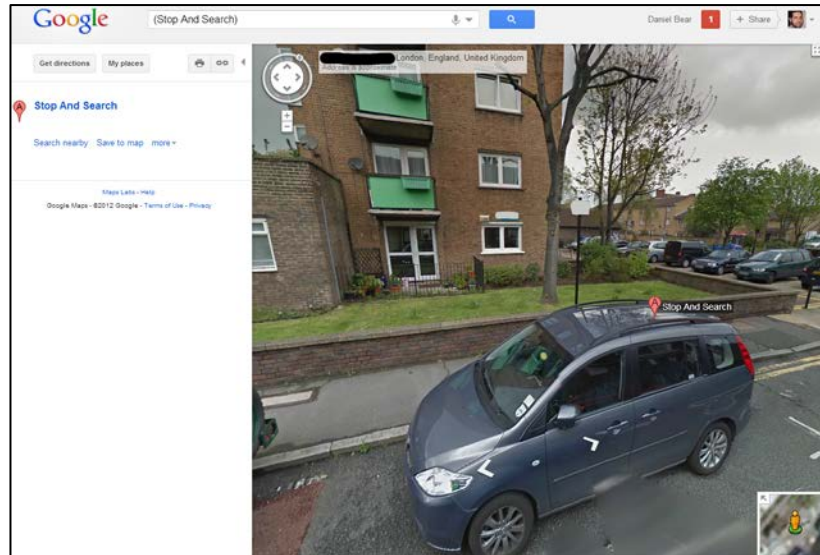


Figure 7: Incident marker generated by GPS Log, as viewed in Google Maps Street View⁶⁰

3.6 Data Analysis

This research used ethnography comprised of participant observation and semi-structured interviews, along with document analysis. Interviews took place with PCs, Sergeants, Inspectors, Superintendents, and a Detective Chief Inspector. The head of Watling's Community Monitoring Group was also interviewed. Policy documents were obtained online and through Freedom of Information requests. Descriptive statistics were obtained through Freedom of Information requests, publicly available datasets, and through the London SafeStats database system. In addition, audio notes and written field-notes were collected.

Interviews were recorded using an Edirol R-09 digital recorder in MP3 format, and transcribed manually. Transcription was, in part, completed by an appropriately trained postgraduate student from the Social Policy Department at the LSE. Her work was checked for accuracy against the digital audio recordings. None of the audio notes were transcribed, but this was not necessary as the audio could be directly uploaded to the qualitative analysis software.

Transcribed interviews and some audio notes were uploaded in to the qualitative analysis software Nvivo, produced by QSR International. Using this type of software

⁶⁰ This photograph has been altered to obscure the identity of the location.

speeds up analysis and helps ensure the data is rigorously examined (Silverman 2005). However, merely adding data to this type of software in a basic coding pattern is not analysis, and active interpretation of the material is still required (Coffey and Atkinson 1996). After data was uploaded to Nvivo, each respondent was given a unique respondent code that was generated based on their rank, unit type, and numerical differentiator.

Initial data management involved identifying initial codes in the data and then creating themes emerging from the interviews and voice notes. This research used an iterative approach, assessing and creating themes during data collection based on common motifs appearing during fieldwork (Bryman 2012). This allowed emerging themes to be examined while still in the field, without closing off avenue of investigation. The initial concepts were labelled 'in vivo', progressing towards more fixed and definitive concepts labelled with a mixture of literature, researcher, and respondent labels (Ritchie and Lewis 2003). The initial themes detected were then categorised under primary thematic coding groups once the fieldwork was completed (Ritchie and Lewis 2003). This was done using 'tree nodes' in Nvivo, whereby secondary and tertiary themes could nest within a primary thematic coding group. A 'self-understanding' approach was used in order to interpret how the respondents understood their policing responsibilities and actions (Kvale 1996), and to refine the themes.

Field-notes, both audio and written, were used in generating the coding framework, but were not regularly uploaded to Nvivo. The data from these sources was reviewed again after the coding framework had been established in order to add specific content to the appropriate thematic grouping. This data had already been given structure to an extent as they came from the researcher's notes directly (Denzin and Lincoln 1994) and therefore were self-selective.

This simple yet robust analysis process provided an efficient mechanism by which the extended participant observation and interview data could be organised and examined. Quotations used throughout this research are intended to highlight themes from the data and perspectives emerging from the analysis.

3.7 Ethics

This research potentially involved significant ethical challenges related to protecting both my police officer respondents and the public they were engaging with. Ethical issues associated with working police officers was somewhat minimized by the fact that they faced minimal risk of harm, they had informed consent without undue invasion of privacy, and there was no intentional deception by the researcher (Diener 1978). The MPS ran a risk assessment with each unit I worked with, determining that my presence would not jeopardize the officers' well-being. Before beginning the research, considerable time was spent with my supervisor discussing different situations with civilians that might occur, and developing practical ways of addressing each potentiality in line with a broader set of ethical research practices. I attended a Research Ethics Seminar, completed the Ethics Review Questionnaire, and Ethics Review Checklist provided by the LSE. My aim was to produce a set of ethical guidelines that would guide the fieldwork, and were not tied to specific types of encounters as situations rarely fit the preconceived scenario. Punch proffered that this method is, "more likely to promote understanding of the issues and compliance with them" (1986, pg. 83). This focus on a set of ethical principles instead of a rigorous structure was designed to help navigate the regularly occurring 'molehill' ethical issues that make up fieldwork with police (Rowe 2005). These are minor issues that the researcher encounters during fieldwork that need to be navigated efficiently. Such issues can crop up during arrests of suspects, while entering peoples' homes, or even while in the canteen. Having discussed the potential ethical issues, my supervisor agreed that the research could proceed⁶¹. In order to test our judgment I met with a Professor in the Department of Social Policy independent of my supervisory team. After examining my paperwork and discussing the issues with me, the Professor concurred that we had sufficiently addressed the ethical issues and did not need to consult the Research Ethics Committee.

Because of a strong desire to promote ethical practices that would be applicable to the variety of potential situations, my supervisor agreed that it was best to adopt a situational view of ethics (Norris 1993). As noted by Fletcher:

⁶¹ The LSE ethics guidelines require PhD students' advisor to be satisfied that all ethical concerns have been addressed for research to proceed. Only in cases where the supervisor is unable to reach a decision on the ethical concerns will the Research Ethics Committee become involved.

The situationalist enters into every decision making situation fully armed with the ethical maxims of his community and its heritage and treats them with respect as illuminators of his problems. Just the same as he is prepared in any situation to compromise them or set them aside in the situation.(1966, pg. 17)

This armed yet flexible approach best suited the nature of the research project. Given the limitless variations of ethically challenging scenarios the research might encounter, it would be impossible to predict every scenario and ascribe a specific response. It would also have been impossible to gain officers' trust had I been constantly muttering a mantra of warnings regarding participation and anonymity.

3.7.1 Ethical Issues with Officers

One of the most important issues in modern qualitative fieldwork of this nature is obtaining informed consent from participants (Du Toit 1980, Bulmer 1982, Van Den Hoonaard 2002). The key point, as highlighted by Bulmer is that, "...those who are researched should have the right to know that they are being researched, and that in some sense they should have actively given their consent" (1982, pg. 49). Officers were verbally informed about the nature of the research and their right not to participate on at least two occasions, including during my introduction to a team. Unfortunately written consent is not an appropriate option during every encounter with officers (Du Toit 1980, Punch 1986), however I carried consent forms with me at all times should any officer have requested details about my research practices. No officer ever asked to see a consent form. This practice was discussed with, and accepted by, unit commanders and research staff at the Metropolitan Police Service.

In general I avoided participating in any activity that might be considered formal policing. On occasion I was asked to hold a torch, stand next to blood splatter on a sidewalk⁶², or carry a first aid kit; relatively benign actions. In the station I would make tea, grab a new battery for someone if I was going to the radio room, or loan a pen. Again, benign actions that served to build rapport. I never explicitly told officers what I would not do, and they generally did not push me to engage in activities that would have been out of line with my position as a researcher. The one occasion where

⁶² So no one walked on it until the Scenes of Crime Officer came by to mark it.

I was asked to watch a person in handcuffs while the officers pursued two teenagers was as far as it ever went. Afterwards I told the officers that I would prefer not to engage in activity like that again. I had decided that under no circumstances would I detain a person, covertly engage in reconnaissance alone, or do anything that might take away the freedom of a civilian. I would engage in activities that would help people, and on several occasions was asked to flag down an ambulance and lead the paramedics to the location of a sick or injured person in order to speed up the arrival of medical services. Officers were legally empowered to call on me as a civilian to assist them, and I told them that if they ever called for my help in an emergency situation I would assist.

Just as previous researchers have before (Smith and Gray 1983, Norris 1993), I witnessed misconduct by the police. This included inappropriate jokes and comments, all the way to violence above and beyond what was necessary to carry out the job. Most frequently the inappropriate behaviour took the form of sexist jokes⁶³ and the misuse of stop and search powers under Section 1 of PACE⁶⁴ and Section 23⁶⁵. Numerous individuals were stopped using justifications that were either well short of the legal requirement or largely fictitious. The key point of engaging in Stop and Search under PACE is that there is reasonable grounds causing the officer to have suspicion about the individual. One clear way of obtaining reasonable grounds for a search under PACE is by citing the suspicious actions of the individual. If an officer wanted to stop someone they would say, 'look at the way he's *standing* like that'. This type of behaviour was routine in RTs and present in the SNTs to a lesser degree. I decided to use those opportunities to ask officers to explain what had made them suspicious of the individual, and how they had learned to spot whatever signal it was they had seen. I chose not to report those incidents because they generated extraordinary amounts of data. Reporting them would have breached trust and would have meant the end of the research⁶⁶. I chose to remain a researcher, intent on

⁶³ Just as Reiner (1978) experienced more than 30 years ago.

⁶⁴ Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984

⁶⁵ Misuse of Drugs Act 1974

⁶⁶ I should note that I am well aware of the traumatic effect that being regularly harassed by state officials in your own neighbourhood must and can have on individuals. I in no way am trying to minimise the anger, frustration, and effect on self-esteem that these police interactions may have on someone, but I was not in a position to report each person who came away from a police interaction with their feelings hurt. I had to grit my teeth and perfect a dispassionate expression.

collecting data from a hidden phenomenon, and not react as I would had I been a community member. I relied on an internal narrative that told me that if my research were successfully completed, my findings may help improve policing practice and do a broader good for society.

Amongst police there is an implicit limit to which other officers will help cover up acts of misbehaviour (Newburn 1999), and it is understood that a researcher is not necessarily bound by those same rules (Smith and Gray 1983). There is great difficulty in producing a definitive trigger for reporting such instances, and an absolutist perspective may not answer ethical dilemmas (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995).

One particularly difficult situation happened in Farmingham when 15 young black men were pulled off a bus by officers searching for people involved in a fight at a nearby party. It was reported that a group of men had fled the fight and boarded a bus nearby, and as the first unit on scene we blocked in the most likely bus. The two officers entered the bendy-bus at the front door, and walked through the bus as I watched from outside. I met them at the back door and they said that there was not anyone suspicious on board. As that conversation was taking place a van full of Special Constables⁶⁷ arrived and their Sergeant led the way onto the bus, barking orders at his team to grab any young black males they found. Fifteen young men matching this general description were pulled off the bus. They did not seem to know each other and some were in sport clothes while others were dressed in silk shirts and polished leather shoes. The officers pushed the young men against the shop-fronts and began searching them roughly. The officers from RT2 that I was with eventually stepped in to help their fellow officers.

One of the young men told the officer that he did not appreciate what they were doing, and that he wanted to know why he was being detained. The Sergeant leading the Special Constables held him by the wrist, shouted at him and attempted to place the man in a position to be handcuffed. The man pushed back, and as a busload of people

⁶⁷ Special Constables are volunteer police officers who work about 16 hours a month. There were about 1,500 such officers with the MPS during the period of research, though that number has increased since. They are fully warranted officers, and you would not know they were volunteers unless you knew to look for the number five preceding their officer ID number.

watched, was thrown to the ground by officers. PC Jeremy, an officer I had arrived with, moved in to help hold the man down. He later told me that he felt the physical force was unnecessary had the man been talked to more politely, but he had no choice but to join once the man resisted. He explained that he was on team 'Police', and that team needed him. I watched as the man screamed, 'This isn't right! You are fucking racist cops! Get off me! Fuck you! Fuck you and leave me alone!'

Two officers had made an entirely different assessment of the situation only moments before the Sergeant arrived, and an innocent man ended up detained and forced to the ground. But what could I do? The man had suffered no serious physical injury, and the force used by the officers was in line with what they could exercise on someone resisting a search. The consensus around the canteen that night was that the searches only took place because of the arrival of the Sergeant. The officers confided that while it was unfortunate that force had to be used, using force for compliance was sometimes part of policing. They added that while it may have looked quite violent, they were using restraining holds on the suspect, not hitting him with their batons or using CS spray⁶⁸. The possibility of filing a complaint was brought up by one officer, but was dismissed as being unfeasible and inappropriate due to the Sergeant's seniority over the officer. I weighed up what to do.

Reporting the incident would have meant certain termination of my access, either from senior officers or by the cold shoulder of PCs (Skolnick 1966). Not reporting it meant that the Sergeant would probably keep treating people like that. I did not report the incident, but instead used it as a means to raise the issue of ethnicity and use of force. While I felt it was a disgusting misuse of police powers, the situation did not reach the level where I felt the impact on the offender justified notifying the unit commander. Many officers from the team had seen the search take place, so it served to facilitate a discussion that probably would not have happened otherwise. I felt I had entered a researcher purgatory where I was not fully accepted but was also losing my place in society because I was complicit in a fellow citizen's mistreatment by police. I took solace in the classic lines of Bronfenbrenner, "...the only safe way to avoid violating

⁶⁸ CS spray is an incapacitating spray, similar in effect to tear gas delivered in a spray can.

principles of professional ethics is to refrain from doing social research altogether” (Bronfenbrenner 1952, pg. 453).

3.7.2 *Ethical Issues with Civilians*

During interactions with civilians - either as suspects, prisoners, or others who came to the attention of the police -I informed them of my role providing doing so did not jeopardise the safety or professional conduct of the police officers involved. I was concerned about distracting the officers, but I also wanted to avoid the ‘observer effect’ (Norris 1993) where people will ‘play up’ to the researcher. In some instances I deemed it impossible to inform a civilian that I was not a police officer or gain their consent for my presence, due to the concerns listed above.

Arrested individuals were always notified about my role as soon as possible after they had been arrested, and were informed that they could ask me to leave without repercussion. Generally prisoners are transported in the back of a police van, so contact with them post-arrest was usually quite limited. In the rare occasions when a prisoner was transported in an IRV I would inform them of my identity before getting in to the vehicle with them. Officers had me ride in the front passenger seat during such occasions. To avoid prompting the arrested individual to say anything that might harm their position I avoided making small-talk with them after informing them of my identity.

There were some civilians with which I had regular contact during fieldwork. A group of about 20 young men aged 11-15 regularly came in to contact with police on their council estate known as ‘The Knottington’ and they came to know I was not a police officer, spreading the word to their friends in the area. Over the course of the research I was at incidents involving those young men at least ten times, including one foot pursuit after an assault. At first they would just eye me suspiciously, but after the fourth time one of them asked who I was. My American accent shocked him, and I told him I was a researcher observing the police. That seemed to settle the issue.

I began to be referred to as, “the big one” whenever they saw me. On one of my very last shifts I was at a community event and the boys were hanging around, having a bit of banter with the local SNT officers. As I spoke with the community youth worker

who had organised the event, she told me that several of the boys were convinced that I was a CID⁶⁹ officer. The youth worker told me that the boys had not understood what a researcher is, and a rumour had formed that I must be gathering intelligence for a big raid. This was confirmed to them by the fact that I just stood there silently watching whenever they were stop and searched, I didn't have handcuffs or a baton, and that I was seen with different officers. She had only recently learned that the boys held this belief, and had tried to explain to them who I was.

This community event was my first chance talk with the boys. I was able to dispel the rumours, and had a good 10 minute chat with the group after the youth worker encouraged them to approach me. We talked about what a researcher does, why one would want to study the police, and how you get to be a researcher. One of them asked to poke my bullet-proof vest to see what it felt like, and I let him. Upon doing so the group seemed to come to an unspoken agreement. No real police officer would let them poke him in the chest like that, and as a sign of my new non-police status, they subsequently began telling me the rudest jokes they knew.

My relationships with civilians were not always as pleasant as the above incident. Sometimes - because people thought I was an officer - I was on the receiving end of abusive comments. On one occasion a man who was being removed from his home for domestic violence tried to pick a fight with each of the officers present. None were taking the bait, and when he turned to me he said, "Come on you big silent fuck. Do you polish knobs you knob polisher? Is your face like that from too many knobs slapping you in the face? I'm gonna clap you in the face Patches!⁷⁰". Many people, both before and after learning I was not a police officer, would ask my opinion on situations. "Do you think you'll find the robber?" "C'mon, do you think they need to be arresting me over this?" I had to be very careful to not portray myself as having insider knowledge, or engaging in behaviour that might make the job of the officers

⁶⁹ Criminal Investigative Division.

⁷⁰ I have a birthmark on my face, and he was referring to that in an attempt to mock me. Later when talking to an officer about the incident I told him that I'd been called a lot of names, but 'Patches' was a new one. He suggested that I should have punched the wife-beater in the face because, "none of us would have seen anything, none of us would have said anything. He was a cock, and deserved to learn to keep his mouth shut." It was quite a surprising statement, and seemed to be said in all seriousness. I felt I had truly been taken in by the team, but at the same time was worried that they might actually do such things to people.

more difficult. Moreover, I had to avoid doing anything that would bring additional harm or stress to civilians. Though I often knew the answer I feigned a lack of knowledge.

The research required me to enter people's homes on a regular basis and, when I did so, I made an extra effort to inform civilians that I was not an officer. Most civilians seemed to take little notice of me. I was only once asked to leave someone's home, and that was after he had initially acquiesced to my presence. The man only revoked my access when he was informed that he would be arrested for sexual assault. This caused him to begin yelling at everyone to leave, in a vain attempt to avoid being arrested. Even though this was clearly an undirected request, and the officers were not about to leave, I complied. In doing so I actually made the situation worse because now he had spotted one small area where he had control. He started shouting that I had to leave his block, and then his neighbourhood, and eventually as he was escorted past me in handcuffs he told me that I needed to leave London because he no longer wanted me there. He was a very sad man looking for any semblance of control as he faced very serious charges.

Chapter 4- Response Policing: Astronauts Acting Out

I'm glad you're studying us, spending time on the street like you have been. You need to see how we really operate, what we experience, yeah, because you can't understand policing until you've spent time on team. I mean, a barrister and I both know the law, but we're different people. He can quote me all kinds of cases and precedent; he knows the law. But where he sees pictures of crime scenes, I've been there. I know the smell of iron in a pool of warm blood. I've held people as they die, whimpering in pain and knowing it's all almost over. I know the law too, but I know its application in the most dire of society's circumstances. The filth the barrister reads about is what stains my uniform... The difference between the barrister and myself is like the difference between an astronomer and an astronaut. The astronomer can tell you all about the formation of galaxies and stars' orbits, but he's never held a moon rock in his hand. (PC Jack, RT4)

This chapter will explore the complex role of Response Policing in Watling. Through RT officers' efforts to respond to emergency incidents coming in via 999, proactively searching individuals they encounter on the street, and stopping vehicles, they regularly engage in non-adaptive efforts to demonstrate that police can maintain order in the community and apprehend those that violate the law. The RT officers represent one side of the bifurcated developments in the criminal justice system. In Watling, their identity is built on the notion that through expeditious response and intrusive searches, they can bring criminals to justice. In reality, this is rarely the case. Often, officers are only able to take a report of an incident that occurred before they arrived on scene and fill out paperwork they will never see again. Combined with the seven per cent success rate for their stop and search activity, the moments of doing 'real police work' are more elusive than the image portrayed to the public. RT officers grasp for moments of triumph amongst endless miles of driving through empty neighbourhoods in the middle of the night. At times, it is a thrilling ride capable of inducing an adrenaline rush so strong it makes your ears throb and your hands shake. It can also be fun - meeting up with other team members for an illicit cup of coffee in the middle of a quiet graveyard shift, swapping weird and wonderful stories about characters you've come across that night. For the most part, however, it is draining - the constant motion of going from non-incident to non-incident, listening to people's problems, and sitting for hours filling in endless paperwork in triplicate after anything exciting actually occurs.

Somewhere, amidst the highs of a vehicle pursuit and the lows of standing around a crime scene waiting for SOCO⁷¹ to arrive, there are drugs - smack and crack, coke and dope, though mostly just very small bags of cheap cannabis. Officers are armed with the same tools they carry to thwart muggers and murders as when they go after teenagers smoking a spliff⁷² in a stairwell. In order to explore the role of drugs fully, this chapter will first set the stage by identifying what street-level policing looks like in Watling. Once armed with this information and analysis the reader will have a significantly improved appreciation of the discussion in Chapter Six. In addition to helping identify the role of drugs in street-level policing, this chapter also provides evidence of bifurcation.

In order to explore the general context of street-level policing I will first explore the Raison d'être of Response Teams, namely their ability to respond to calls via the 999 system. Second, I will focus on the 'proactive' efforts of response teams, notably their frequent use of stop and search. Here I will show the full force of non-adaptive efforts as they are brought to bear on the community. Further, I will explore how officers decide to invoke their powers to search by looking at the schemas officers use to identify criminals and the discourse teams have created to explain their actions. Finally, the chapter will explore how RT officers interact with the community. The application of stop and search powers has persistently resulted in ethnically disproportionate statistics and a strained relationship between RT officers and the community. By exploring these interactions, we will see how officers adopt a view of criminality that distances perpetrators from the 'respectable community'. Further, I will show that officers use non-adaptive practices to engender a sense of mission and professionalism even as other parts of the police service in Watling have moved to incorporate adaptive practices.

By the end of this chapter I will have shown that the role of response officers is fraught with conflicts about their role, and these conflicts are mitigated by officers pursuing action and police-work that reinforces the professional identity they seek to project.

⁷¹ Scenes of Crimes Officer. A forensic technician. As there is usually only one or two available for the borough, officers often have to wait for some time before the technician arrives to sweep for fingerprints or other forensic evidence.

⁷² A spliff is slang for a cannabis cigarette, and can be used interchangeably with the word 'joint'.

Unfortunately this attempt to minimise personal and professional conflicts disconnects the RT officers from the adaptive changes to policing, and generates its own conflicts with the community through the over-use of stop and search tactics.

4.1 Being on Team

The belief that RT officers are constantly responding to emergency calls is untrue. Although RT officers spend more than 50 per cent of their time outside of the station (McLean and Hillier 2011), much of this is spent patrolling the borough or conducting proactive searches of individuals. RT officers often encounter a varied work environment due to their reactive role responding to calls for assistance, and proactive action against suspicious individuals.

Thing is when you're on response team, you are literally led by calls, so all the calls that come out you have to go to. If you get down time and there's nothing that needs your immediate attention you will sort of head down to the areas you know there's going to be drugs, being sold or dealt or people in possession of, you go down to areas where motor vehicle crime happens, burglaries. You'll patrol different areas where you know there's high rates of burglaries and it will literally be just to stop and search people, to try and prevent, to try and make an arrest, pull over, because you're in a car you'll be driving around and pulling over different vehicles sort of like checking documents trying to stick people on for no insurance, no driving license that sort of thing. Every day was different. (PC Sam, Blackburn SNT)

PC Jenny had a concise description of the role of an RT team, "I answer 999 calls"⁷³. Asking her to expand on other work an RT engages in, she continued, "Sometimes you get the opportunity for a bit of pro-activity, but I see my primary role as to answer 999 calls and to go to people who need the police." (PC Jenny, RT4). This emphasis on service through action (Smith and Gray 1983, Reiner 2010) was a common sentiment amongst RT officers, allowing them to differentiate themselves from the rest of the organization. Skolnick's description of the police 'working personality' involving, "danger, authority and efficiency, as they combine to generate distinctive cognitive and behavioural responses" (Skolnick 1966, pg. 42) is particularly relevant to RT policing. To an RT officer, taking action equated with the ability to engage in the real

⁷³ 999 is the official emergency phone number used to access police, fire, and ambulance services in the UK. A separate non-emergency number, 101, was introduced in July 2011.

policing that thwarted criminals (Waddington 1999b). Despite disparaging remarks about the communities in Watling and criticisms of their managers and political overseers, a call to action provided RT officers the chance to do the job they feel they were paid for. “Fuck’n aye I love my job! I get paid to drive fast, bust bad guys, and take a roll on the ground when they put up a fight!”⁷⁴

The RT officers’ focus on action meant that patrolling was often only interrupted by incidents that were of an adversarial nature to community members (Reiner 2010), making positive interactions a rare occurrence. Other than when standing in a queue to purchase food, RT officers rarely interacted with community members who weren’t either the victim or suspect in a crime. Additionally, their constant patrolling in search of action created a skewed perception of the population of Watling. Officers spent their time looking for what was wrong with their community, often seeing innocent actions as nefarious.

One of the first things I was taught in the borough is believe no one, and suspect everyone. And it doesn’t serve you far wrong, because if you approach everything with that attitude, and then you find out the facts, you then know who you’re easing off with and balancing it all out. Loads of people would disagree, but it works. (PC Bruce, RT2)

Officers on team often feel they have a special role within the organization due to their emphasis on service through action. CID, SNT, and many other units are seen as attending crimes well-after the fact, and not involved in dangerous situations. Conversely, officers on TSG⁷⁵, OSU⁷⁶, DPG⁷⁷, SO17⁷⁸, and other action-oriented units are seen as kindred spirits. PC Hugh commented “I want to transfer to TSG because you’re a proper force. Done my SNT rotation and wouldn’t want to go back to that; I need action.” Many officers on team were inclined to evolve their career with postings that were action oriented, not community oriented. Research by the National Policing

⁷⁴RT officer from the borough of Mayne (Bear 2009). Officers in Watling made similar comments, but this was perhaps the most beautiful expression of the idea I’ve ever heard.

⁷⁵ Territorial Support Group- Responsible for public order policing and major incidents

⁷⁶ Operational Support Unit- Responsible for high risk warrants and mental health assessments

⁷⁷ Diplomatic Protection Group- Responsible for protection of politicians, embassies, and government buildings. They can be identified by their red police vehicles.

⁷⁸ Firearms Team- Officers part of ‘Trident’ patrol in teams of three, armed with assault-rifles and handguns. They can be identified by the circular yellow stickers in the front and rear windscreens of their vehicles.

Improvement Agency has identified that Response officers spend nearly 23 per cent of their time dealing with an average of 5.2 incidents per shift, well above the 10 per cent of the time neighbourhood officers spend on or at incidents⁷⁹ (McClean and Hillier 2011). Commenting on an assault he recently attended, PC Jack vented a common frustration at the expansion of the role of RTs, especially for instances where CID or an SNT might have previously been called to take over a situation. PC Jack highlighted how the ability to respond quickly to calls for help was being hamstrung, while other units were not able or willing to respond to the dangerous calls RT officers prided themselves in being able to handle.

I dealt with it [as] the initial investigator, secured evidence, set up a crime scene, caught [sic] the bad guys, cared for the victims, reassured the community. That's where my job should stop because the radio hasn't stopped. There are more calls coming out; I should be able to extract myself from that and go on and do what I am being paid to do which is to answer 999 calls, because with the response team no one else is going to answer them, no-one else in the office is who might be dealing with these jobs are going go 'oh that needs dealing with there's a bloke kicking off at a pub, I'll tell you what I am going to do I'll put my Met vest on and go out there and deal with that.' They won't, that's our job. (PC Jack, RT4)

This sense of separation between RT and other units was seemingly built on real instances. While I was walking with a PCSO from Brunel Gardens SNT, a call came over the radio regarding a street robbery four blocks from our location. The crime had just occurred, and the victim provided a detailed description of the suspect. I looked to the PCSO to see if he heard the call, and he had, but remarked that, "We'll just keep on heading this way, we've been out a while now." A few minutes later, officers from the RT called in to say they had a suspect in sight and needed support to close off his escape paths. At this point, we knew we were less than 200 metres from the suspect, on the opposite side of the RT officers, and between the suspect and a busy shopping centre. Should the suspect flee, he almost certainly would have headed towards us. Again I looked at the PCSO. "That's the RT's job, they'll be fine. Let's take this bus back to the station. Do you have an Oyster card?" With that, we boarded a passing bus and drove past as an RT officer struggled with the suspect. When we arrived back at the station, the PCSO decided he would spend the rest of his shift putting together

⁷⁹ Interestingly, the same research found that officers across all roles spent about 27 per cent of their time on administrative and paperwork activities, or about 2.5 hours per shift.

information for an upcoming community meeting⁸⁰. After sitting around Neckinger station for an hour, I rang up the RT commander and caught a ride with the next passing RT car, which I stayed with for the rest of their shift. I mentioned the earlier robbery incident to the RT officers involved in the apprehension of the suspect. “That’s just an SNT for you. We handle the real calls; they give hugs to old women when they moan about dog mess in their garden” (PC Ron, RT4). Looking back on the incident, I realize I had adopted the RT’s view that planning a community event held less value because it was not action oriented. Additionally, I assumed that all policing was, at its core, about apprehending suspects in response to a crime. For the SNT, this was not their remit⁸¹, and yet I viewed their aversion to action as a sign of failure.

4.2 Responding to Calls: Being There When Things Go Bad

At the time of fieldwork, Response Teams were responsible for responding to all emergency calls in Watling during their shift. This situation has changed in the intervening months, and the new Local Policing Model introduced by Commissioner Bernard Hogan-Howe has directed resources away from Response teams towards a more enjoined team community policing structure⁸². Response Teams now focus on responding only to ‘I grade’ calls, and the beefed up SNTs will, “...investigate all low-risk, high volume crime that affects the day to day quality of life of local people on their ward.” (MPS 2012b). This is an important change because it removes the responsibility to respond to the numerous low-priority calls coming in each day, freeing up officers to respond to dangerous situations as quickly as possible. However, this change fundamentally alters the role RT officers played in the community during the period of fieldwork.

⁸⁰ This would not necessarily take the full rest of the shift, but given the slow performance of the computers in Neckinger Station it was best to budget additional time.

⁸¹ On the MPS website each SNT has a webpage with information on what activities they’re engaging in and how to contact them. Each of these SNT pages says, “We are not a 24-hour response team, so if it is an emergency please call 999” (MPS 2013b)NB: This is not an SNT in Watling, but the language and page structure are the same throughout the MPS)

⁸² Officers across the borough refer to Response Teams as ‘team’. E.g. An officer in a Safer Neighbourhood unit might say something like, ‘When I was on team we used to do xyz’.

Attending to emergency calls dominated professional identity of RT officers, with the number and quality of calls being an important factor in determining if a shift had been successful. All other activity was secondary, but not all calls for help were treated equally.

PC's work so hard, they can't afford to get too bogged down with the, dare I say, the social worker side of things. Their job's demanding enough and I think they have to deal with things quick time. The slow time considerations, they need to be made by someone else, there isn't that opportunity there for them anymore. (Inspector Bruce, RT2)

RT officers were expected to respond to the wide variety of calls that came in to the 999 system. For the purposes of the research, I divided the calls into four broad categories. Firstly, there were reports of crime in progress. These could include domestic assaults, robberies, assaults or frays, and shoplifting incidents. The second category included responding to crimes after they had occurred. These were often related to a robbery reported after the fact, a shoplifter already detained by in-store security, or criminal damage. The third was situations where no crime was occurring, but police were called anyway. These 'service calls' (Reiner 2010) take up a considerable amount of time, and most commonly included complaints about noise, family arguments, or disruptive neighbours. The fourth type of call was drug crimes. Drug offences mostly came to light through proactive stop and search activity. On rare occasions, officers would be called to respond to a report of someone using drugs in a way that had prompted a member of the public to call police.

The unifying thread between these calls was that they were formally identified problems that the officers could respond to. This formality instantly limited the available avenues with which to proceed with the incident. When a call came through the 999 system a CAD⁸³ was created for the incident, providing the details of the situation. Through the CAD, information from the public was translated in to practical knowledge, giving officers organizational and legal constructs under which to operate

⁸³ CAD stands for Computer Aided Dispatch. The system gives the address and additional information provided by the dispatcher, and is displayed on the vehicles Mobile Data Terminal (MDT), a computer system with a touch-screen located between the driver and passenger. CADs had a unique number that reset at midnight each day. To find any call handled by the MPS, all you need is the date and the CAD number. Officers could also create a CAD at the scene of an incident they had proactively engaged in.

(Manning 1988). While the information provided on a CAD was often incomplete, it set up a framework for officers to understand the situation. This allowed them to focus on a limited set of responses to the situation. Given the numerous permutations each general type of incident could take, this narrowing effect was crucial to officers' ability to successfully manage difficult and confusing situations.

On a response team a call comes over the radio it could be anything from a rape all the way down to a harassment even just a shop lift and you need to have so much legislation going on, you need to be able to identify an offence and get it right because if you don't then...if you can't identify certain offences then you're not very good at your job and you're not doing what your paid to do. (PC Hugh, RT4)

4.2.1 Crimes in Progress

Most offences are not discovered until after the crime has been committed (Reiner 2010). Thus, the majority of calls for service do not engender the energy and tension that a crime in progress creates. Officers seized upon crimes in progress that came out over the radio, and it was not uncommon for three or four units to assign themselves to the call. Receiving a call for an assault in progress was considered one of the more desirable calls to attend as an RT officer. It was the epitome of 'real policing'.

Responding to a crime in progress, particularly an assault, meant there was a high likelihood of action upon arrival, often a 'real' victim, and good chance to affect an arrest if a suspect was still present. As discussed, the action component was core to the image RT officers had of themselves. The idea of a 'real victim' further motivated officers' when responding to such crimes (Christie 1986). The status of such victims was cemented almost instantly if they were female, weak, respectable, and blameless for the crime that had just occurred (Christie 1986). The opportunity to bring swift justice to a worthy victim was nearly as strong of a draw as the thrill of action.

It's very hard to find a real victim [in Watling]. The times that I find what I consider real victims is usually the street robbery... the mindless assault on a Friday and Saturday night when you've got somebody who is literally trying to go home or trying to get a cab, or he's nudged somebody in a queue in the kebab shop, and he gets assaulted by some idiot. They're a real victim. (PC Jack RT4)

Assaults between members of the public were superseded in the hierarchy of responses only by assaults against fellow police officers - the squealing alarm broadcast borough-wide by an officer triggering the emergency assistance button on their radio would send officers scrambling to their vehicle. An assault on an officer was, without question, always the fault of the assailant, and the officer a 'real victim'. On one occasion, PC Jenny and PC Brandy triggered their emergency transmit buttons while conducting a drug search.

We saw him sniffing drugs off the back of his hand and obviously went over to speak to him. He was about 6ft2, Brandy and I are quite short, obviously smaller than him and we went to try and search him, he didn't want to be searched so it became a bit of a tussle; although it basically involved me hanging on one arm and Brandy hanging on the other arm and being swung around by the rather large man who didn't want to be searched. We did eventually get him in handcuffs... (PC Jenny, RT4)

I was eating dinner at Ulverston station when this occurred and every RT officer in the canteen jumped and ran for the door as soon as the alarm went off. Officers jumped into the first vehicle they could before it went shooting out of the car park⁸⁴. Though we arrived too late to participate in the arrest, the drive there was punctuated by fervent manoeuvres to slash every possible second off our response time. The situation was resolved by the time we arrived, and the officers were unharmed. Later in the evening, the team was praised by Inspector Bradley for their quick response⁸⁵.

Although officers often expressed excitement when heading to an assault between civilians, there was only terse and limited dialogue when on the way to an officer involved assault. One of the harshest criticisms an officer could levy at a colleague was that they were slow to respond to an emergency alarm from a fellow officer. The need to back each other up in a dangerous profession was key to building solidarity among officers (Reiner 2010). Many officers believed that the public does not support the police, and they must protect each other from physical as well as rhetorical assault

⁸⁴ It is for this ability to quickly leave the station's car park that officers on an RT always park their facing outward.

⁸⁵ One of the darkest periods for RT4 came while I was away for several days. Officers were attacked by a man with a knife while investigating a complaint. They pressed their emergency button, but the dispatcher directed responding officers to the wrong location. In the few added minutes it took to find the officers under attack one officer was severely beaten and had his jaw broken, and the other officer was seriously injured after being beaten and repeatedly stabbed. Luckily, most of the stabs hit her bullet-proof vest, saving her life.

(Skolnick 1966). After leaving the scene of PC Jenny and PC Brandy's call for help, PC Jack commented, "We're the biggest gang in London, and we protect each other because god knows that the inhabitants of this borough don't care fuck all what happens to us."

If a suspect was encountered during a crime-in-progress, usually the only proscribed response for officers was to arrest the individual. If the victim had not suffered any injuries, and there were differing accounts of what happened, sometimes officers would convince both parties they should just walk away and not seek charges to avoid arrest. Additionally, not every 'fight' was actually a fight. In one situation, we were called to a report of four men fighting outside a pub. Racing there in WW1⁸⁶, we arrived to find two men grappling with each other and laughing hysterically. They stopped when they saw the police car arrive. The men explained that they were old friends who were just playing around after one of the 'assailants' had made an inappropriate joke about the other's female family member. Given the total lack of *mens rea* and the absence of any harm to either party, the officers explained why they had been called, wished the men good evening, and went back to patrolling.

Officers' response to domestic assault CADs generally took two forms. If it was reported that there was actual physical violence taking place, the officers responded similarly to any other assault call, though often with dread about how 'messy' these situations could be. However, if only arguing was reported between parties, officers could proceed as if it was a non-crime incident, as will be discussed below. In either case, the handling of 'a domestic' followed tightly proscribed responses that limited discretion. A 124D form was completed for every domestic incident attended by officers. This long and arduous form compiled all the necessary information about both parties, their living arrangements, and any children present in the house. This form was disliked by nearly every officer I spoke with due to its length and the requirement to enter information twice.

⁸⁶ A high powered BMW response vehicle.

I get it, you know, that women are murdered all the time by their partners. I hate scum that treats their misses with anything but respect, but I don't see how they need to take away all the discretion we once had. The job used to be about dealing with situations, and now it's about following a script. Now that guy is out on the street, hasn't learned to have a grown up conversation, and where's he gonna go tonight? I'd be furious if you removed me from my own home for having a row. (PC Peter, RT2)

Research by the NPIA showed this attitude was present across the country (McLean and Hillier 2011). At domestic incidents, officers were required to remove one party from the premises and were compelled to arrest an individual if there was an allegation or reasonable grounds to suspect they had committed an offence. The MPS deemed this a “perpetrator focused approach” that “promotes positive actions for arrest and prosecution”(MPS 2009a, pg. 3). The law was changed to allow officers to arrest without a criminal complaint by the victim⁸⁷. This effectively removes almost all discretion from a situation labelled as domestic violence.

4.2.2 *Crimes After The Fact*

If a robbery was reported within moments of occurring, a specialist robbery squad vehicle would usually attend the incident. These teams worked in unmarked cars and often took the victim to look for the perpetrator during the critical minutes following a street robbery. If these specialist teams were unavailable, or the victim had waited more than a few minutes to report the incident, RT officers attended. In the latter situation, officers tried to comfort the victim while also broadcasting the perpetrator's details to the rest of the team so they could search for suspects in the area. The officers on scene generally only had time to take an official report and then drive the victim around for 10-15 minutes while other officers would stop and search suspects fitting the description of the perpetrator.

Attending these types of incidents evoked a conflicted response from officers. Although there was the possibility of action if the perpetrator was caught, there was often little to do other than fill out paperwork and take a statement. Many officers viewed the ‘mopping up efforts’ as one of the less satisfying aspects of policing. However, they were able to bring some comfort to victims by showing up and

⁸⁷ The MPS has identified that in situations where prosecution is not feasible, they will find alternative means to improve the situation by working with partner agencies in the community.(MPS 2009a, pg. 3)

demonstrating an effort to find the perpetrator, even though officers believed the odds of successfully finding the perpetrator were quite low. PC Paula put it succinctly; “People want to feel you’re doing something, so we do, when we can. You don’t know [what will happen].”

4.2.3 *Non-Crime Incidents*

Many incidents police are called to are not criminal in nature, and instead require them to become social service providers of sorts (Punch 1979). These include arguments between neighbours, noise complaints, and calls about ‘suspicious looking’ people. Officers did not appear to enjoy these situations and they would often hesitate to take on calls that were not going to generate any ‘real’ policing activity. Responding to a noise complaint call over the radio, PC Edmund debated the merits of attending as we were only a few hundred metres away. “We could go, but just our luck we’ll get stuck with some mouthy twat and be there an hour and miss some proper action.” On rare occasions, the RT Sergeant had to get on the radio and demand someone ‘put up’ for the call.

We used to be a knife, sharp knife, and now we’re just like a big butter knife; big fat butter knife that spreads over everything else and we don’t do any of it particularly well, but we should just be tackling crime, which is what people think and imagine we actually do, but they don’t realize how much other stuff we get involved in. (PC Jack RT4)

In many of these situations, officers were unable to provide any formal guidance, only words of advice. One incident in particular had left PC Jack incensed. A woman living in a council flat had called police saying she was afraid of being assaulted by her roommate. Upon arrival it transpired that the ‘roommate’ and her two small children were sub-letting the living room of the flat, and the woman who had initially contacted the police was trying to evict them without notice. Subletting a council flat is a civil infraction, not a criminal offence, and neither is eviction. PC Jack seemed quite frustrated as we walked away from the situation:

It agitates me, stuff like that agitates me, and bar from letting the council know there is not a lot else we can do there, we can't prove anything, so calls like that we deal with them quite frequently. It's not a police matter but I am quite happy to get involved and sort it out, as I say, I asked the female what her immigration status was just to clarify that as well because it's not right and there's young people who perhaps are trying to get jobs and perhaps are trying to get on the waiting list for a council house who can't get one because of people like this. (PC Jack, RT4)

At one such 'non-incident', officers were called to a council flat only a block from Farmingham station. The address was well known to officers as they were called there at least once a month. An elderly bed-bound woman lived in the flat with her two adult sons, both of whom had unspecified special needs. Turning to me as we walked towards the front door, PC Jake said, "You might want to stay outside, they've got fleas and it smells bloody awful". The officers were called because, as usual, the sons were fighting again. One brother had accused the other of using his towel, and voices were subsequently raised at each other. Even though raised voices do not constitute a crime, the mother was unable to intervene and had called the police. The officers were right; the place smelled awful, and the hot stagnant air enveloped me. I excused myself after a few minutes of listening to the officers go back and forth between the two brothers, trying to settle them down. In the end, they asked one of the men to leave under the domestic violence guidelines in order to extricate themselves from the situation that had already lasted half an hour.

I think a lot of neighbours who don't like living next door to each other have now decided that the police are the people that you can just phone up and complain to and expect that a) they're going to be interested in dealing with your problems... We've sort of like turned in to, or we've had to turn in to bit more of a caring service, to be seen to be caring a bit more, rather than just being able to tell people 'look that's not a police matter, you know, you're an adult sort it out yourself' which is what used to happen. (PC Sam, Blackburn SNT)

At another incident, we were called to a small council flat by a woman having an argument with her 12 year old foster son. The officers knew the location well, and said they had been called there at least once a month for the last few years. Arriving at the front door, I was overwhelmed by the smell. Inside, several piles of animal faeces were visible, and the woman lounged in front of a massive flat-screen television with a full ashtray by her side. She had accused her foster child of stealing the £10 she had given

him to buy cannabis for her. The boy sat quietly against the countertop in the kitchen between a pile of takeaway wrappers and several unwashed dishes. As she couldn't show that she actually had given the boy any money, and he denied everything, there was little the officers could do. As Goldstein pointed out (Goldstein 1960), an officer's decision not to investigate those instances that they feel are not breaking the law, often go unnoticed by the wider community unless the failure is of sufficiently immense magnitude.

These incidents cemented officers' view that they were some of the few worthy individuals left in society, and that everyone else was either a criminal, lazy, unbalanced, or all three. "Say what you want, but there's no way, not at all, that I'd raise my family around here. Children are influenced by their environment, and this environment is shit. Good thing we're here" (PC George, RT4). Considering their contact with the community regularly involved many individuals who seemed to fit these roles, it is not hard to see how officers might begin to feel this way.

4.2.4 Responding to Drug Calls

On occasion, officers were called to respond to drug-related incidents by members of the public. These were usually either in relation to someone shooting up heroin in an alley or smoking cannabis in a stairwell. I was never present when a call came in about drug dealing. Both heroin and cannabis related calls were usually treated with a moderate level of interest from officers, though cannabis calls elicited slightly more attention. In the year I spent with officers in Watling, we never once responded to a report of drug use and actually found anyone using drugs. On one occasion, we did come close and could still smell the cannabis in the air when we arrived on the scene. This inspired the officers to hoist themselves over a fence and jump into a small garden, though their efforts came up empty. The officers were disappointed at having missed the culprits, but went back to patrolling after a few minutes. The call wasn't mentioned again during the shift.

Drug-related calls occupied an odd niche within response policing. The fact that the individual reporting the crime was not in danger because of the actions of drug user seemed to lower the priority for officers to respond, no matter what their personal feelings about drug use. At the same time, a drug call was still a call to action,

requiring a speedy arrival in order to catch the perpetrator, and gave the officer carte blanche to search the nearby area if a description of the suspect had been provided. Any call to action was an opportunity to engage in police work, and maintaining a sense of mission trumped most anything else.

4.2.4.1 Limited Responses to Reactive Work

Responding to calls over the radio, no matter the call, was the hallmark of a good response officer in the eyes of many members of team. However, an officer was limited in what they could achieve when responding to a call. Calls for assistance to on-going situations were fairly rare, and the chance of catching a robbery suspect was low. As mentioned previously, the overall sanctioned detection rate in England and Wales was only 28 per cent (Home Office 2011a). Often, it was difficult to identify the ‘real’ victim in a situation as both parties were often morally clouded. Even during ‘real’ incidents, officers often only had the option of arresting an individual or perhaps giving a warning, and were limited by the enforcement options applicable to the situation as it had been constructed.

In the exercise of their proactive roles, officers had much more leeway about how they enforced the law and when they chose to engage in action. As such, there was a tension between what constituted the proper activities of an RT officer. If an officer obtained positive stop and searches, he was lauded by the unit commander for combatting crime and bringing in good numbers. That officer also gained respect from colleagues because they were ‘fighting crime,’ a task seen as paramount for RT officers. At the same time, an officer who would not ‘put up’ for less exciting calls was quickly identified by the team and lost respect. PC Dominic was known as ‘Super Cop’ because of his presence and effective handling of challenging situations, however another officer on team pointed out that, “He probably hasn’t arrested a shoplifter or done an immigration check in years. I’m serious. You only hear him on the radio for ‘I calls’. Does he think he’s better than the rest of us?” (PC on RT4). Given the high volume of ‘service calls’, often the only opportunity for officers to engage in ‘proper’ police work during a shift was to proactively find criminal behaviour to deal with.

4.3 Proactive Policing with Response Teams

Along with the requirement to attend calls, RT officers were tasked with ‘being proactive’. It quickly became evident that being proactive meant using police powers, or at least the implied threat of invoking those powers. Often this meant actively seeking individuals to stop and search. However, it also included traffic stops, drug raids or other large operations organized by the borough. In contrast to the call for help that prompted action when responding to a 999 call, proactive policing almost always involved an unwilling civilian participant, and generally lacked an immediately identifiable victim.

In reality, there were not many drug raids handled by RTs,⁸⁸ and large-scale operations were even less frequent. This left stop and searches as the primary means of proactivity. While that may sound restrictive, the ability to stop and search individuals carried far greater leeway about how and when officers could use their policing powers than did activities based on responding to calls. Officers could dictate what powers they employed, and to whom they employed it, within fairly wide parameters.

Proactive work by RTs was justified by officers in three ways. Firstly, proactivity was seen as a sign that officers were stopping crime before it occurred. To officers, preventing crime signified that RTs were capable of maintaining order. Secondly, officers believed that proactive work was what the community wanted RTs to do. Thus, proactive policing in the form of stop and searches might have been seen as obtrusive by community members, but was seen by officers as the best way to target violent street-robbers causing fear in community members. During a community meeting, a TSG officer responded to a woman who had asked if officers really needed to conduct so many stop and searches, “You don’t want to get stabbed walking home with your shopping, so we need to search the lads that need searching; for your safety” (Unknown PC, Watling).

Thirdly, proactivity was seen as the best way for officers to demonstrate their abilities and meet the expected performance requirements. Positive searches were seen as a key indicator of development for officers on probation. Even for well-established

⁸⁸ In chapter six I will look at some of the drug raids carried out by both RTs and SNTs.

officers, proactivity on the RT provided material to support the yearly Professional Development Review (PDR)⁸⁹. During one encounter with a lost child, PC Jamie saw an opportunity to do just this. He got down on one knee and quietly spoke to the five-year-old girl, gave her a smile, and asked her details about where she lived. When the incident was successfully resolved he remarked, “Did you see how I spoke to her. I took the initiative and communicated effectively with a citizen. This is going to look great in my PDR once I write it up all nice and proper” (PC Jamie, RT4).

