



SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

Measurement of the Extent of Youth Crime in Scotland

By DTZ Piedad Consulting

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report provides estimates of the number of crimes committed by young people (aged 21 and under) in Scotland. It also provides an overview of the conceptual and practical issues involved in estimating the prevalence of youth crime, anti-social behaviour perpetrated by young people, and the fear of youth crime.
2. To provide estimates of youth crime, we used several official data sources, including recorded crime statistics, SCRA data and data from the courts. Recorded crime statistics were our starting point as the main complete source of crime in Scotland. We then used secondary data sources, such as the Scottish Crime Survey, to adjust recorded crime statistics to take account of unrecorded crime. SCRA and courts data was used to estimate the proportion of all crime that is attributable to young people.
3. A number of major assumptions had to be made in conducting this exercise as all the available data sources have their limitations. These assumptions have to be taken into account in any attempt to use these results for policy or other purposes.
4. We estimate that 43% of all crimes and offences in Scotland is attributable to young people under the age of 21. As anticipated, young people are responsible for higher proportions of offences such as fire-raising (86%), vandalism (75%), theft of motor vehicles (75%), theft by opening lockfast places (65%), handling offensive weapons (59%) and housebreaking (55%). Young people seem less likely to commit crimes of indecency (41%), other crimes of dishonesty such as fraud and reset (30%) and motor vehicle offences (26%).
5. Our estimates suggest that bulk of youth crime is attributable to those aged 18-21 (49%). The under-15s commit over one-third of youth crime, with the remainder attributable to those aged 16-17. 87% of youth crime is committed by males.
6. Most youth crime is theft-related. We estimate that there are around two million crimes of dishonesty per year involving young people in Scotland. These findings would appear to be in line with previous research.
7. There are no reliable data sources that would allow the extent of anti-social behaviour by young people and fear of youth crime in Scotland to be measured fully. Instead, we consider a number of key indicators that attempt to measure these social phenomena.

8. There is no agreed definition at agency level as to what constitutes anti-social behaviour and there is a high degree of subjectivity surrounding this concept. Some types of anti-social behaviour, e.g. vandalism and fire-raising, are captured, in part at least by criminal statistics, and their overall incidence is estimated in this report. However, other types of anti-social behaviour are not crimes or offences at all and different police forces record incidents of youth nuisance behaviour in different ways.
9. It is more appropriate to consider anti-social behaviour in terms of the number of people it affects and its impact on people rather than by attempting to measure its actual incidence levels.
10. The Scottish Household Survey found littering and groups of young people hanging around to be the most common anti-social behaviour problems. These problems are most commonly experienced in areas of social housing and by single parent, single adult and large family households.
11. Some 32% of households reported that groups of young people hanging around were common in their areas. 30% reported problems with rubbish or litter lying about, and 22% problems with people drinking or using drugs. However, other than for the 'groups hanging about' behaviour, it was not possible to separate out how much of this anti-social behaviour was attributable to young people
12. The 'discovery' of fear of crime as a distinct social problem is a relatively recent development. Fear of crime is not directly related to the actual risk of victimisation, and may persist at a relatively high level, even when crime rates have fallen. There are many problems surrounding its definition and, like anti-social behaviour, it is probably more helpful to examine it in terms of its impact on people. The available evidence considers the fear of crime in general rather than fear of crime committed by young people per se. There is little evidence about the latter.
13. A recent report placed the UK among the top three EU member states where feelings of insecurity after dark are greatest. In the UK, people tend to be particularly worried about violent crime, car crime and burglary. People in poorer areas tend to be more worried about crime. There is more anxiety about crime among women and young people under 24 years of age.
14. In Scotland, 31% of people said that they were worried about the risk of burglary, 27% about having their car stolen, and 23% about being mugged or robbed.

