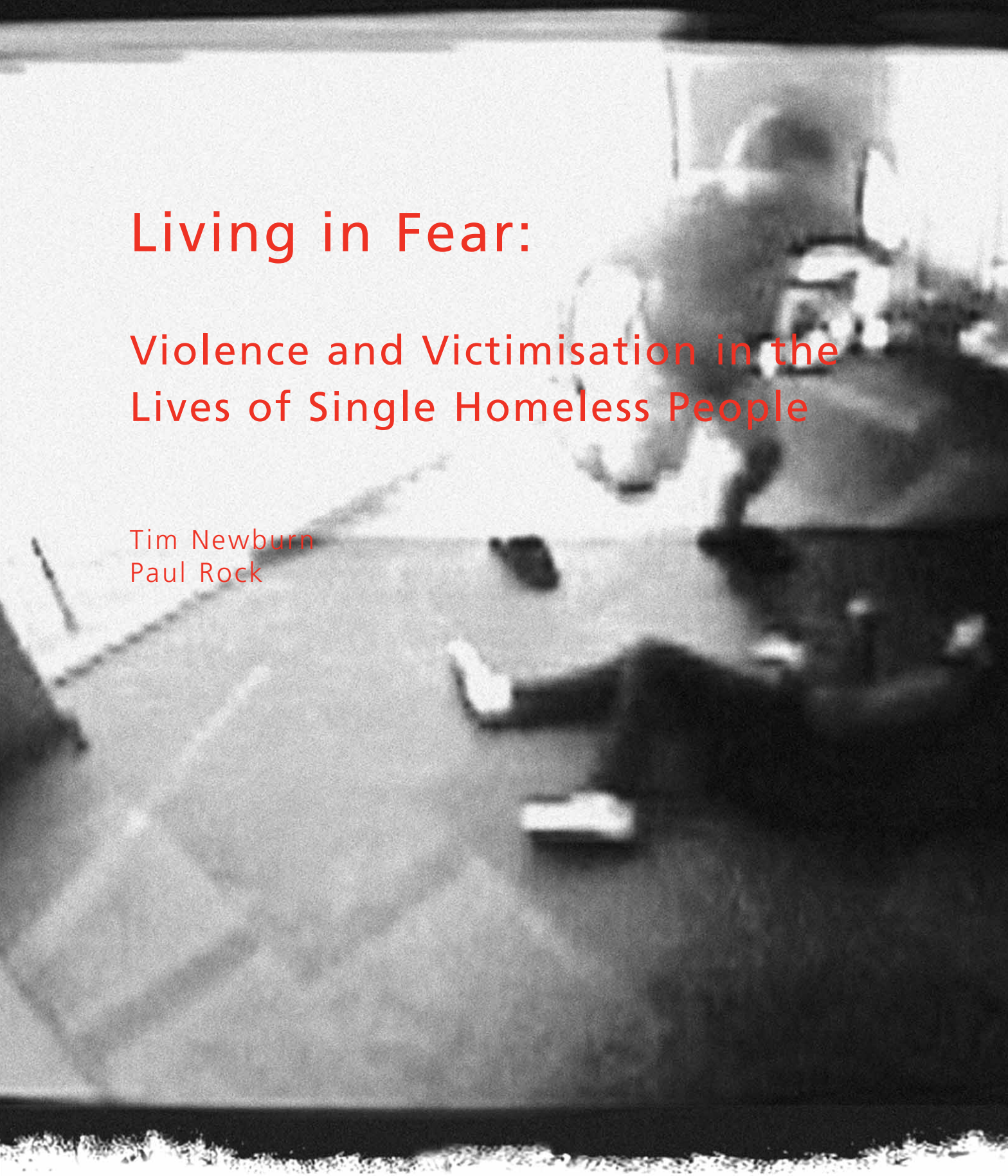

Living in Fear:

Violence and Victimisation in the Lives of Single Homeless People

Tim Newburn
Paul Rock

LSE Mannheim Centre for CRIMINOLOGY

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Contents

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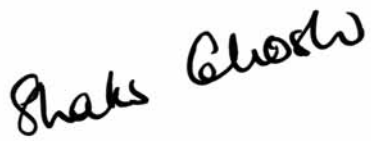
Foreword

Homelessness is a complex issue, perhaps no more so than when it converges with issues of crime and anti-social behaviour. The central message of this report is as simple & stark as it is shocking – homeless people are experiencing levels of violence and victimisation that are absolutely unacceptable in a modern and civilized society and that is something that must change.

There are of course solutions, some of which are outlined in the final chapter of this report, but the fundamental challenge of the coming months and years is to generate the interest, outrage and political will to bring about change. This report is the latest contribution that Crisis is making to this issue – and until it is solved it will not be the last.



Shaks Ghosh
Chief Executive, Crisis

Executive Summary

Homeless people are amongst the most vulnerable people in our society, suffering from acute levels of poverty and social exclusion. Now in a new study commissioned by Crisis, researchers at the London School of Economics have revealed that they are also victims of exceptionally high levels of violence, crime and victimisation. Alarmingly much of it is committed by the general public and for the most part it goes unreported.

Based upon interviews with homeless men and women living on the street and in temporary accommodation in three cities across the UK (London, Oxford and Cambridge), this work brings to light the stark reality that exists for homeless people as they face persistent abuse and threats on a day-to-day basis leaving them traumatised and living in fear.

Homeless peoples experiences of violence & crime

Whilst crime figures in the UK are falling overall, homeless peoples experience of violence and crime remains staggeringly high. Compared to the general public they are 13 times more likely to have experienced violence and 47 times more likely to be victims of theft. Almost one in ten of those interviewed had experienced sexual assault in the last year, around half had experienced damage to property and one in five had been a victim of burglary.

While crime levels are dropping across the UK, for homeless people the rates are staggering:

- 20% of homeless people suffered a burglary, whilst the British Crime Survey reported that 3.2% of all households in England and Wales had done so
- 67% of the homeless had suffered a theft, whilst 1.4% of all adults in England and Wales had done so.
- 43% of the homeless had experienced damage to property, whilst 7% of all households had done so.
- Just over half of the sample, 52% had experienced violence in the past year, in contrast to 4% of the general population
- 8% of the homeless had been sexually assaulted, but the British Crime Survey had encountered too few cases ‘to count.’

Alarmingly much of the violence experienced by homeless people seems to be coming from the general public who account for 32% of violent acts, 33% of threats, 24% of the incidents of theft, and 3% of sexual assaults against people who are homeless.

For rough sleepers, such as George in Oxford, being in the public eye places them at unexpected and disturbing levels of risk:

"A group of guys walked passed obviously on a night out. They returned later on. I was asleep and was woken up by one of them smacking me in the mouth. The other kicked me and pulled me by my jacket. Finally, the third youth told his mates to leave me alone. They saw me on my own. It happens a lot."

People in all stages of homelessness may find themselves targeted, however people who were on the streets or were 'out in the open' were especially vulnerable. Some temporary housing settings may carry their own risks. Mark from Cambridge sustained alarming injuries when a stranger attempted to rob him:

"He grabbed me by the throat and pushed his thumb into my eyeball, which banged my head against the wall. As a result I couldn't see out of my eye for about 24 hours."

Homeless people are often seen as a cause of crime, but the research suggests that in fact they are far more likely to be victims than they are perpetrators. Our findings paint a portrait of ongoing abuse and harassment creating situations of extreme vulnerability for homeless people, particularly in public settings. Almost two-thirds reported having been insulted publicly whilst sleeping rough and, distressingly, one tenth said that someone had urinated on them. Michael from Cambridge reports:

"You'd be surprised the sorts of people that will give you abuse. Families with kids will spit at you. Fag butts chucked at your blankets when you're asleep and lighted cigarettes thrown in your hair. It's worst on Friday and Saturday night… When you get a group of lads together there'll always be one who thinks he's bigger than the rest who will have a go and show off to his mates"

Hidden crime

Despite these alarming rates of violence and victimisation few homeless people felt confident making use of existing services and supports within the community. The homeless tend not to report crime in any numbers; they make modest use of health services and make little use of support services. These findings point to a system wide failure to address the needs of homeless individuals. Turning a blind eye to the experiences of homeless people as victims of crime and violence only contributes to their vulnerability.