4.3.1 Stop and Search

Stop and search activities are one of the best opportunities for RT officers to engage in proactive work during their shift. The output obtained from these stops often involves administrative-based punishments, a key element of adaptive practices. However, the active searching represents an effort by state actors to govern through force and, “provide security, law and order, and crime control within its territorial boundaries” (Garland 1996, pg. 448). For officers, a stop and search is an opportunity for ‘real’ policing, and is a chance to enforce penal sanctions through the expression of police powers. Nevertheless, many of the outcomes of a stop and search are of an adaptive nature. This can be seen in the use of the cannabis Warning System (CWS) or Penalty Notices for Disorder (PNDs) that require the recipient to pay an £80 fine. Although the officer retains an element of discretion and is able to invoke their power (both important factors in maintaining professional identity), often they are transformed in to administrative actors.

Even if an officer tones down the explicit state-based authority they have when conducting a search, this does not negate how the interaction is viewed by the individual being searched. It is almost certain the civilian will identify the experience as one of the state attempting to maintain control, and not one of administrative actors seeking to develop manageable solutions away from the political rhetoric. Even if the outcome of a positive search results in a formal warning instead of arrest, the search may be seen as a public display of power, consistent with sovereign state strategies. It is important to remember that a search is itself a denial of liberty for a brief period.

⁸⁹ See chapters six and seven for further discussion of this.

Stop and search under PACE S.1 and MoDA S.23 require the same level of suspicion as one would need to justify an arrest⁹⁰ (MPA 2005).

Police officers in England and Wales are legislatively empowered to stop and search individuals, provided they have reasonable grounds,⁹¹ and as long as the power is used “fairly, responsibly, with respect for people being searched and without unlawful discrimination” (1984, Code A1.1). While the power to stop and search is vigorously defended by the MPS as an effective tool for both uncovering illegal activity and generating information (MPS 2009b, 2011a, 2011c, MPA 2005), its use has proven contentious (Skolnick 1966, EHRC 2013, Police Federation 2012, Dai, Frank, and Sun 2011, Rehman 2009, Bradford, Jackson, and Stanko 2009, Qureshi 2007, Delsol and Shiner 2006, Lustgarten 2002, Quinton, Bland, and Miller 2000, Eastwood, Shiner, and Bear 2013). The power of stop and search is legislatively an investigative power, though police have manipulated their current practice to use the powers as a deterrent (Lustgarten 2002). Although the intention of search powers was to give officers the ability to find contraband without going through the process of arrest and depriving a suspect of liberty while a post-arrest search was conducted, Lustgarten (2002) argues that police now use their search powers to deter individuals from engaging in criminal behaviour.

Section 1 of PACE is the broadest of search powers⁹², and allows officers to search for stolen items, prohibited articles, a bladed or offensive weapon, and illegal fireworks. PACE strictly limits the information and sources that can generate the reasonable suspicion necessary to stop and search someone in situations outside of the use of Section 60.

⁹⁰ Informally, a colleague who had attended police training as an MPS Special Constable told me that the trainers advised the new recruits that they should set their standard of suspicion to be even higher than that required to arrest when deciding whether to conduct a search.

⁹¹ This is true for Section 1 of Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE), Section 23 of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, but not Sec 60 of the Public Order Act 1994. Section 60 is designed to allow officers to search any individual in a defined area and time if they suspect an incident of serious violence has or will happen, and does not require them to have reasonable grounds to do so. Sec 60 must be authorized by an officer of the rank of Superintendent or higher for a set period of time no more than 24 hours, and only uniformed constables may use the power while it is in place.

⁹² There are at least 18 different laws giving officers the power to search an individual, including Sporting Events Act 1985, Public Stores Act 1875 s6, and the Aviation Security Act 1982 s27. This chapter will mostly refer to searches conducted under PACE S.1, MoDA S.23, and Public Order Act 1994 S.60.

There must be an objective basis for that suspicion based on the facts, information, and/or intelligence that are relevant to the likelihood of finding an article of a certain kind... Reasonable suspicion can never be supported on the basis of personal factors alone without the reliable supporting intelligence or information or some specific behaviour by the person concerned. For example, a person's race, religion, age, appearance, or the fact that the person is known to have a previous conviction, cannot be used alone or in combination with each other as the reason for searching that person. Reasonable suspicion cannot be based on generalizations or stereotypical images of certain groups or categories of people as more likely to be involved in criminal activity. (Bridges and Sampson 2007, pg. 651)

While the legislation provides the requirements needed in order to conduct a search, it does not address whether the officers should conduct the search, thereby retaining officer's discretionary powers (Fielding 2005). An officer could reasonably believe that a person is in possession of contraband, but choose not to search that person.

The MPS has argued that, "Used appropriately and proportionately, stop and search can increase community confidence in the police and make a positive contribution to reducing the fear of crime with accountability to the public" (MPS 2009b, pg. 6). In 2008, the Borough Commander of Watling decreed that, "'I have always championed the use of stop and search - I genuinely believe that it is one of the most effective policing tactics, particularly in relation to tackling knife and drug crime.'⁹³" However, research has estimated that searches reduced disruptive crime by only 0.2-0.4 per cent (EHRC 2010, Quinton, Bland, and Miller 2000), and personal, uninvited contact with police often has negative impact on the confidence of individuals in the police (Skogan 2006a). Skogan's finding has been challenged by Bradford et al, arguing that positively received contact with police officers operating under a procedural justice model may mitigate some of the negative feelings generated by the encounters (2009). The use of stop and search engendered passionate feelings by both community members and officers in Watling, despite its failure to accomplish its purpose of proactively reducing crime.

⁹³ Exact citation has been omitted to maintain anonymity of the borough.

Over 550,000 drug searches took place under Section 23 of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 in 2009/10 in England and Wales, with seven per cent of those resulting in arrest (Coleman 2011). Watling police officers conducted an average of nearly 1,500 Section 23 searches a month, or about 50 per cent of all searches in the area⁹⁴. Based on PEEGs⁹⁵ 2009 population estimates and 2009 stop and search data, the search rate under S.23 for white residents of Watling was approximately 38 per 1,000 residents of the borough⁹⁶ (Eastwood, Shiner, and Bear 2013). For black residents, it was 122 per 1,000, and for Asian residents it was 27 per 1,000. This indicates a disproportionality ratio for black residents of 3.31⁹⁷ compared to a 4.12 disproportionality ratio for the MPS as a whole⁹⁸ for Sec 23 searches during the period of fieldwork. The MPS identified a disproportionality rate of 4.4 across all types of searches during Operation Pennant in 2006 (MPS 2006). These drug searches tended to have a minimal impact on drug markets.

...it was unlikely that searches made a substantial contribution to undermining drug markets or drug related crime, given that drug searches tend to focus in practice on users rather than dealers, and cannabis rather than class A drugs. Although stop and search clearly leads to the detection and confiscation of drugs and weapons, its contribution to overall crime reduction is unproven. (EHRC 2010)

Officers of both RTs and SNTs often based their decisions to engage in drug-related search activity on visible characteristics of low-level drug use. These included smelling cannabis, and youth loitering on council estates or in parks. When asked what made her conduct a search under Section 23 instead of simply using Section 1 of PACE, PC Jenny said:

⁹⁴ Despite making Freedom of Information requests, I was unable to obtain data breaking down the number of searches conducted by each unit or unit type within the borough.

⁹⁵ Population Estimates by Ethnic Group (PEEG), compiled by the UK Office for National Statistics

⁹⁶ Information of the number of searches conducted under Sec 23 was obtained via a Freedom of Information request submitted by Release, a UK charity working on drugs law and drugs law reform. I calculated the disproportionality figures based on this information.

⁹⁷ This indicates that black people in Watling are 3.31 times more likely to be stopped than white people. These numbers may not reflect the actual disparity faces by residents, as there are a large number of individuals who come in or through Watling for work each day.

⁹⁸ When looking at Section 60 searches, it has been calculated that the MPS black/white disproportionality rate was 11.1 in 2010/11 and 10.8 in 2009/10 in. (EHRC 2012)

Smell, what they look like, their behaviour, are they looking nervous and they fiddling with something....Eyes are all like dilated, stoned looking, red eyes, if they look like drugs users. Obviously the heroin addicts of the borough have a particularly distinctive appearance. (PC Jenny, RT4)

Without a doubt, stop and search practices were the most contentious set of issues between police and the community I observed, especially with regards to officers' interactions with black and minority communities. This is not a new phenomenon (Bowling, Parmar, and Phillips 2008, Delsol and Shiner 2006, Miller 2010), having been cited as a causal factor of the Brixton riots in 1981 (Scarman 1981), and again when riots broke out in August 2011 across London (MPS 2012a, Morell et al. 2011).

4.3.2 *Employing Stop and Search*

Stop and search powers were used in a variety of situations during this research, but they were more prevalent with RTs than with SNTs. The observed incidents can be split in to low-discretion and high-discretion stops (Ramirez, Mcdevitt, and Farrell 2006). In low discretion situations, officers usually had a suspect description, or they were responding to a specific criminal event such as a recent street-robbery. Despite the narrow focus of searching for a specific suspect, these low-discretion searches actually gave officers the widest leeway for conducting stop and search. Having been supplied with a description from external sources, officers had broad discretion to search anyone resembling the description. Officers felt justified in targeting nearly anyone of the same ethnicity, gender, and general age range in a given area (Quinton, Bland, and Miller 2000).

We were looking for a robbery suspect, and at 5 o'clock in the morning anyone on that area on that street is in play. It was a very minimal description; black male, dark clothing. So we're driving round 5 o'clock in the morning in the area, [see a] black male, dark clothing. Stopped him, handcuffed him, explained he was going to be searched because we believed he was a suspect in a robbery, and as I search through him I could see he looked a bit spaced out, and I think he had 12 or 13 rocks of Crack in his pocket. He was dealing obviously, had been dealing. (PC Jack, RT4)

Most drug-related searches came under the classification of a high-discretion search, meaning the officer had taken proactive efforts to find someone to search in the absence of a specific suspect description (Quinton, Bland, and Miller 2000, Fitzgerald 1999).

During fieldwork, officers cited grounds to engage in stop and search activity that appeared to fall outside of the guidelines provided. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) found that 27 per cent of stop and search records they examined did not appear to contain reasonable grounds to conduct a search (HMIC 2013). Fitzgerald (1993) highlighted that when officers are empowered to use their intuition in a high-discretion stop, they were likely to employ prejudices. Research has also found that under high discretionary situations, officers were likely to target specific ethnic minorities, because of underlying schemas (Tillyer, Klahm, and Engel 2012). Officers were supposed to rely on specific intelligence or facts, but the 'gut feeling' was often the closest they came in high-discretion searches.

If I see someone and I think something's wrong, you get that gut feeling of 'why are they here? Why are they acting like that?' Then I will think something's wrong, they've got something on them and I will search them but I just...I'm not interested in just searching anyone. (PC Elle, RT4)

Skolnick's (1966) assertion that prejudice may be the result of certain groups becoming a 'symbolic assailant' seemed to ring true in many of the high discretion searches observed during this research. Skolnick proffered that officers will identify criminality in ethnic groups based merely on the individual's conformity to the crudest of stereotypes. Many officers have difficulty explaining what specific element triggered a stop (Quinton, Bland, and Miller 2000), but often officers' justification is related to the behaviour the subject was engaging in. During fieldwork, the common behaviours cited by officers included suspects leaning against a building or vehicle, looking at the police, looking away from police, walking away from police, and dropping something when police approached. The PACE search guidelines require either specific intelligence or specific behaviour in order to generate reasonable grounds to search someone. Personal factors are not enough to justify a search. This is a fairly low standard, and officers would regularly cite subtle behaviours such as standing or leaning as a specific behaviour worthy of stopping someone. "Why'd I stop that kid? It was pretty clear, you know, with the way he stood there. On the corner, bit behind the Ford's bonnet? That's suspicious behaviour when you're wearing a hoodie around here." (PC Fred, RT4).

Additionally, the behaviour exhibited by a citizen may not immediately generate a search, but will arouse suspicion and cause the officer to engage in a Stop and Account.

[When in] areas that are known, where I have found things on people before, times of day, reactions; If there is a group when they see you, if you're in uniform, and they see you and suddenly move, change direction, drop something, bend over, walk off, that's normally a tell-tale sign. It's not grounds, but it makes me interested in them and often I'll stop and speak to people before I search them just to have a chat and if they're evasive, they're nervous when they talk to you then. (PC Jack, RT4)

Ex post facto grounds, generated by eliciting information once an officer has stopped someone, but before the search, are prohibited under PACE but occurred regularly. By stopping an individual for questioning instead of directly searching, officers could gain useful information that they would use to justify the search. A 'stop and account' as the interactions are known, also gave officers a way to assert their authority without engaging in searches - an act they knew could create tension in the community.

I didn't search him this time because I want him to have something next time, something good. I play with their heads. A quick chat here and there with no search makes them cocky, and they start to carry things because they think I'm not going to search them, put hands in pockets. But then I will, and then I've got them carrying some rocks or nabbis, or maybe a knife... and they can't figure out why I searched them that time. (PC Marcus, RT4)

I don't need to search some YOB just because he's a cunt 90 per cent of his waking hours. If he's chatting with me, not being cunt at this very moment, and I've got better things to do, then I'll leave him be. He walks away a little less angry at the uniform, sees we're just people too, and I keep my hit rate up. (PC Maurice, RT4)

Sometimes reasonable grounds were made to fit the situation, and attempting to regulate such behaviour has proved remarkably difficult due to the ability of police to 'find grounds' seemingly at will (Savage 2003, Shiner 2011, Mastrofski 2004). The ability to create reasonable grounds was seen by officers as good police work. As an officer could, after the fact, have their notes reviewed if a complaint was made, constructing solid grounds was a skill utilized by good officers.

I used to have a Skipper⁹⁹ that would have us stop dozens when we had a [Section] 60 in place, and that didn't seem right to me. I'll find the grounds I need to put my hands in your pockets, no matter what you're doing or where you are. Section 60 is the lazy way for lazy police. Good police find the grounds. (PC Henry, RT4)

4.3.2.1 The Attitude Test

Any interaction with the community, especially stop and account situations, could turn into a stop and search if a civilian failed the attitude test (Van Maanen 1978). A civilian could fail the attitude test for complaining about being stopped by the police, challenging the officer's account of the civilian's actions leading up to the encounter, being rude, sarcastic, or too witty. Failing the test had more to do with showing defiance to the officer than a specific action. Many officers interpreted argument as an attempt to hide something from them, "If you start mouthing off, thinking it'll keep me from searching you, yeah, and I do, yeah, then you've won, because you probably had something on you to make you argue like that." (PC Arnold, RT2). This response to defiance has been identified elsewhere in the literature (Quinton, Bland, and Miller 2000, Fitzgerald 1999, Reiner 2010). The problem with these situations was that officers often misinterpreted annoyance as guilt (Bowling and Phillips 2007). The attitude test highlighted the wide discretion available to officers in the field, and their ability to employ non-adaptive responses during the exercise of what might otherwise be an adaptive element of the criminal justice system.

4.3.3 *Schemas and Organisational Messaging Shaping Stop and Search*

Quinton (2011) pointed out that a communicative process takes place when officers decide to engage in stop and search. He described this as taking in a variety of environmental and social signals, sorting them out, and then identifying which stand out (Quinton 2011, pg. 3).

Communicative process which involved police officers identifying, interpreting and labelling information in their social environment. Particular signals in the right context were seen to stand out from the background noise which caused officers to be uncertain or mistrustful about a person, or to think they were involved in wrong-doing. (2011, pg. 3)

¹⁰⁰ IC3 is the police code for a Black person.

While on patrol in an IRV, officers only had moments to identify a potential suspect and determine if they should conduct a search. In these situations, officers were able to cite minute elements of a situation that stood out as suspicious.

Officers' conditioned schemas focus their perceptions before arriving on scene, influencing the communicative process. Smith and Alpert (2007) argued that past experiences, media exposure, and organizational messages develop officers' schemas to help them interpret difficult situations. In addition, officers' develop a 'symbolic assailant' (Skolnick 1966), which primes them to the potential criminality in civilians that they stop and search. Manning (1992) refers to 'interpretive frameworks' to describe how officers may interpret a quickly raised hand as a threat. To illustrate the point, on patrol one evening, PC Jane described the clothing a suspect had been wearing during an arrest the previous week as, "Not like an IC3¹⁰⁰ type robber hoody". An officer's frame may be so conditioned by their experiences and imbibing of police culture that they suppress active interpretation while conducting a search. In other words, officers' observe signals to fit the context and individuals they are policing. The attitudes expressed by officers during this research, portrayed an inflexible, pessimistic, and bitter frame towards those they policed. This was especially prominent in relation to black residents of Watling due to the frequent searches of black civilians based on weak reasonable grounds.

I don't need Section 60; I can find reasonable grounds to search anyone in this borough if I want. That guy eyed the car suspiciously, it's late and he's in an area known for drugs, [that's] grounds right there. Just look where we are, look at the people. How many tax-payers, honest citizens, do you think there around here? Not many. The rest? The rest? They're fair game. (PC Marcus, RT4)

It seemed that officers were not merely separating signals from the background noise; they were suppressing signals to the background so they had clear reason to search. This was particularly true among RT officers.

¹⁰⁰ IC3 is the police code for a Black person.

As you're driving down the street you'll get that person who you catch eye contact with and then you think, well I instantly think why is that person catching eye contact with me is it because they dislike me or the uniform that I am wearing or is it because they've got something to hide and want to see where the police car goes before making a run for it. (PC Hugh, RT4)

PC Hugh's comments highlighted the inability of many officers to view a community as law-abiding or to understand why the community may have problems with the way stop and search is carried out. Officers seemed to have abandoned their critical thinking skills during interactions with the community even though they seemed fully capable of such faculties during other police work.

This attitude led officers to treat community members with terseness and disdain in many interactions. During one stop just days before the August 2011 riots, PC Marcus and PC Neville saw two black teenagers with cans of pop and bags of Haribo candy walking about 20 metres behind a white woman pushing a pram. PC Marcus looked back at me and said, "She's about to get robbed!" He pulled up alongside the boys and asked them to stop. They did not, and so both PCs jumped out of the vehicle and detained them. The taller of the two boys looked at the officers and said, "We don't want to be searched, nobody does." The officers separated the boys and began questioning them. PC Marcus told the shorter boy, "Your story is bollocks. What are you really up to?" The shorter boy still had his pop can in his hand and was gesturing while explaining where they had come from. PC Marcus told the boy to put the can down, but before the boy could even react Marcus pulled the drink out of the boy's hand and threw it to the ground. Both boys were searched but nothing was found and they were not offered search slips. Once we were back in the IRV PC Neville said, "That woman doesn't know how lucky she is that we were here."

Team leaders provided positive reinforcement for stop and search activity based on results, not personal communication skills. Inspector Bradley scolded his team to, "...bring me quality results, not just a lot of searches." Although the Inspector wanted a high hit rate on the searches, he also scolded several officers on the team who had reported a 100 per cent hit rate. To this claim, he reminded them light-heartedly that they needed to, "...document every stop, not just the good ones." Even though the public message was quality of searches over quantity, many officers viewed even

failed searches as effective in fighting crime, in the belief that such practices deterred criminals. This idea was supported by organisational messages to the community that emphasised the effectiveness and importance of conducting stop and search as a preventative measure.

A low detection rate alone does not necessarily undermine the use of stop and search powers. Proponents of the power, especially under terrorism legislation, argue that its use disrupts and deters criminal activity rather than simply detecting it. (Police Federation 2012, pg. 6)

Recently, the MPS has started to focus on improving stop and search hit rates.

As part of efforts to continuously improve services to London's communities, the MPS has reviewed stop and search policy and practice to examine ways of making its use more effective and of increasing public confidence... The new approach will see a renewed focus on reducing violence and for the power to be used in a more intelligence-led and targeted way, leading to more arrests and more weapons seized. (MPS 2012d, pg. 1)

Although successfully applying the organisation's message on stop and search is rewarded, failure is not punished. As a result, bad habits that are occasionally successful may generate positive rewards frequently enough to engender a sense of their success. This cements a potentially warped perception of what works for officers, and equally warped rationalisations about why they police in the manner they do.

In part, RT officers were keen to be 'proactive' while out on the street because the decision to stop and search someone was theirs alone to make. Even in a low-discretion search, the officer wielded the power to act. Given the long tradition whereby discretion is highest at the lowest ranks of policing (Wilson 1968), it is difficult for Sergeants and Inspectors to continually monitor the low-visibility side of policing. Efforts to reduce discretion through bureaucratization have taken hold, but cannot eliminate discretion without fundamentally changing the nature of the criminal justice system. "I'm a professional, and I will respond to calls for help, from the public, and do my job, but I won't be told not to search someone by another officer. That is my decision to make, to protect this community as I see fit" (PC Jack, RT4).

Greater Manchester Police have recently instituted changes to their stop and search procedure to instil some visibility to the decisions to stop and search (Greater Manchester Police 2012). This new effort asks officers to radio in their reasonable grounds to conduct a search once they have stopped someone. Officers are then told whether they are permitted to engage in the search. It is hoped that this oversight will improve community confidence because the community will, "...be reassured that stop and search is being used at the right times and in the right way, to target criminals and keep our communities safe." (Greater Manchester Police 2012). This logic does not propose to employ procedural justice techniques that are shown to improve interactions in these situations (Bradford, Jackson, and Stanko 2009), but relies on the public perceiving the stops as not arbitrary, and therefore acceptable. Implicitly, it seems the policy is trying to reduce the number of baseless searches conducted. One imagines that the knock on effect of this would be that officers would begin to conduct fewer spurious searches if they believed that their request would be rejected in front of the civilian already stopped. Of course, this relies on the street-level officer providing accurate information, and that the judgment of the arbitrating officer is just and sound.

Although stop and search can be seen as aligned with the controlling tendencies of sovereign state strategies, some instances of stop and search were more clearly in line with adaptive measures to manage the problem of drugs, albeit without any of the partnership elements commonly found in other adaptive measures. As previously mentioned, Dorn and Lee (1999) have described the turn in drugs policing to a less heroic stance, and while that is certainly reflected in aspects of community policing and New Public Managerialism, the traditional ethos of the 'drug warrior' remains prominent in officers' description of the implementation of drug related searches. These ideas will be expanded upon in Chapter Six.

4.3.4 The Problem of Disproportionality

The MPS is aware of the disproportionate figures generated by policing efforts across London. The perceived unfairness of stop and search practices was cited by many community members as a cause of the August 2011 riots (Morell et al. 2011, Singh 2012). In July 2011, the stop and search disproportionality in Watling was 3.05 for

black residents, and 1.25 for Asians, across all types of searches excluding S.60¹⁰¹. The problem of disproportionality is particularly acute in stop and search due to the discretion officers exercise when conducting such activities.

The unintentional result and impact [of stop and search practices] on ethnic groups is that they are disproportionately subjected to the powers. If it appears that powers [of stop and search] are being used disproportionately toward a particular group then this could lead to the development of negativity toward the police and the MPS as a whole and ultimately discourage participation and future engagement opportunities. (Watling Equality Impact Assessment 2010).

The MPS is not the only organization that has identified the negative impact of disproportionate stop and search practices.

Without a secure base of community support ('consent') the use of [stop and search powers]... rapidly becomes hazardous and ineffective. To maintain their effectiveness, therefore, their exercise needs constantly to be reassessed not merely in relation to arrests or clear up rates, but also in the light of the effect on the community as a whole. In other words, the satisfactory and fruitful exercise of powers in this area depends crucially in the long term on police action being perceived by individuals and groups as acceptably fair and rational (EHRC 2010)

Beyond being searched disproportionately, black people were also twice as likely as whites to be strip-searched by the MPS (Newburn, Shiner, and Hayman 2004). The issue of disproportionality goes beyond ethnicity as well. Young people, 18-24 years of age, were searched at nearly 145 per thousand in 2009 across London under Section 23 (Eastwood, Shiner, and Bear 2013). This equates to being 6.25 times as likely to be stop and searched as the rest of the population.

The intermingling of drug searches and non-drug searches complicates the interpretation of the number of searches. For example, after a call is received about a robbery in progress with a black suspect, several cars may stop and search black men in the neighbourhood ostensibly to identify if the individual is the suspect in question. Although these searches are conducted under Sec 1 of PACE, they may have ulterior motives. As one officer explained during a stop, "I'm looking for that Blackberry, but

¹⁰¹ Data obtained from the March 2012 Stop and Search Monitoring Mechanism of the MPS

he looks like he might have some nabbis on him, so that'd be good either way" (PC Matt, RT2).

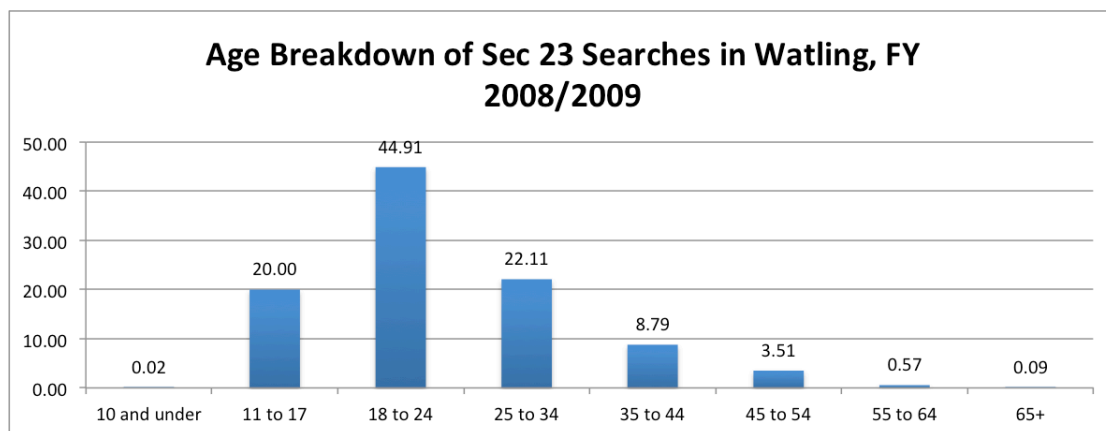


Figure 8: Age Breakdown of Sec23 Searches in Watling, with Rates per Thousand

Research has shown that reducing the disparity in stops and searches might also improve the community's view of policing.

A reduction in disproportionality does not have to result in a rise in crime – on the contrary, in the case of both Staffordshire and Cleveland it has gone hand in hand with reduced crime rates and increased levels of public confidence in the police (EHRC 2010, pg. 14)

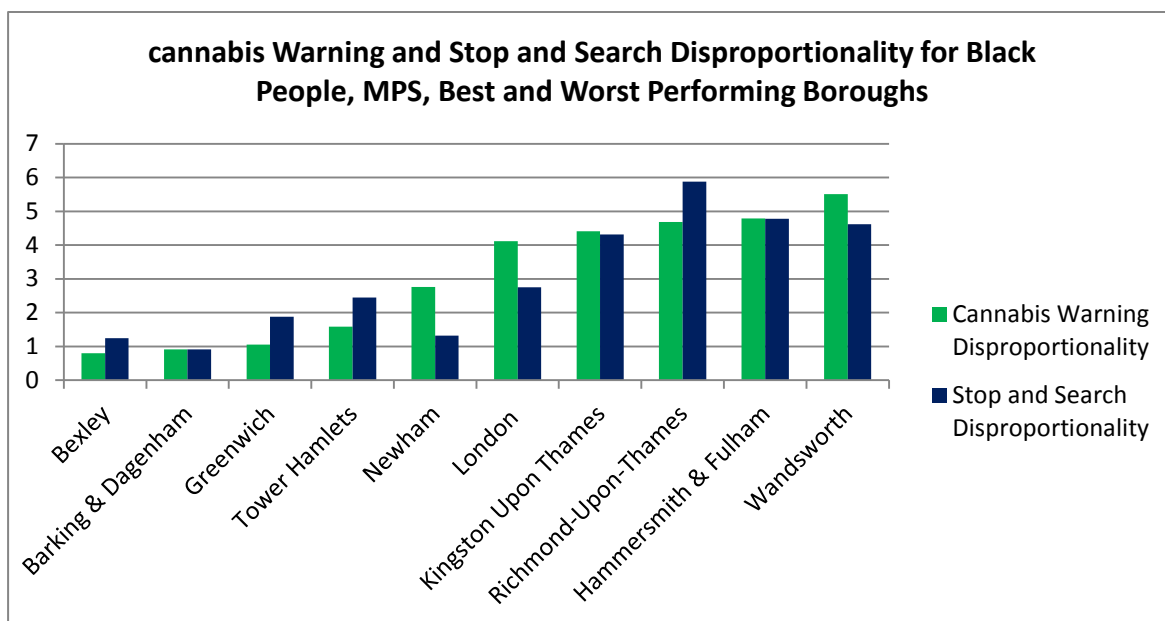


Figure 9: cannabis Warning and Stop and Search Disproportionality, Best and Worst Performing Boroughs in the MPS, (Eastwood, Shiner, and Bear 2013)

4.3.5 *Attempts to Justify Ethnicity Issues*

RT officers were largely ignorant of the full scope of disproportionality in their practices, but what they did observe they explained away. RT officers repeatedly explained that the makeup of the population was largely BME in Watling, and therefore the high numbers of BME stops was a reflection of the community and not policing practices. However, the population of Watling (over the age of 10) is more than 60 per cent white.

I mean if you're working in Farmingham, whether you're a White or Black or Asian officer, you're either going to be stop and accounting or stop and search or just dealing with victims that are going to be different race or maybe predominately black. I'd have to look at the numbers so you're never going to get away from that.... If you look at the demographics in that area I think it's something like 46 per cent of the population in Watling is BME, so it's going to happen, that's the area you police. (Insp Bradley, RT4)

RT officers also cited the concept of having available populations, not just residential populations from which to search. The idea of an 'available population' refers to the notion that some groups are more likely to inhabit public spaces, and therefore present more opportunities to be searched. It has been argued that, "The explanation for why the proportions of racial and ethnic minorities appear high in stop and search figures is because they are compared to the residential population" (Waddington, Stenson, and Don 2004, pg. 910). The findings of this research discard the notion that minorities are either discriminated against by police or are more criminalized, and suggest the 'more prosaic' explanation resides in the ethnic makeup of the available population. While Waddington et al make a solid point in identifying that greater focus should be paid to the idea of whether stops are just, and not simply conducted at proportionally unjust levels, their reliance on the concept of available populations does not have such firm footing. The EHRC has produced such a clear discrediting of the concept that I will leave it to them to make my point:

We acknowledge that an explanation based on ‘availability’ has some mileage, particularly in clearly defined areas with small resident populations. However as a general explanation for the overall pattern, it doesn’t hold up to scrutiny as it is self-fulfilling. Street availability is influenced by police decisions where and when to do stops and searches and these decisions heavily influence the people that are ‘available’ to be stopped and searched. This is compounded by policing that is geared toward street visibility. (EHRC 2010, pg. 52)

Officers also argued that disparity in search numbers comes from the fact that most of the suspect descriptions they receive are for young black men, and therefore they are going to probably search more people fitting this description. As one officer put it, “When I’m responding to a robbery I can’t justify searching that pasty white scrote if I just got told the suspect was a dark skinned African”. The implication in these statements is that blacks offend at higher rates than whites, though research has shown that whites and blacks offend at similar rates (Bowling and Phillips 2002) and that any differences in offending can’t be used to explain disproportionality in searches (Delsol and Shiner 2006). The justification for disproportionality based on offending patterns reached beyond street-level PCs. Official MPS documents state that the driving cause of disproportionality was the, “the profile of personal robbery suspects in London, a crime type that is widely held to be dominated by young black men” (MPS 2010b, pg. 5). It is surprising that the MPS retains such a stance nearly 15 years after MacPherson said:

It is pointless for the police service to try to justify the disparity in these figures purely or mainly in terms of the other factors which are identified. The majority of police officers who testified before us accepted that an element of the disparity was the result of discrimination. This must be the focus of their efforts for the future. Attempts to justify the disparities through the identification of other factors, whilst not being seen vigorously to address the discrimination which is evident, simply exacerbates the climate of distrust. (Macpherson 1999, para 45.10)

The issue of disproportionality cannot be laid solely on the RT teams of the borough. However, the issue of disproportionality results from the larger issue of non-adaptive policing efforts that are the focus of this section, and to place it separately would not as effectively highlight the role that RT teams play in disproportionate policing effects. Certainly the work of TSG and other units has been identified as being problematic, but it is RT officers that are seen to be the front-line of officers protecting the borough

and doing the ‘real police work’. It is therefore important to also examine the accountability, or lack thereof, that RT units operate under.

4.4 Response Teams’ Interactions with the Community

Response Teams in Watling were not obliged to regularly meet with the community outside of their interactions with victims and suspects in the course of their duties. Unlike their SNT counterparts who devoted many hours to attending meetings with partner groups, organising community events, and walking a beat, RT officers usually only briefly came in to contact with civilians as part of an incident¹⁰².

[On] team you're working all over Watling. You don't particularly spend any amount of time in one place to get to know the community, so you're basically... going out, popping a sticky plaster on it, and driving off to the next call, [where] you're popping another sticky plaster on. For long term goals that's going to be an SNT job... The only dealing a response team has with a community is when it turns up to a call. They're not responsible for community (PC Hugh, RT4).

Many officers liked that their role did not require much civilian contact, as they believed the civilians in the borough were mainly disreputable people. Many officers were concerned that increasing community interactions outside of active policing would result in the community being able to tell RTs how to conduct their activities. This tactical advice was something that officers felt the civilians were unqualified to do. As PC George put it, “Fire brigade doesn’t have meetings with civilian groups asking how they should put out fires, so why do the police need to?” (PC George, RT4). To these officers, they were policing the community, not policing *for* the community.

¹⁰² The notable exception to this is when officers get food from local establishments. Here, they tended to interact only with the shopkeepers themselves, avoiding contact with other people waiting in cues. Interestingly, if a conversation did start it was far more relaxed and jovial than most any other conversation I had witnessed. While waiting for food from Turkish Delight one night the smoke from the grill was filling up the whole shop to the point where all the customers were looking at each other as if to say, ‘is it normal?’. One young man, clearly a bit drunk and on his way home from a night out turned to an officer and said, ‘Bravs, you guys need to call your mates at the fire brigade and tell them to come investigate this smoke. Could be a fire or something. Do you have to call 999, or you got some special connection?’ The officers all laughed, and agreed that there was something wrong with the amount of smoke.

The lack of proactive community engagement in RT policing meant that community interactions either occurred when a victim called in to report an incident, or during a stop and search. When it came to interactions with civilians who were ‘legitimate’ victims, officers in Watling took on a different tone. PC Jack described how he witnessed this first hand during a ride-along with his uncle just before Jack joined the MPS.

Seeing my uncle go in to somebody’s house and, you know he just turned it on, and I knew that wasn’t what he was normally like. It was real eye opening because we were at an unexpected death, and everybody had been making all these jokes about the death and stuff, and then here was my uncle being so professional with the family. (PC Jack, RT4)

The idea of officers ‘turning it on’ is found in the literature (Smith and Gray 1983), and was often seen in Watling during incidents. Response officers were quite adept at meeting the emotional needs of victims of crimes, especially those accosted in a street robbery. However, this professional behaviour was not regularly present during stop and search activity. By far the most contentious experiences between police and community were during stop and searches. The following incident during my fieldwork stood out as a prime example of the poor relationship between RTs and the public.

While riding with PC Hugh and PC Edmund, a call came over the radio about an officer requiring assistance during a drug search on a group of youths outside of the Wheatsheaf Estate. We were only seconds away, and arrived to find two PCs arguing with a group of at least five black teenagers. The PC Joan¹⁰³ quickly informed us that she had smelled cannabis while walking past the building and tried to get someone to open the security door so she could investigate. Despite ringing several flats via the intercom, she had been unable to reach anyone. Four young people then emerged from the door and she suspected they were the ones responsible for the cannabis smell. The youths tried to leave, claiming they had no idea what PC Joan was talking about. This was when she called for assistance. Upon arriving, PC Edmund and PC Hugh jumped in to action, and grabbed a suspect each to search them. The PC Joan was having a difficult time controlling the youth she was trying to search.

¹⁰³ PC Joan was on a detail from another unit, and I had not worked with her before.

After searching one suspect, PC Edmund moved to assist PC Joan. PC Edmund told the young man that he was going to be searched under Section 23 of the Misuse of Drugs Act. The young man continued smoking a cigarette, seemingly unfazed by PC Edmund's demands. The incident took place on a busy road, during rush hour, not more than 10 meters from a bus stop that served six or seven routes. During the incident, a crowd quickly grew. The police cars blocked in several busses already sitting at the stop, creating a two-tiered viewing gallery of bus passengers.

PC Edmund reached for the cigarette, but the teenager pulled away. PC Edmund had a hold of his arm as he tried to gain compliance over the teenager. Seeing the struggle, three other officers rushed over to help, but the teenager would not go down. They thrashed about for what seemed an agonizingly long time. PC Edmund would later tell me that, "I wanted to CS spray him, but I grabbed the wrong side of my belt and felt my ASP. I knew I couldn't hit him in front of the crowd like that." The crowd grew incensed at the situation playing out in front of them. People were leaning over the railings of the Wheatsheaf's open corridors, yelling down at the officers. The growing crowd blocked the pavement in one direction, and the street was a wall of buses. A civilian carrying his Islamic prayer mat and wearing a kufi yelled at the officers, "This is violence, violence, you are police, police! What have they done to deserve such treatment, violence?" Caught in the middle of the commotion, I stood amongst the stereo of shouts, radio transmissions, and quarrels.

Eventually, PC Edmund and his colleagues subdued and handcuffed the teenager. Community members were screaming as five officers carried the (formerly) cigarette-smoking teenager to the waiting police van. A tall black woman who had remained silent for the duration of the incident suddenly burst out, "What happened here? What happened here! Stop and search? Ha, you terrorizing us here, stop and search ha! Terrorist, every day on this doorstep. Why? Why?" PC George, who had just arrived on scene, explained to the woman what was happening in a calm and reassuring voice. As he was doing this, another officer from a unit that had responded to the call for assistance walked by the woman and said "Yeah, yeah, see you later, now go on home." (Unknown PC, Watling). One woman, wearing a bandana with cannabis leaves on her head approached several officers. "You like this don't you! You like beating up

black kids! What is your number? You're just a gang!" PC Joan, in earshot of the woman, turned to PC Edmund and I and said in a voice loud enough for the woman to hear, "Nice people around here, huh?" She then turned to the woman and said dismissively, "Nice to meet you, bye bye." The woman kept arguing with PC Joan, "It took four vans and at least two police cars to deal with one person? One person!" PC Joan began berating the woman.

I was trying to detain him for a search, and that's why I called for more units. If you was there on your own, yeah. If you was there on your own, with six of us, I'm sure you'd want to call some of your friends as well, so that's why I called for them. If you've got any problems, if you want to make a complaint, feel free to go down to the station. (PC Joan, Unknown Unit, Watling)

The woman responded, "You lot are jokers, you like all this proper, you like all this in'nit. And you wonder why you have problems, problems you have with people. Because you deal with people like that." As quickly as we had arrived, we packed up and left the scene. I looked back to see that the crowd was still largely intact and angry, but nearly all the officers had dispersed. The following conversation took place as we drove back to the station so PC Edmund could process the arrest.

PC Edmund: Quite a thing there.

PC Hugh: What'd you do?

PC Edmund: Had a big fucking fight with the bloke!

PC Hugh: You punch him?

PC Edmund: A lot.

PC Hugh: Huh?

PC Edmund: (excitedly) Yeah, quite a lot!

Dispatcher: Attention any available units, we've still got two outstanding S graded calls to attend. Still have a possible assault in SW99, informant states she has been assaulted by her manager. Any available units to SW99.

PC Hugh: Ridiculous! Tell us the CAD love. Oh well, what'd you do him for?

PC Edmund: Obstructed drugs search. Cause while we were dealing with those other two, suddenly heard Joan shout up for more units. I was like, 'what the fuck'? So I went over to him, and he's getting well aggressive in her face. So I said to him, 'look fella, you're getting searched as well under Section 23 of the Misuse of Drugs Act, cause you were with this group that was seen to make away, make off after smell of drugs was', um, because that's what they called for in'it. And, uh, he starts waiving his cigarette right in my face, 'you aint stopping me', and I was like, 'Don't put your cigarette in my face, put your cigarette out.' And he said, 'no, I'm not doing it'. So I

said put it on the wall'. 'Nah', and so when I went for his cigarette he just fucking went for me.

PC Hugh: You get a few digs in yeah?

PC Edmund: Yeah, yeah. There was like four of us in the corner fighting him. He was an aggressive fucker.

When I asked them about the way the crowd reacted, PC Hugh commented, "That's just London in't. I think a lot of people in London get a mob mentality. I don't know if they see the police as some sort of tool of oppression, some people. I don't know how it is." After another similarly negative encounter between officers and a group of civilians upset over young black men being searched for drugs, another officer commented, 'They're just anti-police, they don't like us stopping people.' But there is evidence that the public understand the need and are supportive of the practice of stop and search (Stone and Pettigrew 2000), even amongst young BME men (Fitzgerald 1999). What becomes the most salient factor in these situations is how the police conduct themselves (Skogan 1994, Bradford, Jackson, and Stanko 2009, Waddington, Stenson, and Don 2004).

What PC Hugh did not say after the Wheatsheaf incident, and what few officers ever came close to saying, was that it was not simply a matter of the public being anti-police; the simple truth was that there were consistently poor relations between white officers and the BME community. At the Wheatsheaf, the crowd was almost entirely BME, the suspects were all black, and the officers all white except for a single black officer who arrived too late to take part in the fray.

Previous research has identified that the use of stop and search powers can have a negative effect on the community's confidence in police. Only 46 per cent of 12-30 year olds who had been stopped and searched by police thought they were doing a good job, versus 67per cent for those who had never been stopped (Miller, Bland, and Quinton 2000). They pointed out that:

While this finding has clear implications for those searched across the board, it seems inevitable that people from minority ethnic backgrounds, because they are more often searched, will disproportionately suffer from a loss of confidence as a direct result of their personal experiences of searches. (Miller, Bland, and Quinton 2000, pg. 52)

Evidence of the community's dissatisfaction at stop and search was easily identifiable during fieldwork in Watling, especially if the individual being searched was a teenage black male. On multiple occasions a passer-by would stop and watch the proceedings from a distance close enough to overhear the conversation, but far enough away to not be directly intervening. Their looks were often unpleasant in nature, and on at least two occasions people unconnected to the individuals asked the young person if they were okay. On at least eight other occasions community members questioned officers in a less than polite manner about the reasons for a stop. Even when they didn't stop to observe the proceedings, community members walking past a stop would often look at the officers conducting the search with clear contempt. Whereas officers engaged in monitoring a crime scene, directing traffic, or patrolling on foot were rarely treated in an openly hostile or aggressive manner, officers conducting a search regularly faced such attitudes from the public. It should be noted that situations of community intervention were almost exclusively observed when the person being searched was black and so was the community member.

4.4.1 Creating the Other

Today, the openly racist language experienced by Smith and Grey (1983) during their ethnographic fieldwork in London, or Skolnick in the US (Skolnick 1966) is gone. The trend away from such language began with the Scarman Report (1981) and was hastened by the MacPherson Report (Macpherson 1999). Before we rush to celebrate the end of racism, we must acknowledge that the lack of openly racist language may only be an indication that racist attitudes have gone underground, not disappeared (Foster, Newburn, and Souhami 2005). Even without overt racism, implicit bias can warp the interactions between officers and the BME population (Beckett, Nyrop, and Pfingst 2006). Indeed, police prejudice is often thought to be reflective of the wider societal perceptions of certain ethnicities (Reiner 2010). Just as we have seen a tempering of racist language in common usage in recent years without the absence of racist attitudes, so might the police be following suit.

Instead of racism being out in the open, officers often created an 'other' who represented criminality, and was an outsider to the community (Garland 2001). This 'othering' appeared to be largely directed at young BME men in Watling, and was

expressed through the disproportionate use of stop and search; a topic already addressed.

However, race was not the only means by which officers categorized the citizenry in Watling. Officers regularly referred to the difference between a citizen and a non-citizen. A citizen was a contributor to the greater good of the community, who accepted the middle-class value system that officers believed they represented. After he narrowly missed clipping the rear wheel of a fleeing suspect's scooter, I walked with PC Neville around the estate where the suspect had fled. "Wouldn't have mattered none [if we had hit him], wasn't like he's a proper citizen. Man [who] steals from proper citizens isn't one himself. Look where he fled to." In general, 'citizenship' was dependent on payment of a sufficient amount of taxes. This criterion quickly put council tenants as an 'other,' unless they could show meritorious participation in the local community activities. Of course, officers rarely had insights in to the volunteer work of various civilians they came in to contact with, so this possible exemption was rarely observed. Additionally, someone who advocated for 'scum' was believed to be either subversive towards police, a former member of that class, or both. Even those who were considered 'decent folk' could quickly become 'Do-gooders' (Reiner 2010) if they were seen to be challenging the application of police powers.

While Garland pointed out that the 'other' is portrayed as an outsider engaging in disreputable activity, other sources have identified the creation of groups seen to be 'police property' (Reiner 1999, pg. 93). The difference between being police property and an outsider is that the outsider is cast by politicians as the villain that increased penal sanctions and state control will be able to tackle (Matravers 2011). The groups that are considered 'police property' are not necessary deemed to be outsiders of the community, merely low-status groups who are viewed as problematic by dominant groups, and for which the law is one of many tools used to repress (Reiner 2010). Notably, the concept of being 'police property' is a social division created by the police in order to categorise their understanding of those they are policing. The criminal 'other' is a political discourse from outside the organization.

In either case, the uniting idea between 'police property' and the 'other' is there are people who do not deserve the same respect and protection as other citizens. For RT

officers in Watling, most of the population fit in to the ‘other’ category. This gave officers in Watling *carte blanche* to use their police powers on them. By defining criminality as the key characteristic of the harmful outsider, what little empathy and pragmatism might have guided the treatment of ‘police property’ in the past was wilfully abandoned as suspects lost their status as part of the community. This conflict is at the heart of Garland’s ideas of criminology of the self versus the criminology of the other.

One criminology de-dramatises crime, allays disproportionate fears, and promotes routine preventative actions. The other demonises the criminal, arouses popular fears and hostilities, and strives to enlist support for drastic measures of control. (Garland 1999, pg. 354)

This created a difficult balance for officers. Some changes in the criminal justice system have been based on the normalization of crime by rational actors (Crawford 2001). The offender is just another element of the community in a modern society, from which the community needs to bolster their internal defences. A small pivot in police messaging allows the offender to be an outsider for whom force and state control are the only defences. Officers push the offender from the community so they can enforce harsh penal sanctions. This would be more difficult for the criminal justice system if the offender was seen as being just like other community members but, “...the offender is a depraved member of an ‘underclass’ operating within a wholly different moral frame” (Crawford 2001, pg. 76). Once someone is not considered part of the community they are plundering, any manner of penal response is justifiable.

The kind of people we’re stopping [and searching] don’t, don’t deserve the civil rights, the exact explanation of the station you’re from¹⁰⁴, if we’re doing it right. These people have been stopped plenty of times before. (PC Mario, RT2)

¹⁰⁵ Ravensbourne was another Borough in London that had a reputation amongst officers as being ‘as bad as Watling’

Can we speak perfectly freely? In my opinion, just my opinion, it's the demographic where we are working. The majority of people are slag, they're shit, they're not like us. If I worked in a different area and I'd worked ten years somewhere else in an outer borough, a lower crime borough, I probably would have completely different views. I am a product of the environment, I am a product of working for ten years in effectively one of London's ghettos and that's made me the officer I am. That's formed my ideas and concepts as to what a community is with regards to police. The majority of people we are engaging with, the areas we're in, they're low income -if they've got any income at all- and they're involved in criminal activity. They're slags so...they're generally always going to be hostile to officers...The minute you're in a nicer area, where people are working and live normal lives closer to what I'm living, they're quite positive, pro-police. (PC Jack, RT4)

Actions taken against 'others,' often in the form of a drugs search, were promoted as protecting the tax paying, employed, middle-class. These were the 'respectable citizenry'. The most negative perceptions were reserved for black and Asian youths, as they were seen to be problematic. Officers usually learned of their outsider status during the first moments of an interaction when an officer would ask, 'where are you from?' It was assumed that black youths found in 'white' neighbourhoods did not live nearby and were there for nefarious reasons. "It's those free travel cards for young people. Mayor made it easy for them to conduct their crimes all over, catch a night bus home to Ravensbourne¹⁰⁵" (PC Mario, RT2). "The widespread perception of black and Asian people as members of problematic marginal sections of the population amounts to a denial of their 'respectability'" (Waddington 1999a, para 7.5).

Indeed, the individuals being targeted need not have committed any particular offences, as a 'symbolic assailant' will suffice. This symbolic assailant, "need merely to conform to the stereotype." (Skolnick 1966, pg. 218). However, the idea of a symbolic assailant may not be limited to those committing crimes. The idea of RTs finding 'genuine victims' among the many petty calls is perhaps an unexpected development of the 'othering' taking place in criminal justice policy. No longer is the outsider alone in being a danger to the community through their criminal activity. In the mission to thwart crime, resources are scarce, and must be appropriated for true victims. As the publicly defined role of policing has shifted away from penal

¹⁰⁵ Ravensbourne was another Borough in London that had a reputation amongst officers as being 'as bad as Watling'

welfarism, RT officers not only attempt to enforce the will of the state on criminals, but also deny that protection to those not deemed to be within the protection of the community.