1 INTRODUCTION

AIMS OF THE STUDY

- 1.1 The study brief set out the Executive's aspiration to develop an economic cost of youth crime measure to assist in the evaluation of the effectiveness of projects and programmes in this area. The Executive recognised, however, that the initial step in this process was to quantify the overall extent of youth crime, as information on the extent of youth crime was recognised to be partial, ad hoc and fragmented. For the purposes of this study, young people are defined as those 21 years of age and under.
- 1.2 The overarching aims of the study are:
- to provide a clear understanding of the extent of youth crime in Scotland by providing an accurate picture of the crimes committed by juvenile criminals and the numbers involved; and
 - to further research into the fears and perceptions of youth crime.
- 1.3 A two-stage approach was envisaged, with the specific tasks identified. The output of the first scoping stage of the study was to be a framework that would be utilised in the second stage to provide estimates of youth crime and an overview of the fear of youth crime. The work on Stage 1 was presented in an interim report to the Scottish Executive in August 2003. This is the final report.

Stage 1

- Review and explore all potential sources of information on youth crime and fear of youth crime.
- Resolve definitional issues relating to youth crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Identify ways of measuring perceptions and fears of youth crime.
- Estimate the differences between reported and unreported youth crime.

Stage 2

- Provide estimates of the number of crimes committed by young people and the numbers of juveniles involved, as well as providing an estimate of the number of youths committing crimes across a range of crime categories.
- Provide an overview of the perceptions and fears of youth crime in Scotland. Fears and perceptions should include the following:

1. fear of actual youth crime;
 2. insecurities and perceptions of risk of experiencing or becoming a victim of youth crime;
 3. fear of low level crime and disorder;
 4. fear and perceptions of the implications of anti-social behaviour of youths (e.g. groups on street corners, swearing in streets); and
 5. perceptions of the impact of youth crime on the community and how perceptions about the impact can influence the levels of juvenile crime.
- Provide a guide to local youth justice teams on the measures and perceptions of youth crime to allow them to develop and apply the information locally.

STRUCTURE OF THIS REPORT

- 1.4 This report seeks to fulfil the remit set out in the brief by:
- providing contextual overviews of youth crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime;
 - estimating the amount of crime committed by young people by crime type, gender and age group using a mixture of data obtained on recorded crime, court proceedings, and SCRA referrals, as well as data from previous research studies;
 - providing details on the key indicators of anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime, including discussion on the limitations of existing data sources and of the impacts of both phenomena; and
 - providing detailed local authority estimates that can serve as a guide to local youth justice teams are included in Appendix 1.
- 1.5 **Section 2** of the report provides an overview of each of the relevant social phenomena, youth crime, anti-social behaviour and fear of crime. It discusses the problems of definition and other technical issues involved in attempting to measure these phenomena.
- 1.6 **Section 3** briefly summarises all the key data sources and previous research used in producing this report.
- 1.7 **Section 4** provides a series of estimates of the extent of youth crime by crime type, age and gender.

- 1.8 **Section 5** considers the scale of the problem of anti-social behaviour by young people by using a number of indicators obtained from secondary data sources and previous research. It also discusses the limitations of these sources and looks at the possible impacts of this behaviour.
- 1.9 **Section 6** considers the fear of youth crime, again based on a number of indicators from previous research. The impacts of this phenomenon are also discussed.
- 1.10 **Section 7** sets out some broad conclusions about the study findings and the limitations of the data.

METHOD

- 1.11 The method employed in Stage 1, described in the interim report, involved a comprehensive review of available literature which might inform our attempts to define and/or measure youth crime, anti-social behaviour, fear of crime and unreported crime.
- 1.12 We also met a number of individuals in the Scottish Executive and other agencies who are responsible for collecting and analysing data on youth crime and anti-social behaviour:
- Joe Curran, Head of Criminal Research, Criminal Justice Social Research Team, Scottish Executive;
 - Sandy Taylor, Criminal Justice Social Research Team, Scottish Executive;
 - Katy Barratt, Criminal Justice Social Research Team, Scottish Executive;
 - Tom McNamara, Policy Officer, Young People and Looked After Children Division, Scottish Executive;
 - Venetia Radmore, Research Manager, Justice Department, Scottish Executive;
 - Alan Miller, Principal Reporter, Scottish Children's Reporters Association; and
 - Gillian Henderson, Information and Research Manager, Scottish Children's Reporter Administration.