1.0 Introduction

Unprotected by walls, doors and other physical shields; frequently overlooked and devalued and not always fully acknowledged as members of the community;[1] single homeless people face exceptional levels of mental and physical ill-health;[2] social isolation;[3] and victimisation. People who are homeless are a population who face a substantial and persistent risk of violence and victimisation[4] from crime. Yet much of their experience remains invisible.[5]

Homelessness can take very different forms, from rough sleeping to 'hidden' and marginal situations in temporary accommodation. Across those situations people have dealings with an array of health, social care and community organisations. Yet the homeless tend not to report crime in any numbers[6]. They make little use of support services, seldom relying upon services such as Victim Support, general practitioners,[7] and other agencies for support related to crime and victimisation[8]. Official crime statistics can offer no insight into the experiences of homeless people, as they fail to document whether victims and offenders are housed or homeless.

There has been little written about the experiences of victimisation for homeless people in the UK. Anecdotally we know that homeless people experience extreme episodes of violence and victimisation. However many front-line service providers – from health and social care to the police – are more likely to view the homeless as offenders rather than as victims[9]. While this may be unintentional, this perception promotes a bias against individuals who are homeless, making it even more unlikely that they will seek assistance.

This study examines violence and victimisation in the lives of homeless men and women. The experiences of over 300 homeless people are presented here in an effort to shed some light upon the nature of violence and victimisation in their lives, and to offer recommendations for policy and practice to front-line service providers, as well as government and the voluntary sector.

2.0 Policy Context

Violence and victimisation are critical issues in the lives of homeless people. Single homeless people experience elevated rates of mental and physical ill health, face extreme forms of poverty and marginalisation, as well as profound levels of social exclusion[10] [11]. Accompanying these experiences are often substantial risks associated with violence and victimisation. Violence is recognised as a contributor to homelessness through domestic and family violence and is accordingly accepted within homelessness legislation as an area of particular vulnerability and need. At the same time, however, the vulnerabilities of this population are often complicated and overshadowed by the long-standing negative associations of rough sleeping and begging. Recent discussions of anti-social behaviour have emphasised the idea of homeless individuals as criminals, paying little attention to the ways in which they are vulnerable.

Homeless people may then be 'seen less [by some] as victims and more as a nuisance,'[12] ultimately not as people with problems but as a problem in themselves. The ambiguity that accompanies the image of homeless people is reflected in uncertain public policies and practices, where visible homelessness (rough sleeping) and the negative behaviour that can be associated with it become highlighted as a critical social problem[13]. As a result, homeless services have found themselves struggling to work with the complex needs of this population, within an emerging political framework that highlights the anti-social behaviour of homeless people.

Within the homelessness sector, providers are acutely aware that violence has been linked to both the onset and perpetuation of street homelessness[14]. Domestic violence, for example, has long been associated with the creation and maintenance of homelessness[15], especially for young adults and women. Beyond anecdotal examples, however, there is only a limited understanding of the nature of victimisation for people who are homelessness. What limited information exists points to potential hazards or threatening conditions for individuals who are rough sleeping or forced into marginalised housing[16].

In a critical study, Ballintyne (1999) examined the relationships between street homelessness and crime in three major cities in the UK. This research documented alarmingly high rates of victimisation amongst the homeless, both in comparison to the general population and in relation to other sub-groups within the population who are considered to be at an elevated risk of violence[17]. Yet, despite high rates of repeat victimisation there were relatively few efforts to report these events to the police. The assumption that no one will offer help may mean that few people seek out medical care unless it is deemed critical. This may lead to greater morbidity and mortality for

2.0 Policy Context

individuals who are homeless. In addition the psychological impact of ongoing harassment and victimisation goes unexamined.

Since this work there has been a noticeable shift within the UK towards the surveillance and policing of people who are visibly homeless. Anti-social behaviour ordinances for example have been introduced as a means of reducing behaviours deemed to be a 'public nuisance', such as begging or drinking in public. In discussions on anti-social behaviour, the homeless have acquired a high visibility[18]. These discussions play upon the image of homeless people as threatening or intrusive, and minimise the idea of them as victims. Yet there is a more complex interaction that exists between homelessness, violence and crime, and victimisation.

Safety and security pose critical issues for individuals who are homeless. The link that has been created between homelessness and anti-social behaviour however places a greater emphasis upon homeless people as a threat to others, ignoring the extreme and persistent psychological and physical vulnerabilities faced by people who are homeless. This may lead to the undue harassment of individuals who are not only homeless, but also vulnerable in a number of other ways. For example, in settings where law enforcement strategies of 'zero tolerance' have been introduced, there has been the alarming rise of individuals who are homeless and mentally ill in prison and/or jail for minor offences, and with little or no treatment options[19].

Slowly there is a growing awareness that some homeless people (particularly those who sleep rough) are more often the subject of random violence, rather than the cause of it. A number of high profile cases in the United States, for example, have led to the examination of acts of random violence against individuals who are homeless. Describing these episodes as 'hate crimes', two recent reports account in startling detail, situations where homeless individuals are victimised in particularly brutal ways[20 21]. Drawing only upon official reports of violence, these reports nonetheless bring to light disturbing crimes against those identified as homeless.

Such reports also illustrate the considerable health and safety risks faced by people who are homeless and sleeping rough. If we consider peoples lives across a spectrum of homeless situations, the potential for victimisation and coercion increases exponentially. Recent research into hidden homelessness gives some indication of the tenuous position that many people find themselves housed in, leaving them open to unforeseen violence and/or coercion[22].

3.0 Design & Methods

In August and September 2004, researchers from the London School of Economics interviewed 336 homeless people[23]. 305 of those interviews were structured (based upon questions drawn from the British Crime Survey)[24]. An additional 31 were unstructured, taped interviews[25] which allowed an opportunity to explore experiences of violence and victimisation in greater detail[26]. Three cities served as the locations for participant recruitment: 205 of the interviews were conducted in central London, the country's capital city and where the bulk of homeless people are to be found; an additional 50 were held in Oxford and 50 in Cambridge, other cities with high concentrations of homeless people.

From the outset, our research focused upon the extent to which homeless people are or have been victimised within the past year; the circumstances and nature of that victimisation; their assessment of the risks presented by different places and people; the measures which they took to protect themselves; their judgement of the extent and quality of the use, if any, which they made of statutory agencies and voluntary associations; their experiences and views of the police; and the level of their own offending. As with the British Crime Survey (BCS) all information reported is based upon self-report accounts of crime, violence and victimisation.

4.0 Central Findings

4.1 Profile of Respondents

Of the 305 people interviewed, 256 (84%) were male and 49 (16%) female[27]. The youngest (four in total) were aged 17, the oldest 79 with a mean age of 37 years old. Data were collected on the respondents' self-reported ethnicity. Of the 304 for whom data were available, 255 (83%) described themselves as 'White British', 'Irish' or 'Other White'.

Respondents were asked about their current living situation and, in particular, whether they were sleeping rough, living in their own home, with family or friends or in bed and breakfast accommodation or hostel[28]. Almost half (45%) said that they were currently 'sleeping rough' and over a quarter (27.5%) said they were living in a hostel. Only 26 respondents (8.5%) said they were living in their own home. Of those sleeping rough, slightly under half (47%) said that they had been doing so for over a year, with a not insubstantial minority (28%) saying they had done so for over four years.

4.0 Central Findings

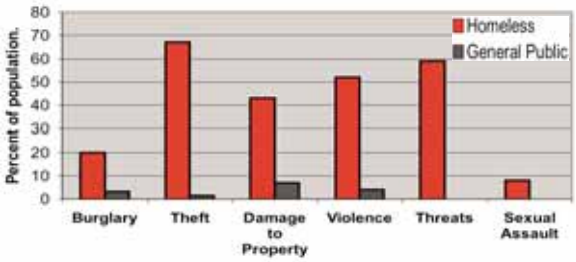
The strong representation of current rough sleepers amongst our sample arises in part from the strong reliance upon day centres as recruitment sites. More indirect strategies (street recruitment, or 'snowballing' by 'word of mouth' through the social networks of homeless individuals) were also used.