I'm not somebody who's going to go out chasing after arrests, I'd rather just make sure that the job I'm doing is done properly, if I get a decent victim, I'll do everything I can to make sure that happens that they're dealt with properly and in a way that's good for them. (PC Jenny, RT4)

[The best part of being an RT officer is] helping people that genuinely need help as opposed to people that call you and just want you to sort out their lives because they can't sort it out themselves. People that are genuine victims of crime that need assistance, catching bad guys, thrill of the chase is always good, just getting a result. (PC Rebekah, RT4)

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter began with a quote from PC Jack. In it he differentiated himself from other aspects of the criminal justice system by his role's focus and willingness to take on action. Despite his deeply held pessimism and belief that the community of Watling was full of unworthy victims, 'slags', and 'shitbags', PC Jack saw value in his service through action.

As much as I might huff and puff and moan as a lot of police officers do, and about the community and all the people that I've said, there are times, there are times; there are little moments when I feel like I've done something worthwhile. (PC Jack, RT4)

In this chapter, I have shown that the draw of being 'on team' is often related to the development of a professional identity built upon the RT officers' role in maintaining order and responding to the calls that no one else in the organization will attend. RT officers still see themselves as something sacred - different from the profane bureaucracies that govern the rest of people's lives. For all of PC Jack's disdain for most of the community in Watling, service through action that helps 'worthy' citizens helps maintain his professional identity. However, maintaining that identity in the face of the daily reality of domestic disputes, non-crime incidents, and bureaucratic responses, created a conflict that needed to be resolved. RT officers had to act out to find or create instances to support their professional identity, while also conforming to the needs of the organization.

How and why the police ‘understand’ calls as they do is practically relevant, for these variegated processes of signification convert human cares, worries, dread, anxiety, and obligations into a form that allows the police to display their obligation to serve the public. (Manning 1988, pg. xiv)

To combat the bureaucratisation of their role, RT officers are drawn towards the Sovereign State Strategies that allow freedom of discretion, action, and visible returns on the application of police powers. They seek out opportunities to enforce their powers as an opportunity to fulfil the identity they believe they have, and seek to maintain. RTs do take on some adaptive efforts, such as the cannabis warning form, with vigour. When it comes to an adaptive effort that makes their job less taxing, and allows them to tackle more serious issues, the officers accept the practice. But where partnership and bureaucratization take hold, they are less keen. The varied nature of the calls they receive and their ability to utilize discretion allows officers to operate in the wide variety of situations they attend. However, the mixed responses utilized by RT highlights the conflicted nature of their role and the policies guiding their role, as ascribed by Garland.

“The politics of penal modernism are deeply ambivalent. They depend upon the ideological orientation of those who staff the institutions, and upon the political and legal context in which they operate” (Garland 1995, pg. 188). What Garland says is that given the ambiguity in policy faced by RT officers, and their need to maintain professional identity, the push towards action oriented activities, particularly stop and search, is the result not of the policies themselves, but of the push by the organization as it responds to political pressures to show results. This pressure to show results is an effort by the state to maintain its claim to power through its ability to bring order to communities.

Basing working practices on the goal of bringing order to the community requires someone to be causing disorder. The RTs, lacking the connection and long-term relationship with the local community fostered by community policing teams, found disorder, real or imagined, in their frequent stop and search activity of community members. Each person searched, whether found with illegal items or not, was a victory

for the RTs, reinforcing their perceived orientation as non-adaptive actors. It is interesting to note that many non-adaptive stop and searches results in a cannabis Warning Form - an adaptive response to the problem of drugs.

The 'us vs. them' mentality that pervades RT policing is born of many factors, but the result is clear. Regularly acting out by 'putting hands in pockets' may help officers sustain a professional self-image as action oriented professionals, but it harms the community's relationship with the police in profound ways, and exposes the gap between what police officers want to be and what policing has become. In part, the MPS tries to counteract the effect of this acting out through the adaptive efforts of community policing initiatives spearheaded by the Safer Neighbourhood Teams. As I move to the next chapter examining the working practices of the SNTs it is worth wondering if these community policing teams are able to engender partnerships and community confidence, or if they are just a new façade on old practices.

Chapter 5- Community Policing: Old Wine in New Bottles

[SNTs] remain at the forefront of our work with communities to tackle crime and the fear of crime and to identify and address crime hotspots. We will continually improving [sic] our capability to reduce anti-social behaviour and disorder. We are committed to tackling crimes that matter to the community. We will focus on violent and property crime... and concentrate our activity on the most vulnerable and repeatedly targeted victims; on the people repeatedly committing crime; and on the places and times most in need of policing. We will continue enforcement initiatives to reduce local street drinking and anti-social behaviour and to tackle crack houses and other drug hotspots. (MPS 2011c, pg. 10)

This chapter will explore Community and Neighbourhood Policing initiatives in the borough of Watling. Each ward of Watling had an SNT - a combined force of nearly 175 sworn officers and PCSOs. Several Community Oriented Policing efforts outside of SNTs were also being undertaken in the borough, and we will examine these in order to help understand the place of the SNTs within the larger Community Policing landscape. The chapter will first look at the adaptive activities of the SNTs, most notably their frequent use of foot-patrols as a method of ensuring visibility to the public. This will lead to a discussion of their use of partnerships with the community to coproduce policing activity and goals. Finally, the chapter will examine how many of these adaptive practices and parts of their mandate retain a residue of non-adaptive strategies. As the opening quote of this chapter highlights, the message about working in partnership is often tied to a strong message about the state's ability to control crime. The conflict between these two messages is evident when looking at the street-level implementation of community policing, but also helps us to understand the context within which their anti-drugs activities take place.

Looking at the two types of teams studied in this research, we see that RTs are immediately focused on non-adaptive goals and activities, which have been influenced by the need for adaptive strategies. Conversely, SNT's style of work is most immediately oriented along adaptive lines but is inflected by residual non-adaptive imperatives. The move away from traditional 'organisational imperatives' towards community co-produced priorities is an acknowledgment of the inability of police to meet the impossible task of eliminating crime (Crawford 2007), and as such is clearly an adaptive exercise.

The idea of a community focused police presence is not new to Watling.

Superintendent William of Watling's CID office started his MPS career as an officer in the borough in the early 1980's and was tasked with community policing efforts from the start of his training.

The expectations was you'd have a local team pretty much dedicated to policing the local community, so in the same way that you have beats etc., the division as it was then was divided into a number of beats and each beat had its own sector policing team that had a specific responsibility for it. So every beat always had a Home Beat officer that was permanently there all the time, but the extension to that was a team of officers who pretty much, when they were on duty, focused their activity in that area. For me that was the Franklin estate in Collington Square. Haven't gone far in my career... (Supt William, Watling CID)

Things have radically changed for the neighbourhood in the intervening years. For one, the 'home beat officers' are gone. Instead of a home-beat officer walking the beat, these days an SNT officer from the Bunsen Terrace team patrols the now empty and crumbling grounds of the Franklin estate¹⁰⁶. The SNT is dedicated to that area only, and run by a Sergeant with two PCs and three PCSOs. In the era of the 'Home Beat' officer, and especially as the prestige of foot patrols waned in the late 1980's (Bennett 1994), officers assigned to foot-patrol were often rookies or sage veterans, assigned to walk a beat either because they needed to learn what policing was about, or because they were past their prime. In either case, they were still part of the local Response Teams, and could respond to calls that came out over the radio¹⁰⁷.

Older officers reported that under the Home Beat system, a sector Inspector would organize regular meeting of community members to discuss priorities for the home beat officers. However, funds for this work were not ring-fenced, and there was no official mechanism of accountability to ensure the stated priorities were acted upon. These are the primary advances in the SNT structure. "What we didn't do then is ring fence the resources and at the same time try to dedicate a service to a small area. The fact was that when we were on duty we had a wider responsibility as a response team

¹⁰⁶ The council wants to tear down the estate, and have moved out almost all the residents. A few families have held out, giving the place the appearance of a post-apocalyptic wasteland. In one of the more farcical moments of fieldwork, we noticed that council workers were repainting the lines of the car park, despite the fact the estate was scheduled for demolition.

¹⁰⁷ Hand held radios were only recently becoming available when Supt William began his career.

right across the division.” (Supt William, Watling CID). This meant that community policing and response policing overlapped.

However, the British public believes that officers on foot-patrol represent a defence against crime (Wakefield 2006) and the development of COP and its eventual transformation in to the NRPP reinvigorated the practice as part of efforts to improve the legitimacy of the police in the eyes of the public. During a chat about the role of an SNT officer, PC Sam defined it as, “Jack of all trades, master of none, social worker, nurse maid, [and] agony aunt” (Brunel Gardens SNT). This description is not far from what an RT officer might say about their own role. But whereas an RT officer intervenes briefly to put a plaster on the problem, the SNT officer must deal with the long-term issues that necessitated calling the RT, and they are tasked with doing so in partnership with the community. The SNT is, to continue the plaster metaphor, there for wound care management.

5.1 SNT Activities

In current policy documents SNTs have a distinct role from other units within MPS. This is largely due to their focus on proactive work in response to local priorities (Home Office 2004a). While foot patrols and community consultation may be seen as a return to the original core of policing (Zedner 2006), street-level officers tend to devalue the community policing focus despite the efforts of senior police managers (Reiner 2010). As we saw in the previous chapter, in the minds of many officers, ‘real policing’ is focused on action, arrest, and the quick resolution of an incident. The transition to this ‘new’ form of policing can be challenging for officers (Lord 1996).

Although community-based policing is considered effective by many law enforcement departments, existing law enforcement stressors, such as role conflict, role ambiguity, and responsibility for people may be intensified for the officer practicing community-based policing. The stress originates from the conflict between the officers' new and old roles, as well as the ambiguity surrounding the application of this new approach. (Lord 1996, pg. 504)

This conflict creates stress by demanding officers find solutions to community problems that often require interventions beyond the limited powers and remit of the police. Whereas an RT officer mainly attends incidents involving individuals they have

no connection with, an SNT officer, patrolling and responding to calls in a small patch of territory, must become invested in the local area and secure solutions, not just arrests:

We want such teams to develop a genuine sense of being responsible for and “owning” their local areas. This means the police involving communities in negotiating priorities for action and, together with partners and the communities themselves, finding lasting solutions to local problems. (Home Office 2004a, pg. 48-49)

Suddenly, the police officer needs to be more than a generalist well versed in the broad application of policing powers. S/he needs to be a researcher identifying crime trends, an analyst deciphering data and producing strategic outcomes, an enforcer of the law, and an organizer of the community (Savage 2007). The constable was to be transformed from an authority figure dispensing justice, to a leader building community cohesion (Home Office 2004a). Doing all of this requires a new type of officer, one who can cognitively engage in the new roles, but also emotionally strong enough to shoulder the burdens of a community reliant on them for protection (Novak, Alarid, and Lucas 2003).

Walking past a disused football pitch in the middle of a large estate with a reputation for delinquent youths, PCSO Andy and I stopped to take in the view. It was clear that we were being watched by several partially concealed faces behind the windows. The ground was still wet from a recent rain shower, and despite the sweet smell of petrichor from the pavement, the place looked bedraggled. “I feel for these people, yeah, with all that’s going on here. We’re doing a lot, but still get the same complaints every time. Same families causing problems, makes living here hard” (PCSO Andy, Brunel Gardens SNT). SNT officers knew the ‘problem families’ and local conflicts of the neighbourhood, and were tasked with repeatedly dealing with the same issues until they were cleared up. They even had a mobile telephone that members of the public could ring directly to get hold of them. But how did they build up this knowledge, and what did they do to deal with the problems of the community?

5.1.1 *Foot Patrols*

The most common activity of an SNT, aside from paperwork, was foot patrol. Even though the focus of community policing is working with communities to find solutions to problematic issues (Lord 1996), the tools available to an SNT officer are limited, and foot patrols remain a key element of their daily activities. The foot patrol allows officers to be visible to the community and build reassurance - two of the main goals of community policing (Stanko and Bradford 2009, Giacomantonio 2009). While RTs rarely had anyone on foot unless they were supporting an on-going anti-robbery operation, foot patrols were part of the routine activities of SNT officers. An SNT might have access to a single unmarked vehicle¹⁰⁸ in the station's vehicle pool but they could not rely on having access to the vehicle. Most wards could be crossed on foot in 15-20 minutes, but SNT officers often took circuitous routes to their destination to observe areas they considered problematic. Whereas RT officers tended to stay on roads during their patrols, emerging from their vehicles only to attend to incidents, SNT officers walked under walkways, through playgrounds, up and down flights of stairs, and along pathways.

At first glance, foot patrols seemed to be casual affairs. Lasting between thirty minutes and three hours, officers walked while discussing the goings on in their lives. The first impression hid discrete activity the officers undertook to increase the efficacy of the patrols. Officers often split up to walk on opposite sides of a street, giving them more contact with shopkeepers and residents. Officers also believed that two officers walking and talking together seemed less open to residents who may wish to speak with them. However, few people unknown to the officers ever initiated contact with them. Nonetheless, the nature of patrols for an SNT officer was very different from that undertaken by their RT counterparts. While RT patrols were fitted in between incidents, SNT foot patrols were opportunities to, "...show the community we're here and available and doing what it is they've asked us to be doing" (Sgt Reggie, Bunsen Terrace SNT).

¹⁰⁸ I use the term 'unmarked' because the car did not have the normal MPS livery across it, nor any lights and sirens. It did however have a large magnetic 'MPS Community Policing' decal affixed on each side.

A contingent of youth on the Knottington estate knew their local SNT officers well, thanks to the frequent run-ins the two groups had with each other. Some of the youths were ‘proper scrotes’ and some just ‘hangers-on’ (PC Clarke, Brunel Gardens SNT), but either way the SNT officers would say hello to the youths if they encountered them during a foot patrol. That is, if the youths had not scattered at the site of the officers. Many of the better-known characters were greeted by name. The officers of Bunsen Gardens SNT had worked with youth workers to find ways of keeping the disruptive youths away from council sponsored after-school activities that they were regularly interrupting.

5.1.1.1 Reactive Aspects of Foot Patrols

In theory, SNT patrols, like their RT counterparts, provided opportunities to interrupt criminal or anti-social behaviour as it was in progress.

It was famously estimated that, on the basis of burglary rates (in the 1980s) and evenly distributed patrol, an officer in London could expect to pass within a hundred yards of a burglary in progress once in every eight years... In practice, random patrol is less about deterring or catching offenders and more about providing a symbolic presence that proclaims a state of order and reassures the public. (Karn 2013, pg. 11)

Whereas an RT officer would see self-generated work as proactive, an SNT officer would see this as reactive in nature. In Brunel Gardens there existed two groups whose presence would instantly cause the SNTs to pursue the offenders with great haste, but who the RTs never encountered. It may sound silly, but the selling of roasted nuts and a three-card monte game were treated as serious infractions by the local SNT.

The nut sellers were particularly crafty. They set themselves up on the middle of a road on the border between several wards from two different boroughs, so no team had direct reason to intervene. If they did, the sellers would see them approaching, cross the border and disappear for a few minutes. This generated a great deal of frustration amongst the team members. The nut sellers were never actually listed on the ward’s priorities, but the team regularly found themselves scampering after them, the sweet smell of candied cashews trailing behind the fleeing cart. Hardly a foot-patrol went by without some mention of this threat by an officer or PCSO.

Similarly, the three-card-monte team was never included in the SNT's priorities list. The scammers set themselves up in a prime tourist area and regularly entertained crowds of 10 to 15 people. Officers believed the card-team was comprised of two men running the actual game, two men planted in the audience, two spotters, and one or two others at large in the area. The SNT team was convinced that, when not running a rigged card game and cheating tourists out of £10 a time, the members of the group were pick-pockets. The card team had irked the security manager of a business complex next to where they operated. Along with two Brunel Gardens SNT officers, the security manager and I descended in to the bowels of the building to the security room. Security guards guided several dozen adjustable CCTV cameras to watch the action. The security manager, a square jawed former member of the Parachute Regiment with the strongest handshake I have ever experienced, pointed out exactly what was happening. "You see, they're playing the game, and on the other camera you can see how they've got a member of their crew waiting by the bike lockers." The officers had tried to set up an operation against the crew, but even in plain clothes the lookouts had spotted the officers and the men running the game had dispersed before they could be apprehended¹⁰⁹.

At no time during my work with the team did they encounter a crime in progress as they patrolled on foot, and as mentioned previously, even if an incident was taking place nearby they did not seem to take particular notice¹¹⁰. SNT officers on patrol did not respond to calls coming over the 999 system. I was not present during an instance when the emergency button was triggered, so cannot comment on their reaction to such incidents. This lack of responsiveness to, or engagement in reactive policing that occupied the majority of RT time is perhaps to be expected given the differing roles for each team (Bennett 1994, Lord 1996, Mastrofski, Worden, and Snipes 1995, Skogan 2006b).

¹⁰⁹ There was talk of having me approach the card dealers myself so that the lookouts would not be alerted, but I pointed out that without any powers to arrest or detain the individuals, I would be unable to contribute anything to the operation beyond having a good view of the men as they ran away. I was reminded of Skolnick (1966) when he drove a truck so the officers he was working with could hide in the back. To be honest, while my excuse was valid, I was reluctant to get into such ethically murky waters.

¹¹⁰ In the total opposite manner, RT officers would pay close attention to any car chases being broadcast across the MPS remit, in the hope it might head towards them and they would be able to get involved.

5.1.1.2 Proactive Stop and Search by SNTs

Proactive efforts for SNTs focused on persistent problems in the community, and were often focused on a specific location or individual. However, like their RT counterparts, SNT officers were empowered to conduct proactive stop and searches while in the community. That said, SNT foot patrols rarely involved stop and search as communication and community interaction was prioritised over enforcement by most of the SNT Sergeants. The view expressed by Sergeants I encountered was that stop and search was the easiest way to lose the cooperation of community, and that a friendly chat could obtain much of the same information a search could. Being a community police officer challenged officers who had often spent much of their career under the dominant paradigm of action and mission that guided RT officers. Many of the SNT officers expressed a sense of pride in providing what they felt was a more substantive resource to the community than they experienced as RT officers, but were often quick to follow such a sentiment with the reassurance that they would still exercise their policing powers if they felt it warranted while conducting community policing activities.

...I'm a community police Sergeant, so I manage a community, which is Blackburn ward, but at the same time I also am a police officer and I police that ward and I have borough responsibilities and general responsibilities. So to be honest, I am a police officer, however, I still go out and if I think someone's a robbery suspect or you know other criminal, I [am] still going to stop and search them or deal with them, I'm not going to stop doing that because I'm a community police officer. However, I do deal with a lot more community issues than the [RT] team obviously would ever get involved with. (Sgt Richard, Blackburn SNT)

In addition, many foot patrols were conducted by PCSOs without a supporting PC. PCSOs are not able to conduct a search, so if they come across a situation where they suspect someone has contraband on them, they must detain the individual and wait for a PC to arrive on scene. Given the time it can take to walk across the borough, PCSOs were not keen to wait around for 15 minutes with an often unwilling civilian. The obvious question is, 'why doesn't a PCSO contact a highly mobile RT officer to come and assist?' They did on one or two occasions when they spotted suspects from a recent robbery, but felt unable to detain them. In both instances, the inability of the PCSO's to follow proper radio procedures or the directions of the PCs coordinating the convergence of supporting units contributed to the failure to apprehend the suspects.

RT officers were likely to ignore requests for support from SNTs unless they were tied to an incident they were handling, and it was rare that an SNT would find itself involved developing situations. While they operated over the same radio channels, it was rare that RT and SNT teams communicated directly via the radio.

While many RT officers stopped people who they deemed suspicious in the brief moments they drove past, SNT officers had much longer to identify an individual while walking, and often already knew many of the individuals in their ward. They were less inclined to engage in activities that harassed local residents whose confidence they were trying to improve. This was evident in the way local RT and local SNT handled boys from Knottington estate. The RT officers knew the boys, and would search them if they saw them congregating or if a theft was reported in the general vicinity. During these interactions, the boys often challenged the authority of the officers. RT officers often responded to such situations by becoming stern and reasserting their authority. For example, after losing a suspect during a foot chase through the Knotting, several of the regular boys assembled near the scene and began mocking the RT officers who had been unable to keep up with the spritely suspect. As I stood catching my breath I watched two RT officers from another unit start yelling back at the boys that they would be searched and/or arrested for aiding the suspect's escape if they didn't get their, 'chubby, pre-pubescent asses off my god-damn streets' (unknown officer, Watling). SNT officers reacted very differently to taunts from the boys.

During one visit to the local after-school club on the Knottington estate, SNT officers came across a dozen pre-teens. One of the boys, who had just arrived on a customized scooter, started to mock the officers as they were speaking to the woman who ran the after-school club. He made lewd gestures towards the officers, asking one: "Do you polish your Sergeant's balls in the station? I bet when you bend over to tie your boots the Sergeant checks out your bum. Does he ever grab it and tell you you're pretty?" Instead of engaging in banter with the young man, Sgt Steve and PC Clarke ignored him and the boy quickly lost interest, going back to showing off his scooter to the other children. Later, Sgt Steve commented, "Yeah, he thinks he's a tough kid, but he's harmless really if you don't play his game. He gets into stuff now and then, but frankly he ends up looking like a fool when he tries to show off." This display of

disrespect would likely have met a more confrontational response from RT officers, possibly even arrest under Section 5 of the Public Order Act¹¹¹. Sgt Steve lamented that while it was tempting to search the young man he knew that reacting to the boy would undermine the larger goals he had in the community. As he pointed out, his priorities did not list, ‘searching mouthy young men’.

5.1.1.3 Checks

Foot patrols sometimes had a destination, or at least stopping off points that required attention. A responsibility of SNTs was to attend to local residents who had been victims of crime or were otherwise involved in incidents. Officers would check on victims or visit estates to ensure repairs had been conducted on damages during a break-in. Officers would also drop in on residents who had reported a problem. These could range from one-off problems such as reports of a suspicious person lurking in the neighbourhood, or more persistent problems such as noisy youths. One woman in the Bunsen Terrace ward called the SNT’s mobile regularly to complain about young men urinating in an alley near her flat. The checks provide a connection to the local residents, in part because of the direct access to officers that community members have via the team’s mobile phone.

We get a lot of phone calls off a lot of residents because obviously they’ve all got our mobile number for the team or our email box, so we get emails off loads of people from top to bottom on the whole ward; which is quite a big ward. Plus we have our reassurance visits, victims of crime, etc. so ye we do speak to, or the team speaks to a lot of people on a daily basis. It’s really good. (Sgt Richard, Blackburn SNT)

The information for every SNT in London is posted to the MPS website, and includes the names and photos of team members, their contact information, and a digital copy of their current priorities. In addition, the information is automatically tagged on the Home Office crime mapping website, <http://maps.met.police.uk/>, so people looking for information about crime in their neighbourhood can immediately find out about their local SNT.

¹¹¹ Section 5 of the POA states that, “A person is guilty of an offence if he uses threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour”, and officers would on occasion use this to arrest someone swearing at them in public. In January 2013, the House of Lords voted to remove the word ‘insulting’ from the legislation in response to a campaign by comedians in the wake of several high-profile arrests ([*The Guardian*, January 14, 2013](#))

Particular emphasis is placed on the reassurance role after a major incident has taken place in a neighbourhood. SNT officers were able to visit residents and inform them about what happened, preventing the spread of rumours and reassuring the public that police were taking action. “It’s quite valuable to knock on doors, speak to local people, let them know why there were five IRVs on the corner the other night” (PCSO Ted, Blackburn SNT). Providing clear accounts to the community about what officers are doing is key to improving community confidence (Hohl, Bradford, and Stanko 2010) and teams are expected to deliver a, “...minimum set of justice information that should be proactively communicated to the public on a regular basis in a medium that is accessible for all” (Home Office 2010f, pg. 34). However, I observed that many of these reassurance visits were focused on finding information on suspects, not informing the public about the details of an incident.

5.2 Partnerships: The Community and Other Public Agencies

In addition to communicating with residents, community policing efforts are predicated on the idea that the police should partner with local residents, community organisations, and public services.

Making a reality of neighbourhood policing requires a genuine partnership between Government, the police service, police authorities, local councils and other partners responsible for community safety; and with local people themselves having a role. (Home Office 2005c, pg. 9)

The partnerships are seen to operate in conjunction with traditional police powers, not alone. “The use of proactive enforcement tactics in combination with alternative methods of crime prevention permits the weaknesses of certain approaches to be counter-acted by the strengths of others” (Jacobson 1999, pg. vi). Jacobson is pointing out that adaptive activities are seen to provide a way of bolstering police efforts by improving the deployment of crime fighting tactics. Much of the organizational effort away from street-level is focused on inter-agency partnerships, not direct interaction with residents (a job left to the SNTs). This emphasis on partnerships can be seen in the development of Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRP) as part of the Crime and Disorder Act, 1998 (CDA) (Hughes and Rowe 2007). The goal of the partnerships was to bring together police, local authorities, and other agencies to

produce an audit of local crime problems, consult local communities, determine priorities, and formulate a strategy to tackle these problems (Phillips et al. 2002). The Government allocated £400 million to support the formation of such partnerships, which helped to create 376 partnerships within two years. While primarily focused on bridging communication gaps between public bodies, businesses and local groups are often involved in the partnerships as well (Phillips et al. 2002).

CDRPs may be joined with Drug and Alcohol Action Teams (DAATs) (Home Office 2005d), which were developed to bring together all local agencies involved in addressing substance misuse. This includes Police, Primary Care Trusts, local authorities, probation service, social services, youth services, and other municipal groups. The Watling DAAT set its 2009/10 goals as, increasing access to effective treatment, increasing engagement with problematic drug users, ensuring safety of service users, ensuring best value for money, and reducing the level of substance misuse¹¹².

In addition to CDRP and DAT partnerships, the Government also created Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) and Local Criminal Justice Boards¹¹³ (LCJBs), with each one following a separate annual review process (Home Office 2007b). LSPs are not solely focused on criminal justice issues, and in Watling the LSP has five thematic sub-LSPs, including one each for economic strategy, housing strategy, public safety (for criminal justice matters), environmental strategy, and children and families¹¹⁴. LCJBs were developed to bring together criminal justice agencies in a local area to effectively deliver their services, and to take the lead in delivery of Public Service Agreements (PSAs) (Lcjp 2008). By creating such partnerships, it was hoped that the multiple agencies covering everything from youth offending to imprisonment and parole –more than 14 organisations in the case of London- would cease conducting their work in a ‘silo’ mode, and coordinate their efforts more efficiently. The London LCJB defines its role in delivering a connection to the community in very general terms, claiming to have:

¹¹² Watling 2010/11 Substance Misuse Needs Assessment

¹¹³ London’s LCJB is referred to as the London Criminal Justice Partnership (LCJP)

¹¹⁴ Watling Council documents.

...excellent work with communities such as in schools, panels with the community and activities based in the court for the public such as open days and mock trials. All boroughs also have Safer Neighbourhood Teams and Community Payback. (Lcjp 2008, pg. 8)

And therein lays the problem. These high-level partnerships appeared to operate to produce strategy across an area, limiting their direct involvement with community members. They are essentially bureaucratic groups that meet in order to meet statutory requirements and receive funding allotments. Community involvement is often seen as a mechanism for delivering policy, not shaping it or deciding on allocation of funds (Shiner et al. 2004). The direct involvement of the community happens well away from the bureaucratic discussion of targets, funding distribution or strategy development. No discernible path exists between the discussions in a Ward Panel meeting and the decision processes of the LCJB. Meetings for various partnerships and the community dominate the schedule of the SNTs of Watling, yet are mentioned only once within the entirety of the LCJP 2008-2011 plan (Lcjp 2008). Whether inadvertent or deliberate, the disconnect between community and LCJB may not impede their continued use as people have tended to report liking the idea of partnerships, but were, “unconcerned with the mechanics of local partnerships; they were more interested in the outcomes” (Charlton, Morton, and Ipsos Mori 2009, pg. 2).

5.2.1 *Working in the Community*

As well as conducting foot patrols and engaging in proactive interventions, SNT officers were responsible for meeting with members of their ward. Every SNT held a Ward Panel meeting every two months, but there were also informal meetings in coffee shops, meetings with Tenants and Residents’ Associations, street briefings, and a variety of one-off events. These meetings fit under the heading of ‘partnerships’ because they involved listening to community members about issues in the neighbourhood. Formal meetings required officers to report on their activity and receive new priorities for the next two months. Other meetings were simply ‘gripe sessions’ where, “...we have to listen to women complain about rubbish collection¹¹⁵” (PC Sam, Blackburn SNT). While the officers were generally taking in information from the community, they also informed the community of their activities and

¹¹⁵ While officers regularly used derisive terms to describe suspects, PC Sam seemed to be describing complaints with actual rubbish collection.

perceptions of local problems. By communicating accurate information during partnership events, SNTs sought to bridge the gap between perception of crime and actual crime levels (Tuffin, Morris, and Poole 2006, Tuffin 2006), with a view to providing reassurance.

5.2.1.1 Ward Panel Meetings

Public consultation to identify local priorities is an important part of COP (Mastrofski, Worden, and Snipes 1995, Ren et al. 2005, Skogan 2006b, Qureshi 2007, Home Office 2007a, Myhill and Quinton 2010, Crawford and Evans 2012). Citizen panels give the, “greatest chance of reaching a range of demographic groups across diverse communities” (Rix et al. 2009, pg. 2). However, the demands of these panels may be based on the community members’ own fears, not sober judgment of the crime problems facing the community (Loader 2006). Though many policy documents refer to the groups as Neighbourhood Panels, they are commonly referred to as Ward Panels by the SNTs because they are meant to represent the entirety of a London ward, not just a particular estate or neighbourhood¹¹⁶. These meetings are the most prominent and formal meetings regularly organised by the SNTs. In consultation with the local SNT, Ward Panels help decide priorities for the area and are intended to include a range of local residents on the panel, though their meetings are often closed to the general public¹¹⁷. Each SNT recruited their panel differently, but none appeared to have a set mechanism. In Brunel Gardens’ Ward Panel, the aforementioned security manager sat on the panel along with a few business owners and local people. Though Brunel Gardens had several large estates, it appeared that only one person was from the estates. In all three SNTs, it was the respectable populations that were allowed on to the panels (Crawford 1999).

¹¹⁶ In London the SNTs operate based on specific wards, but the size of a Neighbourhood Panel may be different in other areas, leading to the more general term being used in policy documents. We will use both interchangeably in this research.

¹¹⁷ Guidance from the MPS on how to effectively run a Neighbourhood Panel stipulates that the meetings should be closed to the public in order to keep the meetings focused on reviewing the data at hand and determining priorities for the team. They likened this to the services of a jury, where the panel listens to evidence and make decisions based on that (MPS 2011d).

This panel should be made up of local people whose role is to assess the local concerns, identified through community engagement and analysis, and establish priorities for policing in the Safer Neighbourhood area. The panel gives direction and local advice to the Safer Neighbourhood team, although some priorities will require partner to take the lead. (MPS 2011d, pg. 2)

All three SNT Sergeants I worked with prepared diligently for their Ward Panel meetings, carefully compiling information on tasks they performed over the last two months and metrics of the ward's safety. "It's an important meeting for us, obviously, and we need to come prepared to show them that we're meeting their targets" (Sgt Richard, Blackburn SNT). Whereas other community-based interactions focused on local crime problems, Ward Panel meetings were mainly about prioritization. SNTs were expected to update the group on the progress of each priority. Although the panel can set priorities, it has no official say on the tactics used to carry out these priorities. Whereas some community interactions focus on shaping police responses (see the discussion on Community Monitoring Groups below), Ward Panels build consensus amongst community representatives about whom or what the police should target.

Sgt Reggie seemed both excited by, and dreadful of his Ward Panel meetings. He fretted and was nervous leading up to the meeting, but became filled with energy as we approached the venue. At the first meeting I attended, located in a small multi-purpose room on the ground floor of a sprawling tower block, Reggie brought sandwiches. We carried in two trays of sandwiches while the young children using the space before us packed up their finger-paints. The panel, comprised mostly of older white women, was chatting as we came in. Reggie's arrival started a well-choreographed routine - women moved chairs, prepped food, made tea, and ushered out the last of the children. Within minutes, we were seated and Sgt Reggie discussed his team's activities and successes over the previous two months. Once his presentation was over, Sgt Reggie listened to the women discuss problems they were witnessing in the area.

A common complaint from the women was that young people were engaging in anti-social activities. Whether it was peeing on fences or riding bicycles on the sidewalk, these complaints seemed quite personal. In general, they did not address the problems I witnessed while patrolling with officers. For example, the neighbourhood had several violent robberies in the days leading up to the meeting. The ladies on the panel did not

seem to see that side of the community. Reggie took it all in, smiling, providing reassurance, and managing to set three priorities the team would focus on. In the end, two of the priorities were ones he had suggested, including a focus reducing robberies. Bunsen Terrace also had bigger concerns to deal with, and Sgt Reggie was not about to let the panel ignore problems they themselves were not party to. He would acknowledge the issues being reported by the panel members, but try to remind them of larger problems in the neighbourhood. With a bit of horse trading he would often be able to ensure that the complaints of the panel members and the needs of the community made it on to the priorities list.

SNTs are judged by MPS managers on their performance in regards to the priorities agreed by the Ward Panels, not on whether the correct problems have been prioritized by the panel. Such important decisions require that the panel duly consider the information presented to them, and a Panel Head is often selected to help disseminate information prior to the meeting. The Head may also work with the SNT's Sergeant to identify concerns to bring to the attention of panel members at the next meeting.

The structure of the Ward Panels can vary. Some wards have a powerful and dynamic chairperson, with a structured meeting and set list of panel members. Other panels have an ever-changing roster of participants. I was able to become a voting member of my local Ward Panel by simply emailing the SNT Sergeant and attending a meeting. I did not mention my research with the MPS or even my research focus¹¹⁸. In these loosely organized panels, there are regulars who show up each time, and a slew of part-timers who come as and when their availability suits. For Brunel Gardens SNT, I only recognized two participants at the two meetings I attended – one was the security manager. The MPS views the ideal size of a panel as 10 to 15 people, but the Bunsen Terrace panel often has five or six, and Brunel Gardens rarely attracts more than eight members. Failure to participate in the Ward Panels and other outreach efforts is a general problem affecting neighbourhood policing (Bullock and Leeney 2013) and has been identified as a concern by the Home Office (Home Office 2010e).

¹¹⁸ Several MPS staff members that I corresponded with during this research have joined their local Ward Panel.

Inconvenient meeting times and meeting location affected attendance at Ward Panel meetings. The Blackburn SNT covered two distinct neighbourhoods. One was a predominantly working class white neighbourhood, and the other was part of Farmingham, a predominantly black neighbourhood. Sgt Richard reported that the residents did not want to attend Ward Panel meetings in the other's neighbourhood, so he would alternate the location of his meetings. Though he had one ward to look after, Sgt Richard had actually created two communities to respond to. Both crime trends and demographics, excluding ethnicity, were quite similar in each area. Nonetheless, the panel alternated locations to avoid having only one part of the ward decide their priorities.

Having a select group of individuals represent a ward, with no defined structure to ensure balanced representation for all individuals, affects efforts to ensure neighbourhood participation in policing (Crawford 1999). At the Bunsen Terrace panel meetings, the members were all above 50 years of age, white, and female - a far cry from the young, poor, and multicultural neighbourhood around them. Their view of crime and policing may have been radically different than community members unable to participate (Bogdanor 2009). Instead of assessing the information provided to them by Sgt Reggie, they mainly complained about what was wrong with the neighbourhood. As a result, cycling on the sidewalk was regularly made a priority. In order to have figures to show the panel at their next meeting, Sgt Reggie had to have officers ticket anyone they caught inappropriately cycling. Though he was not fond of putting his resources to that end, Sgt Reggie lamented, "...that is what they want prioritised, and so that is what my goal is." (Bunsen Terrace SNT). By acquiescing to that demand, he was able to placate the panel enough to get anti-social behaviour prioritised despite their other concerns.

The SNT Sergeants had to strike a fine balance between providing information to the panel, and also inviting contributions from panel members. Each Sergeant knew what priorities they wanted to have by the end of the meeting, and could ensure prioritization of at least one or two of these through the deft use of charm and authority. The Sergeant would often invoke his expertise on crime fighting to convince the panel to agree with him. Luckily for the Sergeants, those attending the meeting were often 'pro-police', and provided they felt their priorities were reached by

consensus, it was possible to include an officer's suggestions. Sgt Reggie got robberies on his priorities list because he explained the impact the robberies had on their victims, and insinuated that the community was at risk if his team was not given the opportunity to do something. A good SNT Sergeant would essentially make the panel meetings an echo chamber. Sgt Reggie reported a crime problem, made the women on the panel feel it was an issue of importance, and then let them say that the problem was concerning. Once this was done, all he had to say was, 'let's do something about it'.

I realize the description of what occurred in this situation could make Sgt Reggie look like a sinister manipulator of old-age pensioners. I did not see the situation in that light. Sgt Reggie had previously spoken of his concern that the panel was not representative of the area, and wanted to ensure he could work on issues affecting more than the small group at the panel. As he put it, "The panel isn't the whole neighbourhood, and we're here for everyone" (Sgt Reggie, Bunsen Terrace SNT). He seemed to keep access to the panel quite limited to the regular group of women. In doing so, he was playing a risky game. He kept out people who could disrupt the smooth running of his panel, but he knew he wasn't hearing the full community's voice. His way of balancing the limited scope of concerns presented by the pensioners was to ensure he brought other problems to the table.

5.2.1.2 Events

As part of their efforts to increase community confidence, SNTs also held events in the community. These often involved services well removed from normal policing activities. One such tactic was the 'Carrot Bus', which was a modified school bus fitted out with computers and gaming consoles. Officers took the bus to a school or community centre and let young people play video games and interact with the officers. By itself, the 'Carrot Bus' only attracted a small amount of interest. While PC Hugh was on secondment to Bunsen Terrace SNT, he sought to improve these events by partnering with the community. Working with the Tenants and Residents Association from a local estate, they arranged for food, a DJ, and a bouncy castle to help get a, "street-party going on" (PC Hugh, RT4). He would provide the Carrot Bus, some additional officers, and funding from the MPS:

I got something like 400 people to turn up, and I built for my event, I ended up building reassurance [sic] to people in that area where I worked. I may not have got much drugs off the streets, but I started to build relationships with people in that community. It wasn't going to be one of those things where you turn up, everyone can see you and we will all be happy within a week; its long term. You need to show people that you're there for them and like, you may not be straight away getting the results you want, but people need to know that from the very beginning they can trust police for a start. (PC Hugh, RT4)

At another event, Sgt Reggie arranged for several MPS vehicles to attend an open house at a local school. Photographs of the event showed bomb squad vehicles, motorcycles, police dogs, and RT cars arrayed in a half-circle in the school's car park, with officers and young people chatting. He smiled throughout his explanation of how changing the context of the interaction between young people and officers ensured that both groups could come to understand each other better if given the opportunity to interact¹¹⁹.

SNT Officers also attended events they did not arrange. For example, Sergeant Reggie and his team were asked to attend a meeting of local Somali groups. Sgt Reggie told me the Somali community had noticed young people turning to crime, and were also concerned about a brewing conflict between two local groups of Somali men. The SNT was asked to attend the meeting, not to resolve the situation, and to provide guidance and information. This suited the team well as they were able to note their involvement to their superiors and also emphasise the need for community groups to take crime-reducing actions in their neighbourhood.

5.2.1.3 Tenants and Residents Meetings

Each housing estate has a Tenant and Residents Association (TRA) comprised of local residents. They are consulted by the local authority on matters affecting their community, are represented on local housing forums, and receive money from the local authority to conduct events¹²⁰. The groups meet on a monthly or bimonthly basis, and the local SNT attends to consult about local policing priorities. The group does not set priorities for the local team, as that is the responsibility of the Ward Panel.

¹¹⁹ RT officers were known to do this as well. PC George took the RT car to do a show-and-tell at his daughter's kindergarten class.

¹²⁰ Watling guide to Tenant and Resident Associations

However, complaints from a TRA will often lead the SNT to make recommendations about priorities for the estate when they next meet with the Ward Panel.

As each TRA focuses on a small part of the ward and is comprised of individuals living within the area, they tend to have a clear idea of what is happening in the community. Even if their problems do not make the priorities disseminated from the Ward Panel, they will often push their SNTs to act in accordance with their needs. In each of the three wards observed during this research, the TRAs were able to maintain influence through several means. First, they would often have a representative on the Ward Panel. If not, they would demand action of SNT officers attending the TRA meeting, stalling progress on agenda items until SNT officers assured the issue would be brought to the Ward Panel. Failing that, they pressured SNTs by contacting local politicians. In Brunel Gardens, the TRA for the Knottington estate was in direct and regular contact with Sgt Steve in order to find out when he would be taking action to deal with their issues. In order to minimize the extra work¹²¹, the SNT Sergeants were keen to include TRA requests when crafting local priorities with the Ward Panel. As they were measured on the success of their responses to Ward Panel priorities, any additional actions diminished their ability to achieve these goals, and placed additional work on the already stretched teams.

The TRA at Knottington estate was the most active of the TRAs served by the SNTs I worked with. Their meetings were held in a dimly lit ground floor common room. When we arrived, PC Clarke, Sgt Steve, and I unstacked chairs and put up a long table at the front of the room. The meeting started on time, with about 11 attendees present in addition to the TRA President, TRA Secretary, SNT officers, and a representative from the local council. The focus of the meeting was young people and their anti-social behaviour. Many residents complained about local youths who were allegedly doing everything from tipping over plants to breaking windows. “You need to take some action, control these lads, get them back in line” (TRA attendee). Sgt Steve spoke about partnership with the council, the schools, and providing after-school resources. He tried to reassure the room that action would be taken, but emphasized

¹²¹ The SNTs would have to divert resources away from their official priorities to assist with the additional problems, and the team would not get credit for effectively meeting this additional problem as it does not appear on their priorities list.

there were shared responsibilities requiring action beyond what policing alone could accomplish. Some seemed content with this idea, but others asked about enforcement, arrests, and ASBOs. Sgt Steve was used to handling such situations. He cited the increase in patrols and searches in the area, the fall in crime over the last year, and the need for the local residents to keep informing him of problems.

At these meetings, Sgt Steve had to create space for his team to be seen as effective authority figures. An older man approached me after one TRA meeting and told me that he came to the meetings to make sure the police, “get off their asses and take care of the local problems” (TRA attendee). At a Ward Panel, Sgt Steve was in control, but here he was trying to win the residents over to his way of doing things. Simultaneously, he was trying not to overstep his reach in a group where he did not have any real authority or power beyond those generally entrusted to him as a police officer.

Sgt Steve told me that a previous TRA President had been forced out for being seen as too ‘pro-police.’ As a result, each interaction with the group was thoroughly strategized in advance. Not all TRAs operated with tension, but it often felt like the SNT was coming in to someone else’s territory. While the SNTs were generally welcomed by the TRA leadership, the assembled residents often stayed away from officers. The officers were aware of their outsider status at these meetings, and appeared to make a special effort to engage with people if they had the opportunity.

5.2.1.4 Street Briefings

Once a week, the members of Blackburn SNT set up a public meeting point on the street or in a park and waited for people to talk to them. They expressed some misgivings about this approach:

I have done street briefings nearly three years in Watling and nearly two years [in] Wilkeston and never had one person come up to me on the street briefing to talk about anything, yet we have to do them because that’s what the senior management team want because it worked in some little flowery village part of the Metropolis. (PC Sam, Blackburn SNT)

In order to generate more direct communication, the team went door-to-door to ask people if they had any problems. This proved less fruitful than anticipated, and few people wanted to speak with the officers and PCSOs.

Brunel Gardens SNT had also adapted their street briefings process in an attempt to increase interaction with residents. At least once a month, Sgt Steve and another member of the team set up a meeting point at one of several Starbucks stores in the ward. They would post a notice in the store a week before and list the visit on their webpage, but few people came to see them. Given the two locations they frequently visited were next to office buildings, many customers were from outside areas and not concerned with local crime issues. The SNT was able to provide guidance, but not directly assist with crime problems in their respective areas.

5.2.2 Impacting the Community, Not Just the Individual

An important attribute of SNTs is their ability to have impact on a scale much larger than other units. While RTs responded to individual calls for assistance, SNTs tackled issues that affected the community. As described by Sergeant Richard:

Response team, as I said, you just deal...you turn up and you deal with a situation; whereas Safer Neighbourhood's you basically take ownership of an issue... It could be very minor but having the potential to escalate, and if you're not there to nip it in the bud it can cause, major issues can happen, which would not necessarily impact on that party but would impact on the community...More people get involved and more response calls will come from because more incidences will start happening. Also, with Safer Neighbourhood's it's not just policing, you know you're working with your partners and a lot of issues you can resolve through other methods than policing, but you get the right people involved to deal with it and you can nip a lot of situations in the bud straight away. (Sgt Richard, Blackburn SNT)

The focus on wider community issues prompted SNTs to view crime problems differently from their RT counterparts. For example, a string of robberies in the area generated different responses from different units. While CID investigated robberies, and RTs kept an eye out for suspected vehicles or culprits, the SNTs held reassurance

events, including property marking events¹²² and distributing information on staying safe from robbers. They might also deploy more patrols along at-risk areas, or speak with locals to gather intelligence. Their interventions largely focused on community outreach, but their ability to deploy police powers was always still available if needed. Their actions were not necessarily about solving the crime, but about making the community feel less threatened.

The borough itself has not got a nice reputation really, it never really has, but [we] try and make it as nice as possible because thousands of people live here, going about their daily lives, bringing up their children... (PC Clarke, Brunel Gardens SNT)

5.2.3 *Partnering With the Community to Discuss Stop and Search*

To ensure police retained legitimacy and confidence in the eyes of the community, police addressed the problems surrounding Stop and Search. This practice has been identified as a key point of conflict between the two groups (MPS 2012a, HMIC 2013, Miller 2010). Based on recommendations from the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry (Macpherson 1999), the MPS and MPA developed the Stop and Search Community Network. Like all London boroughs, Watling developed a Stop and Search Community Monitoring Group (CMG) as part of the Stop and Search Community Monitoring Network (CMN).

The role of CMGs are to act as independent overseers of local police functions at borough level; examine any apparent unfairness in the way they operate; and to hold their local commanders and officers accountable on policies and practices so as to assist in driving down disproportionality. This also includes supporting police officers through sharing of best practice such as the development and engagement in stop and search borough initiatives. Effective groups are not exclusive and should reflect their local community/borough diverse population to ensure a fair voice for all. (MPA 2009, pg. 3)

The CMG meets four times a year, and the meeting is often attended by the borough's Superintendent for Community, Partnership and Criminal Justice. At Watling, several

¹²² A property marking event involved officers 'painting' invisible liquid on to an object such as a phone, laptop, or bicycle. The liquid contained a unique code that could only be seen and read by equipment available to police. In this way, it was hoped that stolen items could be recovered and returned to victims more easily. There was some deterrence effect if people displayed a sticker on the device notifying would-be thieves that the device was marked, but few people used the tags.

Sergeants, a few members of a Territorial Support Group, SNT officers, and very occasionally a PC or two from an RT were in attendance. There were also several community members on the panel. The group was chaired by Ms Brenda Griffin. A retiree, Brenda has worked for the council in a variety of community and criminal justice roles, and was a member of the Independent Monitoring Board, visiting Watling's custody suites regularly to ensure they were following regulations. She focused much of her energy on the CMG, and was active in a variety of local volunteer criminal justice efforts. Twice a year, Brenda invited youth groups to attend the meeting so they could shape discussion about stop and search.

As per the requirements to implement a Section 60 in the borough, Brenda was supposed to be notified before one was put in place to ensure it was being used fairly. During her tenure, Watling had the second highest number of Section 60 authorizations of any borough, averaging nearly 17 per month. She said she never interfered with a Section 60 request, and the only thing she wanted was for officers to implement Section 60's borough-wide, not just on a postcode by postcode basis. Her argument was that a Section 60 authorization should affect everyone, not just people unlucky enough to live in a certain postcode. Brenda had a strong relationship with officers across the borough, and was seen to be 'pro-police'. Largely, the meetings seemed to be empty gestures of accountability.

At every CMG meeting I attended, there was a presentation about stop and search figures, and a discussion of what officers were doing to affect those numbers. For example, an operation targeting young people carrying weapons. The panel of community members did not tend to voice any strenuous objections to the information, and rarely even questioned the tactics. I seemed to be the only person other than Brenda taking notes at these meetings. I often noticed lower ranked officers in attendance appearing bored, staring at the ceiling, or swishing the last bits of tea around the bottom of their cups. One older member of the panel was vocal about his support and trust of the police, and clearly favoured more stops and searches of young people, in order to, "keep the rest of us safe from those kids." (CMG Member). Brenda pushed officers to explain their actions, especially if there was a rise in the number of searches. However, she never appeared to inquire past their explanations.

The CMG meetings were designed to allow the community to shape stop and search practices after years of it engendering poor relationships between the community and the police. However, the CMG at Watling provided little critical scrutiny. The senior officers trumpeted how many stops there were in a given period, and could offer a positive explanation regardless of the numbers. Far from acting as overseers of the police and representing the wider community, the CMG—like many of the SNT Ward Panels—was made up of white people, over fifty years of age, who were supportive of the police and keen to ensure the safety of the community.

Whenever young people were invited to share their views about stop and search, they raised the same issues; they were tired of being searched regularly with spurious justifications, and felt that many of the officers were rude, aggressive, and dismissive of their requests to be treated with respect. The officers often responded that the young people were probably being searched because they fit a suspect description. Further, if they were polite to officers they would be treated well themselves. On one occasion, a 15 year old black teenager read a moving poem about his frustration at being searched regularly. He had been searched five times the previous week. He had been compliant the first two times, but became increasingly frustrated with each search and the perceived disrespect from the officers. After delivering a highly emotional poem to a room of strangers and senior officers, a TSG Sergeant, the only black police officer in the room, told him that if he was polite to the officers, the searches would not seem so bad, and would be completed more quickly. This was a message regularly given to young people.