1.13 We enquired about the use of the following data sources:

- police force data;
- Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service data;
- Scottish Children’s Reporter Administrator’s data;
- Scottish Criminal Records Office data;
- Scottish Prison Service data; and
- Criminal Justice Social Work Statistics.

1.14 After careful consideration of the available data and the views of key personnel, we decided that there was enough information to allow us to estimate levels of youth crime, but that anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime would benefit more from a “key indicators” approach, where we would attempt to analyse perceptions of the prevalence phenomena rather than to provide actual levels of incidents.

2 OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The principal aim of this study is to generate an estimate of the extent of youth crime in Scotland as well as to provide an overview of the perceptions and fears of youth crime and anti-social behaviour in Scotland. As with any attempt to measure and assess social phenomena, it is worth beginning by reviewing briefly the conceptual and technical issues that underpin them.

MEASURING YOUTH CRIME

Problems of definition

- 2.2 As anyone whose home has been broken into or car has been stolen will testify, the experience of victimisation is real in its effects. That does not mean, however, that 'crime' itself is a straightforward or given empirical category. Although some actions may be easier to define as criminal than others, crime is about both action and reaction. 'Criminal' behaviours are only given their meaning by the way in which, individually and collectively, we respond to them and these responses can vary greatly. For example, at what point do we consider a fight between two young people to involve a criminal act. If a ten year-old hits another ten year-old, we might decide that, though wrong, such behaviours are part and parcel of 'normal' childhood. If, however, the children were both fifteen, or the assailant was an adult, we would be likely to consider it rather differently. Similarly, behaviour that might be construed as highly threatening by one person might pass unnoticed by another.
- 2.3 The aim here is not to embark on a lengthy theoretical deconstruction of the concept of crime, but simply to remind ourselves that its measurement (whether in general or specifically in relation to young people) is not a purely technical exercise. There is no definitive or 'real' level of crime or youth crime. That is not the same as saying that real things do not happen to real people, only that competing versions of that crime reality can be painted using different kinds of statistics. Each may tell us something valuable about the 'problem of youth crime', but their starting point and underlying assumptions need to be understood. Consequently, the estimates of youth crime presented in this report need to be understood as precisely that – estimates – that should be seen more as a starting point for discussion and debate than as a neat or definitive summary of the 'facts and figures' of youth crime.

Technical issues

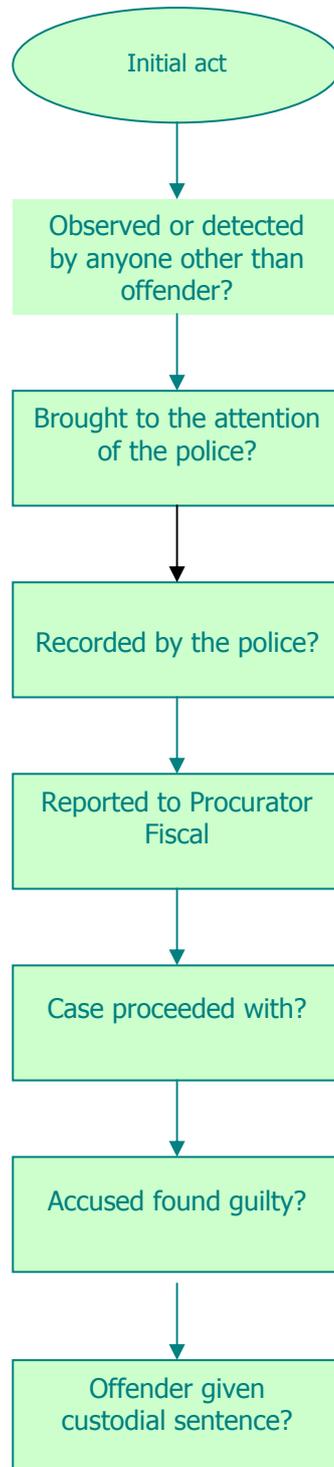
- 2.4 Various kinds of statistics are available about (youth) crime and criminal justice in Scotland. Some of these, such as the police recorded crime statistics, are counts of actions or incidents; others, such as prisons data, record information about cases or people, or, like the Scottish Crime Survey, are based on surveys of the general public and so provide population prevalence or incidence figures. All of these sources tell us something about the character of the youth crime problem in Scotland. If, however, we are interested in the specific question of *how much crime is committed by young people*, then we can narrow our focus considerably. Half a century ago, an American criminologist offered the following observation on the utility of various forms of criminal statistics.

