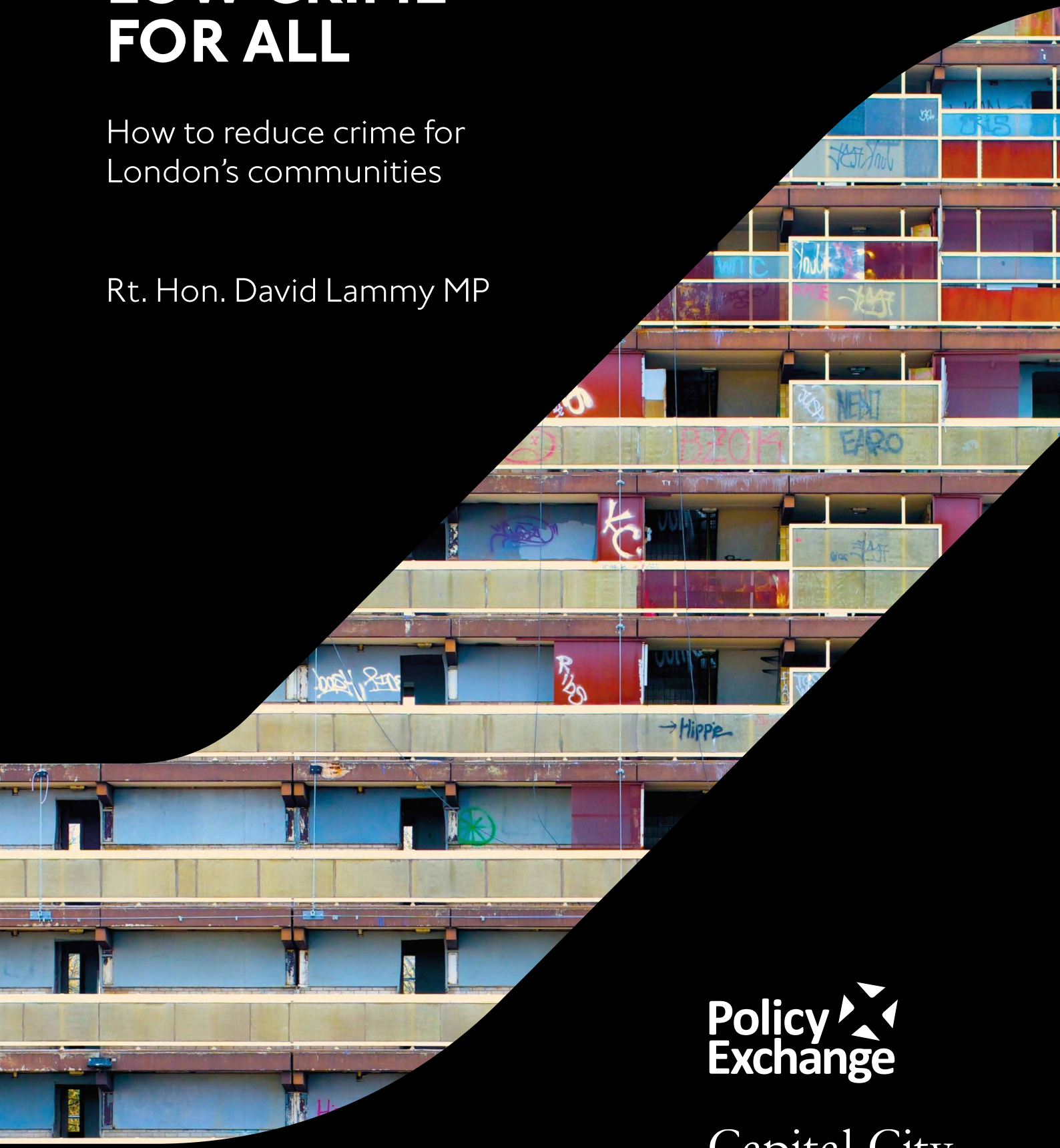
LOW CRIME FOR ALL

How to reduce crime for London's communities

Rt. Hon. David Lammy MP



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David Lammy has been the Member of Parliament for Tottenham since 2000, and is a candidate in the Primary to be Labour's nominee for the 2016 London Mayoral election. Tottenham is one of most disadvantaged constituencies in the UK and was the epicentre of the August 2011 riots. He authored a book on what he believes to be the causes of the riots, Out of the Ashes.

David was one of five children raised by a single mother. He attended The Kings School in Peterborough on a choral scholarship. He studied law at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) Law School, was admitted to the Bar of England and Wales in 1994, and became the first Black Briton to study a Masters in Law at the Harvard Law School in 1997.

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About the Capital City Foundation

The Capital City Foundation is a new research unit created by Policy Exchange to develop policy ideas specifically for London. The focus of the Capital City Foundation is to protect and promote the prosperity of London – while seeking to ensure that the city is as pleasant, safe and affordable as possible for everyone that lives or works here. The foundation aims to create workable policy ideas that can be implemented by the city's governing authorities.

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Preface

Crime has steadily declined since a peak in the 1990s, and so too has the national attention given to the issue of crime and how to reduce it. There is now scarcely a debate about how we can further reduce crime, because the political class has decided that it is falling and therefore that there is no need to act further. Police numbers have been cut, more and more crimes are going unreported, and too often it is the most serious crimes that are deemed worthy of political attention.

Overall crime figures and national trends hide a simple but fundamental fact: for millions of people, and particularly many of the most vulnerable in our society, crime rates have not declined as much. In more deprived areas, levels of many crimes remain worryingly high and create a daily burden for whole communities. For these people the issue of how to reduce crime is as important as ever. This report is written for them because, when it comes to crime and how to tackle it, they have all too often been forgotten.

I make three key arguments in this report. First, that certain types of crime in the UK remain far too high – and that this disproportionately affects those on low incomes.

I reject completely the established complacency about crime rates, and the suggestion that non-violent crimes are somehow "victimless crimes". As anyone who has been affected will tell you, every crime has a victim.

In fact, the effects of these supposedly victimless crimes are felt by the millions of individuals, homeowners and businesses a year that are directly affected – plus millions more relatives, friends, and members of the wider community, who end up helping victims – quite literally – to pick up the pieces.

Both in my constituency of Tottenham and across London, I have seen first-hand the impact of theft, vandalism, fraud and arson becoming increasingly common.

I begin this report by examining the concentration of crime in certain areas, and on certain people.