On one occasion, I went with Sergeant Harry to the basement of a local church where he was going to deliver an outreach programme to a youth group. The youth group had come to a CMG meeting a few months earlier, and I recognised several of them from previous stop and searches. The twelve boys were all from Watling, south Asian, and between 12 and 18 years old.

As we were heading to the meeting, Sgt Harry confided he had no idea what he was doing. “I’m just doing this for my [professional development review] so that I can tick off that I’ve done community engagement.” Sitting at the table strewn with crisp packets and soda bottles, he looked uncomfortable under the gaze of a dozen sets of

eyes. The boys seemed genuinely interested in his presence, but suspicious after having had numerous negative encounters with the police. As Harry started talking it became clear that this meeting was not about listening to the boys thoughts about stop and search. Instead, Harry spent a few minutes discussing the different powers that police have to stop and search, followed by an explanation of how the young people could avoid problems by consenting to a search and not arguing with officers. His argument boiled down to the fact that police were legally empowered to conduct searches and would continue to use those powers to fight crime. While the searches should be done with courtesy from both parties involved, the police were just doing their job and should be respected. This segment of the outreach was followed by a few minutes of role play where the boys took on the role of officer and civilian¹²³ during a stop and search scenario. For the first scenario Harry asked the boy playing the ‘civilian’ to mouth off to the officer.

The boy playing the civilian role did so, and the situation quickly escalated to a shouting match as both teenagers tried to assert themselves. Harry paused the activity and explained how it could have gone much better if handled differently. By this, he did not mean the officer should have acted differently, but instead focused on how the ‘civilian’ transformed a routine stop and search into an unnecessary incident. The boys tried to talk about how officers could treat them better, but this was cut off as Harry said he had to get back to street duties. When we were seated back in the IRV, he took a deep breath: “That went well. All done and dusted with that requirement”. Despite the talk of partnership, it seemed to me that Sgt Harry had only shown the boys that he was not part of their community and did not see them as equals. Talking to the head of the youth group at a community event several months later, I asked him about the event. The group leader, seemingly unsure as to my allegiance, politely said how enjoyable it had been before excusing himself. The incident illustrated the defensiveness of the police around stop and search, and how this shapes the community consultation process (Shiner 2010, Delsol and Shiner 2006).

¹²³ The two PCs in the room were asked if they wanted to take part, but declined. They said a total of maybe 15 words between them during the course of the event.

When it came to partnering with the community to discuss stop and search, the reality fell far from the ideal posited by the MPA in their description of CMGs. Officers attended events, as did a small section of the community, but the meetings were largely rhetorical gestures, nodding in the direction of accountability in order to fulfil a requirement, rather than ensuring the police were held to account for their actions. This façade of accountability plagues the discussions of stop and search between the community and the police (Delsol and Shiner 2006). The topic of stop and search is so contentious that merely discussing how it is working is not an option at community meetings. Instead, the discussion is on hitting targets for positive search outcomes and reducing time spent conducting searches. If any problems with stop and search were acknowledged at all, they were assumed rectified by the fact that the officers were finding contraband at a slightly higher rate than they had the previous quarter. There was little evidence to support the latter half of the statement quoted below, taken from Watling's Equality Impact Assessment for stop and search:

The use of all powers has caused a great deal of concern and tension between the MPS and certain ethnic groups and still does on occasions, however, these concerns are often negated by community leaders interacting and engaging with the MPS at frequent meetings and steering groups.

5.3 Proactive Enforcement and Interventions

While community partnerships and a return to face-to-face interactions between civilians and the police featured prominently in community policing efforts, the vision of community policing also calls for proactive enforcement measures utilizing the officers' police powers. The adaptive orientation of the SNTs mission was inflected by residual non-adaptive imperatives. Such non-adaptive imperatives may not entirely mirror their RT counterparts, but the rhetoric, effect, and policy statements supporting such action are strikingly similar. In one of the earliest pieces championing the development of the new Neighbourhood Policing initiatives, the Home Office emphasised the role of strong enforcement based tactics when discussing best-practices for the new teams. In this description, adaptive practices serve to make more efficient use of non-adaptive tactics. Citing work carried out by Cleveland police:

The 'Dealer a Day' initiative aims to ensure at least one drugs search warrant is executed every day. Officers concentrate on lower level drugs

dealers who blight neighbourhoods with nuisance and criminal activity – and they rely, daily, on the information and intelligence they receive from communities themselves to target offenders. The police follow up this intelligence with high profile, uniformed enforcement action – supported by media coverage. And they provide local neighbourhoods with information about what action they’ve taken – giving advice and reassurance to residents. (Home Office 2005b, pg. 8)

While long-term investigations of drug trafficking in Watling were conducted by the Drugs and Firearms Squad (DFS), and various CID squads conducted follow-up investigations in to serious crimes, SNTs were expected to help uncover problems in the community. Upon identifying harmful criminal behaviour, the SNT was often expected to act on it. A major component of the 2007-2010 MPS Drug Strategy involved tackling ‘crack houses’. The need to target these locations was justified by their negative impact on the community, including an increase in acquisitive crime and fearfulness of residents (MPS 2007a). Because the focus was on the impact these houses had on communities, SNTs were tasked with taking down crack houses. By 2009 the MPS Drugs Directorate felt the teams had been so successful at investigating and raiding crack houses that they dropped the priority from the 2010-2013 drug strategy, then under development. “We’re not even going to list crack houses in the next drug strategy because the SNTs have cleared up the problem so effectively. They’ve got the local intelligence to find and take down these places.” (Senior MPS Drugs Directorate officer)¹²⁴

Given that drug dealing was defined as an SNT priority, many of the proactive investigations undertaken by officers in these teams focused on drugs – primarily in the form of drug dealing and cannabis growing operations. Small time dealers who did not cause problems were not normally targeted, nor were large scale trafficking operations. Rather, the SNTs used local knowledge against mid-level dealers of Class A drugs and cannabis growing operations. Cannabis tends to be sold amongst peer networks, with only 6% of young cannabis users purchasing from an unknown seller (Duffy et al. 2008), so targeting these interactions would be difficult. However, the pungent smell of a cannabis growing operation was easily detectable by officers during regular neighbourhood walks. Shortly before I started fieldwork, Blackburn SNT had

¹²⁴ From (Bear 2009). The Drugs Directorate was unwilling to participate in the doctoral research, but several members from the DD were interviewed during fieldwork for my MSc.

raided a cannabis growing operation in a local estate that had been detected by officers on foot patrols. Over a process of several months, the team identified which property the smell was coming from, researched the flat's power consumption¹²⁵, and conducted a raid after obtaining a warrant.

I was unable to observe a significant enforcement-based operation led by SNTs during my doctoral fieldwork, but did have the opportunity during fieldwork with the MPS in July of 2009. With this SNT in the borough of Mayne, I witnessed non-adaptive response to a local drugs market. The team had heard two years prior about a group of Somali youths who were dealing cannabis near the busy outdoor market in their ward. They had conducted a prolonged investigation using undercover surveillance, CCTV monitoring, and test-purchases to successfully prosecute the group. Those who had not received a custodial sentence were given a two-year ASBO banning them from the area. When I joined the team the bans had recently expired, and the group was back. This prompted officers to re-instigate the operation they had conducted two years earlier. Officers would monitor a bank of CCTVs located in a business that overlooked the areas where the group was selling cannabis, and would stop and search people after they were viewed purchasing the drugs. The officers would take a statement confirming where the people had bought the drugs, and use this information in conjunction with the CCTV to arrest the dealers after a few more weeks of observation. No attempt was made to work with partners in the community regarding this action, and the officers considered it to be a classic example of a well-run drugs sting. Most of the purchasers were either local people, or individuals who bought the cannabis and were apprehended on their way in to the tube to head home.

One factor that influenced community officers to engage in enforcement-led activities was the need for 'signal justice' (Casey 2008), providing "...visible and sometimes violent demonstrations of police power" (Dorn, Murji, and South 1992, pg. 97). Just as there are signal crimes that trigger fear of crime among residents living in an area, SNT officers felt they could combat this fear through visible, pronounced, and well-

¹²⁵ Indoor cannabis growing operations require powerful lighting systems to stimulate plant growth. These provide three potential give-aways during their use. The first is that the bright light will show through at night from a property, the second is a massive jump in power consumption at the location, and the third is a large heat signature that can be identified with thermal imaging.

trumpeted action. The idea was that nothing works as well to announce the arrival of officers as a battering ram and multiple police vehicles within a cordon of police tape. “If people see you take doors, they know you’re doing your job, and maybe they’ll give you a bit of intelligence next time you come round their estate” (PC Hugh, RT4). The intervention itself is quite powerful, but such action is only the first step of a process to provide results that can be shared with the public. The Casey report repeatedly calls for the police to deliver ‘straight facts’, “...so that [the community] can see not just what problems are occurring but what steps are being taken to tackle them. (Casey 2008, pg. 66). In this way, it is theorized that additional crime will be deterred and law-abiding citizens will feel more confident to report problems if they believe enforcement action will be taken.

While it has been shown that residents respond well to being given information regarding the actions of police (Jackson and Gray 2009, Hohl, Bradford, and Stanko 2010), the Casey Report argues that informing residents about the punishment is more important than just informing them of the action taken. “... we got a strong sense that the public look to the Criminal Justice System to ensure above all else that criminals are punished for their crimes” (Casey 2008, pg. 45). Given this need for punishment, the review argued that information about how cases are proceeding against criminals should be shared with communities. Such information is now made available from SNTs during their communication with communities at local events, and has also been made available on the Government’s crime mapping system.

The SNT faced several problems when organising long-term investigations. Firstly, the Ward Panel could change priorities. Time and energy spent developing intelligence and obtaining resources was wasted if the Ward Panel no longer felt the issue was a priority. This would not stop the SNT from acting, but the teams had to meet their panel’s priorities and had little resource to do anything additional. Secondly, the limited number of officers on each team meant that assistance from other units was often needed to increase capacity or investigatory know-how. For example, Blackburn SNT turned to borough-based CID officers when considering shutting down a known drug distribution point. The CID officer confirmed that it was a good target, but felt that mounting an operation to get a warrant would be too much work for too little payoff. As he was not interested in providing assistance, this effectively bought the

proposed operation to an end. Finally, SNTs did not operate at night. PCSOs were not allowed on streets after 10pm, and most SNT shifts had ended by that time. This made surveillance or active engagement in the night time economy difficult. In response, a 'Night-Time Economy Team' (NTET) was formed for the borough and tasked with dealing with the associated anti-social behaviour (ASB). This team had interaction with the businesses associated with alcohol related ASB, but not the residents.

A further difficulty with conducting proactive interventions based on enforcement-led tactics was that they had the potential to dominate the interconnected activities of the partners working with the police. At one meeting with borough-level youth workers in the spring of 2011, officers from Brunel Gardens SNT sat with workers from several agencies discussing how to impact the youth offending problems reported on the Knottington estate. While the meeting was held in the offices of the local authority, and chaired by a YOT worker, the police officers were clearly in charge. At the meeting, it became clear that their partners were paralyzed by bureaucratic managerial impediments and spending limits, and the police were the only ones able to offer activities against the offenders that fell within their already constrained budgets. This was premised on their ability to get their ward panel to prioritize the issue. The officers knew each young person discussed in the meeting, citing various interactions with them. Only two non-police individuals had regular contact with the group of problematic youngsters in the streets, giving the officers a privileged position from which to discuss tactics.

Given their domination of the discussion and privileged information about the goings-on at the street-level, officers took the lead in abating the actions of the youngsters through investigation and strict enforcement of the law. This is typical of the police approach to partnerships (Crawford 1999). The other agencies could offer support to young people and their families once they had entered the criminal justice system, but officers were the ones bringing them in. After the meeting, a member of the Youth Offending team mentioned with heavy policing efforts and fewer afterschool support programmes than ever, she was worried about what young people would get up to over the summer.

At the community level, enforcement-based activities sent a mixed message to the community. How could officers, who did not live in the community or take part in it outside their uniformed roles, claim to be both partners and law enforcers? It was already difficult when people were unable to distinguish the actions of different police units (Casey 2008). For example, if community members see a drug raid and had not had regular contact with the local SNT, they have no way of knowing who was involved in the action. All they see is the display of force. It becomes even more confusing when the officers planning and executing these raids are the same ones who spend their time walking a beat through the courtyard of your estate the next day. How do you interact with someone who smiles at you one day as they walk past, and may be clad in body armour and fire-proof coveralls as they raid your neighbour the next day?

5.4 Conclusion: Putting a New Façade on an Old Foundation?

The central theme exhibited in this chapter is that, in contrast to RTs, the work of the SNTs is most immediately oriented along adaptive lines, but is inflected by residual non-adaptive imperatives. In fleshing out this idea, I have examined the centrality of foot patrol, the coproduction of policing, the nature of police community relations, the problematic construction of ‘community’ and the limited nature of police accountability.

When discussing foot-patrols, I noted they were largely a symbolic action used to provide visibility of the officers, but with limited success, or even intention, to combat crime. Communication, not stop and search, was the primary activity engaged in during these patrols. When it came to working with the community, the SNTs had developed methods to ensure their Ward Panels were responsive to the needs of the SNT Sergeant while also feeling their suggestions were contributing to the direction of local policing efforts. These panels were unrepresentative of the wider community, but this fact was acknowledged and actively mitigated by some Sergeants in order to provide what they felt was the best service to the wider community. By pushing for the inclusion of what they believed to be the appropriate strategic targets, SNT Sergeants were highlighting the weakness of civilian oversight and the uninterrupted police focus on targeting crime through police enforcement. The COP activities that occurred outside the SNT structure lacked effective accountability mechanisms, and highlighted that community involvement was there to help deliver policy, not develop it (Shiner et

al. 2004). The actions of SNTs and COP activities in Watling exhibit the potential conflict for officers imbued with the power to use coercive force but also seek community guidance in order to justify using such powers.

The problems observed in the COP efforts of Watling are not unheard of in the literature (Bullock and Leeney 2013, Sergeant 2008, Quinton and Tuffin 2007), and some argue these problems represent the inherent inability of policing to shed its nature as a violence-delivering machine on behalf of the state. "...‘community policing’ is best understood as the latest in a fairly long tradition of circumlocutions whose purpose is to conceal, mystify, and legitimate police distribution of non-negotiable coercive force" (Klockars 1988, pg. 240). Klockars’ assertion is that COP is simply a new façade, or circumlocution for policing.

I have not sought to argue such a staunch position in this chapter. I agree that the community policing efforts are an attempt to legitimize the place of police within the community after losing much of that legitimacy in the previous decades (Reiner 2010). But where Klockars (1988) sees the introduction of COP as a way of hiding policing’s true violent nature, I believe that COP is born out of desperation, not obfuscation. In light of the failed efforts of the state to abate crime through the traditional non-adaptive efforts, something had to be done to secure the continued existence of policing. We cannot forget or deny that the deployment of SNTs was part of a larger reformation of the criminal justice system. In order to balance the expressive penal elements of criminal justice policy that won elections, adaptive reforms were needed to secure the continued functioning of the system. Stepping away from the ‘truncheon-rattling rhetoric’ (Reiner 2010, pg. 139) when working with local communities allows officers to engage with those community and then shift responsibility to the wider policing family.

With the SNTs in place, the march of non-adaptive practices could continue, and these new units could be co-opted in that endeavour while continuing to build legitimacy within the community. Though oriented towards adaptive lines, these teams were unable to break away from their base nature. Policing could never be fully harmonious with community members (Reiner 2010), but the two could work together. "While the most prominent measures of crime control policy are increasingly oriented towards

punitive segregation and expressive justice, there is, at the same time, a new commitment, especially at the local level, to a quite different strategy” (Garland 2001, pg. 17). This pressure to adhere to both local needs and to execute policing powers generates the most prominent example of structured ambivalence (Garland 2001) seen during this research. The SNT Sergeants were required to appease two radically different groups - their commanders and the community in which they work. This is in addition to their own sense of identity and mission that was imbedded when they became an officer. The conflicted requirements can be seen in government assessments of the goals of COP.

Giving victims and witnesses the support and protection they need and providing strong advocacy for public concerns on crime should be the first test of a Government’s determination to tackle crime. Equal in importance should be the ability of frontline services that fight crime and deliver justice, to do so to the satisfaction of local communities. (Casey 2008, pg. 19)

Community policing has become a façade due to the paucity of true accountability measures and limitations for community members to affect changes to police practices. While initially designed to support the structural changes occurring in policing, the SNTs had become stuck between the old and new ways of policing. Their design, tactics, and partnership activities represent the very ideal of what the new COP was supposed to be as policing entered a new phase. But, like the RTs that find their non-adaptive roles inflected with adaptive priorities, the SNTs are compelled to acknowledge and act upon both components of their identity. Now that I have set the context for the main thrust of policing efforts in Watling, the next chapter will examine the role of drugs for these teams dealing with their conflicted nature.

Chapter 6- A Cause for All Seasons: Street-Level Drugs Policing

“This drug thing, this ain't police work. No, it ain't. I mean, I can send any fool with a badge and a gun up on them corners and jack a crew and grab vials. But policing? I mean, you call something a war and pretty soon everybody gonna be running around acting like warriors. They gonna be running around on a damn crusade, storming corners, slapping on cuffs, racking up body counts. And when you at war, you need a fucking enemy. And pretty soon, damn near everybody on every corner is your fucking enemy. And soon the neighbourhood that you're supposed to be policing, that's just occupied territory.” (Major Bunny Colvin, *The Wire*)

“Thus those qualities which policemen have come to admire as constituting ‘real’ police work are to be found in the work of the narcotics officer” (Skolnick 1966, pg. 120)

The first thing I noticed was the battering ram. About the length of a man's arm and twice as thick, with hand holds at the mid-point and rear, the battering ram leant against the van that would soon transport six RT officers and me on a drug raid. The ram had been repainted many times over the years with different colours, but at this stage in its career it looked worn. The paint had flecked off exposing different layers, leaving a patchwork of colours. The officers wore fireproof coveralls over protective plastic armour strapped all over their body. On top of the coveralls they fastened their bullet-proof vests. Several were giving the face shield of their helmet a quick clean before we boarded the van. . The officers were to hit a ground floor flat in a sprawling local estate where it was believed a significant cannabis distribution operation was functioning. Two adults and their two teenage sons were expected to be in residence, and both the teenagers were known to be ‘anti’¹²⁶.

Arriving at the estate just after 7 o'clock in the morning, we parked about 70 metres from the building and, as quietly as six officers in full riot gear can, quickly reached the front door of the flat and ‘stacked up’¹²⁷. It was a quiet Tuesday morning, and the estate was coming alive with sounds of peoples' morning routines. With the sudden ferocity of a war cry the team started shouting, “Police! Search warrant! Stand clear of the door! Police! Search warrant!” The battering ram swung once, twice, and on the

¹²⁶ Being ‘Anti’ was short for ‘anti-police’, a designation officers gave to people who had a bad attitude towards police. ‘Pro’ was not a term used by officers to designate police friendly groups.

¹²⁷ The officers lined up in a predetermined order, each having a specific role once the door was breached.

third time the door flew open as the wood of the door frame splintered. The officers rushed in, continuing to yell as they charged.

A thorough search of the premises found one small bag of cannabis, for which a cannabis warning form was issued. Additionally, a teenage neighbour who had begun arguing with the officers guarding the door of the flat was arrested under Section 5 of the Public Order Act for repeatedly swearing at the officers. The young man quickly identified that I was the only person not in uniform, and decided to direct a tirade at me as he was being dragged away. He started screaming about a 'boat race' and 'kebab'. Thinking I had misheard, I later asked an officer what the young man had been yelling. Without any apparent concern the officer replied, "Oh that, it's rhyming slang. He was saying he didn't like your face and was going to stab you if he ever saw you again." We packed up the carrier van and proceeded to the next site to be raided that day. After the second raid we had lunch, and then most of the officers changed back in to their uniforms and finished the shift in IRVs.

This drug raid was a remarkable moment of the fieldwork, but is indicative of only a small part of drugs policing in Watling, let alone the policing activity of the teams I observed. It was one small raid, lasting only an hour, and netting neither drugs nor drug dealers. And yet the event was held on to, retold many times over cups of strong tea. It was 'real policing'. This chapter will focus on drugs policing by both RTs and SNTs, with comments on the large-scale efforts undertaken by specialist squads. Just as previous chapters used the ideas of bifurcation to help assess the roles of RTs and SNTs, this chapter will use the idea of bifurcation to help structure the examination of the place of drugs in street-level policing.

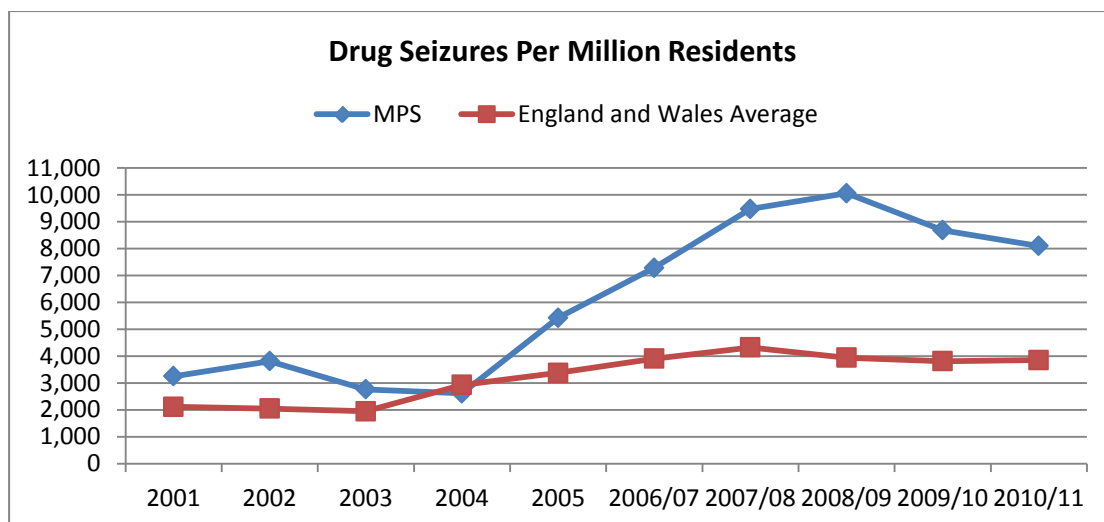


Figure 10: Increases in drug seizures per million population, 2001-2010/11 (Coleman 2011)

Drugs policing is dictated by numerous pieces of official guidance. Some guidance is the end product of national level policies, some from the MPS, and some from local community concerns. Some of these guidelines retain the non-adaptive bite of which they were born in political pronouncements, while others bear distinctly adaptive elements. We can see this bifurcation in programs like Operation Hawk, which masses hundreds of officers to crack down on drug dealing, while at the same time programs like the cannabis Warning System (CWS) allow officers to give tickets for previously arrestable offences. Some of these policies require a tough-minded action-oriented police officer, and some call to a new kind of officer who specialises in community service instead of covert surveillance. Garland identifies this unintended overlap as part of the remnants of structural change.

...a reconfigured complex of interlocking structures and strategies that are themselves composed of old and new elements, the old revised and reoriented by a new operational context, the newer elements modified by the continuing influence of working practices and modes of thought dating from the earlier period. (Garland 2001, pg. 23)

In addition to exploring the adaptive/non-adaptive distinction, this chapter will identify what the role of drugs is in the working practices of street-level police officers not in a specialist drugs unit. I have already addressed many of the policy development issues in Chapter Two, and this chapter will primarily focus on the situation as it is experienced, not as it is written. The previous two chapters have given the reader some

insight in to the complexities of street-level policing in Watling. The pursuit of drugs in Watling is beset with numerous challenges, and often includes conflicting demands between personal feelings and professional responsibilities. While I have found two distinct rationales that help officers justify their activity, for most the issue exists as a useful but ultimately unfulfilling pursuit. Whether acting as ‘Warriors Against Harm’ or ‘Normative Order Warriors’, officers have given meaning to drugs work. I will show that adaptive strategy or non-adaptive, the whole process at street-level is a turbulent, confusing, and ultimately frustrating effort.

6.1 Theory Meets Practice:

There has been considerable debate about the direction of drugs policy, and the implementation of that policy in recent years. But I have found that many of the larger developments in policy are significantly reshaped by the time they reach street-level officers. I will address this issue before further examination of street-level drugs policing in order to clarify what policy ideas reach the street, and their form upon arrival.

Many scholars have pointed to the increasing focus on drugs by the criminal justice system and the reduction in health based approaches (Stimson 2000). This ‘criminalisation thesis’ has been supported by evidence highlighting the focus on drug related crime (Harman and Paylor 2002, Duke 2006). For some authors, “It is sometimes difficult to convey fully to those outside the field the enormity of the transformation that appears to have taken place in British drug policy in recent times.” (Seddon, Ralphs, and Williams 2008, pg. 818). Others have argued that this turn from health based approaches is too simplistic an argument, and that,

...official responses to drugs were never as straightforwardly benign as much recent commentary implies and were never wholly committed to protecting the well-being of individual users. Early controls carried strong moral commitments that were harnessed by the emerging medical professions and paved the way for the medico-penal arrangement (Shiner 2013)

Shiner’s point, that the increasing presence of the criminal justice system in drugs policy is but one visible element of how the entire criminal justice system has transformed its overall aims, is an important qualification to the criminalization

argument. The criminalization thesis retains value in so far as it relates to a view of policy discussions and legislation regarding drugs. At those levels, and focused exclusively on that topic, criminalization of the population of drug users is occurring, and often occurring in the face of public expressions to, ‘champion recovery’ (Home Office 2012, pg. 5). Shiner’s concerns that the entirety of the criminal justice system is developing new means of addressing the ‘criminological predicament’ is perhaps more evident at the street-level implementation of high-level drug policies. At this level, the interplay of adaptive policies with the remnants of a non-adaptive policing culture makes it harder to tally the full depth of penal encroachment on previously health based approaches. This is made more difficult by policing’s traditional focus on criminal justice, not health practices. Additionally it is important to assess what role policing has had throughout the changes in drugs policy in the last thirty years. Policy documents may detail changes in harm reduction efforts and different classifications for cannabis, but that does not necessarily translate to officers on the beat. The validity of the criminalization thesis may hold true at one level, and be less salient at another.

Both arguments agree that that there have been significant changes to drugs policy, and it is due to these changes that this research must address how those changes are both being implemented on the street, and how the perceptions and prioritisations officers have towards drugs affects the implementation. Changes to the nature of drugs policy have not occurred in isolation, but rather are part of a broader shift whereby the consensus of a strong welfare state was surpassed by a risk society focused on individualism (Reiner 2007, pg. 129). Officers on the street must contend with a mixed-bag of policy developments that have rapidly developed in the last decade (Duke 2013). The targeting of Prolific and Other Priority Offenders, increases in stop and search rates, and continued crackdowns on drugs, emphasizes one side of the structure responding to drugs. In this, the citizenry is a victim, and drugs must be repeatedly attacked in order to minimize the risk to the community.

This strategy sets out the government’s approach to tackling drugs and addressing alcohol dependence, both of which are key causes of societal harm, including crime, family breakdown and poverty. Together, they cause misery and pain to individuals, destroy families and undermine communities. Such suffering cannot be allowed to go unchecked. (Home Office 2010c, pg. 2)

Non-adaptive strategies designed to highlight the ability of the police to thwart criminals abound here, and publicly this is the face of drugs policing in London and across the UK.

An alternative response can be seen at the street-level where officers are regularly encountering drugs. Of Garland's six types of adaptation, the idea of 'defining deviance down' and 'redefining success' stand out most prominently when examining drugs policing¹²⁸ (Lee and South 2008, Shiner 2003, 2013). We can see these elements in the official policy guidelines for the cannabis warning system and the increased use of cautions for minor drug crimes (Byrne 2009). These efforts themselves only represent the defining down of deviance, but how they are counted matters even more. On paper these adaptive responses inadvertently show non-adaptive actions. Cannabis seizures have jumped from 78,542 in 2002, to more than 171,553 in 2011/12; an increase of 118 per cent (Coleman 2012). Cocaine also saw an increase of seizures by 249 per cent during that time period. Adaptive responses may come to resemble the non-adaptive rhetoric of policy documents and party-conference speeches. When this occurs, the difference between the two paradigms becomes one of practicality. Adaptive solutions allow the façade of state capability and control to remain in the public view, but provide space for the system to continue to function. This is to say that what the public may interpret as a forceful response, in this case regularly seeing people being searched on the street, may actually just be the by-product of the adaptive CWS.

In its implementation the CWS, an adaptive strategy on paper, has engendered an increased role for state control while decreasing the punitiveness directed at the individual. The CWS is an adaptive strategy because it defines deviance down and creates an administrative outcome for criminal behaviour. However there is also merit to arguments that point out that it has non-adaptive elements; it tries to impart state control and reinforcement of the police role in an area otherwise previously ignored by many officers. The CWS could very easily be interpreted as police 'acting out',

¹²⁸ A reading of policy documents may seem to show that the adaptive response of responsabilization features quite strongly, and this interpretation is correct at many points within the drug prohibition apparatus. However, this chapter is about drugs policing at the street-level, and here responsabilization features much less prominently during daily interactions.

engaging in symbolic actions that emphasise their ability to confront, control, and confiscate cannabis.

Drugs, legal and illegal, are a constant presence in the daily activities of RT officers in Watling. On some occasions officers were tasked with executing a drug search warrant, but this activity was often the result of the unit commander's initiative. RT4 conducted at least five drug raids during my time with the team; however RT 2 did not conduct a single raid. The two unit commanders of RT2 during the period of fieldwork never directly explained their decision not to engage in drug raids. The preponderance of drug situations engaged in by the RTs involved high discretion searches for small amounts of cannabis, and Watling has been in the top five of boroughs for cannabis possession offences for the last several years.

6.2 Non-Adaptive Efforts Against Drugs

While non-adaptive efforts are typically embraced by political actors (Garland 2001, Shiner 2013), they can and do make their way down to street-level policing. Adaptive efforts abound at the street-level, but I observed clear evidence of the propensity for officers to embrace and implement non-adaptive practices. Non-adaptive policy found its way to the street via two separate paths. The first, in actual policy changes that affect what operations and tactics officers use, and the second in messaging about the role of policing and the criminal justice system in prohibiting drugs. In this section I will consider both issues. I believe that non-adaptive approaches to drugs provide something for officers' professional identity as action oriented individuals; something missing in adaptive practices as they are described on paper. The use of drug raids, frequent stop and search, and confiscation of drugs supports both a real and a figurative boost to officers at the street-level in a way that other aspects of their work does not.

6.2.1 Drug Raids

Drug raids have been a regular part of drugs policing since the very beginning of drugs prohibition (Kohn 1992). However, the implementation of such efforts has changed. Where once drug raids were typically undertaken by dedicated drugs squads (Collison 1995), operations can now involve hundreds of officers drafted to engage in massive shows of force against drug dealing across a wide area at once. Many of these

crackdowns were ‘sticking plaster’ efforts, where energy could be applied to managing symptoms as there was little ability to directly impact larger societal issues (Crawford and Lister 2007). Some of these efforts are designed to raise the price of drugs by limiting their availability, and higher prices have been shown to decrease use briefly (Caulkins and Reuter 1998). However it may also push users towards committing property crime because of the higher prices (Caulkins et al. 2000).

RTs do not normally handle large scale drug raids, but are sometimes asked to execute warrants on low-level dealers and growers that the dedicated Drugs and Firearms Squad (DFS) in Watling might not have time to perform¹²⁹. These raids tend to be one-off events, however RTs can and do donate manpower when larger operations are called for. The information for the small raids normally assigned to RT squads comes from a variety of sources.

Information comes in it gets looked at by the intelligence desk for drugs... they look to see if it's a viable operation and that the information is actually corroborative somewhere else... they then make a decision whether it's a go-er. If it's a go-er, and we've definitely got to deal with it, if its low level stuff, they will build that intelligence picture up to its...a point where you can give that job to a team. (DCI Jacob, Watling CID)

I attended three raids with RT4. Two were of suspected cannabis dealing, and one was for a small cannabis growing operation that found 10 plants in a spare room. Both of the dealers were operating in closed markets in setups that were a mixture of Retail Specialists, and Opportunistic Irregulars¹³⁰ (Dorn and South 1990). As such, the limited information supporting each raid was obtained without directly purchasing from the location. This information can come from surveillance, neighbourhood complaints, or in many cases, the use of informants (Dorn and South 1990). This meant that the raiders were not sure if there would even be any drugs at the location

¹²⁹ RTs are sometimes also used in large-scale operations such as Operation Crackdown (Best et al. 2001), a coordinated effort to target drugs markets across London.

¹³⁰ Dorn (1990) says that Retail Specialists are organized drug dealers who do not use a licit ‘front’ enterprise, but are organised to supply drugs at the street-level only. Opportunistic Irregulars are those would get involved in drug distribution, but are not regularly involved, or particularly organized. The two sites raided had the structure indicative of a Retail Specialist, but did not appear to regularly be involved in the drug trade as their exclusive occupation.

they were hitting¹³¹. The raid targeting a cannabis growing operation was based on heat signatures gathered by a thermal scan by a helicopter over-flight. The limited number of plants the woman possessed and the amateurish setup of her growing operation led me to suspect that she was not a high-level dealer.

Speaking about RT4's commander, the Detective Chief Inspector for Watling's CID unit was happy to hand off warrants to RT4 so they could be proactive. "Yeah with Bradley he's a top, top man Bradley. He's quite proactive around trying to get his team to do a little bit of work like that you know, he just adds a little bit of spice on the daily work I think" (DCI Jacob, Watling SLT).

The raids served two key purposes for the RT. Inspector Bradley pointed out that it gave officers an opportunity to expand their professional development portfolio, but it also appeared to give officers a way to engage in classic police work. The constraints of bureaucracy dominated the planning of such raids, especially in relation to the conducting of risk assessments before the operation. However, 'taking doors' provided a temporary transformation for officers to become a 'new centurion' (Reiner 1999, pg. 102), assaulting what they believed to be the sources of many of the problems they encountered during their regular shifts. As discussed at the beginning of this chapter, officers outfitted themselves in the full arsenal of protective and offensive kit available to them in preparation for drug raids. The act of taking a van-load of kitted up officers in to a community projects police power through the very visible, loud, and protracted engagement.

Though drug raids are a non-adaptive practice, officers often hoped to use the raids to help build better community confidence in the police.

¹³¹ In addition to not knowing if there would be drugs present, on a raid occurring while I was with another team, officers on RT4 didn't know which door to hit, and ended up raiding the wrong address. The PC who planned the raid was admonished in the next parade, and made to buy Krispy Kreme donuts for the team.

That area that I was working with had been neglected for about 18 months and confidence in police had gone... You do a warrant, you see that's where the police reassurance starts coming in; if the police are kicking in doors [then] people in that community think the police are here aren't, they've done someone's door and the criminals are going to know if they stay around there the community [is] too strong. (PC Hugh, RT4).

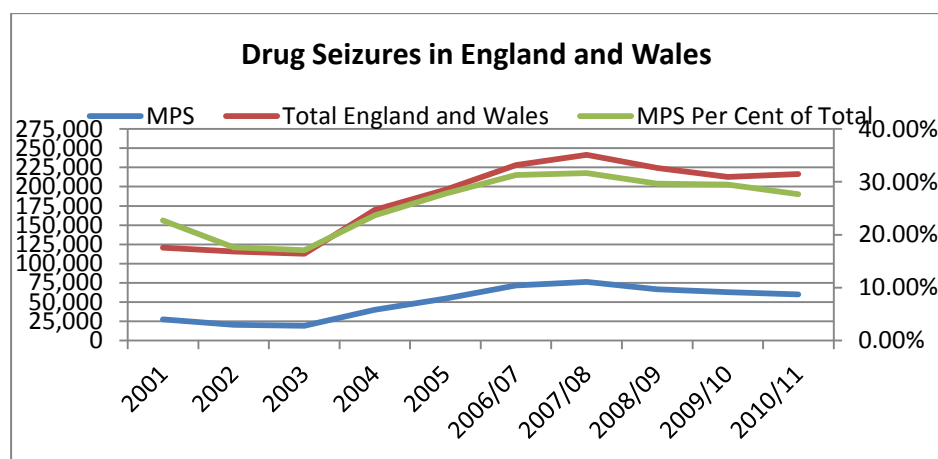


Figure 11: Drug seizures in England and Wales, with a view on the per cent attributable to the MPS

SNTs took the lead in identifying targets for drug raids through local intelligence gathering. These efforts were often carried out along with simultaneous raids by numerous SNTs as part of large operations. One example is Operation Hawk, an on-going operation that saw more than 500 drug raids across London in March 2013 alone. MPS Commissioner Bernard Hogan-Howe instituted the programme as part of his 'War on Crime', saying, "Operation Hawk is another way to tackle criminals decisively and directly. It's all about responding to local concerns and acting on them to crack down on crime rapidly and effectively" (MPS 2011b, para 4). Since the launch of the operation in November 2011, the operation has executed more than 6,000 warrants and closed 240 cannabis growing operations. The MPS describes Operation Hawk as, "a renewed emphasis on local police tackling local drug dealing using local intelligence" (MPS 2013d, para 1). As the information supporting Operation Hawk raids often comes from the community partnerships, the operation is testament to the use of adaptive policy resources to support non-adaptive mind-sets in policing.

These raids, while exciting work for the officers, may not have been particularly effective in thwarting the drug markets in Watling. Previous research has highlighted that drug raids on local dealers and raids on traffickers are equally ineffective, and that

better antidrug policies are required in order to effect change (Chiu, Mansley, and Morgan 1998). Increased enforcement without productive, focused, and community-wide partnerships is largely ineffective at breaking up drug hot-spots (Mazerolle, Soole, and Rombouts 2006), and may actually drive users away from treatment services (Lister, Wincup, and Seddon 2007). Caulkins (2002) points out that enforcement based approaches allow police to respond quickly and with operations of their own design, freeing officers of the constraints of operating within the limits of a multi-agency partnership. In these situations, the core functions of policing are emphasized to the detriment of moves towards community policing (Zhao, Lovrich, and Robinson 2001). However, Lupton et al (2002) argue that low-level enforcement efforts can still reduce collateral damage to communities and displace some of the dealing, however minimally. Avoiding ‘collateral damage’ such as fear of crime, increased crime rates, and divestment can help sustain vulnerable communities (Edmunds, Hough, and Urquia 1996). One must question then whether the efforts will yield results that justify the high resource costs inevitably incurred with such activity (Jacobson 1999).

Whatever their effectiveness, drug raids represent a clear adherence to sovereign state strategies, and have been described as a, “visible and sometimes violent demonstrations of police power” (Dorn, Murji, and South 1992, pg. 97). The raids were an opportunity for the state and the police officers to re-emphasise the myth that they can control crime, and did so by ‘acting out’ with knee-jerk reactions (Garland 2001). The raids also held symbolic value for officers, highlighting both their ability to do more than just target street-level users, and also their ability to get the true villains of the drugs game (Collison 1994).

6.2.2 *‘Coming Down Hard on Soft Minds’: The Targeting of Drug Users by Police*

In this section I will focus on how officers viewed their efforts to combat drugs, justified their tactical choices, and viewed the offenders they were pursuing. I will explore some of these issues as they related specifically to cannabis and the CWS in the next section, but I will start with a broader focus on drugs. Street-level officers in RTs and SNTs pursued drug users, both actual and suspected, as a significant part of their work. While their efforts included both adaptive and non-adaptive engagements, the preferred method for most officers was the Section 23 drug search. Whether a

search was successful in discovering illegal drugs was often only a secondary concern. More importantly, a drug search conveyed the officer's authority and control. Attempting to engage in large-scale efforts to tackle drug crimes could actually highlight the inability of officers to achieve their stated goals, but a drug stop did not hold that same risk. Officers made the most out of the stop no matter what the outcome, using a failed stop to assert authority and gather intelligence (Shiner 2010).

Many officers appeared to find the prospect of an impending drug search energizing. A quiet patrol in an IRV could suddenly come alive with the sighting of a civilian suspected of carrying drugs, and once this energy was present in the IRV it became contagious. No matter the hour, I felt wide awake whenever we were about to conduct a search. Discussions on pros and cons of current cannabis policy disappeared in those moments leading up to a drug search. Thoughtful discussion was replaced by derogatory remarks about drug dealers, and how they were going to find drugs because, "...well you know this guy is going to have something on him. Junkie probably shot up, you know, used all his heroin already, and that's what they do, they haven't the willpower to not use it. But maybe he's got some nabbis still" (PC Matt, RT2). Dorn and Lee (1999) might see drugs policing taking on a less heroic approach overall, but to an RT officer in Watling, a drug search, however slovenly the suspect, was at least a mildly heroic action. It ranked well below a car chase, and certainly below arresting a violent criminal, but a drug stop gave officers the opportunity to be a 'drug warrior' for just a moment.

Officers subscribed to the idea of being a 'drug warrior' with two different but intertwined rationales. The first focused on the idea of drugs as harmful to the individual and the community, and the police role in stopping the proliferation of a dangerous substance. This 'harm' logic tended to be openly expressed and used for justification of the police response activity against drug users. The second rationale involved officers projecting a normative order upon the drug users. In this later trajectory drugs are a symbolic assailant whose presence undermined the rule of law and needed to be addressed in order to sustain the organization and the rule of law. This second driver for anti-drugs activity was not often openly expressed, and emerged from the data only after careful analysis. Officers subscribed to these ideas to varying

degrees, and belief in one rationale was not mutually exclusive to believing the other. We will address these two rationales in order.

6.2.2.1 Warriors Against Harm

The ‘harm’ based logic operated on a simple idea that since drugs are bad, stopping people from obtaining or using drugs is good. Officers were almost to a person convinced that drug use would cause serious psychological problems. Many, even those that were not opposed to legalizing cannabis believed that, “Skunk¹³² rots your brain. The chemicals, the smoke; brings on psychosis before you can even say ‘Rastafarian’” (PC Henry, RT2). “Yeah, you get that brown brain with cannabis” (PC Rosanne, RT2). This logic did not preclude an officer from being pro-legalisation or decriminalization of cannabis, it was simply seen as a problem associated with the drug. As one officer put it, “We’re coming down hard on soft minds” (PC Green, RT2).

Describing how he deals with suspected heroin users in neighbourhoods where “people aren’t taking drugs”, PC Jack justified the need to intervene through stop and search in order to limit damage to the community.

There’s syringes lying around, and I don’t know if you’re aware, people who mainline heroin normally immediately take a shit. So there’s all...there’s lots of human shit lying around. There’s faeces, needles, general filth, blood usually, generally in that area. It’s our job to shield these people from that, so that’s where I see my role as; get in there, get them stopped or get them nicked, get that cleared away, get that secure so they don’t have to see it. We’re not going to stop that person being a heroin user; we’re just going to displace the problem to somewhere else. (PC Jack, RT4)

It is interesting to note PC Jack’s acknowledgment of displacement, in this case referring to spatial displacement of drug users to another borough, a problem

¹³² Skunk has been hyped in the UK media as a type of potentially dangerous, high-potency strain of cannabis, and officers refer to most any green coloured cannabis they find as skunk. Skunk is simply high quality cannabis that is often grown with high power indoor lighting, often with a hydroponic growing medium, in order to obtain higher levels of the psychoactive chemical tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) in the plant’s non-flowering buds. There is little evidence to support the idea that higher strength cannabis is more problematic than other types of cannabis. Users of higher potency cannabis tend to self-titrate to obtain the same level of intoxication as with lower potency cannabis use (Reinarman 2009). Additionally, claims ascribing adverse mental health conditions to the use of high potency cannabis are unsupported in the literature (McLaren et al. 2008).

commonly found with drug enforcement efforts (Hales and Hobbs 2010). This tacit acknowledgment of the limitations of police power to affect crime prevention, “analogous to squeezing a balloon which subsequently changes shape and distribution but does not change in volume” (Crawford and Evans 2012, pg. 779), is one of the few cracks in PC Jack’s normally effusive support of harsh penal sanctions.

Additionally, the comingling of drugs and drug related crime were often cited, and previous authors have identified that police use the connection to argue for stronger enforcement tactics in an effort to thwart both (Seddon 2000, Benson, Leburn, and Rasmussen 2001, Bean 2008).

With regards to the Class A drugs, it was a case of, they were linked to all of the other...most of the other crimes that we had to deal with, burglars, robbers, the motor vehicle crimes, everything was interlinked. The people that were [committing crimes] were more likely to be doing it to feed a drug habit. (PC Sam, Blackburn SNT)

Stop and search was often sold to both officers and community members as a tool to thwart violent crime. “[Searching] serves the joint purpose of detecting those carrying knives and other weapons whilst affording reassurance to communities through this visible, proactive and effective tactic” (MPS 2011a, pg. 2). The MPS policing plan for Watling states that the police need to, “...increase the community’s confidence of the use of stop & search as a necessary and justifiable tactic to tackle crime and especially weapon enabled crimes¹³³”. This, of course, is in a borough where in 2011 on average only 16 per cent of searches were for offensive weapons while 50 per cent were for drugs.

The MPS justifies drug searches by arguing that searches will disrupt drug dealers who may expose children drugs (Police Foundation 2000). However several authors have found that young people tended not to be a part of the local drug markets (Duffy et al. 2008, Coomber and Turnbull 2007, Egginton, Parker, and Aldridge 2000).

¹³³ Watling Policing Plan

Young people's patterns of cannabis acquisition had little or nothing to do with 'drug markets' as they have been conventionally described, and were primarily based around friendship and social networks... Importantly, the cannabis supply mechanisms used by our respondents served to insulate or distance them from more overtly criminal drug markets. (Duffy et al. 2008, pg. viii)

As I highlighted in Chapter Four, some members of the community has a significant problem with the way stop and search is carried out. It is true that many ward panels in London have directed their SNTs to prioritise anti-social drug use and drug dealing, but they may not represent the full perspective of the community. What this means explicitly is often quite vague, and may only refer to a small problem group of individuals in a set location. While the prioritization gives the SNT a reason to move against a specific group that brought about the problem, all officers may use that prioritization to pursue drugs throughout the community.

It's not me who's saying the drugs are bad, it's the community, and so my feelings on cannabis go out the window, don't matter. Now I've got to go after those people, dealers, users, the lot. There's someone bringing that stuff in to Farmingham, and I might not be the guy to catch him, probably more likely DFS¹³⁴, I can push against the ones coming in to buy and then stealing to support their habits. (PC Paul, RT4)

...I know it sounds quite severe but that's what people want, that's what people tell us they want to combat drugs, so you've got to be harsh really. (PC Clarke, Brunel Gardens SNT).

By creating the outsider who used drugs and most likely committed crimes either as a result of or alongside his drug use, the organization openly sanctioned the targeting of minor drug offences. The drug-crime link allowed officers who were not particularly against the idea of drug use to justify their actions. "I don't really care about nabbis¹³⁵ so much, but it's all the other crime associated with it. You know how it is? If some illegal nabbis is okay, so's nicking a bike or a wallet¹³⁶." (PC Hugh, RT4).

¹³⁴ Drugs and Firearms Squad. A unit targeting drug trafficking and firearms possession in Watling.

¹³⁵ Nabbis is slang for cannabis. The term is frequently used by police officers.

¹³⁶ Note that the officer here is speaking about criminal behaviour engaged in because the person is inclined towards criminal activity and engages in it because they have already successfully engaged in obtaining and using cannabis. This is different than the perception officers had of someone who engages in acquisitive crime to feed a drug habit.

6.2.2.2 Normative Order Warriors

The harm based rationale was often co-mingled with the less often expressed need to assert control over drugs to ensure the primacy of the rule of law. The second line of ‘warrior’ thinking emanated from the perception of police officers as maintaining the power and normative order of the state. While not entirely in-line with Brodeur’s ideas on ‘high policing’¹³⁷, the officers do engage in activities that, “[reach] out for potential threats in a systematic attempt to preserve the distribution of power in a given society.” (Brodeur 1983, pg. 513). Drug stops provided an opportunity to engage individuals for intelligence, even if the intelligence was unrelated to drugs (Shiner 2010). If drugs were found, the inclusion of the individual into the Police National Computer would provide an opportunity to identify with whom the individual was interacting with, their location, and their identifying information (Collison 1994).

Anti-drugs activity also sent a clear message to drug users and dealers that they were of a lesser status than the officers. The power dynamic is wholly uneven during a stop and search, with officers physically blocking in suspects as well as dominating the direction and tempo of the conversation. Resisting a drugs search provided grounds for an immediate arrest, and officers were quick to point this out to anyone who questioned why they were being searched. Officers’ frequent use of their police powers, even informally, led many drug users to resent the interactions with officers (Lister, Wincup, and Seddon 2007).

While it would be tough to argue that a drug search is an ‘expressive penal sanction’ exactly as Garland described, the underlying premise behind many of the stops was that a harsher police response would remind criminals that the police had the power to impact their lives. Officers conducted drug searches on the citizenry, especially young men, often expressly to try and punish them for the misdeeds they were unable to bring them to court for. On several occasions officers reported that they felt certain an individual would not have anything on them, but conducted a drug search due to their belief that the young person was up to nefarious activities in general.

¹³⁷ Brodeur was describing the intelligence-led policing of nation states that seeks to maintain normative order, and more commonly refers to the work of organisations such as the FBI or MI5 and their efforts to combat political protest.