4.2 Victimisation

'I suppose you feel vulnerable unless you've got your own sort of like house, flat, bed-sit, whatever thing. You always feel vulnerable no matter where you are because you never know what's round the corner'
(Fred)

Homeless people are exposed to extreme and persistent violence in their daily lives. In this survey we asked over 300 homeless people to tell us about their experiences of violence and victimisation during the course of the past year. Where possible self-report data from this study were compared to the most recent self-report findings of the general population in the British Crime Survey[29]. The findings are extreme – with homeless people experiencing alarming levels of violence and victimisation. In short, the homeless experience much greater levels of crime than the general population across the UK.

Experience of victimisation in last year



Just over half of the sample (157 people or 52%) had experienced violence in the past year and a significant proportion of these had been subject to serious levels of violence. For each type of experience, people were asked: how many occasions they had experienced this crime (i.e. threatened, harassed, been a victim of theft, physically attacked); whether they had reported it to anyone and, if not, why not. In all, 68 of those having experienced violence in the past year[30] received injuries that required hospital treatment. In addition:

- 20% of homeless people suffered a burglary, compared to 3.2% of all households in England and Wales

- 67% of the homeless had suffered a theft, whilst 1.4% of all adults in England and Wales had done so.

- 43% of the homeless had experienced damage to property, whilst 7% of all households in England had done so.

- Just over half of the sample, 52% had experienced violence in the past year, in contrast to 4% of the general population

- 8% of the homeless had been sexually assaulted, but the British Crime Survey had encountered too few cases 'to count.'

'Describing it to people that don't, the general public, it's . . . completely [different] . . . it's a rite of passage, it's a very, very extremely intense period of one's life that can either destroy you or make you. It is very, very hard and it changes you immensely . . . . if you're a decent person or if you've got, if you're not built for this sort of lifestyle, I mean you have to sort of like toughen up very, very quickly because it's very, very physical, very, very rough, very, very difficult. And if you don't fit in, you'll just go under.'
(James)

Dangerousness exists as a constant issue in their lives. Sexual assault for example was not uncommon, and it was not confined to attacks on women. Eleven of the 24 respondents reporting having been sexually assaulted were men and 13 women. In 10 cases the attacker was reported to have been a member of the public, in 6 cases a friend, in four cases another rough sleeper and in one case each a family member or someone where they were living[31] (no details were available for the other cases). What is particularly striking about these results is the widespread recognition that sexual violence is often under-reported due to issues of shame and stigma. These results are even more dramatic when compared to those of the British Crime Survey of the general population where sexual violence is so under-reported that there are too few cases to document officially.

4.3 Anti-Social Behaviour

'I just get frightened, I suppose, 'cause you see the gangs hanging around, you know, the young children hanging around the streets and some of the stories that you hear from the past of that sort of area, you start thinking and seeing issues yourself, seeing other people being victimised. I've seen a lot of that.'
(Eleanor)

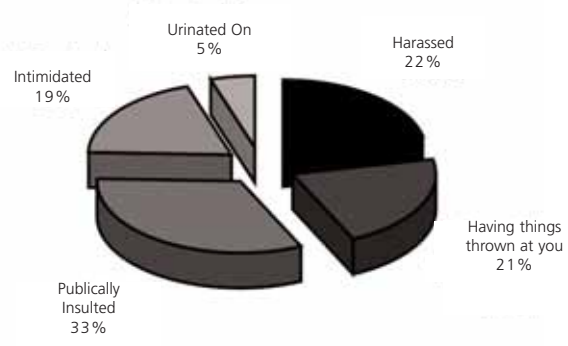
In an effort to understand the impact of anti-social behaviour in the lives of homeless people, we asked people to report their experiences of what is conventionally called anti-social behaviour, including episodes on the street, and during their time staying in temporary accommodation. It is not possible to find comparable figures of how often the wider population has experienced anti-social

4.0 Central Findings

behaviour in the British Crime Survey. This reflects the fact that householders are asked to discuss their *perceptions* of anti-social behaviour in 'their area' instead of *direct experiences* of actions against them.
Anti-social behaviour in the lives of homeless people is unique in that members of the public are often the perpetrators. The nature of anti-social behaviour for homeless people ranges from insults and harassment to incidents of physical assault and extreme degradation. Significant numbers of participants (see Chart 1) had experienced each of the main examples suggested to them, with almost two-thirds reported having been insulted publicly whilst sleeping rough and one tenth said that someone had urinated on them. People in all stages of homelessness may find themselves targeted, however people who were on the streets or were 'out in the open' were especially vulnerable.

Chart 1

Homeless people's experience of anti-social behaviour



One of the key indicators of anti-social behaviour for the general public is related to public use of alcohol and drugs ('People being drunk or rowdy in public places' and 'People using or dealing drugs'), which 25% of the BCS interviewees identified as a local problem. For the homeless, being targeted and abused by *members of the public* are particularly harsh experiences.

'Basically you get more problems from members of the public. The police don't bother you. (….) one guy was about to spit on me (…) and I had another guy, I think he was going to vomit on me. It's like two o'clock in the morning and I woke up and this guy, he was like retching you know, and I woke up and he just again, turned around and walked away. I was almost mugged once with these two guys, they woke me up cause I've sleep on my bag. I used the bag as a pillow and they woke me up, they were trying to pull the bag and I woke up and they said "where's the money, where's the money?"
(Mark)

The ongoing exposure of homeless people to insult and a lack of respect has meant that there is an entrenched sense of fear[32], danger

and powerlessness[33] for homeless people in hostels and on the street. The homeless then are forced to experience the world as an insecure, uncertain and troubled place where they are required to be wary:

'Rough sleeping is quite tough stuff. It is rough. I mean it's quite hard because you get moved from the police, you're not allowed to sleep in one place. Then you get waked up at night time. But cold weather, if it's not summer, it's quite hard to sleep outside actually. You can't even sleep sometimes. Sometimes you got to make sure that you don't fall in deep sleep because some people can come and put the fire on you. I've never seen but I heard someone saying that.' (Dave)

Fear is especially pronounced for women where harassment and the risk of attack are often linked to anxieties about rape and sexual assault[34] [35]. Women respondents spoke of how frightening hostels could be, despite physical barriers between respondents:

[T]hey have separate like doors, say like women's on one side and blokes on the other. but it's still scary being on your own as a woman. Even in a couple really, it's still scary because . . . for women they can still get you at night, so it's scary really' (Rose)

For Helen, the stories that would circulate of other homeless victims produced a heightened sense of the dangers of the street:

'There have been some cases where girls have been taken advantage of. There's also been cases where guys have been abused. I mean have you heard about this women . . who got stabbed to death . . . Jack the Ripper and the guy had only been out of prison about, he'd been in for eleven years for murder and he come out. The thing was, I'm not gonna say what happened . . . but she was stabbed to death and chucked in the river . . . . She was a very nice lady. I only met her one time and she got stabbed to death and chucked in the river.'

This heightened vulnerability is common for women in relation to street culture and the survival strategies that often accompany it (i.e. sex work). Less understood are the ways in which women feel vulnerable across homelessness settings, and the tactics they use to minimise their risks of violence and victimisation.

4.0 Central Findings

4.4 Safety and Security

'I think part of the reason why I've been successful in not being assaulted is, you're completely aware of it, you're completely aware, you know what time [it is], what kind of people to avoid, or how to deal with people who are aggressive towards you, like . how to deal with them and that.'

Safety and security were key issues for people, especially if they slept rough. Respondents were asked a series of questions about their safety and security, beginning with some questions about the extent to which they worried about particular circumstances such as being assaulted, robbed, and arrested. They were asked to compare their experiences and fears whilst sleeping rough, whilst in the place where they live (where relevant) and whilst in a hostel.

The worries expressed by the wider population in the 2003/4 BCS showed that 16% of those interviewed had a high level of worry about violent crime, and 13% about burglary. In comparison, the homeless were often much more worried about safety, and they were worried for a good reason. It is evident that the homeless are required to be vigilant and 'streetwise'.