I find that those on low incomes are:

- **More likely to suffer crime**: Being robbed or injured by violence is three times as common among those with household incomes below £10,000 as those with household incomes above £50,000.
- **More likely to be a repeat victim of crime:** Frighteningly often, crime is concentrated on a limited number of victims who experience multiple offences time and again. The best predictor of being a victim of crime is previous victimisation.
- **More likely to suffer lasting damage from crime:** They are least able to afford to insure existing goods, or to replace goods stolen or damaged. Every victim of crime suffers damage, but the poorest are less able to recover.

Second, I argue that we should not implicitly accept high crime rates. This may seem self-evident, but in the current climate it unfortunately needs restating. High crime is not just a fact of life and something that needs to be accepted. It is

not the case that some areas must always have high crime rates. We can do better, and we know how.

This report presents theoretical and empirical support for a move towards more community-based and problem-solving policing. Police Officers should be given the support and resources they need to allow them to get out of their cars and patrol a beat. Using problem-oriented policing, Police Officers can dedicate themselves to improving conditions in a local area that they regularly patrol on foot.

This can have a transformative effect on local communities plagued by crime and disorder. It builds on the Neighbourhood Policing model developed by the previous Labour Government.

This form of policing builds up Police knowledge of, and links with, their local area and helps ensure better intelligence and greater cooperation with "local people". Officers will develop a better sense of who the known troublemakers are, while residents will learn who their local officers are and how they can be contacted. Police Officers will also become more likely to know the areas where crime is concentrated, and freer to concentrate time there – or on known offenders.

In itself, a regular Police presence may deter criminals from committing some crimes. Even when arrest rates remain the same, crime has still been shown to fall, pointing to a deterrent effect.

There should also be a particular focus on repeat victims – by definition, this means focusing on high crime areas.

Third, I outline my thoughts on how we can reduce crime further in London. I explain how the Mayor of London, the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime, the Metropolitan Police, local authorities and social housing providers can work together to drive down crime rates.

In writing this report I have focused on my home city of London. London suffers more crime per head than anywhere else in England and Wales, and so the need to find the right solutions is most pressing in the capital. Despite this focus, many of the policies contained in this report would also have a significant impact on tackling crime in other parts of the country.

Taking seriously the crime and disorder that continues to plague local communities has significant communitarian benefits. Crimes like vandalism and repeated burglaries affect not just the individual victims but also the wider community.

Simple measures, such as those featured below, can have a huge effect on crime rates and dramatically improve the lives of all Londoners, but will especially help the most vulnerable.

- Social housing providers should include optional low-cost home contents insurance in their rental agreements with tenants.
- Police should invest more in new technologies and deploy them in high crime areas, such as has occurred in Brent, with Smartwater.
- Designing out crime solutions should be implemented at the borough level and on the individual homes of people who are regularly victimised. Investing in WIDE installations – window locks, internal lights on a timer, deadlocks or double locks and external lights activated by a motion sensor – has already been shown to have a major effect on the burglary rate.
- More trees, hedges and bushes in the right places will make it harder for criminals to commit crimes, and more difficult to escape. London boroughs should make designing out crime a compulsory part of the process for obtaining planning approval so that fewer properties are easy targets for criminals.

Authorities should encourage experimentation with all these ideas and others through the use of targeted randomised control trials in different wards to test the impact and discover what works best.

No one should trivialise the misery that too many vulnerable people on low incomes suffer because of a daily threat of crime and disorder.

Some people think crime is no longer a big problem, or that in the areas where it is a major issue nothing can be done. They are wrong on both counts. We can do something. We know what we should do. We must act now.

Rt Hon David Lammy MP
Member of Parliament for Tottenham
September 2015

01 Crime's victims

It is too easy in any discussion of crime rates to forget that every crime has a victim. The notion of victimless crimes is harmful to serious efforts to help victims and stop future victimisation. This is certainly true for the notion that only violent crime is "serious". This fuels the trivialisation of other offences as "minor", and deserving of little or no punishment.

The police.uk website, supported by the Home Office, describes a "stolen mobile phone" as an example of a "minor crime".[1] And when media outlets refer to incidents of shoplifting and vandalism as "low level crime", the harmful idea that property crime is less serious gains traction.[2]

In this section I make two points.

First, that crime directly affects many millions of individuals, homes and businesses a year in a major way, with millions more family and friends helping victims pick up the pieces. It is not in any sense a minor issue. Crime is still too high and reducing it further should be a key concern of public policy makers. Second, that crime disproportionately affects those on low incomes – often those least able to afford to insure existing goods, or to replace goods stolen or damaged.

Relatedly, crime is noticeably concentrated on a certain number of repeat victims, who experience multiple offences in a short period. The best predictor of victimisation is previous victimisation.

Crime is still too high

The Crime Survey of England and Wales estimates 6.8 million offences were committed in the year ending March 2015.[3] This included 1.3 million violent offences, 90,000 robberies, 4 million thefts from individuals, households or vehicles and 800,000 burglaries.[4]

These figures can be interpreted in a number of ways. It is important to acknowledge the context of a dramatic fall since their peak of 19.1 million in 1995.[5] While this drop can encourage complacency, it can more appropriately encourage optimism that it is possible to reduce crime and disorder much further – whether the cause was changes in policing, sentencing, technology or a combination of these and many other factors.

But, it is also important to appreciate the scale of the problem. We must resist the temptation to glaze over the millions of victims and victims' families that these figures represent. None of these millions of people deserved to be robbed, burgled or worse. Nor did millions more deserve the pain of it happening to their loved ones.

In all, 16 per cent of adults were victims of crime in the year ending March 2015 alone.[6] Crime was no respecter of occupational status. 16.1 per cent of people in professional and managerial occupations were victims, as were 15.5 per cent in routine and manual occupations.[7]

A similar pattern can be seen when one looks at racial and ethnic backgrounds. 15.7 per cent of white people and 15.8 per cent of Asian people were victims

of crime. At 18 per cent, the proportion of black people who were victims was slightly higher.[8]

Reducing crime and anti-social behaviour cannot be dismissed as a minor concern. Each year, people from a full range of ethnic and occupational backgrounds have about a one in six chance of being a victim of crime – implying a 50 per cent likelihood every four years.

But in other important ways, crime and anti-social behaviour are far from equally concentrated. While anything that can be done to help cut crime will help rich and poor alike it will help the poor most.