More often than not, police maintain the respectable order through the mere assertion of their authority: their conspicuous presence at certain times and places, 'moving on' the disreputable, stopping and searching those who attract their attention not in the expectation of detecting crime, but intimidating the recipients of such coercive powers. It is noteworthy that the currently fashionable prescription for 'zero tolerance' policing, prescribes precisely this kind of harassment for the maintenance of 'civility' (another name for 'respectability'). (Waddington 1999a, pg. 8.1)

While the direct outcome of a negative drugs stop might encourage a suspected drug user to 'move on somewhere else', the larger reason to conduct such a stop seems to be that officers feel they are defending the order in society. So, whereas the action of moving someone along might seem to be simply displacement and community damage limitation, the behaviour emanates from a set of beliefs that push strong intervention by police as a way to maintain state control of less desirable populations. Drug users, due to their addiction, or at least perceived criminal nature, were valued less than what officers believed to be a 'productive' class of citizens worthy of police protection. As discussed in Chapter Four, those that were considered proper citizens needed police to keep the criminals from forgetting their place and disrupting the limited civility remaining in the borough.

Indeed, the practice of stopping people for what appeared to be no other reason than to assert authority occurred often during car-stops. Officers would regularly check the number-plate of vehicles they encountered¹³⁸. If the vehicle's information indicated that drugs had been found in it at any point previously, it was highly likely that the vehicle would be stopped. Many officers cited the likelihood of encountering gang members when searching a previously 'tagged' vehicle, and searching a gang member for whatever reason was good because it kept them 'in line'. Of the almost ten stops that I witnessed occurring as a result of the vehicle having previously involved in a positive drugs stop, only once did officers actually find any drugs¹³⁹. A key trigger for even searching for a vehicle's information was the presence of two or more young black men, which officers associated with gang activity. Choongh (1998) has identified that police my view ethnic minorities as a section of the population that is

¹³⁸ One vehicle in the borough was equipped with an Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) camera. This scanned each licence plate of any vehicle driving in front of the police car, and automatically scanned the plate, notifying officers if the car was stolen or lacked insurance.

¹³⁹ This situation occurred simply because the officer recognised the driver, having given him a cannabis warning previously. The officer gave no reasonable grounds other than the previous incident.

seen as being in need of discipline¹⁴⁰. If the vehicle was a 1-Series BMW containing two or more young men, had tinted windows, and was driving at night, it was almost guaranteed that officers would at least put the information through the computer system¹⁴¹.

6.3 Adaptive Efforts Against Drugs

Officers in Watling engage in activities that fit with Garland's ideas about adaptive changes to the criminal justice system. Though in some cases they were involved in community partnerships, more often officers have taken on informal responsibility for implementing some of the key ideas emerging from the damage limitation ethos (Lee and South 2008). Most obvious amongst these is the effort several officers made to impact the ability for drug sales to occur, without resorting to using their formal police powers.

PC Saul would regularly engage in efforts to limit the damage of crime and drugs on the community. In one such instance we were parked in front of Club Bandulu, a brightly painted bar located on a busy street just at the edge of Farmington. It was just after 3am, and the street was quiet. Our IRV's engine was on, but the lights were off, and we sat illuminated by the faint glow of the MDT. PC Saul turned back to me:

We'll sit here for a bit. They're dealing out of the Bandulu, you know, and you get junkies coming by to pick up their stuff. They leave needles about, nick stuff, pass out in gardens and alleys, and are just generally a problem. I'm just going to sit here and keep them from dealing for a bit. Can't do much about stopping the dealing, not my area really, and they never keep anything on them, but I can disturb them, and keep the neighbourhood free of their mess for a bit. Maybe they won't come back knowing that we're here. You can see the junkies hiding... They're just waiting for me to leave, but at least I can make them wait. It's a win.

¹⁴⁰ Support for tougher penal sanctions amongst the civilian population also may be related to perceptions of the ethnicity and poverty status of criminal offenders within society (Gilens 1996, Iyengar 1995, Roberts and Stalans 1997).

¹⁴¹ Officers could look up this information on their MDT, or call in to the dispatch channel. Officers in the 11 car, not having an MDT, were only able to use their radio, though they would be more careful about this as it marked them as police officers.

It appeared that his assessment of the situation was correct. Standing behind a bus stop about 60 metres down the road two men were trying to appear nonchalant, but doing a very poor job of it. They had positioned themselves so a bus stop was between us and them, and one of the men kept sticking his head past the edge of the bus stop to look towards us. A man and a woman were about to cross the street, heading in the direction of the Bandulu, but paused briefly before continuing down the road when they saw the police car. Such action would normally have aroused an RT officer's suspicion, potentially causing them to give chase, but tonight PC Saul wasn't interested in finding a small baggie of drugs. Every few minutes a rotund man would emerge from the Bandulu, look around, and go back inside. We stayed parked in front of the bar for about ten minutes until a call came in over the radio. We drove off; PC Saul availing himself of the full complement of lights, siren, and all the torque the IRV could muster.

PC Saul's effort illustrates the management of drugs in the community when strong enforcement options are either impractical or unavailable. It would have taken considerable resources to get the evidence necessary for a warrant, and further resources to conduct the raid and handle the arrests even if his unit were capable of such work. But RTs are not drug squads, and the calls for service take priority. As far as officers in RT2 were aware, no specialist squad had taken the effort to investigate the Bandulu. Managing dealers in this manner happens at the fringes of policing in response to the limitations officers encounter when trying to combat criminal behaviour, but such efforts have been identified as providing a benefit (ACPO 1995). It is the epitome of the adaptive policing idea of redefining organisational success, and is in contrast with the increased pressure for harsh penal sanctions of drug dealers offered from many vocal sources (Stevens 2011).

Being able to make a small impact on a large problem gave PC Saul comfort that he had engaged in 'good policing' that night. This redefinition of organisational success allowed him to maintain his professional self-image and make an impact, however minimal. When I later asked him why he sat in front of the Bandulu, he said, "I was able to do something." While it was his resentment at the effects of drug dealing that prompted him to take up a position outside of the Bandulu, it was the satisfaction at having temporarily disrupted an opponent he could not best that caused him to use the

tactic when the opportunity arose. The tactic was not condoned by official policy, or in-line with the need to, "...maximise efforts to tackle drugs..." (Home Office 2010c, pg. 14). In acknowledging that adaptive strategies such as this still provide opportunities to engage in policing efforts that are personally rewarding, we can understand in part how and why officers have supported the use of such tactics. Some might interpret PC Saul's actions as a sign of impotence, and from a purely consequentialist standpoint this might be correct. There were no 'drugs on the table' as a result of his actions, and any positive effect was short-lived. But this view would undervalue the symbolic importance for officers of being able to feel they have accomplished something, especially in light of their often futile pursuit of criminals.

6.3.1 The cannabis Warning System: Going After Little Fish

Street-level drugs policing is dominated by the pursuit of small amounts of cannabis. In England and Wales, 98 per cent of all cannabis resin seizures are for amounts less than one gram in weight, and only 0.4 per cent of all cannabis seizures are for amounts over 500 grams¹⁴² (Coleman 2011). In a clear sign of the 'defining deviance down', the cannabis Warning System (CWS) allows officers to write a formal warning for cannabis possession, if the person had not been caught in the previous 12 months and is 18 years old. This allows officers to generate a sanctioned detection in less than an hour, a process that could take 10 or more hours with a shoplifting case. For a second cannabis possession offence within the year officers can give a Penalty Notice for Disorder (PND), which results in an £80 fine. A third incident within the year should result in arrest, and offenders will often receive an £80-100 fine from the court, though they can face a custodial sentence. Previously the only official option was for officers to arrest someone found with cannabis. By deploying the CWS, the MPS hoped to, "decrease the time and resources spent on a drug seen to be less harmful than many other commonly used drugs" (MPS 2007b, pg. 3). Instead it heralded a massive increase in cannabis related activity and searches after the 2004 implementation.

¹⁴² To put that in perspective, the average cannabis cigarette, or 'joint', is about 0.25 grams (Van Ours 2007), but can vary between 0.11-0.45 grams (Moeller 2012).

This area has mainly cannabis, it's the main issue in this area, if you go up towards central then you've got a bit more harder drugs, Class A, Class B. But around here is usually people just smoking joints and stuff and, although as critics would argue its harmless and what not that's their opinion, but in this job, it's illegal and we deal with it accordingly. With people if it's their first time they'll get a cannabis warning. (PC Rebekah, RT4)

cannabis is often found as a result of stop and search activity (Lee and South 2008) and usually only gets the 'little league players' of the drugs game¹⁴³ (Collison 1995).

Additionally, stop and search activity against drugs has a low rate of subsequent arrest for any reason, with only 6.14 per cent of stops resulting in arrest in Watling, and an average of 5.95 per cent across the MPS in 2009/10¹⁴⁴. Sitting in the 1-1 car outside a late night fried chicken shop, PC Fred (RT4) explained to me:

The big fish get caught, if they get caught at all, by the border agency or the drugs teams. No one goes after the mid-sized fish really, and we collect the little fish for statistics. We only come across PWITS¹⁴⁵ accidentally.

By this he meant that the focus of his work was not tied to the lofty rhetoric of 'dismantling criminal networks' (MPS 2007a, pg. 3), but rather the easily apprehended drug users of the community. Of the 232,000 recorded drug offences in England and Wales in 2010/11, 86 per cent were possession offences, and of that, 81 per cent were for cannabis possession (Measham and South 2012). A significant amount of cannabis offences are solely possession related events, with no other associated criminal activity (May et al. 2002). For officers in Watling the CWS was a daily reality, and while many would have to search through their duffel bags to find the correct citation forms for a vehicle infraction, the cannabis Warning Form was usually carried in the front pocket of the officer's bullet-proof vest.

¹⁴³ Between 2009-2011, the borough averaged more than 300 possession offences per month, and less than 25 drug trafficking offences. (MPS Borough Data)

¹⁴⁴ Sourced from Freedom of Information request.

¹⁴⁶ A morning shift. Typically begun at 6am.

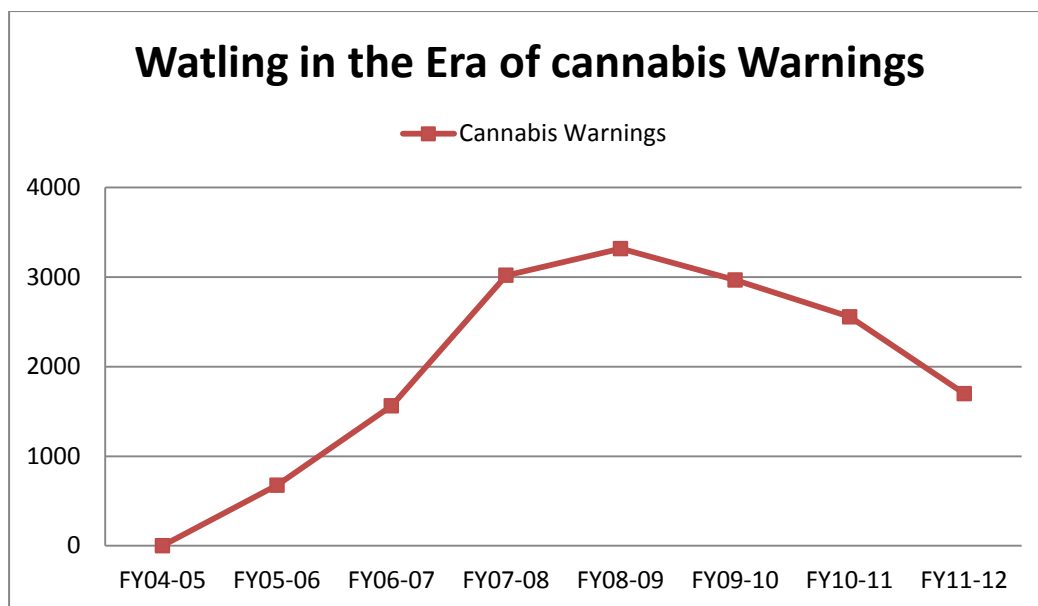


Figure 12: The rise and fall of cannabis warnings

Officers of Watling regularly went out searching for low-level cannabis busts in order to ‘get a detection’. As PC Edmund explained to me at the beginning of an early turn¹⁴⁶, “So many of the little shits around here have nabbis¹⁴⁷ on them. It’s pretty easy to get something if you turn-over a few of them. You gotta wait though; those lazy cunts don’t get up before noon, one o’clock maybe.” His antipathy towards the cannabis users did not necessarily translate to a desire to engage stronger penal sanctions against individuals caught with cannabis. PC Edmund associated cannabis use with a feckless and criminal class, and spoke with disdain about their perceived lifestyle choice. However he did not despise cannabis itself. Like many officers, for PC Edmund cannabis was viewed as a problem, and people who used cannabis were problematic, but it was enough to merely show the state could still exert power of their behaviour. Such was the mixed nature of the drive to target cannabis that some officers would do what they could to avoid harming individuals whose only infraction was related to cannabis possession¹⁴⁸.

¹⁴⁶ A morning shift. Typically begun at 6am.

¹⁴⁷ cannabis. Officers used ‘nabbis’ when talking about people being in possession of the drug, but would use the full word when discussing ideas about policy or the policing of cannabis.

¹⁴⁸ Provided of course they passed the ‘attitude test’ mentioned in the Response Policing chapter.

I found the two boys smoking, and one of them tried to do the right thing and said it was his cannabis. I did a check and seen that he's had his warning already, and that it was recent, but he was all right. Nice lad, not causing problems, and only, really only found because he's got nowhere else to puff. So I said, 'yeah, it's not your cannabis, it was your friend's, because if it's your friends, then it's a warning, but if it's yours, it's a fine.' He couldn't really afford £80, and then what; he gets a warrant out for him [for failure to pay the fine]. (Sergeant Anne, RT2).

PC Oscar (RT2) told me that he sometimes even asks people facing a PND for their second infraction if they would prefer to be arrested instead of given the £80 fine. His logic is that after a cannabis arrest the offender will probably only face a caution or £20-40 fine, and he'll get a sanctioned detection and an arrest out of the encounter.

It was not uncommon for officers to purposely drive around a park several times, hoping to catch a whiff of cannabis in the air. In 2002/03, the last full year of data before the changes in cannabis policing were introduced, Watling had less than 1,200 drug possession offences recorded, but this jumped to nearly 4,000 by 2009/10. We know that nearly 90 per cent of those 2009/10 drug offences in Watling were for cannabis possession (MPS 2012c) and that across the MPS a cannabis warning is issued in 69 per cent of cannabis possession incidents. In practice the warning form was used in 85-90 per cent of observed cannabis possession incidents in Watling during fieldwork. The discrepancy in the observed figures and those released by the MPS may be because officers in Watling were ignoring the guidance to issue PNDs and arrest for second and third possession incidents within 12 months. Though I never observed this directly, two officers mentioned that on occasion they will issue a warning when a PND should have been given, provided the individual was compliant and remorseful. Another explanation is that not all warning forms make it on to the system. Officers reported, and this was never solidly verified during fieldwork, that sometimes they would fail to enter a person's details in to the system while completing the paperwork for the form.

Whilst acknowledging that many cannabis related incidents resulted in poor interactions with community members, the MPS maintains that the cannabis warning system provides a unique tool to improve public/community interaction.

As the majority of people accused of cannabis possession are young male adults, it is hoped the policy will have had a positive effect in reducing friction between young people and police, thereby improving public/police relations. (MPS 2010b, pg. 4)

This argument supposes that the introduction of the CWS was the only change to cannabis policing in recent years, that officers were deprioritising cannabis, and that there would be fewer searches as a result. It fails to account for the increase in cannabis offences, the massive increase in the number of drug searches, and the impact of numerous unsuccessful searches on relations with the community. Between April 2009 and March 2010 67 per cent of cannabis offences were for young men between 18-29, a total of more than 34,400 offences (MPS 2010b). In the months leading up to the August 2011 riots, Watling had a 9 per cent hit rate on section 23 searches¹⁴⁹, and the MPS had doubled the number of drug related stop and searches since 2004 (Eastwood, Shiner, and Bear 2013). The argument takes no account of the quality of the interaction. At every CMG where young people were invited to speak, the main issues raised were their anger at being subject to what they perceived to be frequent unwarranted searches and the negative attitudes officers displayed to them during the searches. Numerous pieces of research, (Skogan 2006a, Glauser and Tullar 1985, Bradford, Jackson, and Stanko 2009, Hohl, Bradford, and Stanko 2010, Ren et al. 2005)¹⁵⁰, have highlighted how contact between the public and police often results in negative impacts on community confidence in police.

We can see clearly how these interactions affect the relationship between police and the community by examining a typical stop taking place on a man leaving a café known to sell cannabis¹⁵¹. The 53 year old African-Caribbean man was stopped and searched for drugs while walking along the edge of a park. He was found to be carrying £10 worth of cannabis, and while the officer wrote the cannabis warning form, commented:

¹⁴⁹ Information from FOI request.

¹⁵⁰ The Independent Police Complaints commission recorded a 44% jump in complaints the first year cannabis warnings were in use, and the number of complaints continued to rise in line with the increase in drug searches, including a corresponding decline starting in 2010/11 and 2011/12.
<http://www.ipcc.gov.uk/en/Pages/stats.aspx>

¹⁵¹ This café will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

I'm an old guy, you know. I've been doing this since I was a boy, never hurt no-one, never been a criminal. You're not gonna stop me enjoying me weekend puff. Why can't you spend your time finding the boys robbin' and cuttin' on people?

In perhaps the most beautiful example of structured ambivalence encountered during fieldwork, the issuing officer responded, "You're right, but you're still getting a warning". At the end of the encounter the man walked away, shaking his head, and I observed him crumple up the warning slip as he put it in his pocket.

6.3.1.1 Officers' Perceptions of cannabis and the cannabis Warning System

Officers had mixed feelings about cannabis and the cannabis warning system, though they were generally scornful of both. In this brief section I will explore the attitudes towards both cannabis as a drug, and also the system in place to address it. Raising one issue with officers almost immediately brought up the other. This finding is itself interesting. Discussing knives did not automatically bring up sentencing policy or the laws on bladed articles, nor did alcohol fuelled incidents in a pub directly lead to discussion of licensing laws. However, cannabis and its prohibitory mechanisms seemed to be one and the same in conversation, but not in action. By this I mean to suggest that while officers were happy to share their widely varying personal views on cannabis and how it should be handled, they all approached cannabis similarly once encountered on the street. I will first highlight some of the common ideas officers held about cannabis before exploring officers' views on the CWS. As we will see, they are often closely linked.

For many if not most officers, ambivalence about cannabis is the norm. Few felt strongly about the drug itself. "It's the nature and times that we live in, that cannabis is there, but as a police officer I won't feel upset if I don't find cannabis on people. Again, I think the cannabis warning system is wrong, I think it's wrong. I think it's a bit too soft" (PC Hugh, RT4). Despite the frequency of cannabis incidents, I never got the sense that anyone really felt strongly about the drug. Even those who considered it a 'dangerous and toxic substance' were hard pressed to sustain such arguments for more than a few sentences before trailing off in to quiet acceptance of the drug's presence in the community. At one point PC Sam (Blackburn SNT) was discussing how he often comes across cannabis when searching people for other reasons.

DB: So is that part of the reason you would stop them?

PC Sam: To get cannabis? No. I've got no interest in cannabis.

DB: What role does cannabis serve in your policing day to day?

PC Sam: It's a detection. That's it.

I estimate that about 25 per cent of officers I worked with told me that they supported the taxation and regulation of cannabis, but would only discuss these beliefs in private settings or while in an IRV. This position was normally held in the belief that it would reduce the problem of drug dealing. None had gone so far as to espouse any potential benefits to smoking cannabis; they simply argued that it was no more harmful than alcohol, a drug whose abuse they regularly felt the repercussions of. For the most part these officers were simply fed up with the current state of affairs.

I don't think we get to the root of it to be honest with you, I think the problems that drugs cause in society, we're not getting anywhere near the root cause of it. Ultimately, someone with a small bag of cannabis on them [will] probably do no harm to anyone but themselves. There's got to be an argument for the Amsterdam way of life and say, 'what harm does that actually do? Well let's regulate it more, make some tax on it and make it so it becomes more socially acceptable like smoking and alcohol'. (PC Jenny, RT4)

Interestingly the pro-legalisers were not noticeably less active than other officers in pursuing cannabis detections via the CWS. Like their counterparts they regularly searched individuals under Section 23 for the express purpose of finding small amounts of cannabis, and the unexpressed purpose of reminding potential suspects who was in charge in the borough.

It is, perhaps, not surprising about 25 per cent of officers viewed cannabis quite negatively, leaving a middle 50 per cent not particularly inclined either way. The anti-cannabis officers opinions included arguments against the drug for every conceivable, and some unconceivable reasons. Some reviled the drug for its psychological damage to young minds, others for its supposed tendency to lead people on to harder drugs. For those who were anti-cannabis there seemed no limit to what the drug was capable of. One officer even suggested that dealers in Watling were regularly sprinkling cocaine

on to their cannabis in order to make it more addictive and drive up demand for their product¹⁵².

...cannabis could be one of the starters that pushes people on to harder drugs. You start smoking cigarettes, you're then more likely to smoke cannabis, you're then more likely to take other drugs which could lead on to the heroin and crack cocaine because if you smoke cannabis you don't think it's addictive or dangerous, it's not until years later that you realize it is addictive. People will buy it all the time because they say they can't sleep without it that's... they think that it helps them sleep but they've obviously got an addiction that they need to feed before they can go to sleep. (PC Sam, Blackburn SNT)

...people say to me that drugs should be legal; I don't really agree with that because the amount of people we go to that their problems in life are as a result of drugs, even cannabis, that's why I think when you stop a kid with a cannabis joint, I think they should be arrested..... I think they do need to have that experience of being brought to the police station and sitting in a cell for an amount of time to think about what they've done because you know it is a slippery slope. (PC Rebekah, RT4)

When looking at the CWS itself we find a similar breakdown of ideas. A small number of officers felt the system worked fine, most were ambivalent or pessimistic, and a few thought the whole thing was a complete travesty because it sent a mixed message about the harm of cannabis to the public while doing nothing to empower officers to fight the drug. No matter how passionate an officer's feeling about cannabis or the CWS, after a minute or two of discussion the officers' invariably became ambivalent, "Well...it's just another tool to do the job, I don't like or hate the cannabis warning system, it's just a way of disposing with certain things" (PC Hugh, RT4).

Some officers liked the warning form for its ease and fruitful reward. It turned a long arrest process in to a quick warning, saving them a considerable amount of time for each interaction. Several commented that before the advent of the CWS they would probably just dispose of a small bag of cannabis instead of going through the time consuming formalities involved in an arrest or caution¹⁵³. "I think that's what used to

¹⁵² Beyond the difficulty, cost, and increased penalty a cannabis dealer would face in doing such a thing, there is no evidence from either the Home Office or the MPS that such practices are occurring anywhere in England or Wales.

¹⁵³ To issue a formal Caution, officers must still arrest and complete all the elements of a normal arrest except for writing up charging orders to the CPS.

happen before the warnings came in, it used to go down the drain, little bit of cannabis, why take yourself off the streets for a tiny little bag of cannabis...what harm does it do really?" (PC Jenny, RT4). Most officers who had been on the job since before the introduction of the CWS admitted to having at one time or another disposed of cannabis in this manner. By doing this officers reported that they avoided tying themselves up with a minor crime and could instead focus on engaging the crime problems they felt were more problematic for their local community. None of the officers reported having disposed of cannabis in this manner since the introduction of the CWS. To them, there was simply no reason not to do the form, and in fact they were rewarded when they did.

...with the cannabis you know, actually where you probably used discretion with a small amount before and you know you could be, 'throw it down the drain and don't do it again, this is your one warning', now actually you became more... you were actually writing up more and putting more people through the system but just for a warning, where before that never happened. So actually thinking, it probably backfired a little bit because more people actually came through the judicial system even if it was just as a warning... (Sgt Richard, Blackburn SNT)

Many officers, regardless of their personal feelings about cannabis, thought the system was a symbolic gesture designed for bureaucracy sake, not for effectiveness at combating drugs.

It sends out mixed messages. Make a decision one way or another; it's illegal or it's not! They did it for the wrong motivation. They didn't do it because, for the cause of getting people off drugs, they did it for the [decreased] paperwork. (PC Jane, RT4).

This sort of derision of the CWS was widespread, but did not necessarily discourage officers from using the CWS. The guidelines issued by ACPO (2003) only recommend that officers use the warning form, and it specifically leaves the option to arrest at the officer's discretion. If officers were *en masse* uncomfortable with the CWS, they could theoretically arrest every person found with cannabis. But this did not happen. Officers persisted in using a system they felt was an ineffective middle ground.

It's a means to an end. But I don't think the first stage has any impact at all on the actual users. All you do is give them a telling off and then a little bit of paper. They don't even get anything to carry off. They sign the bit of white paper and that's it. That's it. Done and dusted¹⁵⁴. (PC Fred, RT4)

The bureaucratization of the process left officers in a position that was difficult to maintain. From their perspective they were being asked to exert their power to stop and search someone, to detain and deprive of liberty, and then reach an anticlimactic end result by only giving the cannabis user a largely symbolic and toothless warning slip.

I don't feel like I'm making any difference, I just... we take cannabis off someone in the street, we give them a warning, and they're not going to stop smoking cannabis are they?" (PC Elle, RT4). "I don't really think it's going to make a difference to them, it's not going to stop them taking it or going [to their dealer] again. So in that respect I don't think it going to stop them. (PC Mario, RT2)

In adopting this adaptive policy officers surrendered some of their ability to live up to their image of action and enforcement, and had to negotiate the new limits of their power. While some might have protested full legalization, the half measure (in their eyes) of the CWS saw them taking on bureaucratized roles, losing power and losing their place within the community as protectors. This would have been bad enough, but the fact that drug users were being given visible evidence of this reduction in power only exacerbates the fall from infallibility. When officers could, and did, just put cannabis 'under the boot' they were able to achieve the same outcome, but were able to do so while saving face in front of the suspect. The power to dispose of cannabis without formal actions still exists. However officers feel that doing so isn't viable if an officer hopes to keep up their performance figures. "That's the animal that the police have created. What they want is a nice big set of figures to hand in to the Home Office. Whether it is effective policing, well, I think we lost sight of that years ago" (PC George, RT4). In response to this bureaucratization, many officers in the middle 50 per cent of officers not particularly inclined either way towards cannabis appeared to talk-up the potential risks of cannabis in order to justify the worthiness of pursuing it. This increased threat supported the need to pursue the drug, and helped maintain a sense of

¹⁵⁴ PC Fred's assertion that 'they don't even get anything to carry off' is not accurate. Individuals are given a copy of the form once it is filled out. They can refuse to take their copy as sometimes occurs.

mission for the officers. This had the knock on effect of making the use of the CWS that much more deflating, as it reminded them of the bureaucratized nature of the exercise.

Several officers openly argued that cannabis policing was a waste of time, but said they would make use of the warning forms to earn detections. The strength of the system, for these officers, was the ease with which outputs could be obtained. One officer reportedly achieved 72 sanctioned detections over the course of a year, of which 68 were cannabis warning forms. This information was confirmed by an Inspector of an RT unit and also a member of the borough's senior leadership team. Unfortunately I was unable to confirm this via data from my Freedom of Information request. PC Rosanne commented about this officer, "While the rest of us are going out doing the hard jobs, he's racking up easy detections." The issue of officers using the CWS to accumulate numerous cannabis seizures was acknowledged in Home Office data as well. "The widespread use of this new disposal is thought to have been a large contributory factor in the increase in the number of police seizures for cannabis since April 2004" (Coleman 2012, pg. 13).

6.3.1.2 Why do Officers Hunt for cannabis?

As far as cannabis is concerned I don't really agree with it, never smoked it, don't really want to, never even thought about smoking it, not for me. But I know people that have smoked it, I know police officers that have smoked it, so you know, I don't think it's ever going to go away, it's always going to be there, it's always going to be...its semi-legalised isn't it? There seems to be that thing that you know they don't mind it if you smoke it in the privacy of your own home and like I get that. I don't mind because at the end of the day it saves me from having to go to certain calls, but I think if you smoke it out on the street, smoking it near schools or... it's like sticking your fingers up at the law isn't it? Why are you walking down the road with a cannabis joint for? Makes you think you're above it, I don't like that side of it but as far as if you want to smoke it in the privacy of your own home, you're not going to stop that, and like I say, I don't agree with it but we're not going to stop it and you know that's another thing, [cannabis users] could be funding terrorism they could be funding...god knows. (PC Dominic, RT4)

In this section I will begin to explore some of the reasons why officers went against their own personal beliefs and professional judgment, and made dedicated efforts to find cannabis. I had encountered officers who were staunch legalisers and others who

would wipe the plant from the earth if given the power, and yet all seemed willing to uniformly administer the CWS. In every other component of their work, barring domestic incidents, discretion and personal attitudes shaped the implementation of police powers.

Searching individuals suspected of possessing cannabis was not necessarily entirely about drugs. Officers knew that any item found during a drug search, something for which they had no specific reasonable grounds to conduct a search, contributed to the detection of crime and order maintenance that lay at the heart of their role. Targeting suspected drug users for ancillary reasons was an accepted practice I discussed earlier in this chapter. It was assumed that those people willing to break the law by possessing cannabis, or appearing likely to possess cannabis, would be more likely to have other contraband items on them as well. Sometimes an S.23 search appeared to merely be a convenient reason to search. Adding one more search under S.23 would not raise an eyebrow given the high number of searches and perception amongst officers that the population was riddled with drug users, and might even result in praise for being proactive.

Additionally, coming across something tangible was a reward in itself. Many of the situations officers found themselves in over the course of a shift left them with little to show for their work other than paperwork, lacking even a clearly identifiable positive outcome. Given the propensity of ‘non-crime’ domestics and robbery reports for RT officers, and meetings and foot patrols for SNT officers, finding a bit of cannabis allowed the officer to hold up their ‘trophy’ to their colleagues. This effect could be replicated by any contraband including knives or other weapons. Cannabis, being more prevalent, and easier to find than knives or weapons, provided an opportune target. Many an evidence bag was proudly displayed to fellow officers. Often it was little more than a fifty-pence sized piece of cannabis:

...for me it's the same, any drugs...but that goes to other things as well like I just like the thought of finding something even if it's a case of knives, weapons, someone that's carrying equipped to steal or something like that, just the actual act of finding it is quite nice. (PC Neville, RT4)

I like [finding cannabis]. I quite like it; I like the feeling I get... It's a strange feeling because you feel like if you find someone with it, it's almost a relief for that shift because you know that you can come back at the end of the day and say, 'ye, I've got this, I found cannabis'. Everyone will pat you on the back, 'well done, you got cannabis.' (PC Rebekah, RT4)

Being rewarded with positive reinforcement for finding cannabis was widely reported. "I tell [people I'm searching] how it is... that I will get more credit for taking this little bag of cannabis off you than I will for dealing with a rape so... lets crack on shall we" (PC Jenny, RT4). This statement from PC Jenny could not have been more prophetic. Only a few weeks after recording her interview PC Jenny was the first officer on scene to a rape at the very beginning of her 12-hour shift. She spent the rest of the day with the victim and coordinating the initial police response. It was quite visible when she finally arrived back at the station how drained she was, and she still had to tag and bag all the evidence; a time-consuming process itself. She made herself tea and got to work, no congratulations from team members or her managers. Earlier that shift an officer had come back to the station with two cannabis detections and received praise from the officers gathered in the writing room as well as from the Sergeant.

Finding cannabis was not seen by the officers as being a particularly glamorous bust, but it was something, and sometimes they needed that win. "...that's what you want to be a police officer for, to fight crime. It doesn't matter how upstairs class it is. And see, the importance of it for a police officer, it could be something very minor, but it's a crime" (Sgt Richard, Blackburn SNT). Incidents with weapons, assaults, or other crimes still in progress were a much bigger draw for RT officers to attend to, but these types of calls were not always available and so other work had to be found.

Low-level cannabis possession was also about as high up the drug distribution chain as officers could regularly penetrate. If officers wanted to pursue drugs at the street-level, low-level cannabis was the quickest and easiest way to find some.

It's tough to find coke because the bankers and middle class types are all using it at parties together, or in the loo at work. Junkies hide away in the shadows; don't come out unless it's for more heroin or to nick stuff for more heroin, and then use it real quick but kids puffing some skunk are just daft, right out in the open. (PC Edward, RT2)

Street-level dealers are harder to come across than users. In England and Wales in 2010/11 only 14 per cent of drug related incidents recorded were for non-possession offences, a category that includes trafficking, possession with intent to supply, and manufacturing (Coleman 2011). “Class A it’s more of a [drug] squad thing to deal with people who are dealing. You may be lucky and stop [someone] with an amount of drugs on them, and you’ve caught them before they’ve gone and sold it, however it’s more luck than judgement” (Sgt Richard, Blackburn SNT). Class A dealers were also known to try and protect their distribution opportunities and supply, and would flee if they were approached. This made catching them difficult and potentially dangerous. On several occasions officers of RT2 had unsuccessfully chased a particular heroin dealer who liked to sell from the corner of a park on a busy intersection. Each time officers had to expend significant resources searching the area, and had come up empty each time. Additionally, the officers believed that CPS had decided to reduce all distribution charges down to possession unless the suspect had been caught as part of a larger operation or was found with multiple kilos. As the latter was almost never going to happen, RT officers felt that pursuing suspected dealers of Class A drugs was not worth their time.

6.3.1.3 Going after cannabis for a detection

One of the most common reasons to go for cannabis was the ease with which officers could generate a sanctioned detection.

...finding someone with a joint of cannabis marks as a detected crime. So you know, you can find someone with a cannabis joint, fill out a five minute form on the street, book it in to custody, put on a crime report that takes ten minutes, show them as the suspect, show them as the accused; bang, you’ve got a detection. And I’ve had the same thing for a job that has taken me like weeks to do all the paperwork for it...I think it’s a little bit wrong. It’s quite pot-luck finding someone walking down the street with a joint. It doesn’t necessarily mean you’ve worked hard; whereas doing a week’s worth of paperwork does! It is hard work! (PC Neville, RT4)

There were few routes available for officers to obtain a sanction detection. Traffic citations did not count, and were considered a waste of time unless the offence was particularly egregious. While the officer might be the first on scene to a serious incident, because they are not involved in the investigation and eventual charging of a

suspect they will not get the detection for that crime, even if they catch the perpetrator themselves. Finding weapons, drugs, robbers, or shoplifters were the main way one could earn a detection. Several officers reported that they would specifically search for cannabis early on in a shift in order to ‘get it out of the way’ and be able to focus on responding to crimes they felt were important to the community and themselves. “If I get some cannabis first thing, I can spend the rest of the shift doing real police work, going to good calls, doing my job” (PC Fred, RT4).

While there are multiple avenues for how to proceed once cannabis has been found, including a PND and arrest, most officers were reluctant to use anything other than the formal warning. Officers were hesitant to use alternative options for three main reasons. Firstly, the other options took more time while achieving same outcome for both the officer and the offender. Officers earned a detection whether it was a warning, PND or arrest. The individual with cannabis was largely given what officers viewed as a ‘slap on the wrist’ as even arrested individuals were often just cautioned and not imprisoned.

The fact that a cannabis warning cannot be given to a minor led some officers to avoid searching young people they suspected of possessing cannabis. The benefits of a quick detection via a cannabis warning would have been lost had they had to go through a full arrest and booking process. Despite the policy requiring under-18s to be arrested, at least 30 cannabis warning forms were issued to 11-17 year olds by the MPS in 2009/10¹⁵⁵. Secondly, officers who were ambivalent about cannabis felt that issuing a warning was the least harmful option available to them. “I’ve got my detection, you know, he got told off. It’s not going to stop him, no impact, no consequences, and I mean, does he even need that? I’m here to deal with scrotes¹⁵⁶.” (PC Russ, RT2).

Arrests for cannabis possession were rare, accounting for only 19 per cent of cannabis related incidents across London in 2008/09 and 2009/10 (MPS 2010b). The only arrest for possession of cannabis witnessed during fieldwork was of a man who had three warnings in the last year, and was quite argumentative with officers when they caught

¹⁵⁵ FOI Data obtained via Release.

¹⁵⁶ ‘Scrotes’ is slang for useless men, usually involved in criminal behaviour, and is short for ‘scrotum’

him smoking a joint as he walked along the road about two blocks from the police station. I observed more than 15 cannabis seizures during my fieldwork, and all the others were handled with a formal cannabis Warning form.

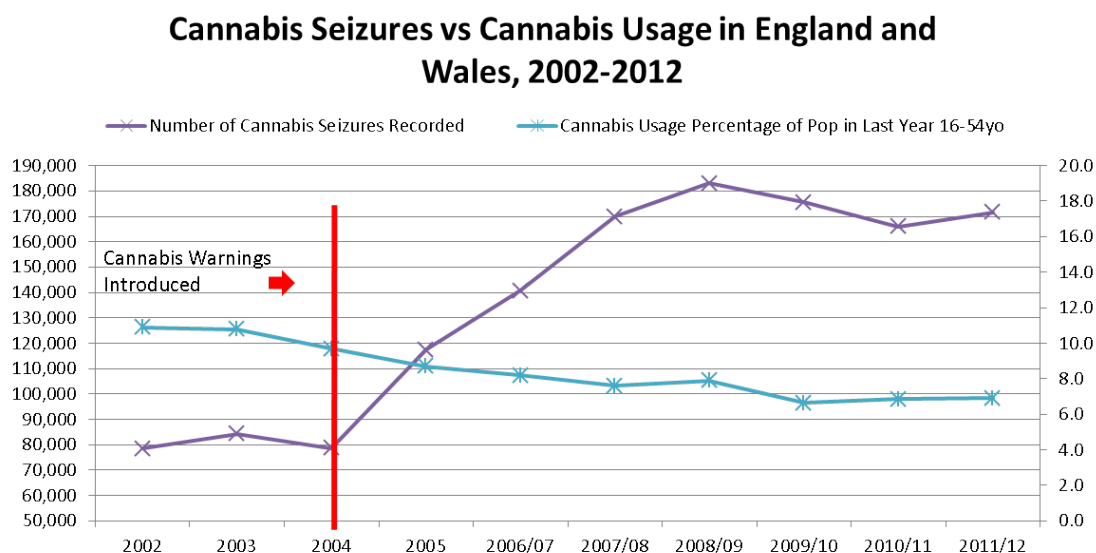


Figure 13: cannabis Seizures vs. Cannabis Usage (Coleman 2012, Roxburgh et al. 2012)

The only officers who seemed uninterested in pursuing cannabis were the small number who did not care about meeting professional development goals. PC Marcus (RT2) told me on my first day of fieldwork that, “I do what needs doing, not what I’m told. Hasn’t hurt me none.” These officers were effective peace-keepers and social service providers (Punch 1979) during incidents, but appeared ineffective on paper. This small group of officers held themselves above what they viewed as a system that, measured formal outputs, but not the quality of the outcomes. PC Marcus worked to achieve good outcomes, which he interpreted as dealing fairly but firmly with suspects, supporting team members, and not flinching from any task that would support their larger mission to maintain order in Watling.

6.3.2 *Partnering with Communities*

Partnership with communities is at the heart of many areas of drugs policy, most notably in areas of drug treatment and consultation between police and local groups to identify specific drug problems (Dawson and Cuppleditch 2007, Edmunds, Hough, and Urquia 1996, Hadwen 2012, Home Office 2004b, 2007c, 2008, 2010c). These partnerships are often defined at the national level, as is the case with Crime and

Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRP) mandated by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (Fitzgerald et al. 2002). In Watling the DAAT and CSP are one organization called the Watling Partnership Programme (WPP). The WPP is run by an executive board that includes representatives from the MPS, London Fire Brigade (LFB), British Transport Police¹⁵⁷, UK Border Agency, National Health Service (NHS), National Treatment Agency (NTA), Transport for London (TFL), and other public sector and charitable groups. Its aim is to, "...bring together a range of statutory, voluntary and community sector services to work together to reduce crime and disorder, the fear of crime and improve health outcomes"¹⁵⁸. Their yearly commissioning plans leave out how exactly they will impact drug use or partner with the police services beyond continuing the DIP programme and, 'working in partnership to tackle criminality associated with drug misuse and supply'.

It is perhaps, not surprising that officers of RTs had little knowledge that such partnerships existed, and even less familiarity about their role. Asked about whether they had ever met with the DAAT before, most RT officers responded with, 'who?' SNT officers tended to have more knowledge about such working partnerships, but even they were quite removed from the processes and decision making. While the SNTs held their Ward Panel Meetings and partnered with local groups within their ward, they did not seem to interact at the borough level. Without an apparent feedback connection to broader efforts across the borough and the entire MPS, partnerships with the community appeared to be isolated efforts within an organization still largely focused on non-adaptive efforts. This finding in Watling is echoed in previous research where it was noted that national level policy promoting community partnerships often resulted in stronger centralized control that left local actors unable to effectively interact with their neighbourhood-level partners (Fitzgerald et al. 2002).

It is interesting to note that the local council's page on criminal justice issues mentions many types of community safety and enforcement issues, and even has a section on 'drugs and alcohol'. However in that section there is no actual mention of drugs, let alone how the local council is working with the MPS to combat them.

¹⁵⁷ The British Transport Police handle policing for all rail and light rail in England and Wales. Officers in Watling regularly referred to the BTP as the 'Badly Trained Police'.

¹⁵⁸ Watling CJP Commissioning Plan, 2012/2013

6.3.2.1 Ward Panel Drug Priorities

Each of the SNTs involved in this research had drugs related issues as one of their local ward priorities during the course of this research. The two most commonly listed priorities relating to drugs were either, ‘anti-social behaviour and drug use’ or ‘drug dealing and using’. The former often appeared to be code for teenagers smoking cannabis in the area. There were serious cases of ASB involving bullying, harassment, vandalism, and intimidation, but these were extreme cases and quite rare. Most often officers were sent in search of teenagers puffing on cannabis in stairwells.

When residents were aware of open drug dealing, or SNT officers were able to convince them such activity was taking place, Ward Panels enthusiastically called for the police to intervene. The tactical responses to such priorities involved classic police responses involving investigation, raids, arrests, and penal sanctions. As I discuss in detail when discussing Operation Hawk, the use of such tactics involved anything but adaptive responses, and relied upon the power of battering rams instead of partnerships. These raids could be combined with dispersal orders and ASBOs in order to keep the offenders away from the area after their release from prison. In these experiences we can see how an adaptive policy construction was rerouted to provide continued support for non-adaptive penal responses.

6.3.2.2 KINS Network

Officers on SNTs utilised the Key Individual Network (KIN) to disseminate information to the community¹⁵⁹, particularly after drug raids or other serious incidents.

KIN members are residents and/or local business people who have a commitment to making their community a safer place. They work closely with the local police team to represent the thoughts, feelings and concerns of the local community. They are also relied upon at times of critical incident to act as a portal for information flow. (MPS 2012b, pg. 26)

¹⁵⁹ I made the mistake of referring to it as the, ‘Key Informants Network’ once and was quickly corrected! It was made very clear to me that the KINs members get information from the MPS, they are not informants to the MPS.

The programme operates on the belief that informing communities about police activities helps improve community confidence (Home Office 2010f). “You’d want to know why there were three carrier vans full of TSG down your block last night? Better we tell them than let the rumour mill spread falsehoods” (Sgt Reggie, Bunsen Terrace SNT). This type of information sharing has been shown to improve community confidence (Jackson and Gray 2009, Hohl, Bradford, and Stanko 2010). The KIN was seen as a way of improving both the ability to disseminate police messaging, and increase its trustworthiness as it would appear to come from community members and not the police. It was also hoped that the KIN would pass information to other community members in a way that supported the key confidence boosting ideas of fairness (Mastrofski 1999) and positive engagement (Bradford, Jackson, and Stanko 2009) between police and community members.

6.3.3 *DIP Testing*

As part of the Government’s push to ‘break the drug crime link’, the Tough Choices programme was rolled out across England and Wales between 2003 and 2005/06 (Polly 2007). This was seen as a core effort to create multi-agency partnerships, bringing health based efforts in line with crime control efforts (Hunter, Mcsweeney, and Turnbull 2005). By 2011 the process was embedded in 23 of the 43 police forces in England and Wales, with more than 230,000 tests being conducted each year (Home Office 2011b). DIP employed targeted drug testing on anyone arrested for 21 crimes¹⁶⁰ commonly assumed to be committed by Class A drug users (Home Office 2010a). Offenders are administered an oral swab to test for the presence of opiates and cocaine, but not for any other illicit drugs¹⁶¹ (Hunter, Mcsweeney, and Turnbull 2005). This included a package of training police and health care workers to work together as a series of new initiatives was put in place to bring cocaine and heroin users in to treatment. This included Testing on Arrest, Required Assessments, and Restrictions on Bail. “The programme involves criminal justice and drug treatment providers working together with other services to provide a tailored solution for adults - particularly those

¹⁶⁰ One of the 21 trigger offences is an open trigger that can be activated with the approval of an Inspector. In essence, anyone can be tested if an Inspector believes the individual has a drug problem.

¹⁶¹ The Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime has announced that from 2013/14 they will remove the ring-fence around the money allocated for DIP testing in order to allow for an increased focus on testing based on local concerns, and are open to the idea of enabling, “police to routinely test for the presence of other drugs and to add to the list of trigger offences” (Hadwen 2012, pg. 1)

who misuse Class A drugs - who commit crime to fund their drug misuse”(Home Office 2010d, pg. 9). By 2011 more than £900 million had been spent on the programme (Home Office 2011b). The programme emphasizes the need to treat drug problems by providing services in partnership with the community and appropriate providers in each area, and the funding streams which initially came from a central pot have moved to a local funding model under the Coalition Government. By 2011/12 approximately 42 per cent of the nearly 70,000 people admitted to drug treatment each year were referred by the criminal justice system in one form or another (Roxburgh et al. 2012).

These services were to be undertaken by Criminal Justice Intervention Teams (CJITs) in partnership with the police and local council. In Watling a Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) sets policy for the local DIP. However, the DIP services in Watling are run in partnership with a health and social care charity that coordinates a number of such programmes across England. Their office in Watling is in a non-descript brick building on a small road that comes off the high street. The charity offers:

...treatment and care services to drug users who are involved in the criminal justice system. The new service offers an integrated end to end support service, with enhanced pathways to engage service users and move them into treatment and wraparound services away from drug use and crime. (Charity’s Home Page)¹⁶²

Watling has three police stations equipped with DIP testing equipment. If an offender is arrested for any of the ‘trigger offences’ they are subject to an oral swab that can detect cocaine and heroin. Of those tested, only about 25 per cent came back positive, with 40 per cent of those positive hits coming from offenders arrested for theft (Home Office 2007c). Despite spending quite a bit of time in the custody suite with officers, I rarely heard about DIP. At one point I sought out several sources to confirm that the programme was even in-place in the borough. The seemingly disconnected nature of DIP and officers’ duties is due to two factors. Firstly, the testing is often handled by officers or staff assigned to work in the custody suite, and secondly because any follow up is with the health providers or the courts, not with the officers (Hunter, Mcsweeney, and Turnbull 2005).

¹⁶² Specific details omitted to retain anonymity.

The lack of visibility of DIP testing speaks to a larger issue than just its prevalence. The only aspect of DIP officers are exposed to is the act of arresting the individual. They often do not administer the test, and are not involved in the initial assessment or follow up care. Their interaction with the programme is infrequent, brief, and only at a surface level. Though it is an adaptive policy, officers are not exposed to the actual partnerships. They often derided the idea of DIP testing, assuming that it meant individuals were ‘let off’ from criminal charges because they were drug users.

If you nick a bike, push em’ off and fall, fall hard and hurt their arm, all fucked up now, what is that? I got you on ABH, theft, maybe even possession if I catch you once you’ve scored. But you know, it’s not right that after chasing you down alleys, you test positive for heroin, and suddenly all is forgiven and you’re having a nice chat with some middle-class twat who just wants to get you a warm bed and some soup before having you chat with ‘the group’ about why you’re such a thieving bastard because your mom never loved you. (PC Henry, RT4)

Suspects are required to participate in the initial testing under a statutory requirement of PACE 1984. Failure to do so can result in prison time, fines, or both. This potential sanction is employed because, “...in order to remain credible, criminal sanctions must exist and be used where required” (Polly 2007, pg. 8). Additionally, suspects are tested before they have been charged with a crime, and in fact may never actually be charged. The Government justifies this coercive state power by highlighting the drug crime link.

Testing on arrest identifies [drug users] at an earlier stage in the criminal justice process. It is part of a range of measures under the Drug Interventions Programme, which delivers an end-to-end system to help individuals address their drug misuse. It is very likely that a number of those persons arrested but not charged with an offence will be involved in crime. The aim is to reduce their need to engage in crime to fund a drug habit, leading to an overall reduction in crime. It is, therefore, a reasonable and proportionate measure on the grounds of crime reduction and public protection. (Polly 2007, pg. 10)

6.4 The Difference Between Class A Drugs and cannabis

The ambivalent attitude many officers had towards cannabis was not replicated when discussing Class A drugs. Here, more than any other aspect of drugs policing, officers believed that the power of the state should be harnessed to punish Class A drug users. Describing how to handle heroin addiction, PC George bluntly commented, “Build

more maximum security prisons.” Most officers were adamant that Class A drugs were destructive and harmful for the community, warranting the full weight of their police powers. The officers’ arguments tended to follow Goldstein’s (1985) tripartite theory on crime associated with drug use, arguing that that drug dealers’ conflicts caused violence, Class A drug users committed acquisitive crime to support their habit, and that these drugs created psychological problems. Primarily though, officers focused on acquisitive crime as their primary rationale for the difference between Class A drugs and cannabis. It is not surprising officers should understand their role in this way. Police have always been involved in the drugs issue from a crime perspective, not the health related activities that have come and gone in drugs policy (Shiner 2013). Additionally, the take-over of the drugs issue from the health services by the criminal justice system, and the prominence of policing within policy documents for the several decades (Seddon 2006, 2000) has disconnected them from any minimal stake in health related drugs policy initiatives that might previously have existed. This take-over shifts not only the pathways available to drug users, but further emphasises the drug problem as a crime problem necessitating management by police, despite the increasing move towards recovery-based approaches in the current drugs strategy (Duke 2013).