When asked directly to compare their sense of security in hostels and on the streets, over one half of respondents (55%) said that they felt hostels were safer than sleeping rough. Small numbers of our respondents said that levels of safety on the street and hostel were the same (3%) or 'it depends on the type of hostel' (2%), and just under two fifths of respondents (39%) said that they felt safer sleeping rough than in a hostel. It is noteworthy that one of the chief sources of insecurity on the streets was said to be the sense of regulation and surveillance by the police, and there were frequent but not wholly consistent complaints about petty police harassment in public places and squats. Steve complained of 'just moving you on, just hassle, hassle and you don't need it'.

Hostels do provide protection from the police and from members of the public who were likely to attack and humiliate them, especially when bars, clubs and pubs closed. In fact staying in a hostel or other temporary accommodation settings emerges as one of the strategies used by homeless people to protect themselves. For rough sleepers however few private institutions offered protection from the ongoing harassment by outsiders.

While hostels offered greater protection against threats by random strangers, they could offer only limited security against other residents. Tony spoke of his earlier experience of hostels: *'You'd have to sleep with your clothes on because you'd wake up in the morning and then your trainers and all that would be gone.'*

Respondents commonly reported that hostels had a drugs culture; were unsafe internally, lacking walls to shield, doors to close and cupboards and lockers to secure; they could be hazardous places to live[36]; they housed untrustworthy and possibly dangerous people[37], dismissed characteristically by one man, Ian, as *'junkies, thieves, people constantly harassing you about this, that or the other . . . people overdosing right outside my room'*; and they were marked by frequent bickering about claims to beds, possessions and space. Derek remarked *'people can argue over chairs and which dorm they're in or somebody's got, somebody's going into their bed or someone's taken their bed. Clothes go missing and things like that.'*

Although those who were interviewed were not always in agreement, many respondents tended to see their fellow hostel occupants as threatening, disagreeable and untrustworthy[38]. James said, for example, 'you get any Tom, Dick or Harry coming in the dorm . . . and they're fucking disgusting, man.' And others said pictorially:

'The trouble is, 'cos of the way things are, that a lot of homeless people don't want to go to [hostels] because there are things that have happened, you know. they're not interested in going to a hostel, they'd rather live on the street, you know because you could meet someone, say, in a hostel, you know, who makes out to be your friend and all that and the next thing they could stab ya. You get your giro or something one day, or whatever, it's money, they could stab you to death. I've heard of it you know.'(Sal)

Those living in hostels had to be alert to a range of threats and provocations including exploitation and bullying by their fellow residents. Where other homeless people may be seen as potential predators, and where trust in the police and authorities is fragile, the homeless have to rely on their own rough presence to deter aggression. Such reliance could itself amplify violence. Chris, living in an Oxford hostel, said *'if 'there's a potential for me to argue with somebody, everyone else is also there watching . . . if there was like a potential for violence between you and another person, and you're both trying to avoid losing like psychological ground . . . you're careful about how you carry [yourself] so that person doesn't get the idea that you're an easy target . . . . [or] you're in any way intimidated by him. . . . '*

Respondents were asked to identify from a list of safety measures including CCTV (closed circuit television)[39], bright lighting and the presence of others when sleeping rough what made them feel safer or less safe. Their answers, in the appendix, indicate somewhat mixed feelings in relation to a number of

4.0 Central Findings

factors, though there are others such as proximity to licensed premises that appear to be experienced largely negatively. Respondents were generally negative about the consequences of being visible to the public – being almost twice as likely to say that they felt less safe as a consequence.

One difficulty emerged: crime prevention efforts can have a contradictory impact and significance for those who are at once frequent victims, frequent offenders and frequently 'moved on'. Ian, for instance, viewed CCTV as *'a double-edged sword. On the one hand, if you're in the view of the CCTV, if you get beaten, they can try and trace them, but on the other hand, a lot of people say that CCTV is used directly sort of to inform the police where people are and then they get moved on . . .'*

Such surveillance also suggested an increased sense of a police presence:

> *'[W]ould obviously make it safer but because of the barrier between the police and the homeless, would make the homeless feel less safe because of constant police presence you know. But the majority of them will probably have some sort of substance they shouldn't have somewhere and will be constantly scared of having it taken off them. 'Cos a lot of them need something just to be able to cope with being on the streets . . '*

The homeless are required to be particularly mindful of how physical space affects risk, in ways that many people are not. The majority (four fifths or 80%) of respondents said that they attempted to avoid rough sleeping as a means of increasing their safety. Three fifths (60%) said they used hostels in the same way, though just under a third (30%) said they avoided hostels in order to increase their safety. Over half (54%) stayed in squats and a little under half (45%) in derelict buildings.

There is a tendency to seek safety, on the one hand, in places where the public are to be found, and where what Jane Jacobs once called 'eyes on the street'[40] offer a limited reassurance that attacks will be witnessed, reported and perhaps curtailed. Eleanor, a woman, said *'I would try to make my way to where there's lots of people, lots and lots and lots of people. That's what I done when I was on the streets. . . . Like Victoria Station, somewhere like that or maybe Trafalgar Square 'cause I used to sleep up on St Martin-in-the-Fields steps, by there sometimes. So yeah, I'd probably try to find crowds of people or go where it's really, really busy, you know, somewhere like Leicester Square, places like that.'*

Yet the homeless are actually most at risk of burglary and offences of violence from the general public. Take Micky's account of the hazards presented by the public to those who sleep rough:

'Sleeping outside the church, someone'd come up and kick you in the back, could be a kid you know, you know, he thinks you're an old tramp . . . Someone'd come up and kick you in the back or – an example in Peckham, in Burgess Park – fella was killed in his tent. They set his tent alight. He was in his tent, he got a tent . . . . Set it alight, boom, things like that. And that's what you have to watch where you go because people come down.'

The homeless may as an alternative go to secluded places where few people visit[41] and where they will be less exposed to danger from the public[42]. One participant, Mark said *'What I like to do is get into a place, a doorway where it wouldn't be accessible in front of the public which are very few places there are. That's a case of finding them but other than that, there's not an awful lot you can do.'*

John said 'it could be a car park, could be a rubbish tip like where you've got to step in the rubbish, sleep on the step, you close the doors, it keeps out the wind. You could be living in a park, round the back of a fence, under the bushes, put a cardboard down and sleep there. As long as you're dry and you're out of the wind, yeah. . . . If tell you there's security, there is no security. The only security you got is where you live, used to live should I say. Best places is out of the way, that's the way to get secure otherwise, there is no security.' Across locations, people devise ways of coping with the constant insecurity that comes with being homeless. Tony, for example, takes advantage of the features specific to living in Oxford: 'I'll go like a college somewhere like that, where the gates are locked, d'ya know what I mean? I mean I can go somewhere which is sheltered and I know no one's gonna be there for the whole night. And then I'll leave there say seven in the morning and then just come straight down to here.'

There is however a companion possibility of being moved on by the police or others from public places, and they must be selected with care – harassment, risk and shelter having to be weighed against one another. Ian said of London:

'Some . . . go down Oxford Street [to sleep in] shop doorways. I wouldn't do this. Shop doorways I don't sleep in. I always find

4.0 Central Findings

somewhere in a park or back of a shop. I would never sleep in a park, on a bench, or in any park, because number one, the park keepers you can't do this, you got to get up, you got to go. It's the police or it's the security. So "no", do you know what I mean? You find somewhere, back of church, anything, church, front of church but not in Oxford Street . . . you don't do that, you don't do that.'