Some distressing crimes affect the poorest most

Much of the Crime Survey data speaks for itself:

- Adults whose annual household incomes were below £10,000 were 53 per cent more likely than average to be victims of personal crime – violence, robbery, theft from the person, and other theft of personal property.[9] For those with household incomes below £10,000 falling victim to robbery and violence with injury were both three times as likely as for those with household incomes above £50,000.[10] Households with incomes less than £10,000 will include those pensioners relying on just the state pension and some students with part time jobs.
- Victimhood was 29 per cent more common among those in the 20 per cent most deprived output areas than in the remaining 80 per cent, and 45 per cent more common than among those in the 20 per cent least deprived output areas.[11] Anti-social behaviour was 60 per cent more common than among those in the 20 per cent least deprived output areas.[12]
- Children aged 10 to 15 in the social rented sector were 37 per cent more likely than children of owner-occupiers to be victims of crime, and 50 per cent more likely to be victims of violent crime.[13]
- Single parents were 25 per cent more likely than the average household to experience antisocial behaviour.[14]

Looking at London's recorded crime figures at a ward-by-ward level reveals huge disparities between crime rates in the areas with the most and least social housing.

It is worth noting at this point that there are two main ways to measure crime and both have their advantages. Police recorded crime is specific, allowing even very local comparisons. This means one can look at street level offences and form a picture of crime rates.

But Police recorded crime by definition excludes all offences not reported to the Police. For a picture that includes this, the Crime Survey of England and Wales is far more useful. This is a survey of tens of thousands of individuals across the country, asking about their experiences of different offences. The Survey does not have a large enough sample size to form a clear picture at the local level, but it does register about 2.5 times as many offences each year as Police recorded crime. In other words, only 40 per cent of all offences estimated by the Crime Survey are reported to Police.[15]

The Crime Survey does not reflect the total level of crime in England and Wales, which is much higher – it includes only certain offences, and surveys individuals and households but not businesses. So the 6.8 million figure above in fact excludes many offences.

So, both measures have their advantages and flaws. Nevertheless the *trends* in crime shown over time are likely to be more reliable even if there are problems with some of the overall figures.

Even counting only the 40 per cent of crimes that are reported to the Police we see the following picture in London:

% of social housing in London wards[16]	Violence against the person[17]	Burglary[18]	Theft and Handling[19]	Robbery[20]	Total Offences[21]
100 wards with the highest % of social housing in London	12,648	14,381	59,139	5,611	152,611
100 wards with the lowest % of social housing in London	5,540	10,993	30,956	1,764	73,672
Ratio by which the crime rate in the 100 wards with the highest level of social housing exceeds that of the 100 wards with the lowest level of social housing	2.28	1.31	1.91	3.18	2.07

For every 100 violent offences last year in the wards with the least social housing, there were 228 in the wards with the most. Robbery was more than three times as likely. There were 31 per cent more burglaries and 91 per cent more cases of theft and handling.

Overall, residents of the 100 wards with the highest level of social housing suffered more than twice as much crime as residents of the 100 wards with the least social housing. This factor alone has a dramatic effect on people's lives.

Examining two very different London wards helps highlight how with regards to crime London is a tale of two cities. Crime impacts people in London differently based on where they live. It affects the poorest communities most.

Northumberland Park

I grew up a mile away from the ward of Northumberland Park. Largely residential and in the north of my Tottenham constituency, it is a proud home to White Hart Lane.

Those on low incomes are well represented. Northumberland Park ranks 39th highest of more than 600 London electoral wards for the share of residents living in social housing, at 48.6 per cent.[22]

Half of all households in the ward take home less than £25,000 a year and 17 per cent claim Jobseekers' Allowance.[23]

At the other end of the spectrum are wards like Cranham in Havering – 39th lowest in London for social housing, at 4.8 per cent.[24] The median household income is £41,390 and only 1.9 per cent claim Jobseekers' Allowance.[25]

The poorer residents of Northumberland Park experience far higher rates of crime than those living in Cranham.

Police recorded crime (2014)[26]	Northumberland Park	Cranham
Violence against the person	654	92
Rape	22	5
Robbery	77	8
Burglary	265	86
Theft and Handling	492	114
Total	**1,889**	**385**

Even only counting the 40 per cent of crimes that are reported to the Police, Northumberland Park experienced 654 cases of assault, grievous bodily harm and other violent offences in 2014 – more than 12 per week. Cranham saw only 92 cases in the whole of 2014.

In 2014 there were 77 robberies in Northumberland Park but only eight in Cranham.

There were 385 Police recorded offences in Cranham but 1,889 in Northumberland Park.

Life for those at greatest risk of crime

The consequences for residents in areas most affected by crime are predictably dire.

The direct impact on victims is most obvious. Two years after a burglary, victims still do not feel as safe as they did before the incident.[27]

As I argued in my last Policy Exchange report, Taking its Toll,[28] property crimes also hit the poorest in society hardest:

- People who are burgled who cannot afford to insure their possessions and who are least resilient to financial shocks are disproportionately affected.
- Small local businesses whose ability to compete with larger national chains is diminished. Operating on small margins, they are less able to absorb the costs of theft, so are obliged to pass these costs on to their customers through increased prices.
- Residents of areas experiencing deprivation and poverty whose groceries increase in cost.
- Entrepreneurs who are deterred from making investments by the high rate of property crime in deprived areas.

The law abiding in high crime areas feel they need to minimise risk by withdrawing from their community, fearing to go outside. This has a major impact on community cohesion, as an area becomes more and more a place for atomised individuals.

Raising a family in high crime areas can be a constant battle. How easily can a parent instil the value of work and respect in children who see violence and robbery as normal, and who may come to see crime as a viable way to become wealthy. Gangs are also most common in the poorest, high crime areas of the country. Among their other appeals is that in a sense they are competing directly

with the Police in offering their members protection against victimisation by other criminals.

One unsurprising consequence of the greater impact of crime on those with low incomes is support for stiffer sentencing. Serious penalties for property crime send a message that it is serious and will not be tolerated.

Very few people support trivialising property crime, or punishing it lightly. Only 13 per cent of people living in marginal constituencies support "sending fewer people to prison for non-violent offences". But tellingly, support is twice as high among those in socio-economic groups A and B (16 per cent and 15 per cent) as it is among C2s and Ds (seven per cent and eight per cent).[29] Only 16 per cent of people in socio-economic group E supported this option so support was very low across the country.