"It may be said that the value of a crime rate for index purposes is in inverse ratio to the procedural distance between the commission of a crime and the recording of it as a statistical unit. An index based on crimes reported to or known to the police is superior to others, and an index based on the statistics of penal treatment, particularly prison statistics, is the poorest."¹

- 2.5 In general, this still holds true. If we are interested in how much crime is committed by young people in Scotland, we need to look for the shortest procedural distance between the act itself and its recording. This means that our starting point should be the police recorded crime statistics, rather than data held by the Scottish Courts, the Scottish Prison Service or the Children's Reporter; all of which are subject to very significant attrition and organisational filtering.
- 2.6 Figure 2.1 illustrates the processes of filtering and attrition that occur in the movement from commission of a criminal act, through detection, reporting, recording and processing by the criminal justice system. (The example shown involves a report to the Procurator Fiscal rather than the Children's Reporter, but the principles are the same for both). As such, it illustrates the increasing procedural distance referred to by Sellin. As he goes on to argue, each procedural step is so selective that the "visible tip of the iceberg of crime" looks progressively different from the huge submerged mass (another metaphor for this is the 'crime funnel').

¹ T. Sellin quoted in J. Biderman and A. Reis, "On explaining the dark figure of crime." *Annals of the American Academy of Politics and Social Science*. Vol.374. P.1-15. 1967.

Figure 2.1 Procedural distance between commission of a crime and its recording as a statistical unit.



- 2.7 In principle, there is another type of data source that reduces even further the procedural distance between the act and its recording: the sample survey of potential victims or offenders. By directly questioning a representative sample of individuals about their experiences, it is possible to generate information about the so-called 'dark figure' of crime, i.e. about those incidents that go either unreported or unrecorded by the police. There are a number of reasons, however, why such surveys are not suitable as our primary data source for the current exercise.
- Although there is a nationally representative victimisation survey (the Scottish Crime Survey), its sample is relatively small and would not allow sub-national breakdowns, e.g. by police force or other geographic area.
 - Victimisation surveys generally offer little information about the age of offenders, since victims often do not know who is responsible for crimes they experience.
 - Victimisation surveys are, by definition, limited to crimes in which there is a clearly-identifiable individual victim. Crimes against corporate bodies (whether public or private) and victimless crimes are, therefore, missing from their estimates.
 - Self-report offending studies also tend to be limited in the range of crime types asked about.
 - More importantly, there is currently no nationally-representative survey of self-report offending in Scotland, with the exception of a very small add-on to the Scottish Crime Survey covering 12-15 year-olds.

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Problems of definition

- 2.8 If the definitional issues surrounding crime are complex, those relating to 'anti-social behaviour' are even more so. There is no agreed definition at an agency level of the range of behaviours that may be considered to be 'anti-social' and the subjective component in relation to any specific behaviour is considerable. At what point, for example, do boisterous young people become threatening, or does 'normal' neighbour noise become a nuisance? There may be variation here in the reactions of individuals within the same area (older people, for example, might feel more threatened or aggrieved than younger people by certain types of behaviour) and in the way that communities as a whole respond to such behaviour. It cannot be assumed, for example, that the sight of a group of young men sitting on a bench drinking alcohol will be greeted in the same way in middle class suburbia, a deprived council estate and an inner city shopping district.