Class A drugs I think are slightly different and I think you’ve got to see the sad cases you see of people who really do have horrible, horrible addictions to it and because of that are shoplifting and prostituting themselves and all of that, but then what does taking their little fix of Heroin off them achieve, it doesn’t achieve anything does it. (PC Jenny, RT4)

Most officers believed that drug users committed crime to fund drug use. The concept of Class A drug users committing acquisitive crime to fund their drug habit is well established in both policy and the literature (Bennett, Holloway, and Williams 2001, Home Office 2004b, 2007a, 2010d). However, this propensity towards acquisitive crime may only reflect about 3 per cent of drug users (Seddon 2002) as most drug users only use occasionally and without problems (Warburton, Turnbull, and Hough 2005). The Government has tacitly acknowledged this fact through the development of the Prolific and Other Priority Offenders Programme (PPOP), introduced in 2004 in conjunction with PSA 23 (Home Office 2009b). The PPOP is not solely aimed at drug using offenders, though three quarters of the people entered in to the scheme by 2007 reported that their crimes were fuelled by a desire to obtain money for drugs (Dawson and Cuppleditch 2007).

The PPO is based on three strands: prevent and deter crime, catch and convict offenders, and rehabilitate and resettle. It is an example of a mixed-bag of policy directives, featuring adaptive courses of action in the first and last strands, and a continued effort to arrest-away crime problems. Police stations in Watling had posters up describing the PPO scheme in the corridors and the PC's writing room, but no-one seemed to take notice. The only part of the programme officers experienced was the 'catch and convict' strand, and this was no different for one offender to the next, PPO or otherwise. As they rarely came across a non-problematic heroin user, the officers were unconvinced that such a population exists. Such users might exist for powder cocaine as it was seen to be a middle-class drug, 'taken at dinner parties' (Supt. Harold).

Cocaine is more associated with going out, and when you're out you want to have a good time, you'll do a quick line in the toilet and then buzz the night away. Heroin is generally...I go to a lot of crack dens and see a lot of heroin users¹⁶³. It's normally people at the bottom of society, they've got nothing left to give society, it's taken, it's right over them...the only thing they live for is that hit of heroin they get each day. (PC Hugh, RT4)

The portrayal of Class A drug users and abusers as being 'damaged goods' also meant that many officers felt some degree of sympathy for them. When officers came across an addict covered in sores and filthy, they were forced to confront the possibility that people they considered to be 'baddies' were actually in a sorry state. Despite the desire to throw away the key on many of these drug users, the damaging effects of addiction engendered a sense of sympathy amongst many officers. This sympathy did not occur for cannabis users. Cannabis users were seen as a means to an end, deserving little sympathy because what they were doing something illegal and stupid but not compelled by addiction or resulting in such damage to the individual. .

You could say someone that uses Class A drugs, that is an addict, that sort of desperation that they've got especially if you've been having dealings with them for shop lifting of whatever, and they look so ill and they've lost all their, well they haven't got family close to them, they're friends are other drug users and they just look so ill. Like, they're not in the best of health and yet you can just see that drugs are their life, that is the most important thing to them. (PC Elle, RT4)

¹⁶³ The term 'crack den' was used to describe any location used for taking drugs.

When we've seen people coming through here who are heroin and crack users, and you look at their lifestyle and the kind of thing they're in to, it's a question of which came first, their drug use or their lifestyle? Which one bounces off the other one? Whether it's because there's a massive problem in their life and they've turned to drugs, or because they've turned drugs they've then turned to crime and to other drugs. (PC Mario, RT2)

The message sent by the MPS about the differences between different drugs was also quite important in shaping the officers' impression of the problem. Though stop and search for cannabis was conducted under the same legal powers as a search for heroin, the bureaucratic nature of the CWS sent a strong message about the role of officers. By defining down the deviance of cannabis by instituting the CWS, the organization could not appear to also 'soften' its approach to Class A drugs, and the targeting of such drugs was supposed to intensify once the CWS took effect. Officers were disconnected from the treatment side of Class A arrests, and the organization condoned crackdowns on Class A drug users in order to adhere to their rhetoric about being tough on drugs. The only options available to officers encountering Class A drugs were to arrest the individual or to ignore the offence. Whereas a warning form for cannabis quietly emphasized their position as bureaucrats, the power to arrest emphasized their unique role as protectors of the community. No matter the excitement of bringing in a bag of cannabis, it was tempered by the fact there was no suspect in handcuffs as well. The power to arrest, to deprive a citizen of their liberty, was a power that officers exercised regularly but were conscious of the seriousness of a situation that an arrest symbolised.

I think Class A is different. I think that's mainly because you can't give street warnings. It's not a quick and easy detection. If someone is carrying Class A then you have to arrest them, and it's a little bit more serious. With Class A it's an arrest, then they have to be interviewed, and then the substance has to go up for analysis. (PC Eleanor, RT2)

Though current UK drug strategy points out various pathways for addicts to live drug free lives (Home Office 2010c), these often begin with addicts being arrested. The conflicted nature of the policy was felt as street-level. As mentioned above, officers recognized addiction as problem and saw some need to get addicts help. At the same time, the officers were disconnected from any treatment avenues, and as such were exposed only to the part of the process involving arrest. Policy documents may discuss the broad partnerships and treatment avenues developing to assist addicts, but that reality is far removed from the street-level encounters officers are experiencing.

6.5 Conclusion: The More Things Change, the More They Stay The Same

This chapter has covered considerable ground. It began by assessing how the criminalization thesis resonates at the policy level, but has progressed to show that street-level implementation of drugs policy is carried out, at least in Watling, by officers conflicted about their role in addressing the problem of drugs. The limitation with the analysis of this chapter clearly rests in its ability to accurately depict police practices from before the period in which was directly observed. Never the less, in exploring both the adaptive and non-adaptive responses to drugs we see that there have been substantial developments in the policy sphere, and significant changes in drugs policing statistics, indicating some changes have reached the street-level. These policy changes have affected the different units in different ways.

The CWS is a constant part of policing practice for RT officers in Watling. As I have shown, officers have found a variety of reasons to make use of the system even when they are not particularly enthused by the process. Additionally, the CWS has reshaped the pursuit and outcome of cannabis possession based encounters. Where previously officers tossed aside small amounts of cannabis if the attitude test was passed, they have almost entirely abandoned such practices within the teams I observed¹⁶⁴.

RT officers go about their work with much the same range of attitudes towards drugs, and employing the same tactics that featured in previous ethnographies that covered the subject (Manning 1980, Wallace, Roberg, and Allen 1985, Smith and Gray 1983, Collison 1995). How they can express their attitudes may be redefined, especially under the CWS, but it is largely intact. Officers regularly stop and search individuals solely to find drugs, as they have done since they were given that power. The frequency of these searches has increased, and at their core they remain a vehicle to enforce norms and assert authority. Officers still conduct raids, ignoring the need for joined-up services to participate in order to be effective (Chiu, Mansley, and Morgan 1998). Additionally, the use of DIP might be seen to be a new turn in bringing together the criminal justice system and drug treatment opportunities, but these partnerships

¹⁶⁴ I believe that the absence of such informal outcomes was not based on my presence. The officers were willing to engage in numerous actions not in line with official guidance while in my presence, and there were ample opportunities for them to dispose of some cannabis in to the gutter without anyone other than those of us at the incident knowing about it.

remain out of sight for most officers. They are obscure ideas that reside outside of the limited field of view officers have of the rest of the criminal justice system. Drug addicts still get arrested, brought in to a custody suite, and put in a cell. The only change is that now they have a quick swab of their saliva along the way. For all intents and purposes for a street-level officer, it was ever thus.

Identifying where drugs policy has come in to the play for SNTs is quite easily spotted, for without the Community Policing that has fuelled the rise in partnership, responsabilization ethos, and produced a focus on reducing the fear of crime, these teams would not even exist. Drug distribution being a signal crime (Innes and Fielding 2002), SNTs provide opportunity to calm those community concerns and become a visible part of the united front against such problems. Beyond their birth as agents of implementing adaptive policies, the SNTs serve another vital role, this time for non-adaptive policy. The SNTs are harnessed to gather local intelligence and use that information to launch drug raids (MPS 2007a). It is nothing new to conduct drug raids (Collison 1995), but having a team dedicated to doing so based on locally gathered intelligence, and community identified concern is a direct result of the implementation of community policing ideas based on adaptive policy. However, I said that the drug raids are part of non-adaptive responses. Indeed, while the spur to conduct the raids arises from community partnerships enabling the flow of intelligence, the raids are ultimately designed to assert the state's ability to protect the citizenry and impede drug distribution.

Let us go back to PC Hugh's own words in the previous chapter. He cites that with intelligence from the community he was able to conduct operations, and that in seeing him conduct those operations the community felt protected and more willing to provide further intelligence to his unit. This is exactly what the MPS and central Government hoped would happen with the deployment of the SNTs (Home Office 2004a, 2005c, Tuffin, Morris, and Poole 2006, Home Office 2007d, 2007b). In this limited regard, we can consider their work a success, and also see how large scale policy goals make their way to the street-level. When combined with Shiner's information regarding the increased use of penal sanctions for drug crimes (Shiner 2013), we can see that SNTs are a manifestation of both adaptive and non-adaptive roles.

Interestingly, while the action PC Saul takes outside of The Bandulu is clearly an aspect of adaptive practice, his action reinforces policing's authority to prevent criminal activity; an idea that is at the heart of sovereign state strategies. The power he can command as a representative of the state's prohibition of drugs is retained, even if the method of expressing it has changed. Even in inaction, the officer projects his authorization to use coercive force, something that sets him apart from any other part of the criminal justice system, or society at large (Bittner 1975). This aligns with Garland's views that while the same criminal justice infrastructure remains embedded in society, the deployment of its powers has changed (2001, pg. 168). Attempting to try and arrest all those potential criminals that looked at the IRV would have been impossible and only served to highlight the inadequacy of police to control drugs. It is in this situation, perhaps even more than in relation to cannabis warning forms, that we can see how adaptive strategies serve to retain some sense of state control in an otherwise uncontrollable scenario.

What we see when looking at these two types of units is that adaptive and non-adaptive anti-drugs efforts are intertwined, each allowing the other to exist and thrive. Garland described the new structure of the criminal justice system as being schizoid (2001, pg. 110), but when examining drugs policing at the street-level, adaptive and non-adaptive developments are also symbiotic. Each is a façade facing away from the other, its internal trusses and beams supporting the other, like two people using each other's weight as they sit back-to-back.

To maintain its authority, the neo-liberal state needs to promise protection, and so must take a non-adaptive stance when publicly addressing the problem of drugs. From this perspective we can see that criminalization of British drugs policy is just another aspect of neo-liberal search for security in the face of uncertainty. Neo-liberalism promises security to the citizenry, but to do that it must criminalize and punish to show it has control (Ericson 2007). This is why we see things like Operation Hawk, where thousands of officers are rallied to engage in large operations that bring forth highly visible 'acting out'. But the state is incapable of maintaining such efforts continuously, and so it must also develop adaptive responses to drugs. This gives room for the less heroic stance necessary to free up resources to address other areas of securitization that would be undermanned if the state's full weight and penal sanctions were constantly

applied to drugs alone. This brings about the partnerships and responsabilization that are at the heart of adaptive strategies. By bringing in DIP and the CWS, the myth of being able to stop drugs is upheld through their regularly reported statistics, supporting the punitive rhetoric. The State says, ‘we are acting against drugs, and here are the numbers to prove it!’ Never mind the figures pertaining to drugs have inadvertently come largely from the CWS, an adaptive strategy designed to reduce the time and energy spent pursuing such drugs deemed to be less harmful to communities than other social or criminal activities. The punitive rhetoric and non-adaptive policies supports the ability for administrative actors to engage in activities below the radar that actually fit their needs as practitioners.

From this symbiotic framework we can begin to see how some new policies filter down, and yet many things remain the same at the street-level. The CWS was able to affect policy because it supported the public image of maintaining control over drugs with the practicalities of quick enforcement for officers on the street. Trying to prosecute all cannabis users would be futile, but writing them warnings is efficient and still asserts control. DIP puts the responsibility for sobriety in the hands of the addicts and drug treatment workers, while reinforcing the idea that crime problems are the result of drug addicts. SNTs ‘take down doors’ like has been done for decades, but do so at the apparent behest of the local community. Such enforcement and constant patrolling of a neighbourhood would perhaps have a very different reaction from the community if it were proposed as an occupying force.

Two important questions arise from this analysis. How do you project the success of both adaptive and non-adaptive efforts at the same time, and how do you get officers on board? Both adaptive and non-adaptive efforts need to show they are generating results or politicians will face a backlash from the community (Matravers and Maruna 2004). Here the drug user has found themselves as both a target for policing’s need to police, and a public’s need to find blame. They meet the needs of both groups, and have the added bonus of giving the politicians someone with whom they can espouse a desire to help in to recovery instead of prison. In order to show the state can effectively control, you need to show that you are engaging. Just like an officer who does not witness what happens to an addict after DIP testing, a large amount of public’s perception is based on what they see being done and what they are told is being done

(Hohl, Bradford, and Stanko 2010), and the practicalities of implementing drugs policing is of less concern to them.

To get officers on board, you need to make the engagement fit their professional culture, individual identity, and need for efficiency of operation in the field. The CWS, while adaptive in nature, allows officers to express their 'harm' and 'normative order' rationales through the use of stop and search. While larger shifts in the criminal justice system continue to emphasise their role as street-level bureaucrats, the pursuit of drugs abates that striking reality for a time. Even the SNT officers committed to community partnership resort to non-adaptive drug raids when presented with intelligence from the community.

Two important questions arise from the above discussion. Firstly, how do you ensure that officers with a heterogeneous opinion on drugs actually adhere to the new anti-drugs policies taking place? I will suggest in the next chapter that, as the old saying goes, 'what gets measured gets done' (Bevan and Hood 2006). Secondly, how do you get the figures to show you're standing strong in the face of drugs without inundating the criminal justice system? The answer is that you need to make it easy for officers to look tough.

Chapter 7- A Profitable Venture for All: Performance Management in Policing

...performance management is a set of discourses and practices that generate [performance indicators] within a stream of other spectacular and mundane signs. The constructions we make and the meanings we grasp in order to move forward are our own: a foundationalist alternative is not possible. From a postmodern perspective, [performance indicators] are never going to be more than "hocus-pocus," and the role of researchers should not be to speak as if they can be "grounded" but to show how tenuous such claims are. (Dorn 2000, pg. 311-312)

In this chapter I will lay out the final piece of my analysis, interpreting why we have witnessed the developments in street-level policing seen throughout this thesis and borne out in official statistics showing an increase in recorded drug offences. I will argue that the increased presence of New Public Managerialism, injected in to the mix of adaptive policies and non-adaptive rhetoric, has created a situation whereby police officers are largely disconnected from the organizational goals and policy directives. This is often referred to as an organization being ‘loosely coupled’ and I will explore that particular condition further in this chapter.

Before addressing the evidence to support my argument I will briefly discuss issues related to problems in the establishment of NPM, to support those ideas already discussed in Chapter Two. Many of the changes in policing came together at around the same time, pushing against each other, creating a loosely coupled officer corps. In loose coupling, “...agents are disconnected from organizational goals” (Knight 2008, pg. 4), and I will explore what this looks like in policing. From this I will show how drugs policing, and cannabis in particular, were in the right position to fulfil the needs of operational officers to meet the various pressures they faced.

The Farmingham police station is located on the corner of the high street and Lombard Road. About 350 metres up Lombard Road, in the heart of Blackburn Ward, is a row of rundown local shops, including a dry cleaner, two cafes, a pound shop, and a social club. While there is a fair amount of foot traffic passing in front of the shops, only the social club and Johnny’s café seem to have customers. The social club is frequented by a regular crowd of older Turkish men, and if you walk past the open door you can see them sitting at card tables, smoking, playing cards, and watching football. The café, by

contrast, does not have a regular clientele. Instead, it seems to attract all manner of people - young and old, male and female, white and black, a steady stream of people come in and out of the café. There are two notable differences between Johnny's café and most other cafes in London: no one seems to stay more than a minute or two at Johnny's, and no one ever exits the shop with a sandwich or cup of tea in their hand. They go in, re-emerge quickly with no outwardly visible food products, and leave the area. Or at least they try to leave the area.

Sitting about 70 metres down the road from the café, the 1-1 car from RT2 is parked amongst the local cars. It is early evening, and with people returning from work we were lucky to find a parking spot with a good sight line to the café. It only takes a few minutes before we have our first target. A man parks his work-van about 40 metres the other side of the café from us, gets out, goes in to the café, and comes back less than a minute later. He starts up the van and drives past us before turning towards the high street.

PC Michael and PC Edward have been excited since they first saw the man park his van. PC Michael starts the 1-1 car and makes an immediate U-turn as he pulls away from the curb, but already we've lost sight of the van and so he pushes the accelerator hard. PC Edward starts writing down the number plate along with the time and location in his notebook. We catch up to the van just as it begins to turn on to the high street, and PC Michael turns on the lights and siren. The officers ask the man to leave the vehicle and explain that they believe he is in possession of drugs based on his visiting a known drug hot-spot. They search him, but come up empty. The man's 14 year old son sits in the passenger seat of the van watching PC Edward search through all the nooks and crannies where one could hide a bag of cannabis inside the front of the van. PC Michael turns to the man, "C'mon mate, I know you've just bought drugs, so just tell us where it is and we won't have to tear apart the van. You probably wanna get home to the misses...that'll happen soon as you show us where it is." As the officers come up empty handed, the man shows signs of becoming increasingly frustrated at the officers. He is shaking his head and muttering as he crosses, uncrosses, and re-crosses his arms repeatedly.

Finally, PC Edward makes the man's son get out of the van, and finds the bag of cannabis wedged in to the seat where the boy had been sitting. Later, after the incident was concluded, the officers told me why finding cannabis on the son was problematic. If the man had the cannabis on him it would have resulted in a cannabis warning. If the boy is the one in possession of the cannabis, they would have to arrest him, as the guidelines state that those under 18 are not eligible for a cannabis Warning. This is problematic for two reasons. Firstly, it would take them several hours of paperwork to do this, depriving the whole team of the 1-1 car's valuable ability to enter an area undetected¹⁶⁵. Secondly, they were concerned the father would 'kick off' if they tried to arrest the son. That would require even more paperwork and potential injury.

PC Michael begins to tell the father how his son could be facing arrest, but he is willing to resolve the situation with a warning if the man will admit the drugs are his. PC Edward stands to the side, boxing the man in between the officers and a fence, thumbs hooked in to the arm-holes of his Met-vest while nodding in agreement with PC Michael. The man begins to shout at the officers, "You lot are just being rude! Why are you coming after me? I work, I'm not hurting anyone here. Why you gotta go after my son? Leave my son alone!" PC Michael reiterates that they do not have to go after the son if the father will agree that it is his cannabis. The man agrees. He tells officers that he has been given a warning once before and is willing to get another if it protects his son. Within a few minutes the cannabis warning form has been completed and we are heading back to the café to see if we can bust another person.

As the reader has probably ascertained, Johnny's café sells cannabis. Every officer in Watling knows this. That is why RT2 starts nearly every shift by having the 1-1 car park down the road at one of several points where they can observe people coming and going in to the café. Officers reported that their goal was not to deter visits to the location, but rather to obtain sanctioned detections via the CWS. During my time with RT2, I observed a near 100 per cent hit rate for searches of people coming out of the café. "I sit here because that's the job of the 1-1 car. We get some detections, and the

¹⁶⁵ The anonymityability of the unmarked 1-1 car to go undetected is extremely useful when searching for suspects after an incident, as it allows the police to enter an area search without alerting people to giving away their presence. . More importantly, as officers are unarmed, the 1-1 car is the first to respond to firearms calls because they can assess the situation and guide in other units that would otherwise be open targets to a gunman.

Gov¹⁶⁶ is happy. Get'm early, and then we can move on to real policing" (PC Michael, RT2). I sat outside Johnny's café with three different pairs of officers over the course of fieldwork, and each said almost the same thing: they were highly encouraged by their managers to apprehend cannabis users for the specific purpose of issuing cannabis Warning Forms to individuals leaving the café. This was done, according to the officers I worked with, with the explicit intention to make the team's performance appear better. Once officers had caught one or two individuals with cannabis, or calls requiring the 1-1 came in, they could abandon their observation of the café. But all good things must come to an end, and later in this chapter I will discuss the demise of this golden goose.

Because of the presence of the 'cannabis café' Blackburn ward registered six times as many drugs possession charges per month compared with the average across all the other wards of Watling. Compared to neighbouring wards it had more than twice as many drug possession offences¹⁶⁷. This 'Golden Triangle' around the café had significantly higher drug offence rates than other areas of the borough, and together they significantly affected the overall rate of drugs possession offences in the borough. Officers reported that the practice of sitting outside the cafe in an unmarked car had been going on for several years, but that officers had known about and been targeting people around the café since 2005. PC Mario reported that during a particularly fruitful shift he had managed to issue 14 cannabis Warnings while sitting outside the café.

¹⁶⁶ A male officer with the rank of Inspector, in this case an Inspector in charge of a Response Team. A female officer in charge of a Response Team is referred to as Ma'am.

¹⁶⁷ The high levels of drug possession offences in the neighbouring wards may be due to the fact that the café resides on a stretch of Lombard road that essentially forms an isthmus between the two major sections of Blackburn ward. As such, if someone emerges from the café and goes in either of two cardinal directions they will be within the next ward in less than 100 metres. This means that some people are marked as having been caught in an adjacent ward, though they came from the café in Blackburn ward.

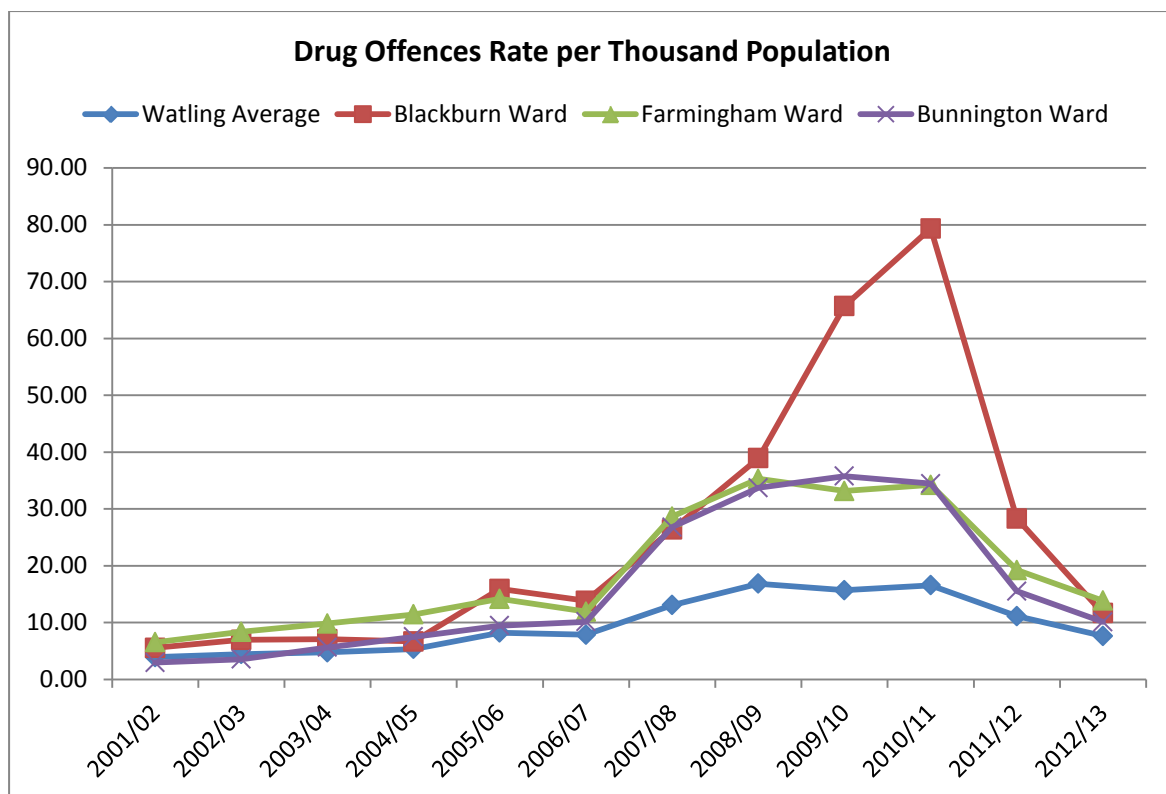


Figure 14: Drug offences per thousand population in and around Blackburn ward (MPS 2013a)

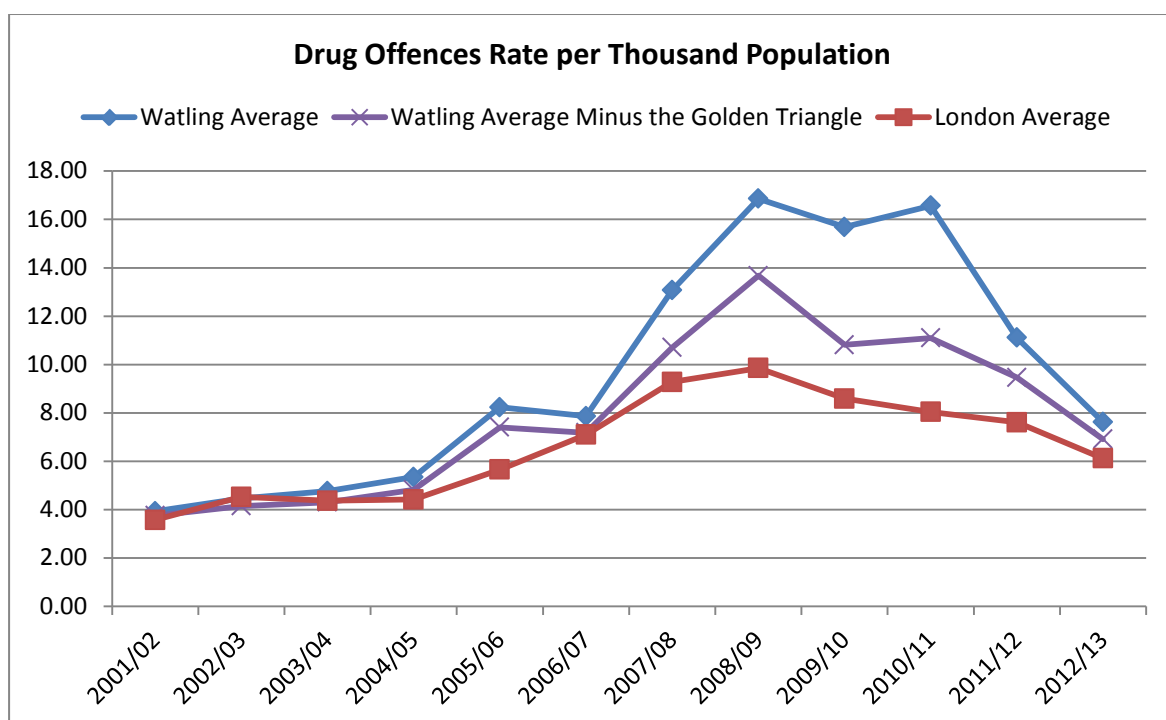


Figure 15: Watling drug offence rates compared to London average (MPS 2013a)

Policing has had to embrace New Public Managerialism as part of the adaptive strategies created as government retreated from the 'war on drugs' mentality that had guided much previous policy (Dorn and South 1990). The incorporation of NPM came on top of a multitude of changes that had been eroding the core ideas of the role of police since the 1980's. Adaptive policies, community work, and partnership, all destabilized the organization by formally emphasising a type of policing that required officers who could build partnerships, not just subdue suspects.

My analysis shows that because of NPM, officers found themselves in a position of having to meet statistical requirements to validate their effectiveness while feeling the effects of this destabilisation, and they responded to this perverse incentive structure by distorting one aspect of their policing practice (Sergeant 2008). Pursuing cannabis warnings in response to performance management pressures took an adaptive strategy designed to shift police focus on to more harmful drugs, and provided a non-adaptive opportunity for officers to reassert what they felt were core elements of their professional identity, even if cannabis had not previously held such stature. Officers were not forced to pursue cannabis, but nor were they free to ignore its potential as a quick solution their professional and emotional needs. The perverse incentive structure of the performance management culture and the availability of issuing a warning for cannabis pushed officers to go for the 'easy pickings'.

Officers were pulled away from the community focused approach the organization sought to take by having to perform to output measures that were unaligned with the new community focus. Nowhere in the MPS policy documents, nor those of the Home Office will we find reference to a concerted push to target low-level cannabis possession. Both officers and the MPS management agree that cannabis should not be a priority; however the outcome based performance targets created an opportunity to stabilize both their professional identity and support their professional development in addition to meeting the performance target. Bevan and Hood (2006) have shown how incentives to hit targets shapes the response of public bodies as they seek to avoid embarrassment and punitive sanctions. Garland describes the incorporation of incentive structures in the criminal justice system as part of a transition from 'social' to 'economic styles of reasoning, that potentially, " skew practice to fit performance

indicators, limit the discretion of field staff, and diminish an agency's real effectiveness in order to maximize the practices that are most easily measurable." (Garland 2001, pg. 189) My argument goes a step farther, and highlights how there are ancillary reasons why it benefits front-line staff to hit those targets. Yes, they are encouraged to hit the targets by unit commanders, but they also receive a benefit as individual professionals.

7.1 Problems of New Public Managerialism in Policing

The introduction of NPM did not revolutionize the policing landscape, clearing away the remnants of old ways in the flood of new regulations. Rather, as I have shown throughout this research, old remnants remain, and the intersection of old and new can seem conflicted. This conflict can also be seen in performance management efforts which employ very different indicators. The deployment of SNTs and the introduction of the CWS each reinforced a focus on a particular type of performance assessment. The SNTs were to be judged on the confidence-based service outcomes, and RT officers were to continue to be measured on their outputs in the form of detections and arrests (Herrington and Millie 2006). In this way we again see evidence of community policing being used as a, 'strategic buffering' (Zhao, Lovrich, and Robinson 2001), protecting core functions and putting on a positive face for government while most officers continued to be assessed on the basis of traditional, non-adaptive, crime-focused outcomes. These types of measurement schemes engender a culture of performance, not a culture focused on responsiveness to the community (Fitzgerald et al. 2002). NPM may put pressure on officers to abandon the valuable but unmeasurable aspects of community policing (Mackenzie and Hamilton-Smith 2011).

This highlights an additional problem that can arise in performance management efforts. The focus on external crime reduction targets can harm the internal leadership of the organisation. Instead of providing leadership to officers in the field, senior officers focus on managing the efforts to reach targets. Shilston has pointed out that many of the quantitative measures implemented by New Labour failed to capture the micro level detail that would let policy makers actually learn from the measures they put in place (2008).

Within a performance management framework the primary characteristic is seen to be the commitment not to an organisational vision but to conformity in both running and delivering services while also aiming to achieve externally set targets. The primary emphasis here is directed to the effective management of targets rather than on qualities of leadership which have become within this context almost entirely redundant. (Loveday 2008, pg. 122)

The problem of synecdoche, the taking of one measured part of an organization to represent the unmeasured elements, can increase the problems engendered by a focus on figures and not the larger organisational vision (Bevan and Hood 2006, Manning 1979). If what are being measured, in this case sanctioned detections, are an inaccurate measurement of performance, then officers can obtain the requested detections while providing a poor service. Even worse, the possibility of gaming the statistics (Bevan and Hood 2006) can occur, whereby efforts are made to shape the appearance of statistics to fit with the PIs. This is especially problematic in the case of 'target' based performance approaches (Hood 2007). Bevan and Hood (2006) identify three types of gaming that can occur. In 'ratcheting' the future targets are based on the ability to hit current targets, and so organisations are incentivised to only meet their current targets even if they are capable of exceeding them. In 'threshold gaming' units operating below the target must raise themselves to the standard, but high performing units are perversely incentivised to let their performance levels fall to the standard. The final type of gaming, 'output distortions', is the most visible form in Watling street-level policing. In this type of gaming, targets are achieved, but the positive results come at the expense of other areas of practice not measured by the set of PIs. In the case of Watling, 'target gaming' meant that performance targets for detections were achieved through the use of cannabis warnings, but this potentially pulled focus away from more harmful criminal activity, and most certainly impacted the relationship with the community.

Without unity in the direction that performance frameworks were pulling officers, the organization created a situation in which there was no uniting direction. Bratton (2009) believes that performance management regimes can unify the organization towards a shared understanding of purpose, but in Watling at least, the fragmented nature of the different performance management regimes seemed to engender disunity between SNTs and RTs.

7.2 Problems of Loose Coupling

Loose coupling originates in organizational theory, and describes situations where the stated goals and objectives of an organization are not perceived to be aligned with the daily activities of the organization (Meyer and Rowan 1977). Through the implementation of performance indicators that do not align with the reality of what officers experience during their shifts, visible distance is created between the street-level officers and the police organization. This misalignment can be extremely deleterious (Legrand 2003). As the organization is asked to regularly reshape its priorities (and corresponding performance indicators) based on ideological and political expectations, the structure of the organisation will loosen in order to allow agents to maintain a role as they see fit.

In response to these multiple, vague, and often conflicting external demands, government bureaucracies, like the police, assign more importance to agreed upon procedures than uncertain outcomes, exist as loosely coupled organizational systems, and are characterized by decision making practices that tend to be more ceremonial than substantive. (Willis, Mastrofski, and Weisburd 2007, pg. 180)

Officers working in a loosely coupled environment are able to distance themselves from the organization and create opportunities to nullify policy through their adherence to street-level practices that remain in-line with the law and their own perception of the role of policing (Crank 2010). "...loose coupling themes serve to decouple line activity from organizational goals and policies when they are perceived by officer to obstruct or undermine the ability of the police to do their work" (Crank 2010, pg. 6).

Loose coupling recognises that there is a gap between formal structures and work practices. Formal rules are often broken, decisions are often unimplemented, or if implemented have unintended consequences. Performance systems are subverted or are too ambiguous to provide much guidance. Attempts to control and co-ordinate activities in organisations leads to conflicts and loss of legitimacy. (Knight 2008, pg. 5)

Viewed from a different perspective, this might be referred to as police discretion. However there is a difference between an officer deciding when and how to create a formal response to (illegal activity) they observe, and the ideas of loose coupling that highlight the disconnected and contradictory nature of daily activities and organisational direction. Loose coupling does not argue that officers are using professional judgement to subvert formal rules, but rather that they are doing so in reaction to the actions of the organisation. Officers were emotionally invested in at least some of the stated aims of the organisation, but were disoriented by the contradictory nature of what they were being asked to do in the different teams, frustrated by the focus on performance management, and were distanced from what they and the organisation considered to be priorities. This was because of the perverse incentive structure that has been *inadvertently* created by the CWS and NPM, which encourages officers to game the system by going for easy pickings. Loose coupling gives officers the space to purposefully stand still amidst the ever flowing changes in policing policy due to the gaps created between officers and the official direction of the organisation. Without transitioning officer culture or enjoining all units to a common performance management framework, officers can pick and choose how they interact with organisational priorities based on what suits their style.

RT officers have no connection to the confidence-based statistics that guide SNT activities, nor do they have much connection with the myriad of internal statistics produced by the MPS. During parade an Inspector may announce how the team ranked in the monthly figures, and may even plead for them to accomplish certain goals, but once out on the streets they are largely left to their own devices.

[I'm told to] get as many as you can. Cannabis detection makes prizes at the end of the day; it's all to do with performance figures again. I don't think the police should be judged on performance like a business, because I don't think the police is a business, it's a force. It's not a force, it's a service in the sense that we are there to deal with the needs of the public, and I understand that, but to manage teams on how many cannabis detections they get; I don't think it's right. (PC Hugh, RT4)

During parade I noticed that crime hotspots were highlighted on a map of the borough, and officers were advised to pay attention to those areas. I knew that Blackburn SNT had recently put robberies as a Ward Panel priority. Though the robberies in that ward

were shown on the map, the fact that it had been listed as a community priority did not accompany the little green triangles that marked the location of each robbery. For the RT officers it was about stopping crime, not about how the community perceived those crimes.

It's the politics of it. The amount of resources that are wasted, on us chasing these ridiculous figures, it breeds people like Insp Bradley. Now he is completely figures whipped! It's all that fucking matters to him, detections and arrests. Well, you know, is it working? I don't think it is. I don't think it is at all. We're just keeping the lid on things [on the street]. (PC George, RT4)

Officers in Watling felt even more disconnected from the organization when they felt proud of the work they had done but felt underappreciated for that work because it did not fit neatly in to a performance indicator. As I discussed previously, PC Jenny came back from dealing with a rape and received little recognition of her work while another officer who brought in two joints was congratulated by the Sergeant. With no arrest in hand, and plenty of evidence to tag and place in evidence bags, PC Jenny was occupied with the paperwork for some time after her return and was largely left alone by the team. She did not say anything at the time, but in her interview only a few weeks previously:

I just think it's a bit stupid really, it's the figures orientated policing isn't it really. The end of the day, if you can get a tiny piece of cannabis off somebody it equates to a detection, whereas 12 hours dealing with a rape is just 12 hours spent not doing anything that's going to get you a figure. (PC Jenny, RT4)

7.3 Just Say Yes to Drugs... Policing

How, then, are performance management regimes driving officers to engage in a policing activity for which they apparently have limited interest?

...we're a response team but we get targets [for] arrest and detections, whereas our objective should be to answer the calls. That should be the objective, and the only one, [and] anything else that you get as a result of that should be a bonus. The problem is because of [targets] we then get tied up with so much stuff that we don't need to be doing because people -not on this team but on other teams- go, 'we'll just arrest everyone!' because it's easier, we get a figure for it. (Sgt Moses RT4)

I don't put any pressure on my officers to get detections, although they may feel that there is pressure, from up high they have a...they have to get two arrests and one detection a month, which works out to twelve detections and twenty four arrests a year. So there is that pressure in some ways; if it's not achieved then they're not put against the wall and shot. (Sgt Harry, RT4)

It's because it's easy pickings and we go back to this measuring [detections]. At the end of the day if you drive past and you see someone walking out of [the café], nine out of ten times they've got drugs on them so you're going to stop them, you're going to get a positive stop, you're going to find some drugs on them...it's not rocket science you know, and at the same time that's what you want to be a police officer for; to fight crime. It doesn't matter how upstairs class it [is]. And see the importance of it for a police officer, it could be something very minor, but it's a crime. (Sgt Richard, Blackburn SNT)

Though policy documents (Home Office 2010c, 2007a) may measure success in combatting drugs through measuring admission to drug treatment programs or international trafficking organisations disrupted, these are not relevant to the experiences of officers on the street. At the street-level, outputs matter. Whether part of the CWS or the number of crack houses closed down, selected output based performance indicators are seen by unit commanders and the SLT to represent how well an officer performs or how well their team is performing. Community Damage Limitation efforts (Lee and South 2008) may improve the outcomes of policing efforts by engaging with the issues directly affecting local communities, but those efforts do not translate to the local PC trying for a promotion to Sergeant. In the eyes of many officers, the figures give ammunition to the Government to highlight successes in targeting drugs.

From above it's what they want, because on paper [cannabis warnings are] classed as a drug related offence with a clear up at the end of it. So yet again it's the Home Office counting those guidelines that they can go and say at the end of the year, 'well we have 10,000 drug related offences and we had 9,800 of them were cleared up'. But it's just a guy on the street with a little bit of cannabis, a joint. It's not 10,000 dealers, it's not the big end of the scale, so that's where the annoyance lies. (Sgt Moses, RT4)

A Home Office press release stated the following in October 2010:

Statistics out today show 224,080 drug seizures were made in England and Wales by the police and the UK Border Agency last year as part of their work protecting communities from the harm of drugs. While this figure is a seven per cent fall on the previous year when 241,473 seizures were made, they also reveal intelligence led enforcement has led to a rise in the quantities seized by police forces of the most dangerous drugs, including cocaine, crack and heroin¹⁶⁸. (Home Office 2010b, pg. 1)

We know that in recent years about 65% of cannabis seizures are for possession level offences¹⁶⁹, so given the 168,547 herbal and resin cannabis seizures¹⁷⁰, I calculated that 49 per cent of all drug seizures in 2009/10 involved small amounts of cannabis (Mulchandani, Hand, and Panesar 2010). The chart below provides a representation of the impact on drug seizure statistics that cannabis possession offences have.

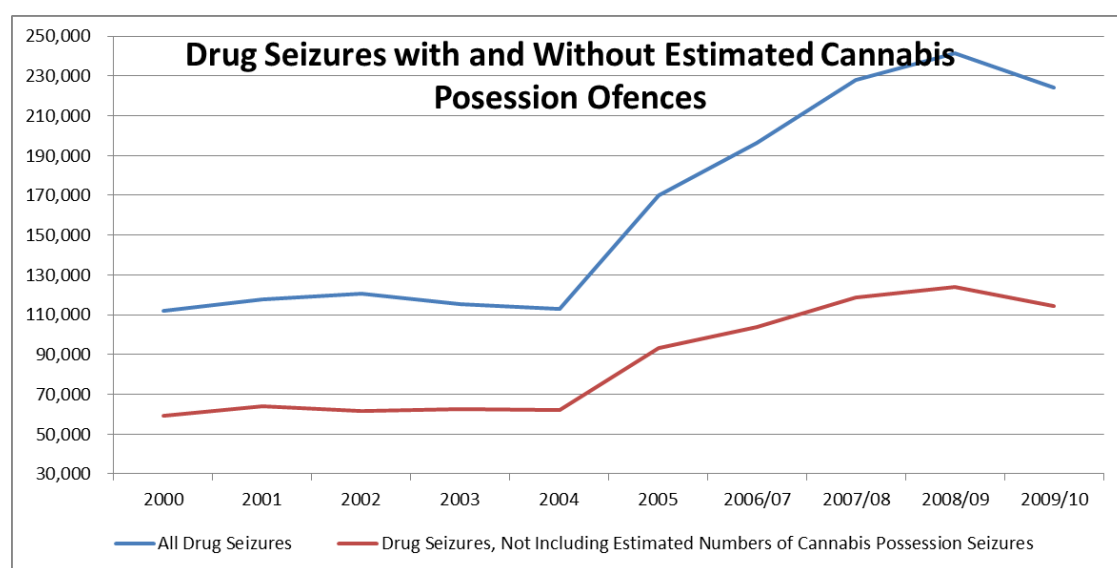


Figure 16: Drug seizures, with and without cannabis possession offences, England and Wales

That the increase in recorded cannabis and other drug offences is largely a function of performance management initiatives, and not an increase in drug usage rates, and has been noted elsewhere.

¹⁶⁸ It should be noted that 78 per cent of those drug seizures involved cannabis, while only 18 per cent of the seizures involved Class A drugs.

¹⁶⁹ See Chapter 2

¹⁷⁰ Seizures of cannabis plants are excluded from this figure as it is unlikely that individuals found with plants would be charged with simple possession offences.

The use of out of court disposals such as cautions, cannabis warnings or Penalty Notices for Disorder (PNDs) increased rapidly for both adults and youths during the mid-2000s then reduced in 2007/08. These changes coincided with the introduction of the Offences Brought to Justice (OBTJ) target in 2002 and its subsequent replacement in 2008 with a revised target designed to focus effort on bringing more serious offences to justice. This target has now been removed. (Ministry of Justice 2010b, pg. 7)

The Ministry of Justice (2010a) has pointed out that it was not only drug related activities that saw an increase in their frequency during this period. A large increase in all out of court disposals took place, coinciding with the Public Service Agreements undertaken by New Labour, and decreasing upon the removal of the targets associated with those PSAs. This increase in out of court disposals highlights the adaptive changes occurring in the criminal justice system.

These outcome based measures are used to demonstrate activity and bolster police legitimacy. At a Police Community Consultative Group meeting one night I sat in the back row of a the community centre and listened to Watling's borough commander deliver his report. He mentioned community satisfaction rates, and covered the improvements in response times and decreases in burglaries, but his presentation was not focused on those items. Rather, the overriding message was that the police were taking action, conducting operations, and actively pursuing criminals. This was evident because they continued to arrest and process large numbers of offenders. The message was well received, as was the commander, and those in attendance seemed satisfied with the overall picture of the borough. Even at community meetings, and in a time when the government had officially moved beyond the measurement of outputs, the borough commander used these indicators to show that his officers were targeting criminal behaviour, rather than demonstrating the impact that this was having on the lives of those to whom he was speaking.

Street-level officers are aware of the larger organizational and political transformations being undertaken, but they are only minimally involved in shepherding those developments.

7.3.1 *An Opportunity to Stand Firm*

Amidst all the policy changes taking place in policing, officers have been disconnected from the larger organizational goals by the regular redrafting of performance management standards in the last decade. Instead of being pulled in new directions each time the political wind shifts, they have planted their feet. With the advent of the CWS and a renewed push for output based measures of success, officers have identified that drugs and cannabis in particular allow them to fulfil the expectations of their managers enough to free them from adherence to larger restructuring of the organisation. Targeting cannabis fits within the mission oriented nature of the classic police culture, and so meeting the performance measurements on the back of low level cannabis busts does not impinge on the sense of self or sense of mission that officers are seeking to maintain. At the same time, because their targets are being met, they can pursue aspects of policing that matter more to them. “I’m just not interested in the whole cannabis thing as some others are. I don’t like cannabis any, so it’s no bother to do. Take’s a bit of pressure off from the Gov, then I can go do my thing, police, police things that matter” (PC Matt, RT2).

This focus on low level cannabis detections is not evident in any of the national level drugs policy materials, nor the MPS drug strategy and represents a practical response by officers to meet their professional needs. As Manning said:

Even when policy is set, articulated, and flows down the line to agents, it rarely actually constrains them, and they continue to act in line with their own perceptions of the practical problems of drug enforcement. The central problem of drug policing, from the agent’s perspective, is not moral but distinctively practical. The aim is to define the work in ways that will allow the occupational members involved to manage it, to make reasonable decisions, control it, parcel it out into the meaningful, solvable, and understandable units and episodes, and make this accomplishment somewhat satisfying day after day. (Manning 1980, pg. 16-17)

Officers have always had to make policy work in order to achieve their own aims as well as the institution’s (Lipsky 1980). The current iteration of performance management techniques has generated new and specific avenues through which the officer is able to meet those needs, irrespective of the larger changes in the organization and the role of police officers.

If unit commanders simply asked officers to go get more cannabis, this by itself would not engender the response we have seen in statistical data on drug seizures. Cannabis lacked legitimacy as ‘real policing’ before the advent of the CWS, and the CWS was an effort to further deprioritise the issue of cannabis amongst police officers (May et al. 2007). Additionally, we can view the CWS as part of the wave of adaptive changes brought in to policing that included the organisational refocusing on community policing. However, the confluence of a destabilised role for police officers, pressure to hit performance targets, and the ease of securing detections through a cannabis warning changed the role of low-level drugs policing. With the introduction of the CWS the status of cannabis was raised as officers constructed a modified understanding of the place of cannabis in policing to support the new focus on finding the drug. Officers in Watling developed neutralisation techniques to inwardly confirm why they are engaged in such practices, and discussions about gateway theory, drugs’ connection to crime, and the psychosis inducing effects of cannabis are brought up regularly to defend the CWS¹⁷¹. What was an adaptive effort by any normal measure (as seen in its use of summary judgement and the defining down of deviance) was reconstructed as a tool to promote a bygone idea of policing. With the CWS, officers in Watling were able to stand firm in the face of changes.

Where officers might previously have put cannabis under their boot, their discretion to do so remained, but they had no reason to engage in that behaviour when a reward awaits them for only minimal additional effort.

¹⁷¹ See the previous chapter.

...whereas before you might have said, 'it's a small amount, what are you doing you stupid', they passed the attitude test, you have discretion, is it worth bringing them in? ...Whereas now you have these forms, I can just fill this form in and I've got a result for it, and we are more result driven than we were when I started you know. There's all these indicators, performance management, it's broken down into spread sheets. It wasn't like that when I first started... if you didn't have two arrests a month you'd just get a letter in your tray from your inspector you know, when you could walk out and nick two beggars in a day where I started off... you wasn't measured like you are now. Everything's broken down into stops, your percentage rate of success in stops, how many tickets you issue, you know everything, you're micro-managed on a massive scale now so when these things change definitely more people got issued tickets when they probably would never have been issued before. (Sgt Richard, Blackburn SNT)

7.3.2 *Rewarded for Detections*

Officers not only find that going for cannabis provides them with an opportunity engage in policing activity that will keep management content, and their professional self-identity fulfilled, they are also actively rewarded for obtaining arrests and detections. The primary way this is done is to award training courses based on who is producing the figures the Sergeants and Inspectors are asking for.