The economically disadvantaged go through life with a persistent fear of crime and anti-social behaviour. The lower the household income, the greater the percentage who believe crime has gone up "a little" or "a lot" in the past few years. Two thirds of individuals whose household incomes were below £10,000 agreed with this, compared to less than half of those with household incomes above £50,000.[30] Those with household incomes below £10,000 were more than three times as likely to worry about burglary and violent crime.[31] The same disparity exists for fear of anti-social behaviour.[32]

Lower income households are not wrong in their views on crime. There is a patronising view that people have been duped into believing that crime is high by the press. Data suggests tabloid newspapers are *not* the trigger for this fear. 19 per cent of tabloid readers believe they are likely to be a victim of crime, compared to an almost identical 17 per cent of broadsheet readers and 20 per cent of non-newspaper readers.[33]

Repeat victims

Those with lower incomes think crime is high because crime is now more concentrated on particular areas and particular people – their areas and people like them. A worrying feature of modern crime rates is how concentrated they are on certain repeat victims. The academic Rebecca Thompson suggests that "contrary to other crime types, the fall in theft and robbery since 1996 is largely comprised of a reduction in single victims".[34] The same welcome trend has not extended to many victims of theft and robbery.

Research has long suggested a dramatic concentration of crime on a relatively small number of victims. One Home Office study determined that 41 per cent of all property (excluding vehicle) and personal crime was focused on two per cent of the population.[35] 59 per cent of all retail crime was focused on three per cent of retail businesses.[36] As the author put it:

> *Commission of a crime boosts the likelihood of its repetition. Offsetting that, change in the situation facing the perpetrator on his/her return diminishes the chance of crime. The recognition that change in a target after a crime diminishes the chances of its repetition is important. It chimes with the offender accounts presented later, and is exactly parallel to the 'Broken Windows' thesis (see Kelling and Coles, 1996), in which neglect of the first attack on a building or person means that no-one cares, and that the attacks can continue with impunity. The argument for 'fixing broken windows' is precisely the same as for preventing repeat victimisation by changing what the offender first encountered.*[37]

For some unfortunate victims, we see a dramatic likelihood of repeat victimisation. The above study tersely explained: "victimisation is the best single predictor of victimisation … a major reason for repetition is that offenders take later advantage of opportunities which the first offence throws up".[38]

Among the 20 per cent most economically deprived output areas, each victim of violence suffered an average of 1.75 offences during the year ending March 2015. Each victim of personal crime as a whole suffered an average of 1.58 offences in that twelve-month period. In other words these individuals were not the victim of one random crime but of repeated victimisation.

Offence	**Average number of offences per victim in the 20% most economically deprived output areas[39]**
Domestic burglary with entry and no loss	1.87
Domestic burglary with entry and loss	1.83
Attempted domestic burglary	1.83
Domestic burglary with entry	1.82
Domestic burglary	1.75
Attempted theft of and from vehicles	1.67
Bicycle theft	1.67
Burglary in building other than dwelling with entry and no loss	1.65
Burglary in building other than dwelling with entry and loss	1.60
Burglary in dwelling with no loss	1.59
Attempted burglary in dwelling	1.58
Burglary in dwelling with entry	1.47
Burglary in dwelling	1.44
Burglary in dwelling with loss	1.34
Burglary in building other than dwelling	1.33
Attempted burglary in building other than dwelling	1.30
Burglary in building other than dwelling with entry	1.30
Home and other vandalism	1.30
Vehicle vandalism	1.29
Theft from a motor vehicle	1.29

Theft of a motor vehicle	1.27
Theft from outside dwelling	1.25
Vandalism	1.23
Wounding	1.22
Common assault with no injury	1.20
Violence without injury	1.20
Acquaintance violence	1.19
Domestic violence	1.17
Common assault	1.16
Violence with injury	1.15
Stranger violence	1.14
Common assault with injury	1.14
Other personal theft	1.12
Attempted snatch and stealth theft	1.09
Robbery	1.08
Theft from the person	1.07
Mugging	1.07
Stealth theft	1.06
Snatch theft	1.00
All personal theft	1.18
All personal crime	1.58
All vehicle crime	1.40
All vehicle-related thefts	1.23
All household theft	1.38
All household crime	1.55
All violence	1.75

Notably, these figures for *repeat* victimisation – falling victim to the same crime more than once in a year – do not account for *multiple* victimisation. Multiple victimisation is falling victim to different offences in the course of a year. Many of the people who suffered one or more violent offences will also have suffered one or more burglaries.

In choosing victims, criminals can often be coldly rational. In the case of burglars, once they know the contents, layout and security arrangements of the home, it makes a repeat burglary easier – especially if they leave just enough time for replacements from insurance. One survey of a small number of multiple convicted burglars found 76 per cent had gone back to a number of houses after a varying period of time to burgle them between two and five times.[40]

In one series of interviews with offenders, they admitted:

> *Once you have been into a place it is easier to burgle because you are then familiar with the layout, and you can get out much quicker.*
>
> *It was so easy I went back ten days later.*
>
> *The house would be targeted again 'a few weeks later' when the stuff had been replaced and because the first time had been easy…*
>
> *It was a chance to get things which you had seen the first time and now had a buyer for.*[41]

Proper policing is a vital part of tackling repeat victimisation, and I discuss this at length in the next section.

But getting architecture and design right is also very effective – designing out crime by making it physically difficult for criminals to commit offences, or to escape having done so. Homes that have been repeatedly targeted should be considered high priority for investment in crime prevention.

I discussed in my last report how for an average cost of £200, homes can be designed to minimise crime.[42] WIDE retrofitting for existing homes can cut the risk of burglary by a factor of 30.

The Greater London Authority London Plan, which sets out the Housing Strategy for London, predicts that at least 49,000 houses will be needed in London, per annum, for each year between 2015 and 2036.[43] We should not miss this opportunity to design out crime.

Local authorities should look carefully at insisting on designing out crime principles in new developments, perhaps as part of the planning process. They should also consider planting trees, hedges and bushes in ways best designed to impede criminals – in the way of known escape routes, and to prevent areas becoming places where criminals congregate and sell stolen goods and drugs.

02 Problem-oriented, hotspot policing

It is easy to observe a problem, but we need to solve it. In the first section I showed that crime remains too high and it harms the poorest most. In this section, I will examine how Police tactics can drastically reduce crime. I recommend:

- A greater use of Police foot patrols.
- A focus on preventing crime in areas where it is highest.
- The use of problem oriented policing.