Technical issues

- 2.9 The measurement issues are equally difficult. One reason for this is that the meaning of anti-social behaviour is often impossible to reduce to single, discrete acts, but resides, instead, in a course of conduct or an on-going relationship. Thus a conventional 'events orientation' approach to measurement is unlikely to capture adequately the nature of the problem. A protracted and bitter neighbour dispute, for example, may grow out of a relatively minor disagreement and, in such a context, other relatively minor behaviours (such as parking in a particular spot or tipping over a dustbin) may be seen as (and indeed be intended as) further provocations.
- 2.10 Moreover, unlike much personal and property crime, which tends to involve a one-to-one victim-offender relationship, many people may be affected by the same behaviour. All of the residents in a block of flats may be affected, for example, by one noisy neighbour, or multiple users of a shopping centre by a group of young people who are hanging around and drinking near the entrance.
- 2.11 For both these reasons, it makes little sense to talk in terms of the number of 'incidents' of anti-social behaviour and much more sense to seek to measure it in terms of the number of people affected. As such, however, it becomes impossible to simply add our measures of anti-social behaviour onto those for crime. In any case, there would likely to be extensive 'double-counting' as some instances of anti-social behaviour will already have made their way into the police recorded crime statistics.
- 2.12 As will be clear from the following review, there are a variety of information sources about specific forms of anti-social behaviour. However, for the most part, these are likely to be more useful as indicators of organisational activity than of actual prevalence. If the 'dark figure' of crime is considerable, that for anti-social behaviour is likely to be many times greater. Individuals may not feel personally victimised in the same way, may not know that there are agencies they can turn to, or be reluctant to do so for fear of retaliation or exacerbating the situation. As a result, there is no equivalent to the police recorded crime statistics to which we can turn for even a rough guide to prevalence. Agencies' records are likely to capture only a fraction of possible anti-social behaviours and any increase in the numbers of incidents or cases recorded is as likely to reflect increased awareness as it is a change in actual prevalence.

FEAR OF CRIME

Problems of definition

- 2.13 The 'discovery' of fear of crime as a distinct social problem in its own right is relatively recent and can be traced back to the development of national crime surveys in many Western countries during the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. These exercises documented for the first time not just experiences of victimisation but public perceptions of and attitudes towards crime and policing.
- 2.14 The much heard assertion that 'fear of crime is now more of a problem than crime itself' has its roots in the observation that certain sections of the population (especially women and older people) tend to exhibit high levels of anxiety about victimisation but are at comparatively low risk of actual victimisation. It has been reinforced by the fact that public perceptions of and anxieties about crime have remained static (or worsened) during a period in which crime rates have been falling.
- 2.15 Such findings have led to the identification of fear of crime as a focus for policy intervention in its own right and as a social condition that is seen as virtually independent of crime and detection rates. Local authorities and police forces are thus increasingly tasked with reducing fear of crime through a 'reassurance' agenda. The activities of young people are a particular focus for such strategies, not surprisingly, since, by any measure, they contribute disproportionately to the crime rate and act as a focus for national and local concerns about crime and disorder.
- 2.16 Before looking in any detail at the sources of information that are available about fear of crime in general and fear of youth crime in particular, it may be worth highlighting some of the limitations of the concept. Within academic criminology, it is increasingly recognised that the concept of fear of crime has been inadequately theorised and that many of the quantitative measures currently in use only tap into certain aspects of public anxiety.