[Detections] keeps the Sergeants off your back... everyone has their own reasons for getting targets. When you're on a response team and you're getting to that stage where you want to do a driving course -driving courses are like the big thing on response team- once you get that you've kind of like made it, so the build up to that you are desperately trying to get your figures to get the driving course. I was in a position where I didn't feel like I was going out and desperately trying to grab everyone I could, but at the same time I was lucky enough to be in a position where you know, on the bit on the lead up to the course I just had good postings and arrested quite a few people, so it just added weight to it. But it does seem to be quite a big thing; if you've got your figures you will get a driving course. So you could be the worst officer in the world but out getting arrests because they're handed to you on a plate, and you will get a driving course. (PC Neville, RT4)

I feel the pressure sometimes because if you want to go anywhere in your career in this job you've got to sort of say 'I've got this amount of detections and I've been to this many serious incidents that I've run'. So it's like you're trying to prove yourself, and it's the only way that you'll be considered for courses. (PC Elle, RT4)

They want us to get figures. The Gov does... He'd rather have two detections for cannabis than for us to have brought someone in and dealt

with it ourselves. You know the Gov. He's detection crazy. I mean, you were in the briefing this morning. He wants detections, detections, detections! It's seen as a sign of performance for him. It basically comes down to the fact that we do things because... I would rather spend all day stopping cars, but when it came to reviews and courses I would get fuck all. If I took five cannabis spliffs off the street a day, I'd be the fucking Gov's golden boy. I'd get whatever [training] course I wanted, which is ridiculous, but you have to do what they want, to an extent. (PC Edmund, RT4)

The training courses are important to officers because they allow for them engage in new and exciting areas of policing while also progressing in their career¹⁷². The basic driving course allows officers to drive a car with no siren, and this is followed by the IRV driving course, and eventually an RT driving course. Beyond that there are courses for every specialization in the MPS, and you need to accrue them in order to build a portfolio if you ever want to go for promotion or work on anything other than an RT.

PC Dominic had attended many courses in his five years at the MPS, and was preparing for his upcoming move to an OSU when I interviewed him. Fellow PCs described him as a good officer because of his ability to handle difficult calls, work as a team player, and his ability to find hidden drugs. The Gov and Sergeants on team liked him for those reasons, but also because he brought in lots of arrests and generated his share of detections. As mentioned in Chapter Four, he was dubbed 'Super Cop' by his colleagues. PC Dominic was looking forward to his move to OSU, but when we spoke he described the move as being about getting more action, not necessarily long-term career progression. He mostly like advanced training because they provided him with interesting experiences he wouldn't otherwise have.

Ye [I'm a] response driver. I've done the public order training, cycle trained, enforcer training so you can hit a door down...they try and make it scientific and you, force equals mass times acceleration, so it's like being at a science lesson or something but...ye, it's good fun though. (PC Dominic, RT4)

¹⁷² In the MPS, training opportunities can be used to develop new skill sets, but do not necessarily mean that an officer is looking to move away from RT or SNT work, or advance in rank.

Even for officers not seeking a transfer to new opportunities within the MPS, the need for detections helped to avoid being transferred to a unit they were not interested in working in. 'Good' police officers are able to show their unit commander that they are a part of the team, and that means not only supporting fellow officers, but supporting the team's reputation by producing the figures the commander is asking for.

It's the easiest way to show, or at least people think, it's the easiest way to show what you've done in a shift... Yeah, because you get a hand over at the end of the shift, and it's like, 'what's your return on work?' They don't look at how many calls you went to or how many reports you put on. They'll look at how many stop and search you've done, and how many arrests. And how many detections.... Especially if you're young in service, you've got to show 'willing' because they're so many compulsory transfers now to different areas. If you want to stay on team, you've got to be able to show that you can work on team, and that you can get figures, as well as answering calls. (PC Eleanor, RT2)

In addition to excitement, courses offer a financial reward. Officers that attend specialist search courses can be called to help with investigations in to shootings, or sweeps of public venues ahead of events. These calls often come on short notice, and without time to amend normal shift patterns, the officer is able to collect overtime. The courses also supported those officers that sought promotions, providing them with the skills necessary to take on leadership in higher ranks.

7.3.3 *Quantity over Quality*

The pressure and reward opportunities presented to officers skews the implementation of policing activities to those actions that will generate the necessary figures. In 2000 the MPS recorded 19,619 drug possession offences. By 2009 that figure had reached 71,383, of which 82 per cent were for cannabis (Mulchandani, Hand, and Panesar 2010). The practice of targeting minor offenders to generate the necessary volume of arrests and detections is well documented (Hope 2008, Police Federation 2008, Select Committee on Home Affairs 2008). This is often accomplished through use of stop and search activity for drugs (Bear 2011, Bear and Shiner 2011, Eastwood, Shiner, and Bear 2013). As discussed previously, the regular interactions with community members during a stop and search tend to have negative impacts on the relationship between the two groups (Skogan 2006a). Instead of primarily considering the impact

an encounter will have on the community, officers place the requirement to obtain detections and conduct searches at the forefront of their decision making process.

When I was doing my probation I was set [by] Sergeant George 10 stops a month, so that was stop and searches, so you had to do at least 10 stops and searches a month. But I think that...I don't think you can put a number of stop and searches because you may have days where there is nothing going on... then the sergeant goes 'I want 10 stops from you today' and if you don't get it you get a bit of telling off. I mean it's again, rock and a hard place, but then again I am happy with what I am doing. I know what's right and what's wrong; if I can't get 10 stops I am not going to make grounds up, I would never do that. (PC Hugh, RT4)

Officers' perception that the community was comprised of a significant population of criminals was supported by the organizational messaging that emphasized bringing in as many arrests and detections as possible. Even a failed search allowed officers to engage in 'proper' policing. By targeting drug users officers were not liable to become mired in unpacking difficult situations or community problems. They could simply search, detect, and write up drug incidents without concern for the impact on the community members once they had either left the scene or deposited them in the custody suite. Whether a particular street interaction went well was not judged by the quality of the interaction, but rather by whether it yielded a detection.

Would love to just have a couple of units just surround the estate and catch them all. If you searched them all, you'd have five or six detections from that. It sounds really sad doesn't it? In the fact that I'm looking at it in positive outcomes, detections, when I should be saying something like, 'reducing the drug dealing' or something like that. But for me, it's more about detections. I just find that, when I'm listening to myself, thinking how sad the situation is. (PC Fred, RT4)

The focus on detections may also emphasise catching, as PC Fred put it, 'small fish'. While there was a massive increase in the number of drugs possession offences dealt with by the MPS, there was not a corresponding increase in the number of drugs trafficking offences. In 2001 the MPS dealt with 3,716 drugs trafficking offences. While this peaked at 5,184 in 2005-06, by 2012-13 it was back down to 3,726. This miniscule increase in 13 years was in stark contrast to the current 140 per cent increase in drugs possession offences (MPS 2013c).

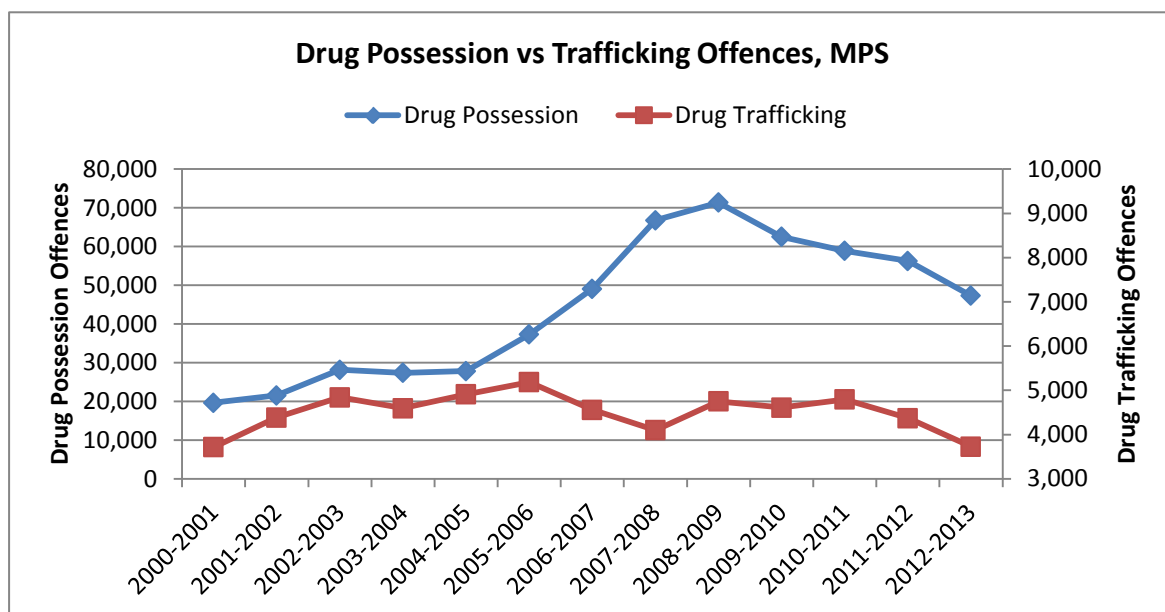


Figure 17: Drug possession versus drug trafficking offences in the MPS between 2000-2013 (MPS 2013c)

7.3.3.1 Making More Work:

The push for drugs fuelled an increase in drug seizures on paper, but the statistical rise may not have correlated precisely with the amount of drugs officers encountered. It may have simply been the case that officers were previously encountering drugs, but using their discretion to deal with the situation informally. Now, in the face pressure to hit performance targets, many officers had altered how they policed. The push to hit targets was effective at altering the policing practices because officers were also inadvertently provided an easy method obtain their figures in the form of cannabis Warnings. However this also increased the number of people being drawn in to the CJS, even if only peripherally. Government research backs up the findings of net-widening encountered in this research.

There appears to be a clearer indication that the increase in out-of-court disposals is in part the result of ‘net-widening’... following the introduction of cannabis warnings there was a significant rise in offences of cannabis possession brought to justice, but that there were no marked changes in the numbers of convictions and cautions for this offence. This would support assertions that the disposal provided the police with a quick and effective means of dealing with offences which would previously have resulted in no sanction. (OCJR 2010, pg. 9)

7.3.4 *Breeding Discontent*

The drive for performance indicators made the officers resentful and feel disconnected from organization. In their eyes the goal had shifted from protecting people to appeasement. Whether this was appeasement of community members trying to ‘dictate’ police responses, or appeasement of Government ‘bean counters’ demanding figures, the process of using performance indicators had impacted the relationship officers had with their professional identity and the organisation. Instead of enjoining officers to take part in a larger battle against crime that most harmed the community, the use of PIs that were easily met by drugs, and so targeted by team leaders, made many officers feel that they were being pushed away from meaningful work (though some convinced themselves that cannabis was meaningful work).

It’s a lie isn’t it, it’s a fudge of the figures, its... the police itself shouldn’t really have targets apart from reducing crime, that should be it... Why should we have, why should the police... especially drugs because you’re going to find it anyway you shouldn’t need to be targeted from above saying you need to have X, Y and Z because you should be doing your job anyway, it sort of detracts from other things, if you need to have so many drug detections or drug arrests that’s what you’re going to go for but you might miss other things

[Politicians and Senior MPS officers] focus on figures, so overall crime figures have come down, so this has gone up, so to counter that we need to sort out vehicle crime for the last two months of the calendar year. Our Governors are telling us, ‘forget everything else go out there and sort out vehicle crime, I need that done!’ He needs that done, because he’s asked it, because *he’s* asked it! Rubbish! Because people are still getting robbed out there Gov, but that’s not important now because at the end of the month there’s an election coming up. That sort of stuff we could do without, we could do without that. Let the police run the police. You know, let’s not have it actionable to political whims, who’s in power at the time. (PC Jack, RT4)

Even while obtaining the figures that the team leaders wanted, the officers were giving up part of their ability to tackle the crimes they felt themselves capable of impacting. There was strong consensus that without the lure of an easy detection, drugs and especially cannabis would cease to receive the attention of officers at all ranks. Without the reward of a detection:

They would disappear off the face of the earth. They'd get rid of [the warning forms] because there'd be no point! Once they've stopped counting them, then the commanding ranks will lose interest in them, and they'll turn their interest to whatever is interesting them. (PC Jane, RT4)

Officers believe that the MPS stands apart from other police organisations in the push for detections. Offices reported that colleagues in other police organisations did not have to resort to meeting certain detections and arrest requirements¹⁷³.

There is no reason for us to get detections and arrests anymore. It's only the Met that is only still wanting [sic] them. The City of London police, as soon as Theresa May got rid of the policing pledge; they got rid of the requirement for detections and arrests. (PC Fred, RT4)

This belief further undermined officers' perception of the organization. They were not part of a large problem with policing nationally; rather it was their organization that was singularly misguided.

7.3.5 *Blaming Command*

There was a tendency for officers to lament the focus on statistics, and blame the command structure for forcing them to engage in practices clearly aimed at improving the statistical appearance of the teams. I observed that each RT unit commander emphasized obtaining detections and arrests to varying degrees. Targets for the team, and comparisons between different teams were reviewed at parades for RTs and were occasionally mentioned at the start of SNT shifts. While RT unit commanders focused on the number of detections and arrests their team had made, the SNT Sergeants focused on community confidence figures and the progress of ward-panel priorities. However, whether officers engaged in these activities was not just the result of directives from commanders.

Officers were not beholden to operating in line with every piece of guidance they were given. Clear evidence of this can be seen in the lack of stop and search forms willingly handed out during stops. Commanders regularly asked officers to fill out the forms, begging them to do so in order to avert any future problems, but much of the time the

¹⁷³ I only know this to be true at Thames Valley Police, and cannot confirm this at any other police service.

forms were either not completed, or the community member was told they would have to appear at the station to get the form. From this we have evidence that officers could engage in unsanctioned activity, and therefore also know that they did not necessarily have to engage in all sanctioned activity. Given the discretion that officers have once they are out on the street (McLaughlin 2007), officers could avoid actually going after drugs if they were determined to avoid such practices. Few did, as it was simply too easy to accomplish, and a necessary part of career progression for all but the most cynical and senior constables.

The unit commanders received blame for such practices abounding, but this can be seen as an attempt by officers to protect their sense of what their role was. By blaming commanders for their frequent pursuit of small amounts of cannabis, the officers could justify engaging in behaviour they were not particularly fond of. This displacing of blame is similar to the reaction of officers in the face of changes made to stop and search practice as a result of inquiries in the murder of Stephen Lawrence (Shiner 2010). The message that pressure from commanders was causing them to engage in the pursuit of statistics also was a visible way of showing that they were taking on-board changes to the organization, even if they did not like them. The display of obedience helped divert attention from how officers were not engaging in other reforms as they were supposed to do. The relationship created between commanders and PCs by the development of PIs can be seen as a symbiotic one. Unit commanders were able to produce the stats they needed to keep their command and rise through the ranks, while PCs were given an opportunity to easily meet the requirements and cement their preferred cultural norms that were under threat. Through the detections obtained via the CWS, officers were able to justify their continued inhabitation of the role of 'crime fighter' even as the inability to actually fulfil that role was evident in the rest of their daily working lives.

7.4 The Café

Johnny's Café was the goose that laid the golden egg, and unlike the farmers that killed the goose out of greed in the original fable, the officers of Watling were content to let it keep producing for them. It was considered by most to provide a valuable way of obtaining the necessary detections in order to provide officers the space to target other problems without worrying about whether they were earning a detection:

Bit of a piss take to be honest, but it's what it is, detections for the team. Be like taking away Christmas to close it up, and what would happen then? They just go somewhere for their cannabis that we didn't know about (PC Rosanne, RT2).

As long as the café produced, it was left largely to conduct its business. The café was allowed to profit, as were the officers. Asked about what harms the café brought to the area, Sgt Richard, the head of Blackburn SNT, said, "Probably none." Pressed further, he said, "Other than that it is criminality, it says to people, 'I can be a drug dealer and stand in this area, on the same street as the police station and no-one's going to do anything about it.'" Sgt Richard told me that the premises had been raided several times over the years, but each time they found hardly any drugs, and the café was up and running again in short order.

Not that all officers liked the idea of sitting outside of the café. Many were frustrated that sitting outside of a known drug spot and stopping people was what the job had become. These officers viewed the targeting of drugs in order to gain detections as detracting from 'real' police work.

The general feeling of most of the people on our team is that we would rather be out, certainly in the unmarked car, you'd rather be out looking for proper stops. You would stop someone in a high robbery area and come across a weapon. Prime example is yesterday. We stopped, me and Lisa, we stopped four young Lads around the corner. The only one that actually managed to give us his details had a screw driver in his pocket and was a PYG member. The other three are probably gang members, but they didn't give their details so we don't know, but you got four gang members, four potential gang members walking around, one of them armed, and that's a proper stop, that's proper, you know. Let's get in there, put ourselves on offer. Let's get in there to stop a little bit of crime that actually matters. That, we quite happily do, we want to do... Anybody can sit outside of a cannabis cafe unmarked. The only crime you're really stopping then is someone taking some cannabis that they're going to smoke on another day, whereas at least with something like that [weapons search] you're stopping crimes against a victim. (PC Mario, RT2)

If you sit in front of the cannabis cafe you might get a detection, but if you search three people at 3am in Framingham, who are clearly up to no good, it doesn't show as anything, but you've probably done more. (PC Eleanor, RT2).

Officers of the Blackburn SNT did try to take action against the café. I attended a meeting between PC Sam and a detective from the borough's CID. PC Sam was trying to develop an operational plan to eventually raid and shut down the café. There had been no direct complaints from the community about the café at that point, but the team wanted to show their proactive abilities and launch a raid. The detective knew exactly which café Sam was discussing as soon as the meeting began, and quickly shot down the idea of raiding it. His stated reasons were that it would take too much time and intelligence gathering to put together enough evidence for a raid, and that funds could not be spared for an operation that would not catch any large scale distributors or Class A drugs.

The café did not survive indefinitely. It continued supplying the local population with cannabis and the local officers with detections for another nine months after I completed fieldwork. In the early 2012 the MPS released a statement that, 'following concerns raised by local residents', officers from Blackburn SNT raided the café, the social club, and the dry cleaners, arresting four men, and seizing £8,000. The statement went on to say that in the lead up to the raid the MPS had conducted a 'targeted stop and search operation' around the café. In the year before the raids there were an average of 35 drug possession offences a month in Blackburn ward¹⁷⁴, but in the year following, the average dropped to only 12 per month.

7.5 Conclusion

In this chapter I have laid out what I believe to be the primary explanatory factor driving the surge in cannabis policing over the last decade. That performance indicators were given such weight at the same time officers were feeling disconnected from the organisation's shift in focus, created an unintended outcome. Both the organization and the community suffered due to the emphasis on NPM.

Though officers often resented having to go after low-level drugs, many tried to justify their actions as being 'real policing', while quickly achieving a detection, and not really altering their actions on the street. The predominance of hitting targets that

¹⁷⁴ As discussed earlier in the chapter, many cannabis warnings were issued in other wards as the café was near the intersection of three wards.

aligned with only a small aspect of police performance allowed officers to hit that target in manner that required only peripheral adherence to the pressures for changes in other areas of policing. Additionally, the aspect of policing being measured aligned with classic ideas of police culture, emphasizing enforcement and action instead of adaptation and community engagement. Officers were emotionally invested in at least some of the stated aims of the organisation, but were disoriented by the contradictory nature of what they were being asked to do in the different teams, frustrated by the focus on performance management and were distanced from what they and the organisation considered to be priorities because of the perverse incentive structure that has been inadvertently created by the CWS and NPM, which encourages officers to game the system by going for easy pickings.

Instead of serving as a platform to renegotiate the ideas of what it means to be a police officer, the performance indicators I observed during fieldwork helped cement outdated stereotypes for a new generation of officers. NPM has provided a rallying point whereby the officer corps can stand firm and police in a manner that meets their professional identity and career aspirations. In doing so, the pace of reform towards community based policing practice can be tempered by the act of being, at least on paper, a 'good police officer'. Unfortunately, what it means to be a good police officer is quite different than what it means to be a good police service.

Chapter 8- Conclusion

8.1 Recap of the Thesis

This thesis has explored the working life of street-level officers, with a particular focus on the execution of drugs-related activities within their wider remit. I have shown how officers in Watling worked for a conflicted organization within a conflicted policy landscape, leading to a conflicted role. Through the policing of drugs officers found a way to stand firm amidst changes to policing they were disconnected from, and ensured they maintained a self-satisfying professional identity. That such activities met performance targets was an important factor in officers choosing drugs as the mechanism by which they stood firm against changes to policing. The following will review how I came to these conclusions.

In the Literature chapter, I explored four distinct areas underpinning the thesis. These areas included an examination of the policing literature, drugs literature and policy, New Public Managerialism, and the theories of bifurcation proffered by Garland (2001). In exploring the policing literature, I drew particular focus to two important ideas; discretion and culture. Both discretion and culture are, in the eyes of many of the respondents, under attack in Watling. While there is debate about the continued resilience of police culture (Waddington 1999b, Reiner 2010, Chan 1997, Foster 2003), this section ultimately concluded that maintaining an illusory police culture may be more important to officers than whether that culture actually exists. Discretion is also explored in light of Lipsky's ideas of how street-level bureaucrats exercise discretion to fulfil their role (1980). The tempering words of Evans and Harris (2004) reminded us that discretion is not necessarily good, and can even shield misconduct. More importantly, discretion is incredibly difficult to regulate as it is at the heart of policing (Scarman 1981) and officers operate with little oversight on the street (Novak et al. 2002).

In exploring the drugs literature, I traced the development of drugs policy, contrasting the criminalization thesis (Seddon, Ralphs, and Williams 2008, Stevens 2011) with Shiner's (Shiner 2013) idea that British drugs policy has always had an undercurrent of punitiveness that has become more prominent in recent decades, rather than suddenly developed. I then explored how policy documents for England and Wales reflect

multiple approaches to dealing with drugs. Importantly, a strong war-like stance focused on ‘winning’ through employing punitive responses has been reshaped in recent years with a less heroic stance (Dorn and Lee 1999) that accepts ‘disrupting’ drug trafficking organisations as a victory in strategy documents. Though the goalpost has moved, the state apparatus driving towards it remains largely the same. These strategy documents instruct the criminal justice system to take account of community partnerships and target only the most harmful drugs (Home Office 2010c). However, they reflect a near total absence of discussions about low-level cannabis despite the drugs’ predominance not just in drug-related police activity, but as a part of all policing activity.

The chaotic nature of UK drugs policy, and the drive to hit a redefined set of performance targets, leads to the over-arching theoretical component of this research. Garland’s (2001, 1996) theories on bifurcation in the criminal justice system helped this research to understand the multitude of anti-drug efforts operating at all levels in British drugs policy. While Garland only briefly addresses how drugs policy relates to his theories, the development of British drugs policy – vacillating from its history of penal-welfarism to more coercive enforcement, and back towards welfarism in the face of failure on the drugs war – makes Garland’s theories an ideal mould with which to help structure my arguments.

In Chapter Three, I prepared for the empirical chapters by explaining how this research was conducted. In many ways, this project was classic police ethnography and faced many of the same challenges as its predecessors (Skolnick 1975, Manning 1980, Collison 1995, Smith and Gray 1983). Unlike its predecessors, this work used a new form of digital ethnography that allowed the researcher to capture data without delay, and with a depth unavailable in traditional methods. In the methodology section, I began to show how officers’ activities often involved intervening in complex situations requiring both them and the researcher to be flexible, but within the strict limits on their behaviour.

The following chapters on Response Policing, Community Policing, and Drugs Policing, highlighted the teams’ working practices. By differentiating between the units, we were able to clearly see their working practices, and therefore able to

contextualise the drugs chapter. In the RT chapter, I showed how the backbone of British policing builds itself up to an image that can be difficult to meet. Focusing on a sense of mission and ‘hedonistic love of action’ (Reiner 1999, pg. 91), RT officers attempted to maintain order and thwart criminal activity, even while knowing their impact is often limited. Their acting out in the form of frequent drug searches helped generate action and a sense of impact - a feeling that was often scarce in their working lives. Additionally, the pressure for detections felt by RT teams in Watling began to emerge, and its alignment with officers’ need to create action and control became fully evident in the Performance Management chapter. A distinct sense of ‘us vs. them’ pervaded officers’ work and impacted their interactions with the community.

In the Community Policing chapter, I traced how and why the shift towards community policing took hold, highlighting how it was an attempt at accountability (Chan 1999), a response to the inability to impact crime rates (Garland 2001), and the need to improve community confidence in the police (Barnes and Eagle 2007, Hohl, Bradford, and Stanko 2010, Home Office 2005b). Behind the façade of partnership and alternatives to punitive enforcement measures, the SNTs that emerged to implement this strategy had the same powers and tactics available to all police officers. Their role as officers did not change. Instead, the way their performance was measured was altered, and their interaction with the community was increased. The organisation grappled with a conflicted identity as it sought to determine how to marry the role of police officer and that of community liaison. In addition, this chapter highlighted that the SNTs are not always partnering with the full breadth of the community, and may be basing their activities on the desires of a limited set of influential community members. This chapter began to highlight that the community policing model may not be naturally aligned with policing’s history and methods (Bennett 1983).

In the Street-Level Drugs Policing chapter, I first experienced the thrill and let-down of a drug raid, before examining the debate about developments in drugs policy and policing. Some have argued that the criminalization of British drugs policy has fully transformed the issue (Seddon, Ralphs, and Williams 2008), while others approach the subject as one of change throughout the criminal justice system (Shiner 2009, 2013). The key idea here is that street-level drugs policing cannot be understood in a vacuum, and the analysis of the guiding policy documents must be taken in context

with the larger changes to the landscape - something this thesis has tried to do with the environment of the police officers. This chapter also allowed exploration of the cannabis Warning System in detail. The CWS was constantly being utilised by officers, and I explored the conflicted nature of how officers may lack negative feelings towards cannabis, but ardently target the drug. Even in adaptive partnerships, drugs policing strained the relationship between SNTs and the community, particularly when officers invoked tactics that ran counter to the community's desires. The implementation of drugs policing was seen as a smash-and-grab affair, with officers having little understanding of why they were engaging in such practices, and often unwilling to see their actions as the 'less heroic' (Dorn and Lee 1999) conditions in which they were operating.

The Performance Management chapter connected the previous work to identify what I believe is the coalescing force behind the increases in low-level drug seizures seen in the UK since 2004. In this chapter, I showed how New Public Managerialism interjected itself in to policing practice with surprising results (Maguire and John 2006). While the fragmentation of police culture and reshaping of the organisation buffeted officers, the ease with which NPM targets could be met provided a simple activity that allowed officers to find stability within changes. The output measures used in NPM asked officers to engage in the type of policing that emphasized their role as protectors of the community; the CWS gave them the perfect tool with which to achieve those goals. Johnny's café was but the most flagrant example of officers pursuing easy detections. I described how this 'loose coupling' created a situation whereby RT officers were not embedded in the changes occurring in the organisation. This situation was exacerbated by the fact that their targets were unaligned with those changes.

The story of this thesis is one of pressures, and of how policies, organisations, and officers react to those pressures. I have covered how the officers in Watling lacked a stable platform from which they could operate. Not only was their role changing, but also their culture and performance measurement framework. The structured ambivalence at each stage of the process had unforeseen results, and this thesis has charted those results as they interacted with the daily working life of officers. The combined pressures for change actually generated space for officers to stand firm if

they turned their attention to policing small amounts of cannabis, fuelling a significant increase in drug seizures between 2004-2009.

8.2 Contributions to Knowledge

This thesis has covered considerable territory, but contributes to knowledge in several specific areas. The primary aim of this research was to understand why there was such a dramatic increase in drug seizures in recent years by examining how drugs policing fits in to the working lives of police officers. That focus was not diluted by developing contributions to academic knowledge in several aspects. Rather, the multiple advancements in research are a sign of the complexity of the situation.

8.2.1 Explored Street-Level Policing of Drugs

Whereas much previous research on drugs has focused on advancements in policy (Acevedo 2007, Bammer et al. 2002, Bayer and Oppenheimer 1993, Bennett 1983, Bennett and Holloway 2010, Bessant 2008, Caulkins and Tragler 2004, Chen, Skidelsky, and Social Market Foundation. 2001, Egginton, Parker, and Aldridge 2000, Fazey and Bewley-Taylor 2003, Fischer 2003, Higate, Lart, and Hughes 2006, Kleiman 1992, Maccoun et al. 2002, Meier 1992, Monaghan 2012, Niskanen 1992, Reinerman 2009, Reuter and Stevens 2008, Ritter 2009, Seddon 2000, 2006, Shiner 2013, Stevens 2011, Wodak 2007), or the broader challenges of policing drugs in our society (Bean 2008, Beckett, Nyrop, and Pfingst 2006, Benson, Rasmussen, and Sollars 1995, Chiu, Mansley, and Morgan 1998, Dorn and Lee 1999, Dorn and South 1990, Hunter, Mcsweeney, and Turnbull 2005, Murji 1998, Newburn and Elliot 1998, Wallace, Roberg, and Allen 1985), this project has brought street-level issues to focus - a necessary point of reference to improve the delivery of drugs policies.

Street-level policing has previously been studied by ethnographers. In particular, Smith and Gray (1983) were most influential to this project. However, additional authors' shaped how to approach the difficult task of ethnographic fieldwork with police (Norris 1993, Westmarland 2001, Mastrofski et al. 1998, Hammersley and Atkinson 1995, Pearson 1993, Rowe 2005). Drugs policing has also been studied, with most researchers focusing on drug detectives (Bacon Forthcoming, Collison 1995, Manning 1980, Loftus and Goold 2012). Where this work differs is its focus on how drugs

policing fits in to the working lives officers not assigned to drug squads, and the depth achieved through observing the same units over the course of a year.

Previous research identified that public sector workers will ‘game’ the system (Bevan and Hood 2006) when given performance management targets based on a simplistic understanding of their performance (Munro 2004). This has been found in policing (Rogerson 1995, Johnsen 2005, Reiner 1995) and specifically drugs policing (Dorn 2000). In this work, I have shown how the pressure to achieve quantitative targets has altered police working practices, resulting in a massive increase in drugs stop and search and drugs seizures. These activities provide officers an opportunity to shore-up the foundations of a classic style of policing. This pursuit of low-level drugs no longer aligns with the community policing values the organisation projects to its ‘customers’. This understanding of the role of current performance management structures goes beyond the simple adage that ‘what gets measured gets done’ (Rogerson 1995). Instead of seeing increases in drugs incidents as a sign that officers are simply responding to the changes in the organization, this thesis argues that officers are engaging in a concerted effort against drugs to avoid changing the style of policing that meets their perception of the normative order of policing. Officers can ‘act out’ in a way that secures their career ambitions and sense of mission without having to acquiesce to larger changes.

This research also provided an up-to-date accounting of what street-level policing looked like in the lead up to the August 2011 riots. While this project cannot ascribe causality between the police actions in Watling and disturbances elsewhere in London, a clear picture of the relationship between the police and the community in Watling was obtained during fieldwork. I was able to witness how the relentless use of stop and search created frequent abrasions to the police/community relationship. The recognizable policing practices observed in previous ethnographies of street policing are visible throughout this work. If the practices in this research seem familiar and reminiscent of a policing of the past, it is because the purpose of many of these practices seemed to be aimed at ensuring the past is retained by the organization, despite significant policy changes and a focus on community policing. What have changed are the factors driving such activities. Where once officers had legitimacy and exercised their power as a way of maintaining order, in the modern era of fractured

legitimacy, the increased effort to exert their power is the end result of a schizoid need to project sovereign control while meeting performance targets achieved through the dissemination of warning forms.

8.2.2 *Using Garland to Understand Drugs Policing*

Though Garland has rarely spoken of drugs in his work, others have already used his ideas in relation to drugs policy and policing. Using Garland's ideas, these authors have contributed much insight to help resituate a contextualized understanding of the relationship between drugs and crime (Seddon 2006), and the reshaping of drugs policy in late-modernity (Shiner 2013). Others have even used Garland to explore the implementation of community partnerships (Skinns 2003). Using Garland to explore the issue of drugs, whether at a policy or practical level, is prudent because British drugs policing displays clear evidence of how the, "...criminological predicament gave rise to a process of accommodation and adjustment", and Garland's analysis of the bifurcated construct "is clearly implicated" (Shiner 2013), if not prominent in his own writings.

However, as far as I have able to ascertain, this thesis is the first research to utilize Garland's theoretical ideas to explore the practical context of street-level policing. To be clear, the purpose of doing so was not to prove whether the theories were correct at this level. Instead, Garland's ideas were used to help understand the often-contrasting activities and attitudes on display during fieldwork. By bringing Garland's ideas in to street-level policing, I was able to not only examine their robustness at this new level, but also bridge the gap in understanding the impact policy changes can have at the point of implementation.

I have shown the division between those invested in the task of implementing community policing models that are adaptive in nature, with those tasked with maintaining order by exercising police powers to bring punitive rhetoric to bear. Splitting the organization solely along a path delineated by the task of the unit is crude. However, in doing so I have exposed that roles are not limited to one set of tactical responses. Exploring the policing of Watling through the lens of bifurcation has provided increased ability to contextualize the developments of policing in a way that a less demarcated approach would have failed to allow. More importantly, the ideas of

bifurcation actually helped identify the conflicted nature of each unit's role within the policing structure. Looking specifically at drugs in Chapter Six, the conflicted nature of the various tactical endeavours was made clearer by using the ideas of bifurcation.

In examining the utility and frailty of the ideas of bifurcation, this research has uncovered a new and perhaps important caveat to the discussion of Garland and bifurcation. Instead of simply seeing NPM as one element of adaptive changes, this thesis has highlighted the importance of such initiatives on the policing landscape. Future research may wish to parse out the importance NPM on the development of policing practice.

8.2.3 *New Digital Ethnography Methods*

In addition to exploring the role of drugs in street-level policing this work has also contributed to the advancement of ethnographic methods that could be harnessed by researchers from many disciplines. Where once small notepads or scraps of paper served to record the interactions, conversations, and personal thoughts of an ethnographer in the field, this research has harnessed readily available technology to create a more robust way of recording data. Instead of deciphering short-hand notes written quickly during and observation, or long-hand notes written well after the fact, digital ethnography allows researchers to capture a tremendous depth of detail efficiently and accurately. Moreover, it allows the researcher to recall the data more precisely and improve the utility of the information collected in the field.

In this thesis, I have not only developed an idea for how to conduct digital ethnography, but have also provided the reader with detailed descriptions of how it was used in the field. Through refinement of the process, future researchers will be able to quickly record detailed field-notes, avoid 'retrieval induced forgetting' (Wimber et al. 2009), and improve episodic memory recall to use data effectively. This will help future ethnographic researchers avoid some of the questions of accuracy that current qualitative practices face.

8.3 **Policy Recommendations**

As this research has touched on general street-level policing, community policing, and drugs policing, I will direct my policy recommendations to each of these areas, with

the wider issue of NPM connecting all three. With regard to the place of drugs within street-level policing, the recommendations herein speak to larger problems of policing's legitimate use of coercion. If I were to condense the policy recommendations across all three areas in to a single idea, it would be that all performance management frameworks will impact the organization they are applied to, and so we must thoroughly consider not just what we want to measure, but what we want the organisation to look like. If the performance indicators do not align with that vision, then something needs to be reconsidered.

The analysis of this project has identified that the most contentious issue within policing remains the use of stop and search, primarily in the hunt for drugs. The tactic has been the focus of much debate from scholars (Lustgarten 2002, Mastrofski 2004, Skogan 2006a, Delsol and Shiner 2006, Bradford, Jackson, and Stanko 2009, Morell et al. 2011, Quinton 2011, Bear 2012, EHRC 2012) and also from the government (MPA 2005, MPS 2009b, 2011a). Current guidelines are constructed in such a way that officers have broad capabilities to define 'reasonable grounds,' while having little oversight in to their practices given that they are part of the 'low-visibility' (Goldstein 1960) of street policing. What oversight does exist is lax and not taken seriously by the officers in Watling. Early on during fieldwork, I often felt sad and angered while watching an aggressive officer search a young person for little reason other than being black and standing on the corner. The idea of 'police property' (Lee 1981) becomes not just a convenient academic term, but a very real condition when a person is handcuffed and pressed against the side of an IRV. Through acknowledging my feelings during these situations, I was able to see how my own ideas shifted during the course of my time with the teams, a situation that may very well happen to new officers on team. What had been a sick feeling in my gut when I first started with the teams became a gut feeling that there must be something illicit taking place when viewing those same people who had engendered empathy only a year earlier. I saw first-hand how the frequent use of stop and search was a tool not just for the community, but for the officers to reassert their normative order to new recruits. Through repeated exposure, one becomes numb to the dehumanising aspects of a search, finding justification through spurious logic.

The point here is that current legislation and policy on stop and search mean that the tactic is used time and again as one of the few remaining tools of order maintenance, and it is often not used well. Officers in Watling search with little justification, are aggressive, use language that could be interpreted as demeaning, and show little empathy for those they are detaining. This happens to citizens of all races and creeds, but especially to those who are black and south Asian. While no top-down legislation or policy developments will abate this behaviour overnight, improvements to the training, recording practices and oversight of officers conducting stop and search appeared to be in desperate need in Watling. One possible avenue to curb such practices is the use of body-worn video equipment, currently under examination by others at the LSE (Rieken 2013).

Efforts to reshape the performance management framework of MPS units might prove more fruitful than training and oversight, and reducing the number of negative drugs searches will reduce disproportionality levels (EHRC 2013). “In all five police forces during the course of the Commission’s study, this reduction [in stop and search] has followed firm action to prohibit the use of stop and search as a formal or informal quantitative performance indicator” (EHRC 2013, pg. 39). MPS Commissioner Bernard Hogan-Howe introduced new KPIs for stop and search, including reducing negative drug searches by 50%, achieving a 20% hit rate on S.60 searches, and having at least 20% of searches target weapons. Watling has improved in each of these areas, but failed to achieve any of those targets as of the March 2013 Stop and Search report issued by the MPS. Unfortunately, I am unable to ascertain whether the changes to organization-wide targets have also affected performance targets levied at individual officers or teams within the borough. These new organizational targets are the result of the community outrage following the riots. While it is certainly admirable that the MPS recognizes the damaging effects of numerous failed drug searches, and the disproportionality in S.60 searches, simply reducing the targets as part of a quantitative restructuring will not be successful if the changes do not account for how the organization will respond to meet the new targets or how the changes will impact officers. The problem of loose coupling and the perception of working to hit misaligned targets will only worsen if reactionary changes to PIs are sought by managers disconnected from street-level concerns.

Simply changing the targets and publicly releasing the improved figures also impacts on community policing initiatives. Adapting the PIs provides the organization with reference points they can bring to public discussions about policing. These figures are a synecdoche for police actions on the street, and do not necessarily improve public perception of officer behaviour. More importantly, PIs do not provide accountability mechanisms that increase democratic control. In this sense, the changes are more, 'old wine in new bottles' (Manning 1988) for communities still left without a proper voice. This research has repeatedly seen how local priorities are subjugated to the will of officers' priorities. While many of the SNT officers were deeply committed to the goals of community policing, the structure they operated in prioritized a different type of policing activity and its associated performance measures. Additionally, RT officers know little, if anything, about local concerns, and have no incentive structure to work to support those concerns in their police activities. Without a concerted effort to adapt and adopt community policing to be a more integrated part of Watling's policing strategy, the efforts of the SNTs will continue to be dominated by the stronger punitive policing efforts. The introduction of the Local Policing Model in Watling after the conclusion of fieldwork for this research may have accomplished this goal, but further examination is required.

Finally, the pursuit of drugs - especially the focus on low-level cannabis seizures - is primarily driven by the performance management framework in place in Watling and the MPS. Researchers must be careful not to oversimplify the situation and think of the issue as solely a matter of incentives to meet targets, but appreciate the broader nature of the activity as a way of maintaining professional identity amidst organisational changes. I have shown that officers construct a narrative allowing them to target drugs despite having personal opinions that are often in stark contrast to their policing activities. This allows them to find meaning in their pursuit of the detections they need in order to stay in the good graces of their managers. The pursuit of a new target, say, the number of conversations with community members each shift, could just as easily be taken up with vigour by the officers. On paper, these goals would almost certainly be met. However, the quality of the interactions on the streets would not necessarily improve. The idea that it is the quality of such interactions that matters (Hough et al. 2010) would be overlooked. Additionally, if the new 'conversations' target did not

meet the needs of officers to uphold their mission as they perceive it, there is the potential to further disconnect officers from the organisation's direction.

A significant shift in the policy landscape must be considered to improve the implementation of policing efforts. The bifurcated rhetoric and practice experienced by officers on the street creates space for them to disconnect from changes to policing, exacerbating the problem of loose coupling. Garland (2001) described adaptive strategies as the hidden product of those working to maintain the functioning of the state. However, this hidden process has made its way into official policy in the form of community policing and the drive for community confidence. The state appears confused, publishing guidelines that promote tough enforcement measures against drugs and the 'others' who peddle them, while also endeavouring to create a new responsiveness to the community and policies designed to push addicts in to treatment. The two tracks of criminal justice policy development inevitably put pressure on those caught in the middle. Like tectonic plates slowly smashing together to form jagged peaks, the confusion found in British policing policy, particularly in drugs policy, is jolting the communities caught above the fault lines.

Does this mean that one track must be abandoned? Some would argue that police are incapable of taking on the ethos of community policing while maintaining their traditional role (Bennett 1983, Klockars 1988). I cannot go so far as to agree with total abandonment, primarily because the need for community policing outweighs the difficulties of implementing it. Therefore, what must change is the bifurcated nature of policy development. It is one thing to have adaptive policies emerge from practitioners seeking to obtain some inroads against an impossible task, but it is another to publish strong rhetoric extolling the power of the state while also promoting the state's compassion and willingness to engage in partnership. This becomes even more problematic if the partnerships in question are not, in practice, what they claim to be on paper.

Criminal justice policy needs to acknowledge the limitations of the state openly; abandoning insincere punitive political rhetoric for an honest discussion about what society actually wants the role of policing to be. Despite government advice and popular support, Labour moved cannabis from a Class C drug to a Class B drug. The

move was entirely political (Pearson 2007), and is a prime example of the misconstrued nature of current enforcement efforts. In order to create a police service that is responsive to the community and respects the individuals within, the larger policy ideas must convey respect and a desire to support the whole community. If the message presented to officers is fragmented, and performance indicators are easily fulfilled by targeting low-priority crime, officers will never holistically remove the habits and cultural norms that bring them in to conflict with the community. Only by shifting the way the entire organization operates and thinks about its role in society will criminal justice policy be able to bring officers along with the organization as it develops. Currently, the bifurcated structure of criminal justice policy creates a space for officers to stand firmly for a culture that is no longer aligned with the organisation's mission. This shift cannot happen within the organization by itself, and needs larger forces to contribute to a unified direction of policing in England and Wales.

8.4 Outlook

In this final section, I will address the limitations of this research. Further, I will look at how future research efforts might build on these shortcomings to advance the current findings.

8.4.1 Limitations to Current Research

This project achieved much of what it set out to do, but there are certainly areas with room for improvement. Extending fieldwork in light of the August 2011 riots and refining in the digital ethnography methods might have been useful, but were not available. In regards to the analysis and conclusions reached from the data, this project has admittedly reached far in attempting to explain the role of drugs in street-level policing and the reasons why NPM was able to successfully drive officers to pursue low-level drug seizures. I will discuss the limitations of concluding such a finding.

Far and away, the biggest disappointment of this project was the curtailment of fieldwork only hours before a seminal moment in British policing. The riots that swept across London in August 2011 did not spare Watling. While being present over the course of three days of disorder would have certainly produced interesting field-notes, the weeks and months following the disturbances would have provided a unique

opportunity to observe how officers interpreted the causes of the riots and how they dealt with the aftermath. Alas, this was not possible in the current research. I had made too clear a break with the teams, and it would have been disingenuous to return only to observe such salacious moments. I feared that, in their eyes, I would have ceased to be an observer interested in policing, and become a carpetbagger in post-riots Watling. However informative a pre/post comparison of policing practices might have been, the possibility of being considered an interloper kept me from pursuing the opportunity. Certainly, one cannot predict such occurrences during fieldwork, but this project might have offered additional analysis if such an opportunity had been available.

In assessing the impact of PIs on policing activity, and the role they played in the loose coupling within the organization, this thesis has made a fairly substantial claim. I have argued that officers are misappropriating the goals of NPM to resist being directed by either of the bifurcated pressures impacting their work. The obvious limitation to this assertion is that I only observed five units within one borough, and over a relatively short period of a single year. Crucially, this research began only three months after Theresa May dispensed with the Single Confidence Target. As such, the organization could rightly have been in a state of flux. In addition, the borough had seen several gang murders in the year leading up to fieldwork, and several during fieldwork. This could have fostered an aggressive attitude amongst the officers who were regularly exposed to violent acts and horrific injuries. I know that the inhumanity I witnessed during fieldwork made me both revolted and angry that people could treat each other with such wilful violence. These factors could explain a certain ‘hardening’ of the policing style of officers in the borough.

There will undoubtedly be questions as to the validity of my conclusions as they pertain to this specific borough during this specific time. Certainly, the myriad of influences, personalities, and situations presented in this work undermine the idea that the actions of nearly 75 men and women are reacting to changes to the organization in a similar fashion. I would answer this assertion by pointing out that while uniformity in belief is never certain, and the effort to uphold a bygone type of policing culture not necessarily explicit, the conclusions of this research highlight the larger effects of the performance management programmes instituted in policing. Some officers may truly hate drugs, and some may have no problem with drugs at all - that is not the point.

Drugs, and cannabis in particular, have become a useful way of policing that fits with officers' idea of what policing should be. Whether or not an individual officer engages in anti-drugs activity does not change this conclusion. In the actions of other officers who pursue drugs vigorously to meet PIs, space is created whereby the whole team can de-couple themselves from the ideas of partnership, procedural justice, and community oriented work.

8.4.2 *Future Research*

This project has shown that police ethnography is alive and well, and can still be a valuable tool to advance our knowledge of police practice and the impact of policy developments. As mentioned, this research took place in one London borough and at a time of great flux. Additionally, this research brought the ideas of bifurcation to bear on a topic not originally covered in depth by Garland (2001). Future research efforts can surely take on these limitations.

Even though Theresa May had abandoned the SCT in May 2010, the infrastructure supporting both the outcome and output-based measures still reigned supreme in Watling. Now that time has passed, the teams have been reorganized, and a new borough Commander has been appointed, revisiting the borough might prove a fruitful exercise. Perhaps with the café closed and PIs amended in the wake of the August 2011 riots, officers have found other ways to retain the culture and policing styles. Only another stint of fieldwork could explore these issues.

The fieldwork was also quite limited in scope. Future research efforts should consider expanding the base of operations. Comparing two or three areas would allow for comparisons that might highlight how NPM affects practices differently, and how loosely-coupled officers are to the organization. Using teams, similar to Quinton (2011) with the Home Office, or Mastrofski and Parks with their structured fieldwork (Mastrofski and Parks 1990), could allow us to explore a whole police service, not just a single borough.

Finally, the use of bifurcation has helped this research make sense of the complex changes and forces shaping street-level policing in Watling. Without such a theoretical

base, I would have struggled to dissect the diverged policies and their onslaught of conflicted practices. Using this theoretical base to explore drugs policing made sense to examine the forces shaping drugs policy development in the previous forty years (Shiner 2013). While criminologists have praised Garland for *The Culture of Control*, drugs policy researchers have been slow to utilize this concept. Research into the development of policy must find a way of bridging theory in to practice; Garland's work provides an important route to do just that.

One enticing opportunity for research could come from exploring how officers react if cannabis no longer earns a detection. Recently, the MPS has discussed piloting this idea. We also see there is room to change measurements in policing as a nearby borough saw the use of stop and search removed as a PI. With this in mind, a future project may wish to see what happens when officers no longer receive detections for bringing in cannabis. The focus would not just be on how their policing practice changes, but on what steps they take to ensure the survival of their police culture. If my conclusions are correct, we would expect to see new policing practices emphasized that ultimately push the classic style of policing onto the citizenry. This would be unfortunate, but would help us understand how to mitigate such activity.

8.5 Final Thoughts

In a meeting held for prospective doctoral students while I was a Master's student at the LSE, Professor Julian LeGrand warned us that we should always remember our doctoral research is a narrowly concentrated piece of work, not our opus. He reminded us that we would have our entire careers to create our opus, but for the PhD we should set our minds to a specific research question, answer it thoroughly, and move on. I was prepared to follow this sage advice. Unfortunately, the passion one must have in order to pursue a topic for four years can also engender a desire to seek answers to questions beyond their thesis. I have attempted to avoid this, while still addressing the broad set of factors impacting my research questions. Whether I have struck the appropriate balance is a judgement I cannot make from my position buried within the project.

What has been established in the preceding pages is that the place of drugs in the working lives of non-specialist street-level officers is dictated by a confluence of pressures acting on the core of policing. In Watling, an eroded sense of identity, coupled with changes to the structure of policing and the opportunity to prove one's worth through near-valueless performance indicators, fuelled an explosion in the targeting of drugs. A loosely coupled police organisation produced new ways of working with their 'customers' without providing a transitional experience for officers nurtured by a different formula, and with a performance management structure that hindered change. It is perhaps no wonder that Garland says that, "the public police look much the same way today that they did thirty years ago" (2001, pg. 169). This is what officers seemingly desire, despite many changes to the organisation, the community, and the role of policing. Bevan and Hood understood that, "governance by targets rests on the assumption that targets change the behaviour of individuals and organizations..." (2006, pg. 8). The assumption, at least in the case of policing, has proven correct; but the changes are being dictated by the officers, not the target makers.