What appears to work for many is avoidance behaviour. Sal said *'I always make sure that nobody knows where I am . . . Most places I used to sleep is like you know, the tall wheelie bins? Like you can lock them from the inside, so I used to get in them, do you know what I mean? A lot of me other mates like sleep in doorways and that. I found that the times I done that, you've got people who are drunk on the streets and that and they just come and they give you a kick . . . '*

For others, safety can be found in numbers. Patrick recalled how his allies had repelled an attack: *'I've been close to being a victim of crime [but] . . . there was about eight of us in the one place and the people realised there was quite a few of us there, otherwise they would have come and caused trouble with us, d'ya know what I mean?'*

Ian said:

'There was three of us and we live in a park and then we go into a library in Holborn and we was all like, we was alright. But they'll say, you got, you got, a lot of these, they sleep in groups of ten and . . they're protecting each other. This is how homelessness is out there. If you're vulnerable, then people will come and take. I'm seen it. But if you're streetwise, they can't do it. They can't take liberties, so to speak. I won't accept that. . . That's why they sleep in their gangs of six and seven because they feel safe in them. . . . boys like to attack the homeless people. It's been done. Kick them . . . I've seen it. . . . . To the police you're nobody, so where you going to get help from? There's no safety out there. The police don't give a shit cause you're homeless, so where you going to get help from? There's nobody to help you.'

For women who are homeless, securing a partner can be a critical strategy to reduce risks for violence and victimisation. Nicky, for example, would not venture out without her partner: *'Yeah, my partner looks after me and*

makes sure that nothing happens to me. . . . [We're] always together, yeah.'

But the presence of other homeless people was certainly not a safeguard. The second largest group of perpetrators of offences against the homeless are the homeless themselves, and the homeless do not necessarily trust one another. An outreach worker remarked that clusters of people can lead to 'a rough sleeping scene with lots of alcohol and drugs' and violence.

One instance given by Simon, who in describing experiences in a common public 'hang-out' for homeless people said: *'Whenever you get a large group of people who are homeless, there's always a lot a drinking and drugs and whatever for various reasons. And that tends to instigate trouble and so on.'*

Stan notes the volatile impact of drug use and mental illness in fuelling episodes of violence *'you get, well a lot of mental and drug people on the streets and drinking people . . . sometimes you get attacked as well. But it's more dangerous when you sleep at night, probably may get killed as well, never know.'* Ben added, *'people get very aggressive and occasionally your best mates can turn against you and you know, because if you're drinking yourself, you get, you turn into an asshole.'* It is a scene where forms of criminal exploitation such as 'taxing' (stronger beggars extorting money and social security from those who are weaker) can abound. Ian remarked:

'Most of the fighting down here is done amongst their own self because someone's got money, someone needs a drink. Or someone's got drugs and someone wants them and this is where the fighting comes from all the time. It's not nobody coming outside and doing it. It's amongst their self. I ain't got no money, I want a can of beer yesterday, so what? You can fight over a can of beer. This is where the trouble comes from or over a bag of heroin. That's where the trouble, it doesn't come from outside, it comes from amongst their own – homeless are fighting each other over drugs and drink. That's what it's all 'oh, you stole my clothes, you stole my sandals.' This is there it's all coming from.'

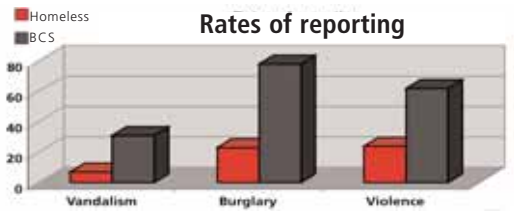
4.5 Reporting

Despite these alarming rates of violence and victimisation hardly any homeless people reported their experiences. Very few people made use of health and social care support in the community if at all [43] [44]. Of all the statutory and voluntary agencies, the homeless have the most frequent contact with police officers[45] around the issues of crime and victimisation. As a result respondents were

4.0 Central Findings

asked about the nature and number of these contacts in greater detail. Where people did report a matter, they were asked about their experience (who they reported the incident to, their satisfaction with the treatment they received and whether or not they reported the matter to anyone else).

The low levels of reporting are dramatically illustrated when we compare known rates for burglary, vandalism[46], and violence:



Expectations of the results of reporting to police were mixed but they were generally low. Participants often summarised their experiences with the phrases *'they never do anything'* and *'they don't bother'*. As a result, there is some suggestion from these statements that the homeless often did not believe that they were considered as valid victims or complainants in the eyes of the police. Nicky articulates the idea that little or no action will result from speaking with the police about their experiences:

> *'I wouldn't [report a crime to the police] because as they see it, we're homeless and they're not really bothered about us getting beaten or anything else, or if stuff is stolen. All they're bothered about is, right, "we'll write it down" and that's it and nothing gets dealt with.'*

Ian echoes this sentiment, describing a particularly tense relationship with local police:

> *'The police don't care about homeless people fighting. They let them carry on unless a knife comes out, then they do look into it. But apart from that, 'oh, it's only a few homeless people, let them carry on.' The police don't give a . . . . you know what I'm saying? The police don't care if you're homeless and you're fighting. They don't give a shit . . .They ain't going to waste their time. . . . As far as they can see, we're just a nuisance. They'll tell us to get up and run.'*

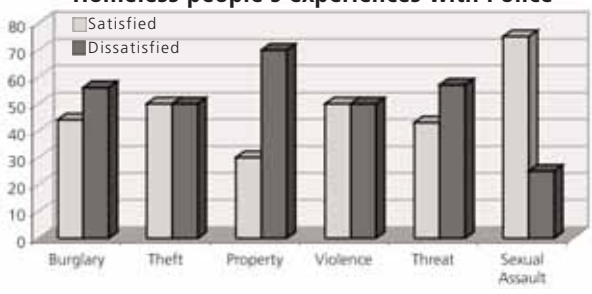
Lower rates of reporting incidents of violence and victimisation may also be linked to fears of intimidation and retribution from the perpetrators of crimes, concerns about the consequences of making oneself known to the police[47], and a general reluctance to inform on anyone[48] (there is, said one housing provider a *'culture of not grassing on anybody'*):

'It really wouldn't help [to approach the police] because you get to know people and things like that and it's, you know, it's best, it's really best for the police not to know 'cause you can get over it better, get over it quicker. You know, I might meet that fella or he might meet me and I might meet him next week and he'd go, I remember you.' (Micky)

There is also a greater sense of dissatisfaction with the police response where a report is made. When we compare how members of the general public feel about their experiences with the police, almost three fifths (58%) of the general public in the British Crime Survey declared themselves satisfied with the way in which the police handled incidents that were reported. For the single homeless people in our survey the rates of satisfaction were considerably lower, as depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1:

Homeless people's experiences with Police



These elements combine to create a tense relationship between the police and homeless people. Some homeless feel that the police are likely to view them more as offenders than as victims of crime. For individuals who are homeless, this may fuel a desire to keep a distance from the police for fear of attracting unwelcome attention; or they may believe simply that the police have little interest in their plight. Chris notes the scepticism that exists about the general police capacity to improve their security:

'I think it makes a difference if you're . . homeless and your approaching them with an attitude or if you're off your face . . . but if you're homeless and you're straight off and . . . report a crime then they will treat you in the same way as they'll treat anybody off the street but it's still, you know it's not a big deal to them because it just happens all the time. What can you do about it?'

Subsequently the higher levels of victimisation experienced by the homeless are not reflected in reports of crime made known to the police.

However there are exceptions, where the police intervene with the homeless in proactive and responsive ways. Ian for example, spoke of how two officers prevented him from being seriously hurt by passers-by:

4.0 Central Findings

'I'd just received a couple of kicks to the side of my legs . . . and just as the two chaps in question grabbed me and dragged me up to my feet, two coppers come round the corner which was perfect timing. It's the only time they'll ever have perfect timing in my life. . . . [They] threatened the blokes with being arrested if they didn't basically piss off into the clubs and behave themselves.'

It is worth noting that the police in this episode had observed the incident whilst on foot patrol rather than being summoned by the homeless victim himself. This may have made a difference in both the nature of this intervention and its outcome.

The frequency of 'proactive' contact by respondents is typically very low[49]. However, by contrast, contact initiated by the police via stops and questioning appears to be quite common[50]. This is clearly illustrated in the contrast that exists between participants reporting a crime (22% had contacted the police to report a crime in the past year) and the self-reports of respondents who had been stopped and questioned by the police in the past year (83%). Many individuals had been stopped multiple times[51]. For some respondents the intrusiveness into their everyday lives was extreme, with some claiming to have been stopped '100 or more times' to 'daily, sometimes three or four times a day' or 'so many I've lost count'. While in most cases, nothing had happened as a result of the stop (74%)[52], the constant surveillance of homeless people warrants attention. This immediately creates a scenario where homeless people are treated with suspicion first, and placed in a defensive position in their interactions with the police.