- 2.17 In particular, there has been criticism of the most widely-used fear of crime measure, the question (taken from the British Crime Survey series): 'How safe do you (or would you) feel walking alone in this area after dark?'. It is generally accepted in survey research that hypothetical questioning is inadvisable. In this case, since most people do not, in fact, walk alone in their area after dark, respondents have little on which to base their experience. As a result, the use of this single measure tends to paint an exaggerated picture of public anxieties, all the more so because it tends to be asked in the context of surveys about crime.² If survey respondents are asked to list (unprompted) the types of things that they worry about, crime rarely features and issues such as money, health, relationships and jobs feature far more prominently.
- 2.18 The use of crime-specific measures (e.g. 'How much do you worry about having your home broken into?') tend to produce very different response patterns by population sub-group. Older people, for example, exhibit rates of worry that are in line with (or even lower) than those of the rest of the population for most types of crime.
- 2.19 In general, the most useful information about crime-related anxiety takes account of both perceived impact and perceived risk. In other words, respondents are asked not only about how worried they are about certain crime types but also about how *likely* they think it is that they will become victims. Thus women tend to say that they worry 'a great deal' about sexual violence, not because they think themselves especially likely to become victims, but because of the impact if it were to happen.
- 2.20 Recent work around the fear of crime has also pointed out that crime-related anxieties are often symptomatic of a broader sense of anxiety about the pace and direction of social change, and of a growing concern with risk and its regulation. Magnified by the media, the issue of crime (and youth crime) may simply provide a focus for a much wider, but more diffuse, sense of unease about contemporary life and be largely unrelated to the actual victimisation experiences of individuals or communities.

² The observation that talking to people about crime tends to 'produce' anxieties that would not otherwise be expressed is of more than purely methodological significance. It has also has implications for campaigns that attempt to address fear of crime. Put simply, there is a danger that attempts to reassure have the opposite effect and, by drawing attention to issues related to crime, actually increase public anxiety. Evidence for this effect comes from a number of crime prevention evaluations, most recently in the context of the reintroduction of 'beat policing' in a suburban community in England (see "Community policing experiment failed to reduce residents' fear of crime, Joseph Rowntree Foundation Press Release, 9/10/2003).

3 MAIN SOURCES OF INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION

- 3.1 Each of the main sources of information, secondary data sources and previous research that we used in compiling estimates for the levels of youth crime are summarised briefly below.

RECORDED CRIME STATISTICS

- 3.2 As argued in Section 2, police recorded crime statistics are the most complete source of data on crime in Scotland. They can provide a breakdown of the number of crimes committed by crime type and by local authority area. As such, they are the logical starting point in any exercise that is attempting to estimate crime levels.
- 3.3 However, recorded crime statistics will only provide a partial picture of the actual level of crime because not all crime is reported to the police or recorded by them. Neither can it determine the level of youth crime, as it does not record the crime perpetrator (often impossible, unless someone has been convicted). The latest recorded crime data is for 2002.

COURT STATISTICS

- 3.4 The Scottish courts hold data on criminal proceedings. This includes details on the offences proceeded against in court by the types and numbers of offences and the age and gender of the person proceeded against. This data is useful in any attempt to estimate the proportion of crime committed by young people.
- 3.5 However, few crimes result in any kind of court proceedings and a high proportion of crimes committed by young people is dealt with by the Children's Hearings system. The latest courts data is for 2001.

CHILDREN'S HEARINGS DATA

- 3.6 Courts data needs to be supplemented with data from the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA) in any attempt to estimate the proportion of crime committed by young people. Data from the SCRA records provide details on the number of offenders referred by crime type and the number of offences that they commit and therefore provides information on incident rates. However, like the courts, not all crime by young offenders is dealt with by the Children's Hearings system.
- 3.7 The SCRA now has a case management database that can provide fairly specific data requests, but the new system has only been fully rolled-out from December 2002. There is, however, SCRA data on offences referred by crime type, age and gender for offences referred for 2002, but not for 2001 (the latest available courts data).

THE 2000 SCOTTISH CRIME SURVEY

- 3.8 The Scottish Crime Survey (SCS) measures crimes against people living in private households throughout Scotland by means of a representative survey of over 5,000 Scottish adults.³ Despite the title, the reference year for the data in the latest survey is 1999 and this is the latest year for which data are available. The main value of the survey is that it attempts to provide estimates of total personal and household crime committed against adults, and, therefore, goes beyond crimes recorded by the police. Because not all incidents are reported to the police and not all that are reported are recorded by the police, there is a significant gap between SCS estimates of crime and the number of police recorded crimes.
- 3.9 The SCS has been designed to be comparable (as far as possible) with the British Crime Survey, which covers England and Wales, and it is also designed to provide evidence of both the incidence of crime (victimisation) and the fear of crime.
- 3.10 The key limitation of the SCS is that it is a survey of adults (aged 16 and over) resident in private households and it does not collect information about crimes committed against corporate and public sector bodies, individuals not resident in households and those aged under 16. However, in 2000 there was a small additional survey of 403 young people aged between 12 and 15 and resident in households (see below).