We can reduce the overall level of crime in London much further by focusing on the areas where crime is highest and using the tactics that have been proven to work in other major cities. Focusing on crime prevention is an effective use of Police resources. At its best this model of policing gives ordinary citizens back the basic order and civility to which we are all entitled but which some areas do not currently enjoy. It makes the Police and the community partners in a joint mission – to reduce crime.

Police embedded in the community again

Recent decades have seen a revolution in expert thinking about the value of Police embedded within the local community, and time spent doing the right things. Known variously as problem-oriented policing, broken windows and hotspot policing, the common underlying theme is the crime reduction potential in emphasising some of the most traditional aspects of Police work: going where the crime is, policing a beat on foot, identifying problems and solutions, proactively tackling "minor" offences and fear and disorder. In a sense, these theories – particularly hotspot policing – merely expand on the common sense notion that a strong Police presence (for example at football matches and other major events) helps to tackle crime, and seeks to apply some of the lessons to preventing crime and disorder more widely.

By contrast, these theories are sceptical of selectively ignoring some offences as too trivial, of too much Police time spent in cars at the expense of foot patrol and of investigating and responding rapidly to crime at the expense of directly deterring it or preventing it.

New York

New York City is a classic case of a city once plagued by crime, disorder and fear – now transformed by good policy, especially good policing.

In a foreword to my last Policy Exchange report, New York's Police Commissioner Bill Bratton set this out:

In 1994, when I first became Police Commissioner of the City of New York, the city was experiencing nearly unprecedented levels of violent crime. To some people's surprise, however, one of the first things I had the New York City Police Department (NYPD) do was approach low-level crime and disorder, including fare evasion in the public transit system, graffiti and other types of vandalism, and pickpocketing and petty larcenies, with the same vigour as they approached more serious crime.

I knew that many New Yorkers had unfortunately come to accept low-level crime as part of city life. But I also knew that such disorder ruined the quality of life for the vast majority of law-abiding people who lived and worked in our great City. Moreover, I knew that the way to tackle the violence and felony crime was to tackle the seemingly small things, because doing so prevents many of the big things. As Sir Robert Peel taught, almost two centuries ago, the purpose of the Police is to prevent crime and disorder.

Starting in 1994 and continuing up to today, the NYPD rose to the challenge. They did it by working with local communities across the city, by getting out of their cars and walking the streets, by tackling hitherto neglected crimes like aggressive begging and soliciting, and by showing local people that they were there to serve them.

In itself, cracking down on fare evasion on the New York subway soon led to the solving of, and reduction in, serious crimes. A new system for booking fare dodgers and quickly releasing them was introduced. Perhaps intuitively, once Police began stopping fare dodgers they found large numbers of the people responsible for more serious offences. In some areas, as many as one in ten were wanted on a criminal charge or were carrying an illegal weapon.[44]

Another important step was taking subway graffiti seriously. A generation ago, commuters on New York's trains were usually unable to see what station they had arrived at through the windows, so widespread was the graffiti problem. Maps and signs inside the car were similarly unreadable.[45] One commuter described the feeling of being:

assaulted continuously, not only by the evidence that every subway car has been vandalised, but by the inescapable knowledge that the environment … is uncontrolled and uncontrollable, and that anyone can invade it to do whatever damage and mischief the minds suggests … ever-present marking serve to persuade the passenger that, indeed, the subway is a dangerous place – a mode of transportation to be used only when one has no alternative.[46]

A longitudinal Police study of 15 year old graffitists confirmed this picture: three years later, 40 per cent had been arrested for crimes such as robbery and burglary.[47]

To combat this lawlessness, New York introduced a policy that combined arresting graffitists again and again with cleaning any graffiti within hours – so that almost no one would ever see their work. It was a success. Within five years, the last graffiti-covered train was removed from service and cleaned.

Immediately, crimes that had been rising for years began to diminish. Maintenance of order on the New York subway saw felonies on the subway fall by 75 per cent within four years, and robberies fall by 64 per cent.[48] This dramatic change was particularly striking given that no specific anti-robbery or anti-theft

tactics were introduced: only Police action premised on the belief that the subway should be a safe, orderly place.

Similar results followed efforts against "squeegeeing" in early 1990s New York. While some of the groups of people offering to wash car windows were good natured and good humoured, many were deliberately menacing. From the victim's perspective, the line between aggressive begging and mugging can be a thin one. Swarming around a car demanding money and spitting on cars that refused often had the perpetrator's desired effect: the extraction of money from a terrified driver.

As soon as the New York Police Department began arresting these law-breakers, they found half had previous arrests for crimes such as robbery, assault and burglary.[49] Previously, Police had handed out penalty notices, demanding the accused pay a fine or appear at the Police station at a later date. These were ignored by offenders, and no further action was taken – squeegeeing was not a priority.

Instead of merely handing out penalty notices, officers began arresting those who ignored the penalty notices in the summer of 1993. Ignoring the notices was a jailable offence, and now prison time would follow – punishment was swift and certain. Aggressive squeegeeing ended in New York in a matter of weeks.

Why does it work?

The first point is that the evidence is this form of policing *does* work when it is tried.

This year, a systematic review looked at 30 separate real life randomised experiments and tests of the notion that "when police address social and physical disorder in neighbourhoods they can prevent serious crime".[50] The normal way this was done was for Police to assign more officers to one of two nearby areas, or to instruct Police in one of two areas to focus far more attention on low-level crimes, and compare changes in crime rates in the control areas to the areas where disorder policing had been trialled. It was also important to establish that crime had actually been reduced overall, rather than displaced.

Aggregating the data from all 30 studies revealed that policing disorder strategies created "an overall statistically significant, modest crime reduction effort".[51] The programmes that achieved the best results were those that used "community and problem-solving interventions designed to change social and physical disorder conditions at particular places".[52] Put simply – crime went down when effective community policing was deployed in an area.

Fundamentally, this form of policing gives Police a sense of ownership over their "turf", and a high level of responsibility for deterring, stopping and solving crimes within their patch. Rather than spending a small amount of time in a large area, often driving from one place to another, they spend a large amount of time in a much smaller area. Officers are expected to become familiar with the community and its residents. In principle, they respond to all requests for Police attention, and follow up on investigations personally.[53]

Interestingly, there is evidence that Police need very little new instruction or training to take on this role. It may simply come naturally to most Police when freed from many other constraints.