To balance our understanding of the complexity of crime and victimisation amongst homeless people, we asked participants also to discuss their experiences of offending. Overall just under half of all respondents (48%) had been arrested at some point in the past year. By comparison a recent national self-report study conducted by the Home Office found that three percent of males and one percent of females had been arrested in the past year and, indeed, only one quarter of males (24%) and six percent of females had ever been arrested[53].

The elevated rate of offending amongst this population comes as no surprise. Homelessness (particularly rough sleeping) has shown some relationship to low-level crimes, particularly those offences most clearly related to poverty and subsistence. In addition the strong presence of a street-based economy of illegal drugs contributes to an intersection between homelessness and drug use.

4.6 The Issue of Respect

'You feel useless, you feel down completely from there on. You get abuse from the people, you get, people just look at you like a beggar or something, like even if you're not begging.' (Dave)

One of the major, recurrent themes that emerged through this series of interviews was an emphasis on the importance of respect: that 'peculiar lack of respect which consists of not being seen, not being accounted as full human beings.' Many of those who are homeless, particularly those who sleep rough, share that social invisibility; something that people strived to work against.

Mike spoke about how easy it was to be objectified and belittled on the street: *'As soon as they know you're homeless and involved in drugs, they've just got the same [stereotype] as everyone else who's on drugs. It doesn't matter what person you are, what past you've had, what you've done, what marriage you've got, you're still on drugs now and that's the person you are, that's how you get treated.'*

The negative stereotypes that exist of homeless people may be especially pronounced in relation to crime and violence. In some social and health care services for example, providers may emphasize the notion that people who are homeless pose a risk (to staff safety) rather than the idea that they may be at risk (as victims of violence and coercion).

For Ian, this sense of exclusion was particularly marked in his interactions with the police: *'They shouldn't look at a person 'cause they're homeless. A homeless person has as much need as a person who's living in a house. This is what the police don't seem to understand. Don't look at me 'cause I'm homeless and think oh, and I'm dirty, I'm a nobody. I'm a human being same as you, so why should you look down on me and say, "oh he's homeless, fuck 'em." This is what they do.'*

For some participants, there was a noticeable difference between the way in which they have been treated by younger versus more established police officers. Sal said:

'I mean the older [police officers], some of them are okay. Yeah, they know, do you know what I mean? But the young ones, they can cause you so much hassle at night, they treat you like dirt 'cause you're on the street anyway, you know, they treat you like shit, they really do.'

The idea of a need to lessen the social distance between homeless people and mainstream

4.0 Central Findings

communities is something that people are conscious of. Simon, for instance, reflected on the defects in the training of the police and community support officers:

'I know it's hard cause [the police] got to be trained in the law and all that sort of stuff but yeah, maybe some sort of, some maybe a little bit of psychology with it you know, like . . . a bit of a humanitarian teaching, to sort of understand. . . . I don't know what training [the Community Support Officers] are given but maybe them especially, cause they seem to have a bit more time and a lot of them are moving into the police force, maybe while they're doing that, they do some sort of, I don't know some sort of work that involves working with the homeless like . . . finding out what makes people tick.'

Likewise, some homeless people developed strategies for distancing themselves from the stereotypes that exist. For Mike one of the ways in which he strived to create this distance was to emphasise his sense of personal hygiene:

'the young people are mainly the ones using the drugs and they have very poor standards of personal hygiene because they don't care about it . . . I try to keep myself tidy so that people don't look at me because . . when I've been a little more unkempt myself, people do notice it. You do alienate them and that's what puts me off. I try to dress tidily and keep myself clean because it do alienate, definitely, it's hurtful . . . when people look down on you. I hate that.'

Chris echoed him:

'I do my best to keep myself clean and normally I've got bits and piece of jobs so I've got friends where I can go and wash and shower. My clothes are dirty but nobody can ever guess that I'm homeless usually because I'm a student or whatever. So I do my best to look like a student or do my best, I've got a big backpack, I'm travelling, so I just look like a tourist, it's as simple as that.'

The search for respect and a valued identity is perhaps one of the starkest and most poignant findings of our survey. This concept underscores much of the interaction that people had with services and within communities.

5.0 Conclusions

The findings of this research point to a number of broad conclusions. First, there are unacceptably high levels of victimisation among individuals who are homeless. The homeless are often victims of crime and of anti-social behaviour and incivilities, and yet at the same time they feel under-protected and unduly harassed by the police. The data in this study show very high levels of violence and threats against the homeless, far in excess of those experienced in the general population. Thus, over half of our respondents reported having been a victim of violence in the past year compared with approximately four percent of the general population. In addition, eight percent had been a victim of a sexual assault whereas the prevalence of such offences in the general population is insufficient to register in the British Crime Survey. Other forms of criminal victimization are equally over-represented within this population.

What appears starkly is how ill-defended the homeless are, how little they believe any formal authority has treated them as a population which requires protection and support, and how some part of their high rate of offending must as a result be explained by a perceived need to resort to extra-legal violence as a last resort.

Levels of trust and confidence in the police are extremely low among the homeless population and, consequently, the likelihood that victimization will be reported is much diminished – further exacerbating the absence of protection and trust as well as boosting levels of offending.

It has been argued that the effectiveness of policing rests on legitimacy, and legitimacy on a perception of fair procedures, fair outcomes, helpfulness, concern for civil and even-handed treatment. On most of these counts it is clear that the homeless are poorly served. There are multiple failures across systems for these individuals: they feel they cannot approach the police with any assurance or comfort; they feel that they have been failed by the homeless services in that hostels are often unsafe; they appear to be beyond the reach of other organisations that have responsibilities for victims; and they become even more heavily involved in extra-judicial violence as a result.

One very striking finding in the study is the prominent position of the general public as perpetrators of crimes against homeless people. In the major categories of criminal victimization – burglary, violence, threats, sexual assault, and criminal damage – respondents reported that the perpetrator had been a member of the public. The exception was theft where other homeless people appear slightly more likely to have been the perpetrators than were members of the public.

5.0 Conculsions

Violence, threats, intimidation and abuse from the public, particularly where the latter are intoxicated, appear to be an everyday reality for the homeless population. Not only are the homeless unprotected, their very identity can make them a target of ill treatment. In all this, they may be said to resemble the victims of what the Americans would call hate crime: 'the violence of intolerance and bigotry, intended to hurt and intimidate someone because of their race, ethnicity, national origin, religious, sexual orientation, or disability.'

A central theme running through this report, something at the very heart of the research findings is the fact that the homeless – in hostels and on the street – experience the world as an insecure, unpredictable and troubled place where one is obliged continually to be guarded and suspicious. This is the almost inevitable product of the fear, danger and powerlessness that is at the core of much of the experience of rough sleeping. Many of those living rough take themselves to be socially invisible. The homeless feel – or perhaps more accurately are made to feel – marginal, apart from the respectable world, and heavily stigmatised. Theirs is a world of exposure to frequent, if not continual abuse, and one in which they are denied 'respect'. The extraordinarily high levels of victimization, the failure of formal agencies, especially the police, to provide protection, are the clearest indication of this absence of respect and of the denial of the 'rights' usually associated with full citizenship.

6.0 Recommendations

Single homeless people are a population experiencing extreme and unacceptable levels of violence and victimisation, often perpetrated by members of the public. The findings of this research points to a system wide failure of health, social care and law enforcement services to address the needs of homeless individuals. Across the sectors there is a need to respond to what homeless people are saying. Reducing and resolving the issue of victimisation for homeless people demands immediate action.

Crisis brought together key stakeholders in the fields of health, policy and homelessness to discuss preliminary findings of the research. Based in part on those discussions, we developed the following set of recommendations, calling for national and local strategies for cross – agency work, and endorsing practical solutions for effecting change.