³ The 2000 Scottish Crime Survey: overview report." Scottish Executive Central Research Unit. 2002.

- 3.11 The SCS depends on the willingness of the public to take part, therefore there may be some response bias in the results (the response rate was 71% in 2000). It also relies on individuals' recollections of events that may have occurred some time before and may not, therefore, be entirely accurate. Finally, the SCS is only able to produce results that are reliable at the whole of Scotland level; the results for any sub-national analysis are subject to very wide margins of error and are not generally presented in the main report.

GLASGOW YOUTH SURVEY 2003 (MORI SCOTLAND)⁴

- 3.12 This study was undertaken in response to issues raised by school pupils in the city and was aimed at gauging the opinions, feelings and experiences of young people (aged 11 – 18) in mainstream education in terms of their current lifestyle and future plans. Just over 1,500 young people took part in the study, which was conducted through a self-completion questionnaire in a classroom setting. A number of topics covered by the research relate to crime and anti-social behaviour. In particular, the findings offer useful insights into young people's fear of crime and concerns about personal safety, their experience of being a victim of crime and their experience in committing various types of crime.

Fear of Crime/ Personal Safety

- 17% feel very safe in areas around where they live and almost half feel fairly safe. However, greater anxiety is reflected in the fact that a quarter say they do not feel very safe and one in ten "not at all safe" in their local area.
- The most commonly mentioned situation in which young people feel unsafe is when they see gangs and drug users. More than half feel unsafe in rough areas and walking through dark areas.
- Three in five young people say they feel either very or fairly worried about being attacked in the street or other public place. Very young people (11 year olds) and girls are most likely to feel worried about being attacked in the street, along with young people from black and ethnic backgrounds. In contrast, just one in six say they actually have been attacked in the last year with this being most common among boys aged 14 – 15.

Experience (victimisation) of crime

- 55% of young people surveyed stated that something negative had happened to them in the last year. Being threatened by others (39% of respondents) was the most commonly mentioned incident. One in five (18%) say they had been physically attacked in the past year.

⁴ MORI Scotland, Glasgow Youth Survey 2003."

- Boys are more likely than girls to have experienced some sort of incident: half (48%) say they have been threatened by others compared with around three in ten girls (29%).
- The likelihood of being a victim of crime also increases with age: more than half of boys aged between 14 and 18 claimed to have been threatened by others and a third said they had been physically attacked in the last year.
- Half of black and ethnic minority young people said they had experienced abuse because of their race or religion in the past year, in stark contrast to the 5% of white young people who say the same.

Committing Crime

- While most young people say that they have not actually broken the law in the past year, many admit to a range of anti-social behaviour⁵.

YOUTHLINK: STATE OF THE NATION STUDY

- 3.13 YouthLink Scotland, the national youth agency for Scotland, commissioned a survey in 2003 to explore what it means to be young in Scotland and to generate information on young people to inform the development of policy.⁶ MORI Scotland surveyed 3,096 11-25 year olds across Scotland and explored their experiences of and views on a range of issues including lifestyle, living in Scotland, education and training, work, technology, attitudes towards the media, social and environmental values, volunteering, self-perceptions, citizenship and equality.
- 3.14 In the context of this research on crime and anti-social behaviour, the MORI study found that one in ten young people reported having been a victim of racist abuse. However, attitudes appear to be predominantly non-racist - at least seven in ten young people regard using terms such as 'chinky' or 'paki', speaking negatively in private about people from different ethnic backgrounds and being impolite or verbally offensive to people from different ethnic backgrounds to be either slightly or strongly racist.

⁵ A summary of crime/ anti-social behaviour types admitted to by young people is shown in Figure 5.1 together with the proportion of young people who claim to have been caught for the act.