Police chiefs in Newark, New Jersey reluctantly assigned far more Police to foot patrols in return for extra funding from the State government, but offered officers very little guidance. Foot patrol officers in Newark nonetheless behaved in a remarkably similar way in all areas – becoming a full part of their areas. Using local

facilities and shops, knowing local people by name and being known to them by name, they soon developed regular sources of information.[54]

This all builds superior knowledge of and links with the local area, meaning better intelligence and much greater cooperation from local people. They will have a better sense of who the known troublemakers are. If Police are regularly patrolling their beat on foot they are far more likely to know the areas where crime is concentrated, and freer to concentrate time there.

Their regular presence may in itself deter criminals from committing some crimes. The possibility of a victim calling the Police, and Police arriving in time to catch them, is different from the knowledge that a Police Officer will walk down the street within a short period of time, as they always do.

Even when arrest rates stay the same, crime has still been shown to fall.[55] As this cannot be down to the incapacitation of offenders, it points to a deterrent effect.

Another important reason this can work is that Police are empowered and expected to achieve results – a neighbourhood where people are and feel safer. The alternative view is that the Police, far from being responsible in their own right for order and justice, are merely one cog in a much wider justice system that begins with policing, goes through the prosecution stage, persists in the courts and ends in the probation, community service or prison systems. But this view can easily rob Police of discretion, responsibility and a sense of ownership of the results. It always allows the buck to be passed. It can end Police initiating solutions and preventing crime – instead only responding to crimes already in progress.[56]

Is this intrusive policing?

Criminals are a permanent and often highly intrusive presence in the areas worst affected by crime. It can be extremely dispiriting to talk to parents in areas where crime is everywhere and authority is absent. They are constantly fighting to protect their children from crime – or worse, from becoming a criminal.

In that light, communities are often resentful when they feel a lack of Police attention, and welcome greater Police protection.[57] It is dangerous to conflate areas of high crime with areas where people dislike a Police presence. More Police attention focused on the minority of prolific offenders can be a vital respite for their many neighbours who suffer crime most.

In a more fundamental sense, taking crime and disorder in a community seriously is a communitarian view. It recognises the importance of the wider effects on a community, not only the direct victims, of vandalism or repeated burglaries. Longstanding members of a community can feel the impact of these offences as a grim pattern over time, as they feel the area they grew up in or moved to decades ago slip away from them.

Good policing is not about intruding on communities, but about empowering communities, and including Police within them.

That is why, when so many victims of crime are non-white, encouraging an ethnically diverse Police force in areas like London is about much more than tokenism. Similarly, an ethnically diverse Police force can be expected to be more persuasive when gathering information from all sections of society – and when gathering testimonies against criminals.

Nor does this sort of policing mean a large number of arrests. The key is giving Police the time in an area, and the discretion with their powers, to identify the best

solutions to a community's problems. Police attention to disorderly behaviour is vital, but arrest can be a last resort.[58]

A high Police presence in a community and the consequent Police knowledge of that community enables proportionate responses. Beat Police will have a better sense of who the known troublemakers are, and will be able to distinguish them from harmless "wannabes" who superficially behave in a similar way while avoiding crime.

Conversely, lack of familiarity with an area can itself contribute to heavy-handedness. Professor David Bayley of the University at Albany, State University of New York, who has studied Police behaviour worldwide, said Police Officers from outside an area who visit but do not work regularly in the precinct can act as if "their responsibility is to 'keep things under control' by demonstrating an intrusive, hard-edged presence".[59]

Is it showing poor prioritisation of Police time?

There is an opportunity cost to any time Police Officers spend on a beat. Any time spent in one part of an officer's shift is time taken away from another.

To advocate a focus in one area – in this case, on beat-based, problem-oriented foot patrols, is to advocate reductions in other areas. It is reasonable to look at what, in these circumstances, is being partially sacrificed.

The vision of policing I am advocating is about a vision of what should be prioritised, not an argument against prioritisation. It is about prioritising Police on foot patrols over Police time spent in cars. It prioritises the notion of Police as part of the community over Police as a rapid reaction force, speeding from one area to the next in response to crime reports. It prioritises catching criminals in the act over responding faster to calls from individuals.

The reason for these priorities is that they matter most. Simply, while of course citizens demand that Police provide assistance when they are the victims of crime, the highest priority is preventing them from becoming crime victims in the first place.

The problem for those who would take the opposite view, and forgo all the above advantages of having Police on foot in favour of rapid response by car, is that it appears so much less effective.

If Police arrive at the scene of a crime while it is actually being committed – whether arriving on foot or by car – the chance of an arrest is substantial.

But if Police are called after a crime has been committed, the speed by which they arrive makes very little difference to the chances of solving the crime.[60] Perhaps surprisingly, this is because most of the delay between a crime being committed and Police arriving actually comes down to the behaviour of victims and witnesses. People, on discovery of a crime, will then often call friends or family, and decide how to react. Only after this will they tend to contact the Police.[61]

One study in Kansas City, Missouri, tentatively concluded that the number of car patrols by Police made no substantial difference to criminal activity, the amount of reported crime, rates of victimisation, fear of crime or satisfaction with the Police.[62] Rapid Police response led to an arrest in only three per cent of serious crimes.[63] Even more sobering, the author of the study calculated that even if all the delays in contacting the Police were somehow to be eliminated, this could rise to only seven per cent.[64]

If Police time spent in cars is comparatively unproductive for crime prevention, it is worth considering the opportunity cost of this Police time. Police simply cannot come to know an area in the same way darting from place to place by

car. The car acts as a separation: people cannot easily approach, and if they do – perhaps to pass on useful information on who is selling stolen goods – it will likely be noticed by neighbours.[65]

Working with neighbourhood policing teams, I have seen the value of Police being immersed in a community, on foot. Police can see the area beyond its crimes and problems. They encounter the law-abiding majority and learn from them.[66] As discussed above, this means, for example, that Police come to know the posers from the troublesome gang members.[67]

It is also encouraging that the investigative work of solving crimes appears to be little impediment to Police being "visible and available" to the public. Comparing the percentage of Police in a given Police force who were "visible and available" with that force's "sanction detection" rates (crimes solved) does not demonstrate that Police time away from their desks meant fewer crimes were solved. In fact, across the 43 forces in England and Wales, there is a positive correlation of 0.3 between having more visible and available Police and higher rates of crimes solved.[68]

Is it showing poor prioritisation of crimes to target?

My main response to those who minimise and trivialise what they like to call "minor offences" is essentially a moral one. There is no such thing as a "victimless crime". Each incident of disorder, theft or criminal damage has a victim. The effect goes well beyond the victim to affect the whole community negatively.