6.1 National Strategies

- Homeless people's experiences of victimisation need to be recognised on a national level. This requires the systematic collection of information to enable patterns and trends to emerge and see what responses are necessary over time. A module added to the British Crime Survey, and a specific targeting of people across homeless situations as part of the BCS would be an important step in recognising homeless people's experiences as victims of crime.

- Minimum standards must be put in place regarding safety and security across housing sites (temporary and permanent), including provision for the training of staff in handling situations of resident victimisation and coercion. Establishing these systems of monitoring would allow for the safety of both staff and residents.

- Develop and promote alternative strategies – beyond the criminal justice system – as a means of tackling violence and victimisation amongst the homeless. Relying only upon a criminal justice framework will yield limited results due to the complex relationship between homeless people and the police.

- Promote public education campaigns about the impact and effect of anti-social behaviour on homeless people and its unacceptability.

- Include within the enlarged scope of services to victims, prefaced by the Government's Justice for All of 2002 and A new deal for victims and witnesses of 2003 to support and recognise victims of crime who are especially vulnerable within our society, such as individuals who are homeless. Work needs to be focused upon ensuring that Victims Rights for homeless people are actively promoted.

6.2 Local and Regional Work

- Local police and homelessness agencies need to work together to help hostel providers and day centres make their services safer, and to bridge working relationships. A need for a clear statement setting out for homeless people their rights and responsibilities when using hostels, day centres and other services.

6.0 Recommendations

- Ensure that the training of staff and other community stakeholders (police, health and social care professionals) reflects an understanding of homeless people's experiences of victimisation. There is a need actively to work against the stereotypes that exist about homeless people in this area.

- Agencies within the homelessness sector should actively work to engage services that may not traditionally have had dealings with homeless people, such as Victim Support and the Witness Service. These services can offer specialised care to victims of violence and are familiar with the unique issues that face victims of violence.

- Draw upon strategies that have been tested and implemented with other vulnerable populations (e.g. sex workers, victims of domestic violence, young offenders).

- Maintaining and extending the work of Contact and Assessment Teams. Local homelessness contact and assessment teams play a pivotal role in linking people with critically needed services. These teams can act as a vital bridge between the criminal justice resources and health and social care agencies.

- Recent work by the Pan London Providers Group makes note of substantial changes that have been made to the conditions of hostels within the London area. A consistent investment in improving organisational and structural issues, such as improving the physical conditions of hostels, reducing the size, improving the sense of privacy and safety for residents, and promoting staff training. These transformations are welcomed and suggest a promising direction for care within temporary housing sites. The implementation of standard evaluation methods (e.g. Hostels Review Toolkit, designed and promoted by the ODPM) can help to define minimum levels of care as well as indicators of good practice.

Endnotes

1 It was illuminating, for instance, that the Westminster City Guardian to whom one of us I spoke was uncertain whether they should be reckoned part of the community which his organisation protected.

2 A large contemporaneous survey reported that 40% have a 'mental health problem', 37% alcohol 'problems' and a comparable number 'drugs' problems. St Mungo's (2004) *TheBIGStat*, St Mungo's, London.

3 The same survey showed that 44% of those who were parents had lost touch with their children, and 50% had 'no next of kin details'.

4 Although street drinking and begging are not co-extensive with rough sleeping, a survey of the London boroughs of Camden and Islington and published late 2000 of street drinking and begging is quite revealing. 'Beggars and street drinkers', it stated, 'express a strong desire not to be treated just as a problem. Sixteen per cent of them say there's nothing good at all about being on the streets . . . 15% say the police, and 13% say the aggression and violence.' Camden and Islington Council (2000) *Time for Change*, Camden and Islington Council, London, p.5

5. And it is an invisibility which some homeless people themselves believe to be quite deliberately engineered. One who was interviewed for this survey said: *'I mean if you slept in the station, you're moved on because you're a nuisance, right? But see the public don't want to see this, see the people on the street. They don't want to see them sleeping in doorways or under cars and things like that. They don't want to see that. They want, you know, to 'put it away, ignore it'.'*

6 According to a 1998 survey analysed in Ballintyne, S. (1999) Unsafe Streets: Street Homelessness and Crime, IPPR, London, (p. 17) 21% of homeless people reported crimes to the police compared with 44% of those interviewed for the British Crime Survey.

7 Shiner, M. (1995) 'Adding insult to injury: homelessness and health service use', *Sociology of Health and Illness*, Vol. 17, No. 4, 525-549.

8 Danczuk, S. (2000) Walk on by . . . *Begging, street drinking and the giving age*, Crisis, London (p. 19).

9. Ballintyne, S. (1999) *Unsafe Streets*, op. cit., p. 44.

10 Mohan, J. (2002) Geographies of welfare and social exclusion: dimensions, consequences and methods. Progress in Human Geography 26 (1): 65-75.

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11 Pleace, N. (1998) Single Homelessness as social exclusion: The unique and the extreme. Social Policy and Administration 32(1): 46-59.

12 Hellen, N. (2003) 'Begging set to become crime in policy shift', *The Sunday Times*,26.1.2003.

13 Danczuk, S. (2000) *Walk on by* . . op. cit. p. 9.

14 Pleace, N., and Quilgars, D. (1998) *Health and Homelessness* in London. King's Fund.

15 Warnes, A., Crane, M., Whitehead, N., and Fu, R. (2003) *Homelessness Factfile.* Crisis.

16 Robinson, D., and Coward , S. (2003) *Your Place, Not Mine: The experiences of homeless people staying with friends and family*. Crisis/Countryside Agency.

17 Ballintyne, S. (1999) *Unsafe Streets: Street Homelessness and Crime*, IPPR, London.

18 Danczuk, S. (2000) *Walk on by* . . op. cit. p. 9.

19 Barr, H. (1997) *Prisons and Jails: Hospitals of Last Resort. The Need for Diversion and Discharge Planning for Incarcerated People with Mental Illness in New York*. Urban Justice Centre.

20 National Coalition for the Homeless (2002) *HATE: A Compilation of Violent Crimes Committed Against Homeless People in the U.S. in 2001*, National Coalition for the Homeless, Washington, D.C., USA

21 National Coalition for the Homeless (2003) *Hate, Violence and Death on Main Street: A Report on Hate Crimes and Violence against People Experiencing Homelessness from 1999-2002,* National Coalition for the Homeless, Washington D.C., USA

22 Robinson, D., and Coward, S. (2003) Your Place, Not Mine: The experiences of homeless people staying with friends and family. Crisis/Countryside Agency.

23 We are most grateful for the painstaking, helpful and enthusiastic way in which Nisrine Mansour, Anthony Morgan Ubaid Rehman, Melony Sanders and Caroline Turley carried out those interviews.

24 The British Crime Survey (BCS) is a self-report survey of individual experiences of crime and victimisation within the past year that may or may not have been reported to the police. The BCS offers an important alternative to conventional crime reporting systems (i.e. police records) which

Endnotes

are unlikely to capture the experiences of individuals who are 'hard to reach' such as those who are homeless. In addition, the BCS allows insights into the perceptions of people around the issues of crime and safety, as well as the strategies employed to minimise their risks on a daily basis.

25 We would like to thank Jenny Law and Joyce Lorinstein for their work in transcribing those tapes.

26 The quantitative results are reflected in the accompanying set of tables in the appendix while individual accounts of violence and victimisation experiences are explored through excerpt of qualitative text.

27 See appendix for a detailed description of the sample.

28 All respondents were asked when they had last slept rough. Over two fifths (41%) said 'last night' or 'currently' and a further nine percent said they had done so within the last week. Only eight respondents (3%) said they had never slept rough. Respondents were also asked on how many occasions they had slept rough and what was the longest period they had done so. The answers are summarised in Tables 4 and 5.

29 Dodd, T. et al., (2004) *Crime in England and Wales 2003/2004*, Home Office, London, 2004.

30 This amounts to 43% of those experiencing violence, or 23% of the total sample. The majority of these were men (of the 68, 60 were men and eight women).