Appendix A: References

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Appendix B: Consent Form for Social Science Research

Title of Project: Adaptive and Non-Adaptive Policing of Drugs in London

Principal Investigator: Daniel Bear (D.Bear@LSE.ac.uk)

Supervisor: Dr Michael Shiner (M.Shiner@LSE.ac.uk)

- ☐ 1. **Purpose of the Study:** This study will use interviews with relevant MPS staff and stakeholders to assess how national policy on drug policing is reflected in street level implementation. There is a particular interest in the use of community policing.
- ☐ 2. **Procedures to be followed:** You will be interviewed for approximately one (1) hour. The questions deal with a variety of subjects related to drugs policy, community policing, community confidence, and discretion.
- ☐ 3. **Statement of Anonymity:** Your identity will not be associated with your responses. Electronic data will be stored and secured in password protected files, and hard copies of written records will be kept in a secure environment. In the event of publication or presentation resulting from the research, no personally identifiable information will be shared. Results of this study may be used for teaching, research, publications, or presentations at scientific meetings, but your identity will not be revealed. You will be allowed to choose your pseudonym.
- ☐ 4. **Discomforts and Risks:** There are no physical risks in participating in this research beyond those experienced in everyday life. Though you are provided anonymity, the disclosure of information to the researcher may be used in the final research product, and become public knowledge. There is no remuneration. You can ask questions about this research at any time during the interview or afterwards.
- ☐ 5. **Voluntary Participation:** Your participation in this research study is voluntary. You may choose not to be a part of this research study. There will be no penalty to you if you choose not to take part. You may refuse to answer any question, or stop the interview at any point. Any data gathered before you quit the research may be kept and used by the researcher.

- ☐ **6. Data Recording:** Your responses will be recorded in a digital audio format in order to ensure accuracy in the research. These recordings may be transcribed by a professional transcriptionist or the researcher. As mentioned previously, these recordings will be kept in password protected files, and the researcher will ensure that the transcription is done in line with all professional social science standards.

Statement of Consent

PI Initials: I (print your name and rank) _____ give my
informed and voluntary consent to take part in this research study. I have read and
understand the consent form presented to me.

Interviewee Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix C: Street Level Policing Interview Information Sheet

Participant Code: _____

1. Are you male or female? *Please tick the box that applies to you.*

Male

Female

2. How old are you? *Please write your age in years in the box*

--

years

3. What is your ethnic group? Choose ONE section from A to E, and then tick the appropriate box to indicate your cultural background.

A. White

British

Irish

Other white background (please write in)

B. Mixed

White and Black Caribbean

White and Black African

White and Asian

other Mixed background (please write in)

C. Asian or Asian British

Indian

Pakistani

Bangladeshi

Any other Asian background (please write in)

D. Black or Black British

Caribbean

African

Any other Black background (please write in)

E. Chinese or other ethnic group

Chinese

Any other (please write in)

4. What is your religion

None

Christian

Buddhist

Hindu

Jewish

Muslim

Sikh

Any other religion (please write in)

Appendix D: Interviewee Information

<u>ID Code</u>	<u>Pseudonym</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Team</u>	<u>Years Policing</u>	<u>Interview Date</u>	<u>Interview Length</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Ethnicity</u>	<u>Gender</u>
SUPPSLT02	Harold	Supt	SLT	21	21/09/2010	1:06:59	44	White British	Male
INSPRT01	Bruce	Insp	RT2	23	05/12/2010	0:38:34	42	White British	Male
PCRT03	Jenny	PC	RT4	5	30/03/2011	0:44:35	29	White British	Female
PCRT04	Rebekah	PC	RT4	1	30/03/2011	0:44:44	24	Black Caribbean	Female
PCRT06	Elle	PC	RT4	2	31/03/2011	0:45:13	24	White British	Female
PCRT05	Neville	PC	RT4	4	31/03/2011	0:51:24	24	White British	Male
SGTRT01	Moses	Sgt	RT4	9	01/04/2011	1:02:08	38	White Irish	Male
PCRT01	Hugh	PC	RT4	2	06/04/2011	1:02:34	28	White British	Male
PCRT02	Jack	PC	RT4	11	06/04/2011	1:10:25	34	White British/Irish	Male
PCRT07	Dominick	PC	RT4	3	12/04/2011	0:56:12	24	White British	Male
SGTRT02	Harry	Sgt	RT4	8	13/04/2011	0:51:40	28	White British	Male
PCRT08	Marcus	PC	RT4	8	13/04/2011	0:55:06	26	White Welsh	Male
CMT01	Brenda	N/A	N/A	N/A	13/04/2011	1:15:45	60	White/Asian	Female
INSPRT02	Bradley	Insp	RT4	16	10/05/2011	1:18:07	35	White British	Male
PCOSU01	Callum	PC	OSU	6	18/05/2011	1:04:18	27	White British	Male
PCSNT01	Clarke	PC	Brunel	8	13/07/2011	0:43:23	43	White British	Male
PSSNT02	Steve	Sgt	Brunel	15	13/07/2011	0:43:45	?	White British	Male
DSDFS01	Oliver	DS	DFS	21	13/07/2011	1:11:26	40	White British	Male

PSSNT01	Richard	Sgt	Blackburn	14	20/07/2011	1:09:39	36	White British	Male
PCSNT02	Sam	PC	Blackburn	11	20/07/2011	1:24:29	32	White British	Male
SUPPSLT01	William	Supt	SLT	26	01/08/2011	0:58:27	48	White British	Male
DCI01	Jacob	DCI	SLT	27	01/08/2011	1:01:01	?	White British	Male
INSPSNT01	Ned	Insp	SLT	30	02/08/2011	1:28:04	?	White British	Male

Appendix E: Interview Schedule for PCs and PCSOs

- **Intro Questions**
 - Length of Service
 - Expectations as PC
 - Why join
 - Where headed
- **Role**
 - How do you see your current role?
 - How has your view of policing changed during your service?
 - What is your biggest challenge in this role?
 - What is best part of this role?
 - How do you manage the multitude of demands placed on you?
 - What role does the community play in your policing activities?
 - What do you think about the focus on community confidence in the Met?
 - How has your job changed in the last few years?
- **Communication**
 - How well do you know the policies that guide your actions on the street?
 - How would you describe your communication with the community?
 - Are there any instances you can think of where you had a communication problem with a civilian, not including situations involving a language barrier?
 - How would have changed your communication if you had a ‘do-over’ for that scenario?
- **Drugs**
 - What are the drug problems like in this area
 - Do you have a lot of acquisitive crime associated with drugs
 - What are the limits of your ability as a police officer to deal with drugs
 - What are some successes you’ve had with the drug problems in this area
 - What is your view of drug users
 - What would you change about the current legal framework around drugs
 - What would you change about the current policy about drugs in the Met
 - What makes you search someone for drugs
 - Are police the right group to be at the sharp end of the stick in combating drug use?
 - Do you think police can eradicate drugs? If not, what can they do?
 - What changes to drug laws would you make?
- **cannabis**
 - How does cannabis fit into your activities
 - How does the effort against cannabis affect your wider efforts as police?
 - How have things changed since the move to class C, and then back to B
 - What purpose to cannabis warning forms serve
 - What would be the ideal policy for dealing with cannabis
 - How are cannabis users different than other drug users?
 - How much does a gram of cannabis cost in your area? An 1/8? An Ounce?

- **Stop and search**
 - What is GOWISELY? Why is it there?
 - Do you always fill out a stop and search slip? Why wouldn't you?
 - How do you think the community views stop and search practices
 - What things do you think would improve this opinion.
 - How did you feel the first time you searched someone?
 - What directives have you been given about searching people?
 - What would make you decide to search someone?
 - Why do you think there is a disparity in the ethnic makeup of police searches?
- **Specific Officer Traits**
 - Can you think of a specific officer that does their job in an exemplary fashion?
 - What is it that makes them so good?
 - How do other officers engage in the same practices, but not to the same level as that officer?
 - Can you think of an officer who does not do their job well?
 - What about their work is problematic
 - How would you rate yourself as an officer?
 - What is your best quality as an officer?
- **Priorities**
 - What are your current priorities?
 - How do you go about addressing these priorities?
 - What role to statistics play in your policing practices
 - Do you feel pressure to meet statistical figures?
 - Does this pressure affect your policing practices in a way that makes you uncomfortable?
 - What matters most to you as a police officer?
- **Wrap Up Questions**
 - If you were Met Commissioner, what would you change?
 - Are there areas where you feel change is warranted but probably won't be addressed by the Met?
 - Is there anything you'd like to ask me?

Appendix F : Interview Schedule for SLT/Inspectors/Sergeants

- **Intro Questions**
 - Length of Service
 - Expectations as PC
 - Why join
 - Where headed
- **Role**
 - How do you see your current role?
 - How has your view of policing changed as you moved through the ranks?
 - What is your biggest challenge in this role?
 - What is best part of this role?
 - How do you manage the multitude of demands placed on you / your officers?
 - What role does the community play in your policing activities?
 - Who do you answer to?
 - What do you think about the focus on community confidence in the Met?
 - How has your job changed in the last few years?
- **Communication**
 - How well does the Met communicate larger policy goals to street level staff?
 - How well do officers communicate with each other?
 - How well do police communicate with the community?
 - Are there any instances you can think of where you had a communication problem with a civilian, not including situations involving a language barrier?
 - How would have changed your communication if you had a 'do-over' for that scenario?
 - How would you describe your style of leadership?
 - What do you expect, in terms of communication between your officers and the public, when your officers are at a call?
- **Drugs**
 - What are the drug problems like in this area
 - Do you have a lot of acquisitive crime associated with drugs
 - What are the limits of your ability as a police officer to deal with drugs
 - How do you instruct your officers to deal with the issue of drugs
 - What are some successes you've had with the drug problems in this area
 - What is your view of drug users
 - What would you change about the current legal framework around drugs
 - What would you change about the current policy about drugs in the Met
 - How would you like your officers to go about searching for drugs
 - Are police the right group to be at the sharp end of the stick in combating drug use?
 - Do you think police can eradicate drugs? If not, what can they do?
 - What changes to drug laws would you make?

- **cannabis**
 - How does cannabis fit into your police officer's activities
 - How does the effort against cannabis affect your wider efforts as police?
 - How have things changed since the move to class C, and then back to B
 - Why are cannabis warning forms important to your officers and you
 - What purpose to cannabis warning forms serve
 - What would be the ideal policy for dealing with cannabis
 - Why should officers search for cannabis?
 - How are cannabis users different than other drug users?
 - How much does a gram of cannabis cost in your area? An 1/8? An Ounce?

- **Stop and search**
 - What do you expect from your officers when they're searching people
 - How well do officers comply with the stop-slip requirements
 - How do you think the community views stop and search practices
 - What things do you think would improve this opinion.
 - How did you feel the first time you searched someone?
 - How do you think regularly searching civilians affects officers?
 - Do officers comply with stop-slip requirements?
 - What directives do you give your officers about searching people?
 - What would make you decide to search someone?
 - Why do you think there is a disparity in the ethnic makeup of police searches?

- **Specific Officer Traits**
 - Can you think of a specific officer that does their job in an exemplary fashion?
 - What is it that makes them so good?
 - How do other officers engage in the same practices, but not to the same level as that officer?
 - Can you think of an officer who does not do their job well?
 - What about their work is problematic

- **Priorities**
 - What are your current priorities?
 - How do you go about addressing these priorities?
 - What role to statistics play in your policing practices
 - Do you feel pressure to meet statistical figures?
 - Does this pressure affect your policing practices in a way that makes you uncomfortable?
 - What matters most to you as a police officer?

- **Wrap Up Questions**
 - If you were Met Commissioner, what would you change?
 - Are there areas where you feel change is warranted but probably won't be addressed by the Met?
 - Is there anything you'd like to ask me?

Appendix G : Working with The Teams

Dorn and Lee (Dorn and Lee 1999) highlight that the policy responses required by a modern police force vary across the ranks and the type of unit. I worked with two types of units that regularly implement aspects of drug policy initiatives in order to observe the different ways they approached their policing duties. This section will provide an insight in to the structure and culture within the two main RTs that were engaged, and also discuss the role of gatekeepers in this work.

This project entailed work with five different teams; two Response Teams, and three Safer Neighbourhood Teams. Response teams are comprised of up to 40 officers each, usually with four sergeants, and one Inspector. Some officers, usually three or four per team, will be qualified as RT drivers, meaning that they can drive the high-powered BMW that is called upon for pursuits or more serious incidents. Usually these are more senior or exemplary officers. There are supposed to be two of these cars on a team, but in practice there is often only one deployed. The RT car is quite powerful, and it was not unusual to hit 80mph or more when responding to a call in an RT car. About half the team will be qualified as a response driver. These officers operate the Vauxhall Astra Incident Response Vehicles (IRV), and are qualified to drive to emergencies with the lights and sirens on.

Each borough has a two letter abbreviation, and Watling's is WG. This abbreviation is worn on each officer's shoulder, next to their three number shoulder identifier. As there are two response teams in WG, they are designated WW and WS. The vehicles in a response team are also numbered. A 2-x vehicle is an IRV, 1-8 is a robbery response car, 1-1 is an unmarked car used for observing dangerous situations and doing drugs policing, and a single digit car is for the RT car. For example, WS22 would be an IRV from the WS team, and WW1 would be the RT car for WW.

Farmingham Response Team: RT2

The first team I began working with was Response Team 2 from Farmingham Police Station. I was put in to contact with one of their Sergeants by Supt Anera, and we arranged for me to start going out on with the team shortly thereafter. Team 2's Inspector was named Charles Kingsley, and I would later find out that he was actually

raised in Watling. Inspector Kingsley welcomed me to his team, and never once made me feel as though I was imposing on his or his officers' time. He conveyed strength and leadership with an ease and confidence that confidently toed the line between commander and colleague. He could join in with the banter at a canteen table, and quickly turn to issuing instructions from that same seat if a call came over the radio. This style seemed to resonate well with his officers. He gave them space to moan about the things officers moan about when not in the company of the higher ranks, but was also accessible and regularly took part in discussions with officers. He moved on mid-way through my fieldwork, and his replacement had a very different leadership style.

Inspector Rachael told her team on her first day as their commanding officer that she was, "...a response officer, always have been, and never want to be anything else." Where the other inspectors primarily based themselves in the station, Inspector Rachael insisted on being out on the street as much as possible. She would, at times, even make arrests and search suspects. This angered many officers because she would sometimes be too busy doing this to provide guidance on developing situations. She was an intimidating woman, with an almost permanent scowl. Replacing Inspector Kingsley, Inspector Rachael's style didn't gel with the team, and nearly every officer on team complained openly about her leadership. I rode with her only once, and we never developed a good working relationship. She declined to be interviewed for this research and I would mostly try to avoid her during my last several shifts with the team because I got the distinct sense that she had tired of my presence.

The Sergeants of the team were able middle management, and their organization skills inside the office were backed up by very strong street skills when they attended the scene of incidents. Of all the officers I met during my time in the field, Sergeant Sharon stands out as one of my favourites. With her semi-hidden smoking habit and a loud Yorkshire voice, Sgt Morrison did not abide bullshit. She could manoeuvre through the bureaucracy of the MPS, connect with the PCs on the team, and take control of incidents on the street with a calm but firm attitude. Response Team 2 had many officers who were young in service, but there were several old hands with more than 20 years on the job, and their seniority and knowledge were attributes called on regularly during difficult situations. The team's PCs were a tight-knit group, though

there were two officers on the team that were generally disliked by the rest of the team. It was explained to me that these disliked officers ‘winged about everything’ and chimed in with their opinion to conversations that they weren’t a part of. This apparently would have been a small problem, except these officers were also, ‘shit police. They don’t have the attitude or composure, and I don’t trust them to get my back.’ (PC Dave, RT2). One of the officers had failed public-order training because she couldn’t complete an obstacle that was considered fairly easy to overcome, and for several weeks afterwards she would talk about her old shoulder injury and how it probably was why she couldn’t pass the course.

This team was populated by more characters than any other I worked with. Each officer seemed to have carved out a distinct personality, as separate from their colleagues as possible. There was PC Mitch, a kindly older PC who never wore his bulletproof vest, wore loafers instead of boots, and seemed to shuffle along amiably even in rapidly escalating incidents. Mitch loved to go and converse with the local prostitutes to ensure they were safe and took a keen interest in protecting vulnerable people. Despite Mitch’s apparent care for people, he rabidly hated Chinese immigrants. On early morning patrols he would stop and search anyone he suspected of being an illegal immigrant, and detain them until they could prove to be in the country legally. There was also PC Paula an RT driver and former horse breeder.

The team, unlike others I would work with, made break times a very communal event. The canteen at Farmingham Station had erratic hours, and the kitchen itself was rarely open to serve food when the officers needed it on a night shift, but the dining area was the place to bring your meal when your allotted break came. Two tables were pushed together end to end near the back of the canteen area, and this is where Response Teams would always eat. During my time in Farmingham station with RT2 and other units, I never saw a non-RT unit eating at that table. Even visiting officers and Territorial Support Group teams somehow seemed to know that the table in question was the domain of the RT on duty at that time. The table’s location at the back of the canteen provided some empty space where officers could have enough room to sit with their colleagues whilst being able to shed their Personal Protective Equipment but keep it nearby. The tables also provided an area where the officers could sit and talk in relative comfort during their shift. It was the scene of storytelling, a break from the

dangers outside, and the place where you could be assured of a chocolate biscuit and a hot cup of tea at even the most unsocial hour.

Officers of RT2 covered the southern section of the borough, an area that included some particularly notorious parts of London due to especially violent crimes over the years. As previously mentioned, the ward of Farmingham itself was the only one in which black residents were a majority, and officers mentioned this fact to me on several occasions. Despite this racial makeup, there were no black officers amongst the 30 strong team. There were a number of women on the team, but almost the entire team was white-British. There was one male officer of Turkish decent, and one south-Asian female officer. This different makeup of the police and the citizenry of the area was quite stark, and several instances occurred where groups of young black residents had quite negative encounters with groups of all white police officers. This is not to assume ethnic differences caused the negative experiences, but it was certainly palpable that there was a difference in the makeup of the groups, and that sentiment was expressed by the residents.

Ulverston Response Team: RT4

The second RT I would work with was based at the other 24-hour response station in the borough. RT4 was led by Inspector Bradley, a man who had a sterner and formal leadership style than Inspector Kingsley in RT2. He was approachable and seemed genuinely concerned with the well-being of his officers, but he demanded good performance from them. Inspector Bradley was in his early 30s and had been a police officer his whole career. He was on a clear upward trajectory through the ranks and was respected as one of the best Inspectors in the borough by the Senior Leadership Team. He displayed what I felt was a genuine kindness towards me throughout my fieldwork, providing access to his team in whatever capacity I needed. At RT2 I had to call a PC or Sergeant to let me in to the building each time, but at RT4 I often called Inspector Bradley to let me in to the building. Admittedly this may have been in part because his office was right next to the main entrance, while the Sergeants' office was located much farther away. The team's opinion of Inspector Bradley was split. Some viewed him as, "a quality Inspector, good in tough spots and friendly, if a bit too driven" (PC Paul, RT4). Another regularly referred to the Inspector in a mock German

accent because of the pressure Inspector Bradley put on his officers to be the best rated RT in the borough.

RT4 at Ulverston rarely ate in the canteen onsite, but preferred to gather in the PC's Writing Room. Eating in there meant that you had to try and find space between the computers to put your food, but afforded the distinct advantage of giving the officers a space to themselves. A canteen can be filled with officers from any number of teams, or even senior staff members. The PC's Writing Room was for PC's only, and filled with the photo shopped pictures of colleagues, Police Federation announcements, and the kettle. So serious was the sanctity of that space, no one ever actually included the words 'PC' when describing the space. It was simply, 'the writing room'. During the debate about police pay initiated by Home Secretary Theresa May, several pictures of her appeared on the walls of the writing room adorned with sketches of numerous penises pointing towards her face. The jokes that were too crass for crime scenes or Parade found a welcome reception in the writing room. Sergeants stepped in to that office only rarely, and usually to let people know when they could go home at the end of the shift. This was less the case at RT2 in Farmingham. There, the writing room was located right between the Sergeant's office and the Inspector's office. Still a place of sanctity, the lack of privacy meant that the dirtiest jokes had to wait until one could extricate oneself to the car-park area where privacy could be ensured.

RT4 had many officers with less than 5 years of service, including several that had started their career as a PCSO. The officers on RT4 would have been the most random group of people assembled if it had not been for their shared current profession and uniform. They came from all walks of life, social classes, and backgrounds. The former west-end dancer turned police officer riding with the former-paratrooper. The action oriented twenty-something officer riding with the 50 something female rookie nicknamed 'Gran'. The ginger Sergeant with a soft voice sitting across from the hard-as-nails 'Sergeant God'. I came to spend more time with this team than RT2 in Farmingham, and I don't know why that was exactly. There was a level of team cohesiveness at RT4 that made it a good place to work. I cannot say that I was able to glean better data from RT4 than RT2, or that the experiences were any more or less exciting with the different units. There are perhaps then only two reasons why I spent more time with RT4 than RT2. Most important of the two, RT4 allowed me in to their

professional lives with a seamless ease that I didn't experience at RT2. This is not to downgrade the value of the data or the welcome I received from individual officers at RT2, but simply describes how the label of outsider seemed to shine less brightly across my forehead with RT4. Secondly, and far less importantly, RT4 would sometimes give me a ride home at the end of a shift. The near universal refrain by officers in that situation being, "It's the Commissioner's petrol, not mine".

One factor that improved my working relationship with RT4 was being involved in a car crash with officers from RT4 in the first month of my fieldwork with them. During a response to an 'I grade' call an hour in to a day shift on a frosty Sunday morning, I was in the backseat of the RT car driven by PC Marcus when we were broadsided by a Renault while speeding through an intersection on a red light. No one was seriously injured in the accident, but we were all shaken up. Personally my neck hurt a lot, but I refused to acknowledge the pain since the neither of the officers involved appeared to be injured. I stood outside in the sub-zero temperatures for two hours as all manner of officers came to take evidence and evaluate the accident. As I was still somewhat new to the team, I didn't know what I could and couldn't talk about with the officers involved in the crash for fear that I might somehow taint evidence or bias future testimony. It was very lonely and cold standing in the middle of the closed off street, pieces of both vehicles at my feet. I felt like I was watching some movie unfold around me as the police tape went up and ambulances started arriving. My relationship with Marcus would be because somewhat awkward as a result of the accident. He was aware that I had filled out a witness statement, and for several months the Crown Prosecution Service hung the threat of prosecution over him. Having not seen my statement, he couldn't be sure if I'd written a favourable version of the accident. During that time he wasn't able to drive for the MPS, a role he cherished deeply. PC Marcus made a point of telling the team how much he enjoyed sitting as a passenger and not having to do anything during that period. At one point I ran in to Marcus in the car park, and during our conversation I slipped in that I had written a 'good' witness statement, and that I couldn't see how CPS would pursue a case. Things between us improved after that.

The accident, painful as it might have been, bonded me with officers of the team. When the story came up over the next few weeks, I was able to engage in the

storytelling process. In those moments I was no longer the random civilian listening passively to stories of past adventures. I am confident that the experience strengthened my position with the team. The fact that I refused medical treatment, stayed cool in an otherwise traumatic situation, and stayed on to finish the rest of the shift were certainly noticed by officers. Several commented on my composure and pointed out that I had already experienced a fairly rare event for police officers. Some officers questioned whether my presence on the team was a good omen, preventing more serious injuries during the accident, or a bad omen in that my presence caused the accident. This was debated several times over the course of the next few weeks, and again when I was in another, much less serious accident, while with two other members of the team a few months later.

Gatekeepers

The issue of gatekeepers in ethnography's well documented by the likes of Liebow (1967) and Whyte (1955). Gatekeepers at the ground level can play an instrumental role in what you get to see and how you see it. The command structure of the police may have helped overcome some obstacles as team leaders were told by Superintendent Anera that I would be joining their unit. While this would not ensure that individual officers would be willing to participate, it did lay down an expectation that was beneficial for my access. Similar methodology has proven successful at generating confidence and support from the ranks to enable effective research (Wilson 1968, Smith and Gray 1983, Collison 1995). Due to the nature of this work I was presented with several gatekeepers in the form of team leaders, each one requiring individualized relationship maintenance. This became even more important when Supt Anera left Watling just two months in to my fieldwork. At that point, I lost my patron in the borough's Senior Leadership Team, and had to rely on the team leaders continued support to maintain my access. As access was never guaranteed, but had to be negotiated on an on-going basis, I remained constantly vigilant to my perceived role, the attitude of the gatekeepers, and the officers themselves (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995). I was fortunate that I never experienced (or at least was aware) of any time where the gatekeepers tried to keep me away from sensitive, disorderly, or troublesome situations (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995).

Working with Teams in the Field

At the time fieldwork began in Watling, officers on Response Teams worked 12 hour shifts, typically doing three day shifts followed by two nights. The shifts ran either from 6-6 (at Farmingham) or 7-7 (At Ulverston), with two one-hour breaks built in. Given the frantic pace of operations in the borough it was rare that officers would get more than an hour of break time in total during a shift, often split in to several small chunks of time. This pattern changed in April of 2011, switching to an eight hour shift. When working with a Response Team, I would arrive about 15 minutes before the scheduled start of the shift, and make my way to the briefing room after being let in to the building. The first activity for the team was to Parade.

The Parade unfortunately lacked any marching and was just a briefing with a PowerPoint featuring recent crimes, wanted suspects, and missing persons. Officers also received their vehicle assignments and break times during Parade¹⁷⁵. Those arriving late to parade had to purchase donuts for the team during the shift¹⁷⁶. SNTs also did a version of Parade, but given the different start times for various team members, it was not a formal briefing. The few minutes before the Parade started were always the most challenging part of the shift for me because it was the most relaxed time for the officers. There wasn't any suspect fleeing or suspicious person loitering nearby to take their attention. At any moment they could have leeringly turned their attention to me and my intrusion in to their job (Skolnick 1966). But they did not. My presence, like that of a PC from another team, a Special Constable on a single shift, or any other random MPS staff never outwardly disturbed the quiet banter and boot-tying that proceeded the start of the briefing.

At my first visit to a team I would be introduced by the team Sergeant, and asked to say a few words. These were critical moments and I should probably have had a well-rehearsed speech on tap. I did not. The lack of prepared rhetoric was deliberate

¹⁷⁵ In what is perhaps a sign of the bureaucratised nature of the profession, assignments were not read out by name. Rather the vehicle call-sign was read out, followed by the shoulder numbers of the assigned officers, and their assigned break periods. For example, 'Whiskey Whiskey two-one, nine seven seven and three five six, 23 and 02.' Though pairings would often remain the same for a month of shifts, the assignments were read out at each parade.

¹⁷⁶ Ordinary donuts were tolerated, but Krispy Kreme donuts were considered the standard to be met, especially for officers young in service. Forcing an officer to incur a financial penalty for informal punishments was strictly forbidden, but the practice was accepted without complaint.

because I feared that a well-rehearsed speech would sound like a well-rehearsed speech, and not an honest accounting of my purpose there. I told the officers that I was a student¹⁷⁷, and that the purpose of my being with them was to observe how street policing of drugs took place in Watling. I confirmed that I was not a reporter, that they were free to not participate without fear of repercussion from the MPS, and that anything they told me would be anonymised before entering the public domain.

After attending the pre-shift parade I would either be assigned to a car by one of the team's Sergeants, or would request to go out with a specific car. Usually I was assigned by the Sergeants for the first few shifts with a unit, but I would branch out as my familiarity with the team grew. I wanted to ensure that I had a chance to ride with most officers on a team early on in the process, and was reasonably successful at accomplishing this. Additionally, asking officers myself instead of being assigned by the Sergeant gave the officer the chance to decline participation more easily. Though none ever did, I felt this approach was more ethical on the grounds that it was more consistent with the principle of informed consent.

Starting out with one car did not always mean I would stay with that team for the entire shift. Arrests take a long time to process, and the paperwork involved in processing them does not lend itself to allowing an officer to converse with a researcher. This was especially so if there were multiple arrests or it was for a complicated case. In one notable instance, I went out with WG22, and within five minutes he had arrested three Chinese men on immigration violations. It was a good thing I switched cars, because he was tied up processing the men for nearly seven hours. While I was interested to see the range policing activity and how drugs fit in to that, spending seven hours watching an officer do paperwork on immigration violations was not going to generate the data I needed. I had limited time in the field and sometimes had to make the decision to pursue activities that would generate better opportunities for relevant data collection.

¹⁷⁷ Mastrofski et al. (1998) note that the role of 'student' may be less threatening to officers than police staff or government researchers engaged in the same activity.

If a situation arose where officers would be off the street for a considerable period, I had a choice to make. Did I wait, or did I join another team? There were a myriad of factors that went in to making a decision on this, but more often than not I would join another team if the delay was estimated to be for more than two hours. Officers seemed to support these decisions by and large, and to understand why I would not want to wait around for several hours. On occasions where I did wait around, I largely found that I had no one to talk to. Sitting in the station allowed me to absorb quite a bit of data from listening to the radio, making tea, smoking with officers on their breaks, and writing up field-notes; but it was not as informative to do so.

When a new car came in I would tell them my previous team was ‘stuck writing up multiple bodies’, and could I join them. Upon getting in to a vehicle with an officer for the first time, I would reiterate the basic confidentiality and anonymity issues I informed them of when I first joined the team. My spiel went something like this:

Hi guys, before we head out I just need to remind you of a few things. Firstly, I’m not a reporter, or DPS¹⁷⁸. I’m a PhD student doing research on street-level policing of drugs. Basically I’m interested to see how and when drugs become a part of what you have to deal with as police. Anything you say to me today is anonymised, and by that I mean that I won’t ever tell anyone your name, your unit, or what borough we’re working in when I write up my research. The Met knows the units I’m working with, but I’ll never give them officer names for anything you say. You don’t have to let me join you during your shift, and if you don’t want me along at any point, for any reason, you can just drop me off at the station without any repercussions I’d prefer it if you did that as opposed to just leaving me in the middle of Farmingham, but you are welcome to do just that if you find my company too awful to bear. When we’re out and about I tend to come along no matter the situation, but you are free to direct me as you see fit if I’m doing anything that you think jeopardizes you, your partner, the civilians involved, or my own safety. Basically, I can be told to piss off just like you might any other citizen who is too close to a dangerous or intense situation. I don’t engage in policing activities, but if you’re taking a kicking you can call on me for help like you would a civilian. I will tend to stay out of your way and not engage with citizens, but if people ask who I am you can tell them whatever you want. I’d prefer if you told them that I’m a researcher, but if the situation is such that you need to tell them something different, go right ahead. Are you guys okay with all that? Any questions?

¹⁷⁸ DPS is the Department for Professional Standards, and they handle internal disciplinary matters.

No officer ever directly turned me away from joining them, though a few seemed a bit suspicious of me at first. I solved this by finding an opportunity to join the suspicious officer when they were paired with an officer I had ridden with before.

In the car we tended to talk about a variety of things well beyond the subject of the research. A natural transition into policing and drugs issues was easily achieved once the police had a call or spotted someone suspicious. By letting the topic of policing emerge naturally I was able to achieve two important things. Firstly, I cemented my own position by not being excessively nosey. If I had pressed for information before officers were comfortable with my presence I might have been seen to be using them as research subjects, mining them for information. Secondly, the actual topics emerged more holistically, and were not limited to what I thought we should be discussing. For example, I let officer broach the subject of ethnicity. Once the topic was there, then I would expand and question as needed, but I believe this led to a more comfortable relationship with the officers. Towards the end of the fieldwork I would occasionally adopt a more direct line of questioning when out with officers with whom I had developed a good relationship. This was done in order to clarify previous information I had been given, or to probe deeper in to a line of questioning begun during a previous shift. This targeted effort elicited useful data, but I used it sparingly because I felt it drained a bit of the social capital I had built up with officers.

Upon arriving at the scene of incidents I would exit the vehicle with the officers. However, this was not always an easy feat. Firstly, the room behind the passenger in a Vauxhall Astra is quite limited, and many times my foot would get stuck underneath the seat. Moreover, sometimes the child lock would not have been disabled when I first joined the car. This would leave me unable to open the door from the inside, and I would have to ask the officers to let me out of the vehicle. Easily corrected once noticed, this still provided a bit of an annoyance for both parties, and it was a clear indication of outsider status with the team.

Jumping out of the car quickly was an important aspect of police activities. For officers it represented being in control and providing an urgent response to people in need. For me, it meant not getting left behind. In one incident I was with PC Gareth as we did an area search for a robbery suspect. His partner had got out to search through a

street market on foot, and was to meet us at the end of an alley. Just as we turned into the alley a youth perfectly fitting the description of the suspect spotted us and bolted towards open parkland. PC Gareth was out of the car in a flash, but my foot got stuck, and in two seconds it took to free it I was already 20 metres behind him. I ran as hard as I could for nearly 300 metres, but kept losing distance as they skirted around corners and hopped over fences. Suddenly I turned a corner and they were nowhere to be seen. Without a radio to hear what was happening, I made my way back to the car. A few minutes later PC Gareth emerged from the gap between two small blocks of flats. He was covered in sweat, but empty-handed.

Though I took deliberate care to not appear to be a police officer, I made the decision to follow officers if they engaged in a foot pursuit. In vehicle pursuits I had no say in the matter, and frankly the adrenaline rush of a vehicle pursuit makes it impossible to maintain the dispassionate demeanour of an observer¹⁷⁹. Foot chases were different. For a start, they were more frequent. I was involved in only two genuine vehicle pursuits, but five lengthy foot pursuits and two additional instances that ended after just a few meters.

I chose to take part in foot pursuits for several reasons. Most importantly I wanted to see how officers understood their role, and part of that was seeing how they reacted to a 'decamp'¹⁸⁰. It also was a way of separating me from the image they may have had of a researcher. Officers would often ask me during my first shift with them what time I would be going home. Officers mentioned that the few civilians who had done a ride-along never stayed for the full tour, and they never wanted to see the boring bits of police work. My response was always the same, 'I go home when you go home.' I felt that if I was going to be there for the full shift, I might as well be there for the full experience. This also was part of the constant struggle to gain and maintain respect in the macho environment I was working in. Also, to be totally frank, I didn't want to be

¹⁷⁹ So powerful is that rush that the Met has a special sticker placed in front of the passenger seat that details exactly the information an officer needs to put out over the Main-set during the pursuit. Listening to other units call out a pursuit over the Main-set, their voices take on a frenzied pitch, a combination of the adrenaline, speeding car, and the fact that there are probably three radio channels suddenly ablaze with information.

¹⁸⁰ A 'decamp' was the general term for a foot pursuit in progress, but it was most often used in conjunction with someone exiting a vehicle and running away. A call of 'Decamp! Decamp! Decamp!' over the radio generated a significant response from other units, second only to the emergency button being activated.

stuck alone with the car. I wasn't a police officer, and sitting by myself in a police car was an open invitation for civilians to misconstrue my role and identity. Luckily foot pursuits were rare, brief, and largely an empty gesture. Officers in their late twenties or older, loaded down with an extra 8-10kgs of gear, aren't nearly as fleet of foot as the youths who ran from them.

My goal upon arriving at an incident was to stand close enough to hear exactly what was transpiring without being in the way, or appearing to act as a police officer. I made sure to never stand between an officer and civilian/suspect, or to block in a civilian so that that they were surrounded by what they might assume were three police officers. Positioning myself in this manner meant I was sometimes a bit of an unknown quantity to civilians interacting with officers. It was clear to most people that I was with the officers, but not one myself. What I was remained a mystery to many, and I can only guess at the explanations they came up with for my presence¹⁸¹. At one scene a group of youths was being stopped after it was reported that they were harassing people and knocking over bins. Lined up against the wall, the crew of 14 year olds gave flippant answers to the officers and giggled at their own comments. At one point a small boy who appeared to have carefully shaped the faint moustache just beginning to appear on his upper lip looked over at me. Studying me from head to toe and back again, he turned to the officer searching his friend. "Who's that guy with the thing on his face¹⁸²?" Before I could say anything, the officer snapped back, "What does it matter if he's the king of Siam or CID? You need to be worried about me, not him."

Sometimes I ended up in the middle of a rapidly escalating situation. In one instance I had positioned myself about four meters behind a group of three officers who were talking with an apparently drunk and belligerent 19 year old black male about 80 metres away from a large warehouse party. A young man had been shot only blocks away a few days before, and both police and the community were on edge. Suddenly from behind me a group of ten young men appeared, yelling at the officers about the fact they were harassing their friend. They seemed to understand that I was not a police

¹⁸¹ This ethical issue will be covered in detail at a later point in this chapter.

¹⁸² I have a port-wine-stain birthmark on my left cheek.

officer, and did not direct any of their comments to me¹⁸³, but I was now between the officers and the group of young men, trapped by a shrub wall behind me. As the tension escalated, other officers who had been standing on the periphery of the initial stop came rushing up behind the group. I felt trapped, and the tension continued to mount as the volume of the shouting increased. Eventually I slipped away from the crowd when the man involved in the initial stop was handcuffed and dragged away. This action caused the crowd to follow him towards the waiting van, and I headed back to the car I had arrived in.

I was authorized by the police to accompany them into people's homes during incidents. If it was a particularly small home or an intense situation, I stayed near the door. I made sure to enter the premises last, and stand quietly without touching anything. In homes I faced a particular ethical dilemma. While officers were allowed to enter someone's home in an emergency, I was not an officer, and therefore could be asked to leave. I tried, whenever the situation allowed for it, to inform people that I was not a police officer, and that they could ask me to leave at any point. Sometimes the situation was too tense, the visit too brief, or the person too inebriated to allow me to disclose this information. Out of more than 300 incidents I attended, at least 50 involved entering someone's home. On only one occasion was I asked to leave, and I did so courteously and promptly.

The incident in question occurred in a small flat strewn with old fast food wrappers and furnished with only two folding beach chairs, a TV, and a small bed. The man who lived there had apparently invited a woman home with him from the pub after a ten hour drinking session so the two of them could smoke cannabis together. The female victim reported that after they were high the man tried to grope her breast and kiss her, and she called the police. While the police were talking to him in his bathroom, he became quite agitated. He started screaming at them all to leave, but they told him they would not. When he turned to me and started screaming that I had to leave I politely excused myself and explained to the officers that as a researcher I was obliged to respect his wishes at this time. He was quite confused by my withdrawal, and

¹⁸³ Though several did keep looking at me, as if trying to decipher who I might be. My jacket was zipped up, so they could not see that I had a bullet proof vest on.

temporarily calmed down as he tried to process what had just happened. He was subsequently arrested for sexual assault.

This encounter produced one of the oddest moments of my fieldwork. A few minutes before I was asked to leave, I was standing in the living room of the flat, and the female victim came up to me. Before I could say anything, she moved quite close to me and began to study my face. I have a Port Wine Stain birthmark on my left cheek, and her eyes wandered all over my face for about ten seconds. I stood there silently. She smelled of beer, sweat, and cigarettes, but I remained still as she scanned me from only inches away. After she had thoroughly examined every pore, she turned, walked a few feet away, and then turned back to face me. She said, ‘You’ve got a beautiful soul inside you, and it radiates such intense energy, such goodness, such beauty. That’s why you’ve got a birthmark. It’s an expression of how much goodness shines inside you.’ With that, she turned and pulled out a half-smoked joint from her purse... in front of a room full of police officers

In general I remained with a team for as long as possible. At times this meant being in quite boring situations. During one large fire I was with an IRV that was assigned to block access to the street, about 200 metres from the fire itself. For three and a half hours we stood in the cold, the officers directing people on alternative routes to their destination as the early morning darkness slowly gave way to the dawn. We were stuck there for an hour past the end of the shift, and I politely declined the officers’ offer to have a unit come and take me back to the station¹⁸⁴.

Work with Safer Neighbourhood Teams

Shifts spent with the SNTs were quite different from shifts with the RTs. They tended to be much slower in tempo, with fewer incidents, and less sense of urgency. SNTs accomplish a great deal of their work though foot patrols in their assigned neighbourhoods. As such, shifts with an SNT meant a lot of walking. Patrols were

¹⁸⁴ It should be noted that I didn’t spend the entire time standing with the officers by the police tape. At one point they suggested that I go closer to the actual action and see what was going on. I ended up spending about 15 minutes leaned up against a fire truck, having a front-row view of the fire-fighters attacking the large fire. It was certainly a spectacular sight to watch, however the smell of smoke permeated my coat and lasted for several weeks.

directed to pass by known trouble spots, to follow up with complaints from civilians, and to generally ‘fly the flag’ as it were.

A typical shift with an SNT involved accompanying one of the PCs or PCSOs while walking through the area. These team members had developed an intimate knowledge of the areas they worked in. They knew all the back alleys and the names and addresses of all the problematic members of the community. Their slower pace allowed them to absorb details of the neighbourhood, and they would often encounter a friendly nod or smile from a citizen they recognized. I generally walked alongside the team member, free from the physical barriers of an IRV that clearly defined my place compared to the officers’. Walking alongside someone as an equal is quite different than always having to sit in the back seat. While this may have made me appear to be another officer to someone taking a cursory glance, I maintained the same positioning and role during encounters alongside SNT members as I did with RTs.

Appearance

I also made sure to keep my goatee-beard and hair trimmed short, and always showed up freshly shaved. My coat was a fairly standard black North Face waterproof jacket during cold weather, and a soft-shell fleece in slightly warmer situations. Both were rugged, practical, and not flashy in any way. I made sure to always have a standard kit when in the field. This included a small torch, a pair of latex gloves¹⁸⁵, chewing gum, an extra pen, my iPhone¹⁸⁶, an external iPhone battery, and a handkerchief¹⁸⁷. The gum proved especially useful in encouraging dialogue. On several occasions when conversation had dried up as we wearily passed the early morning hours of a shift, offering a piece of gum to the officers would reignite discussion. The torch also came in handy several times when an officer would either have forgotten, or was experiencing a problem with their torch. All officers on an RT carried a duty-bag (usually a small duffel bag) that they left in the boot of the vehicle. This contained various forms, equipment, high visibility coat, snacks, and the other various bits and

¹⁸⁵ Though I had no interest in getting involved in emergency situations, I was around situations where there were considerable amounts of blood, and the potential of being called to assist in a medical situation was always possible. I specifically purchased a box of gloves that were a different colour to the off-white ones worn by police and medics.

¹⁸⁶ More on the use of the iPhone as a research tool can be found in the Methods chapter.

¹⁸⁷ Most of these items were kept inside the pockets on my bullet proof vest, making them bulge just like that of officers’ vests which were full of pocket books and other bits and bobs.

bobs that might be necessary over the course of their shift. I too carried a bag, though smaller than the standard officer's bag. In there I always kept my recorder, consent forms, notebooks, snacks, and extra warm clothes. The bag could have stayed at the station during shifts with RTs, but putting it in the vehicle along with the officer's was a powerful symbolic gesture that I was joining them. When out with SNTs the bag was left in the station since I usually accompanied them during foot patrols.

Appendix H : Freedom of Information Request

August 5, 2012

Dear Sir/ Madam,

I am a PhD Candidate in the Social Policy Department at the London School of Economics and Political Science. I am currently engaged in research that will be used to help complete my PhD. I am seeking data related to the implementation of drugs policy and community policing initiatives by Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) units across the city. I also have specific questions relating to the borough of [Watling]. This information is sought under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA 2000).

Community Policing Data:

Please provide me with any reports (either formal briefs/memorandum, or tables outlining the data) that discuss the results of the Public Attitude Survey (PAS) for the MPS as a whole.

Please also provide any reports on the PAS specifically for the borough of [Watling], for the years 2006-2012.

Please provide me with any reports that discuss the results of Victim Response Surveys (VRS) for the MPS as a whole.

Please also provide any reports on the VRS specifically for the borough of [Watling], for the years 2006-2012.

What is the budget allocated for Community Policing in the MPS for each year between 2006-2012?

What is the budget allocated for Community Policing to the borough of [Watling] for the years 2006 - 2012.

Please provide me with the daily engagement reports for the [Bunsen Terrace, Brunel Gardens, and Blackburn] Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNT) in the borough of [Watling] from August 2009 – August 2012.

Please provide me with any reports on the effectiveness of the community policing initiatives of the MPS as a whole.

Please also provide any reports on the effectiveness of community policing initiatives for the borough of [Watling].

Please provide me with any 'heat maps' showing the community confidence levels in the borough of [Watling], based on data gathered between 2008-2012.

Drugs Policing Data:

Please provide me with copies of the Monthly Report on Drug Crime produced for the monthly management briefing and the Drugs Directorate that contains information on the FYTD statistics on drugs crime within the MPS.

Please provide me with any policy, tactical, or strategic guidance documents that deal with police enforcement of drug laws, and are issued to leaders of SNT, Drug Squads, or Response Teams in the borough of [Watling] between 2004-2012.

Please provide me with the total number of stop and searches taking place under S.23 of the Misuse of Drugs Act, the success rate for finding prohibited items, the number of seizures for each class of drug, and the number of cannabis warning forms issued, broken down by borough, and covering the FY2004/2005-2011/2012.

Please note that I am making this request based on evidence in my research that several data collection softwares are currently in use by various public bodies. It is on this basis that I am confident the questions above should not violate the cost restrictions set out in s. 12 FOIA 2000 and the s.3 of the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004. I am more than happy to work with you in regards to prioritising certain sections and deadlines for responding with the material if that will help you put together the various items I've requested. For the purpose of clarity, I would also like to confirm that the information being requested relates only to datasets of a depersonalised nature. Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me via the below email address. I look forward to your written reply, within 20 business days as specified by section 10 of the FOIA 2000.

Yours sincerely,



Daniel Bear
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Appendix I : Thematic Coding Framework

<u>Primary Thematic Grouping</u>	<u>Secondary Thematic Grouping</u>	<u>Tertiary Thematic Grouping</u>
Cannabis Issues		
	Alternatives to Cannabis Warning System	
	Cannabis as part of larger crime issues	
	Cannabis without Detection	
	Disposal of Cannabis	
	Frustration with situation	
	Mental Health Issues	
	Not a Community Priority	
	Passion for finding cannabis	
	Reasons for Going After Cannabis	
		Only in it for the detection
		Responding to Community Demands
	Views on Cannabis warning system	
	Who Gets Caught	
Communication		
	Communicating Large Scale Policy Goals	
	with management	
Community Issues		
	Can't Meet Community's Expectations	
	Community Perception of police	
	Dislike the Community	
	Efforts to Improve Community Confidence	
	Hostile Community Reaction	
	Not understanding the community's feelings	
	Suspicious of Community	
	Who Participates in Dialogue	
Creating the Other		
	Reciprocating Respect	
	Sympathetic Addict	
	Tax Payer vs. Non Tax Payer	
	Worthy Victim	
Discretion		
	Changes to discretion	
Domestic violence		
Expectation of joining police		
	Becoming Police	
	Community Confidence Part of Imagined Role	
Improving		

Community Confidence		
	Challenges in Working with the community	
		Disparate Nature of Community
	Superficial Changes	
	Visible Sign of Community's confidence	
Incorporating Priorities		
Managing Drug Problems		
	Futility	
	Getting Small Amounts	
	long term success of drug war	
Participation		
	People Don't Participate	
Performance management		
	Effect on Policing Practice	
	Alternative Performance Management	
	Pressure for detections	
		Not Getting Credit for good policing
	Alignment with Working Practices	
Politicisation of Policing		
Problems in the past		
Procedural Justice		
	As a part of standard policing	
	As a tool for compliance	
	Using Procedural Justice Against Citizen	
Psychological Needs of Officers		
	Achieving something	
	Getting something tangible	
	Managing Stress	
	Not being bothered	
Race issues		
	Denying race as an issue	
	Different Reactions between whites and blacks	
	Going after people because of criteria, not skin colour	
	Justifying Racial Discrepancy in Stop and Search	
	Reverse Racism	

'Reality' of Policing		
	Constrained by Job	
	Doing something worthwhile	
	Empty Efforts	
	Making Things Work	
	Pessimism	
	Policing as Excitement	
	Policing as Boring	
	Product of Experiences	
	Professionalism	
Role of Response Officers		
	Adaptable to the situation	
	Being a Hero	
	Broadening of Role	
	Burnout	
	Dealing with Non-Police Matters	
	Disconnect from Community	
	Job is Challenging	
	Looking Down on SNTs	
	Prioritisation of Time	
	Proactivity	
	Response Role in Community Confidence	
	Role of 11 Car	
	Shit Calls	
Role of SNT		
	Anti-Social Behaviour	
	Developing Communication Lines	
	Good for Promotion	
	Intelligence Building	
	Long-Term Investigations	
	Right Person for SNT	
	Telling Community The Problem	
Stop and Search		
	The Attitude Test	
	Causes for Stop and Search	
		Just Search Everybody
		Look like they need a search
		looking at the car
		Search for Suspects
		When To Not Search
	Community Engagement with Stop and Search	
	Community Reaction to Stop and Search	
	Handling Groups	
	Keep it casual	
	Motivation to stop and search	
	Officer Safety	

	Only Guilty People Object	
	Preserve Dignity	
	Reaction to Performing Your First Stop	
		Changes to attitude of conducting searches
	Resentment at Stop and Search	
	Section 60 and it's use	
		Avoiding its use
	Stop and Account	
	Stop slips	
		Reasons to not give a stop slip
		The necessity of stop slips
	Stopping the wrong people	
Using Force		
View of Drug Users		
	Different types of users	
	Friends who used drugs	
	Singular Focus is Drugs	
	Young People and Drugs	
View of Drugs		
	Come Down Hard on Drugs	
	Drugs as unstoppable	
	Drugs Cause Crime	
	Finding Drugs By Accident	
	Harm of Drugs	
	Some Sympathy	
	Views on Cannabis	
War mentality		
	Policing VS Serving	
	Against Harm	
	Normative Order	