As we have seen, tackling these offences can have the greatest effect in reducing serious crimes. One Chicago Police Officer explained the consequences of tackling aggressive begging: "When we stop kids from panhandling on the El, we are preventing robberies. Kids can start out asking for money; they then find out that people are scared in the subway and begin to try to intimidate them into give them money. It's a short step from intimidation to simply taking the money."[69]

It is so often anti-social behaviour, and supposedly minor offences, that make the biggest negative impact on quality of life in an area. Experience of anti-social behaviour appears to drive perceptions of the local crime rate. The Crime Survey of England and Wales found that of the people who thought crime locally was lower than average only 22 per cent had experienced anti-social behaviour. Among those who thought crime locally was higher than average more than twice that proportion – 48 per cent – had experienced anti-social behaviour.[70]

Similarly, less than a quarter (23 per cent) of those who had confidence in the Police had experienced anti-social behaviour, compared to more than half (55 per cent) of those who lacked confidence in the Police.[71]

This point certainly applies also to property crime, often wrongly dismissed as "minor". Given that property crime accounts for more than three quarters of all crime,[72] the idea of stopping the most serious offences of all by targeting lesser offences necessarily means targeting perpetrators of property crime.

Much evidence backs up the wisdom of taking property crime seriously. Theft, for example, is clearly a "gateway" offence. For almost all serious offences, the first conviction for most who commit them is actually most likely to be theft.

Criminals convicted of violence against the person were more likely to have their first conviction for theft than for violence against the person. The same is true for robbery, criminal damage, drug offences and possession of weapons.[73]

This is even truer for prolific criminals, defined here as those with at least 15 previous convictions or cautions. (These prolific criminals now account for

more than half of all prisoners, while only 8 per cent of prisoners had no previous convictions or cautions.[74])

Prolific criminals found guilty of violence against the person in 2014 were actually more than six times as likely to have committed theft for their first offence (40.1 per cent of the total) as violence against the person (6.6 per cent). Prolific criminals found guilty of a sex offence were more than 19 times as likely to have committed theft for their first offence as a sex offence. Prolific criminals found guilty of robbery were more than 13 times as likely to have committed theft for their first offence.[75]

Property crime is often more literally a "gateway" crime, in the sense that the commission of one crime is necessary in order to commit another. Stolen cars facilitate the commission of other types of crime (such as getaway vehicles in bank robberies, or to transport stolen property away from a burglary), so reducing car theft will also also reduce other crime types. Police often pursue keenly the drivers of cars that are untaxed or uninsured because it is these cars that are more likely to be used for committing other offences.

Conclusion

We do not need to accept the high level of crime that exists. It imposes too high a cost on all Londoners, but especially those on low incomes. We can tackle it by deploying foot patrols more often and using problem oriented policing, which has been found to be very effective in cities across the world. Property crime is not a minor crime. It is a gateway to very serious offences and tackling it effectively is a great way of reducing the overall level of crime. To do this we need to focus on the areas of London where crime is highest and apply the solutions outlined in the next section.

03 Solution for London

Crime is still far too high and London suffers more crime per head than anywhere else in England and Wales.[76] Reducing crime should be a key priority for the Mayor. Combatting it will require policy changes in terms of how Metropolitan Police Officers are deployed and how our housing is built, maintained and regulated. There are few policy areas under the direct remit of the Mayor that can deliver greater benefits to the poorest in society than reducing the fear and victimisation in our most vulnerable communities. Below I outline the thirteen steps I think we should take.

The Metropolitan Police should move towards beat-based foot patrols and encourage officers to get out of their cars. This has been shown to reduce crime and disorder in cities previously plagued by both. It also increases public satisfaction in the Police, a key MOPAC target contained in its 20/20/20 strategy.

Foot patrols should focus particularly on repeat victims – by definition, this means focusing on high crime areas. Police should work with the communities they serve through problem-oriented policing to bring down crime. To have enough Police to do this, we need to employ an additional 1,400 Police Officers and 1,000 Police Community Support Officers in London, reversing the force reductions made since 2010.

The Met should invest in new technology in high crime areas, learning from the success of the deployment of Smartwater technology in the London Borough of Brent. There was a case study of Smartwater technology in my recent paper on property crime, *Taking its Toll*.

The Metropolitan Police and MOPAC should experiment relentlessly. There should be randomised control trials in different wards to test the impact of different policy measures. We need to find out what works and to deploy it rapidly and effectively. Below I explain what these policies would mean in greater detail.

Housing in London is cripplingly expensive. Building more social housing is essential, but we should be careful not to build crime into our communities by way of poor design and complacency about security measures in homes. Where this has been the case it needs to be remedied.

"Designing out crime" solutions should be implemented in the planning stage at the borough level, and where possible retrofitted on individual homes that are regularly victimised. Investing in WIDE installations – Window locks, Internal lights on a timer, Deadlocks or Double door locks and External lights activated by a motion sensor – has already been shown to have a major effect on burglary rates. This should be the responsibility of landlords in cases where properties are being privately rented.

A greener London should also be a safer London. More trees, hedges and bushes in the right places can make it harder for criminals to commit crimes, and

harder to escape. London boroughs should make designing out crime a compulsory part of the process for obtaining planning approval.

Social housing providers should include optional low-cost home contents insurance in their rental agreements with tenants.

More Police patrolling London

1 Given the importance of foot patrols, as discussed above, it is vital to increase the percentage of "visible and available" officers in the Metropolitan Police.

In 2012, the most recent figure available, the Metropolitan Police ranked 39th of 43 Police forces in England and Wales on this measure – the fifth lowest in England and Wales.[77] On average, just 10.2 per cent of the Metropolitan Police's officers and PCSOs were visible and available.[78]

This figure has its limitations – officers are rightly not permanently on duty, so it could never be 100 per cent. But officers and PCSOs in West Yorkshire (16.3 per cent) and Cleveland (15.8 per cent) manage to be 60 per cent more available.[79] The Metropolitan Police has a unique role in tackling the threat of terrorism, which is an unusual constraint on time spent on the beat for some officers.

London also suffers unusually high rates of conventional crime. The Mayor of London, in his or her capacity as Police and Crime Commissioner, should move the Metropolitan Police from one of the country's lowest forces for "visible and available" Police to one of the highest.