31 These categories, used throughout the survey are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

32 For a study of homelessness, crime and the fear of crime on the Bowery, see Cohen, C. and Sokolovsky; J. (1989) *Old Men of the Bowery: Strategies for Survival Among the Homeless*, The Guilford Press, New York, esp. p. 104. More generally, see Jackson, J. (2004) 'Experience and Expression: Social and Cultural Significance in the Fear of Crime', *The British Journal of Criminology*, November, Vol. 44, No. 6.

33 Shiner, M. (1995) *'Adding insult to injury'*, op. cit., p. 537.

34 Ballintyne, S. (1999) *Unsafe Streets*, op. cit., p. 12; and D'Ercole, A. and Struening, E.(1990) 'Victimization Among Homeless Women', *Journal of Community Psychology*, April, Vol. 18, 141-152.

35 Ferraro, K. (1995) *Fear of Crime: Interpreting Victimization Risk*, State University of New York Press, Albany.

Endnotes

36 One man, Rory, talked about a hostel which *'was like proper scary in there, . . . there was quite a lot of crack addicts and heroin addicts in there and that, and the toilets and stuff yeah, that they didn't really object to people talking drugs in the building. And that, in the toilet they had, oh cheers, yeah, in the toilet they sharps box . . . the needles, but that the lid wasn't on top of the box so that then if you stumbled in there a bit drunk like you could have just put your hand on the needles or something.'*

37 Ian said, for example, *'I can't have my children come visit me because it's not secure. So I was in one, they said, 'no, you can't bring your children in.' 'Why?' 'Because we don't know what there might be perverts or child molesters.' And I said, 'you should know if there are any because you should know people's background.''*

38 CHF (2004) *Strategically Speaking: Homeless People's Experience of Camden's Homelessness Strategy*, Camden Homelessness Forum, London, p. 25.

39 Closed circuit television and enhanced street lighting appear to have an uneven and unpredictable impact on levels of crime, but they do seem to allay the fear of crime. See, for example, Painter, K. (1989) *Lighting and Crime Prevention for Public Safety*, Middlesex University, Enfield, and Ditton, J. (2000) 'Crime and the City: Public Attitudes towards Open-Street CCTV in Glasgow', *British Journal of Criminology*, Vol. 40.

40 Jacobs, J. (1961) *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, Random House, New York.

41 Warnes, A. (2003) *Homelesslessness Factfile,* op. cit., p. 75.

42 Andrew, a Cambridge homeless man, talked about 'Jesus Green . . . which is quite a lot of people sleep there from time and time and someone came along and sprayed lighter fluid on ____ 's sleeping bag while he was yeah, things like that . . . do happen. I've seen other people have left, put up tents and sleeping bags and stuff and had them, had them slashed up while they're not around and things like that. Other people being kicked, beaten up while still in their sleeping bags. Doesn't tend to happen to me 'cause I avoid those places . . . sleep in the bushes. . . . [and the police] possibly come round and spoil the place where they're sleeping or whatever, move them on which constantly happens anyway – security guards and police.'

43 Shiner, M. (1995) 'Adding insult to injury', op. cit.

44 Danczuk, S. (2000) *Walk on by* . . op cit. p. 19.

45 Ballintyne, S. (1999) *46*, op. cit., p. i.

Endnotes

46 Vandalism for the homeless is defined as 'damage to property'.

47 Nicky said, *'the police just see us all as drug addicts and alcoholics. We're just homeless because of the way we are, because we've been through drugs and everything else. They're not much fussed. All they're bothered about is arresting us.'*

48 Stothart, C. (2004) 'Crack Dens', *Housing Today*, 30 April, p. 26.

49 Stothart, C. (2004) 'Crack Dens', op cit. p. 11.

50 Waddington, P. et al (2004) 'In proportion: Race and Police Stop and Search', *The British Journal of Criminology*, November, Vol. 44, No. 6.

51 Over half of all respondents (52%) that had been stopped (or 46% of all respondents including those that had never been stopped) had been stopped more than 10 times in the past year.

52 In a minority of cases, respondents had either been moved on (33%), arrested (28%) or warned or cautioned (18%).

53 Budd, T., Sharp, C., and Mayhew, P. (2005) *Offending in England and Wales: First results from the 2003 Crime and Justice Survey*, London, Home Office.

54 Sennett, R. (2003) *Respect: The Formation of Character in a World of Inequality*, Allen Lane, London, p. 13.

55 Hough, M. (2004) '
Modernisation, scientific rationalism and the Crime Reduction Programme', *Criminal Justice*, August, Vol. 4, No. 3, p. 245.

56 USDOJ (2001) *Hate Crime: The Violence of Intolerance*, Community Relations Service, United States Department of Justice, Washington, DC, p. 1.

57 Warnes T, Crane M, and P. Foley (2005) Far more than a bed..The Journey of London Hostels for Homeless People into the 21st Century. London: Pan London Providers Group (PLPG).

58 ODPM (2005) Hostels Review Toolkit. London: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Appendix

Demographics

Age of Respondents		
AGE	NUMBER	%
Under 20	10	3
20-29	69	23
30-39	116	38
40-49	64	21
50-59	34	11
60-69	9	3
70 and above	2	1

Respondents' Self-Reported Ethnicity		
ETHNICITY	NUMBER	%
White	255	84
Black	31	10
Mixed	10	3
Asian	6	2
Other	2	<1

Living Situation

Respondents' Self-Reported Current Living Situation		
LIVING SITUATION	NUMBER	%
Rough sleeping	137	45
Living in a hostel or other temporary accommodation	84	27.5
Own place	26	8.5

Number of occasions of rough sleeping		
FREQUENCY	NUMBER	%
Once	28	9
2-5 times	42	14
6-10 times	13	4
More than 10 times	211	72

Length of time sleeping rough (on last occasion)		
LENGTH OF TIME	NUMBER	%
Less than one month	73	26
1-3 months	59	21
4-6 months	44	16
7-12 months	36	13
Over a year	63	24

Experience of Victimisation

Experience of victimisation in the past year		
NATURE OF VICTIMISATION	NUMBER	%
Burglary	62	20
Theft	206	67
Damage to the place you live	85	28
Damage to something else belonging to you	45	15
Violence	157	52
Threats	152	50
Sexual assault	24	8

Experience of anti-social behaviour		
TYPE OF BEHAVIOUR	NUMBER	%
Harassed by others at a hostel	128	45
People throwing things at you	125	42
People insulting you publicly	192	64
Intimidated/harassed by drug dealers	114	38
Someone urinating on you	30	10

Contact with the Police

Satisfaction with the police (among those reporting crimes)*		
TYPE OF CRIME REPORTED	% SATISFIED	% DISSATISFIED
Burglary	44	56
Theft	50	50
Damage to property	30	70
Violence	50	50
Threat	43	57
Sexual assault	75	25

Number of times arrested in the last year		
HOW OFTEN	NUMBER	%
None	159	52
Once	68	22
2-5 times	51	17
6-10 times	14	5
Over 10 times	11	4

Appendix

Self-Reported Offending

Self-Reported Offending		
Offence	% Ever	% In last year
Taken car/motorbike without permission	25	4
Drunk driving	27	4
Criminal damage	25	8
Theft from a shop	55	30
Theft from someone's house	13	2
Snatched purse/bag etc	4	<1
Burglary	19	4
Use stolen credit/debit card	21	10
Bought/sold stolen goods	47	27
Threatened someone with a weapon	19	10
Carried a weapon	35	21
Got into a fight in public	53	34
Bought drugs	63	52
Sold drugs	20	10
Beat up or hurt someone	29	14

Safety and Security

Worry in different locations			
Worried about..	Sleeping rough % (N=295)	'Where you live' % (N=77)	In a hostel % (N=203)
Being assaulted	46	14	16
Being robbed	42	19	33
Being sexually assaulted	15	5	7
Being harassed	36	21	17
Being threatened	33	18	17
Being arrested	33	6	10
Mistreated by police	36	10	13

Do the following make you feel safer or less safe?		
	Safer	Less safe
CCTV	48	23
Bright lighting	48	30
Visible policing	47	31
Other rough sleepers close by	58	21
Being visible to the public	29	53
Being near pubs and clubs	12	76

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