To do this, 1,400 constable positions and 1,000 PCSO positions will need to be reinstated in the Met, to give it the capacity to restore dedicated neighbourhood policing teams that are visible to and approachable by their local community.

2 As part of encouraging foot patrols, the Mayor of London should look closely at Metropolitan Police spending on Police cars, and, perhaps, sell some existing vehicles to reinvest in other means of crime prevention.

London has some of the finest Police Officers in the world, but the evidence is that they are spending too much time in cars and too little on the most effective methods of policing. More foot patrols is also environmentally friendly.

3 The Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime should attempt randomised controlled trials around London to gather evidence on which policing methods work best.

Deploying different numbers of Police in comparable wards, or deploying the same numbers and asking them to operate differently, would help identify the most effective ways to Police an area, catch and deter criminals, and reduce fear and disorder. The most effective methods could quickly become a new standard of policing for high-crime areas.

4 More Police resources should be directly invested in crime hotspots, particularly those areas recently victimised.

The best predictor of a burglary is a previous burglary within 400 metres within the last six weeks.[80] Police should be there too, both to deter burglars from returning and to catch them in the act.

Police focus on repeat offences automatically concentrates efforts on areas of highest crime and on those individuals at greatest risk of future victimisation. It fuses the roles of victim support and crime prevention. It helps both prevent and catch repeat offenders insofar as repeated offences against the same target are the work of the same perpetrators. It helps target prolific offenders who are likely also to be responsible for repeat victimisation.[81]

5 As discussed in my last report, the Mayor of London should replicate the "Compstat" model in New York.[82]

At least once a fortnight, senior officers should go through crime statistics and hold borough commanders to account for any increase in crime rates or decrease in Police effectiveness. This also works to gather sufficient data to spot trends, patterns and emerging challenges.

6 The Mayor of London, Transport for London and MOPAC should sustain a particular focus on crime on public transport.

Crime and disorder on public transport can be particularly pernicious owing to the lack of physical space to escape it. It often affects the working poor most as they tend to have no other option for getting to and from work.

Designing out crime

7 London local authorities should insist that new home developments incorporate "designing out crime" principles as part of the planning process.

Proper planning and architecture have a recognised role in crime prevention. Designing out crime ensures it is physically more difficult both to commit crimes and to do so without being caught. For an average cost of £200, a new home can be designed in such a way as to meet these principles. As already occurs in Greater Manchester, local authorities should make compliance with designing out crime principles a compulsory part of the planning permission process.[83]

8 The Mayor of London's environmental team should put the "greening of London" at its core, with a view to placing trees, bushes and hedges in the way of known areas of criminal activity.

In the previous financial year alone, the government paid for the planting of four million new trees.[84] There is a real opportunity to locate more new plants in ways that impede crime.

More plants in London is pleasing aesthetically and reduces London's carbon emissions. Most relevant for the purposes of this report, it is a simple solution to the architectural problems in many parts of London. Working with Police, local authorities and residents' associations, the Mayor should identify new locations for trees, bushes and hedges that will block off areas currently used by criminals to intimidate, to sell drugs, to escape from Police – and wholly or partly fund them.

9 For a few hundred pounds per home, WIDE installations can cut the risk of burglary by a factor of 30.[85]

I recommended in my previous policy paper on crime that, as part of a broader regime to increase landlord accountability in the private rented sector, tenants should have the right to request that their landlord install WIDE target hardening measures in their home. Landlords should be obliged to do this following any tenant's victimisation.

10 Further, as part of the randomised controlled trials mentioned in recommendation 3 above, the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime could trial investing some of its budget in crime prevention by directly funding WIDE installation in the areas most consistently burgled.

An experiment along these lines in Kirkholt, Rochdale, suggests this could be successful. In Kirkholt, investment in measures to secure properties that had just been burgled were followed by a two thirds reduction in domestic burglary, and a fall to almost zero of repeat burglaries.[86]

Investing in tackling crime

11 As part of MOPAC's randomised controlled trials, the Metropolitan Police should roll out new technologies in some of the highest crime areas, comparing the results to areas of similar crime rates. The deployment of Smartwater shows how this can work in practice.

Smartwater is an ink-like liquid visible only under ultraviolet light. It has a unique forensic signature that links it to one registered user. Each user's liquid is forensically different to other users, so marked goods can be traced back to their owner from just a trace sample of the product. It is used to mark property or to mark criminals; it cannot be washed off clothing, skin or hair. Because the unique code is inherent in the liquid's chemistry, it can be discreetly applied to jewellery, and even cash if required.

A large part of Smartwater's operations go into working with local Police to conduct "sting" operations, to prove to local thieves how effective Smartwater is at convicting thieves, then advertising Smartwater's effectiveness widely. For example, they will set up a sprinkler system in a jewellery shop that sprays would-be burglars with the liquid when the motion sensor is activated. When analysed later, the thieves cannot deny being at the scene, as they are covered in ultraviolet glowing liquid directly traceable to the crime scene. The goal is to make thieves frightened of targeting homes or businesses that are protected by Smartwater – meaning a window sticker with the Smartwater logo is as powerful a deterrent as the liquid itself.

12 The Mayor of London should work to ensure social housing providers offer optional and low cost home contents insurance as part of their tenancy.

Britain's poorest and most deprived communities are at greater risk of burglary or other theft victimisation, yet they are less able to afford insurance, and less able to absorb the financial shocks of crime. This problem is getting worse: a survey of social housing tenants found that 53 per cent of respondents had home contents insurance coverage in 2012, whereas in 2014 the figure had declined to 39 per cent.[87] There is a systemic inequity – a regressive social tax

– caused by property crime in poorer communities, and innovative solutions around encouraging greater insurance policy adoption would serve to address that inequity.

Social housing providers should offer low cost home contents insurance packages that can be paid at the same time as the rent, to try to increase insurance coverage amongst those most vulnerable to property crime.

Similarly, local government authorities could provide crime prevention advice – including the recommendation to purchase home contents insurance – to residents as they register for council tax or for the electoral roll.[88]

Housing: London Police as Londoners

13 **The Metropolitan Police should offer subsidised housing in land it owns for rent or purchase by officers to encourage them to live in London.** If we are to take seriously the idea of Police as active, full parts of local communities, we must also combat the increasing tendency for London's Police Officers to live outside London, as a result of spiralling housing costs in the capital. Police will be a part of the local community and better known by the community, building public confidence in the Police. Simply by being Londoners rather than commuters, officers will likely gather intelligence on an area and build trust in their free time.

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