⁶ YouthLink Scotland, "State of the Nation Study." 2003.

YOUNG PEOPLE AND CRIME IN SCOTLAND

- 3.15 The 2000 Scottish Crime Survey undertook an additional survey of just over 400 young people between the ages of 12 and 15.⁷ The survey covers young people's offending behaviour, their worries about specific crimes, their feelings of safety and their likelihood to report victimisation
- 3.16 The survey, however, is small and there was a high level of non-response to some of the questions. The sections on experience of victimisation and offending behaviour, in particular, were based on very small numbers.

COUNTING THE COST

- 3.17 In recognition of the limitations of the SCS in estimating crime against corporate bodies, an exercise was undertaken for the Scottish Executive in 2000 that attempted to estimate the levels of crime against business in Scotland.⁸ It examined the experience of crime across five principal business sectors (manufacturing, construction, wholesale and retail, hotels and restaurants and transport and telecommunications) that account for around half the value of the Scottish economy. The study used surveys of business headquarters and individual business premises alongside a number of qualitative interviews.
- 3.18 The study investigated all the main types of crime that these businesses had experienced, i.e. break-ins, vandalism, thefts and violence. It also provided statistics on commercial crime levels across five Scottish regions (Borders, East Central, West Central, North and the Islands).
- 3.19 However, the study only covered half of the Scottish economy and some economic sectors, notably the public sector, are excluded from the analysis. It is also worth noting that, in general, representatives of business are less likely than individuals living in households of having an accurate overview of all incidents of crime experienced within a particular period. The study can also only give broad regional measures of commercial crime. However, it remains useful as a source to estimate levels of unreported crime committed against commercial interests.

⁷ MVA, "Young people and crime in Scotland: findings from the 2000 Scottish Crime Survey." Scottish Executive Central Research Unit. 2002.

⁸ John Burrows et al, "Counting the cost: crime against business in Scotland." Scottish Executive. 2000.

HOME OFFICE RESEARCH STUDY ON ESTIMATING THE COSTS OF CRIME

- 3.20 In 2000, the Home Office undertook a research exercise that attempted to estimate the economic and social costs of crime.⁹ As part of this exercise, the study attempted to estimate actual incidents of crime by attaching multipliers to various categories of recorded crime. The sources of these multipliers included the British Crime Survey (BCS) (for personal and household crime) and the Commercial Victimization Survey (for commercial and public sector crime). A lot can be learned from this approach in any other exercise that attempts to estimate the number of incidents of crime.
- 3.21 However, inevitably, there were some shortcomings with the Home Office's approach. The BCS, like the SCS, only estimates crimes committed against those over 16 who live in households and additional adjustments had to be made to include crimes committed against those under-16. Although estimates of sexual victimisation were included, it was accepted that the estimate could only be tentative given the uncertainty among people as to what constitutes a sexual crime. It was also accepted that estimates of offences such as fraud and theft from a shop were also tentative given the measurement difficulties. The study did not attempt to estimate the number of handling stolen goods offences, drugs offences, other notifiable offences, traffic and motoring offences and other non-notifiable offences due to the obvious difficulties in even rough approximations for offence types that are committed frequently but are seldom detected.

YOUTH LIFESTYLES SURVEY

- 3.22 The Home Office's Youth Lifestyles Study includes an examination of youth crime.¹⁰ It is a large self-reporting survey of offending by nearly 5,000 people aged between 12 and 30 and living in private households in England and Wales. It examines prevalence and incidence rates for various types of crime that could be used to estimate the proportion of offences committed by young people. It also breaks the results down by age and gender.
- 3.23 The survey also considers various types of anti-social behaviour as a risk factor in predicting serious or persistent offending.
- 3.24 Although the survey only covers England and Wales, there is no reason to believe that the picture in Scotland will be substantially different.

⁹ Sue Brand and Richard Price, "The economic and social costs of crime." Home Office Research Study 217. Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate. 2000.

¹⁰ Claire Flood-Page et al, "Youth crime: findings from the 1998/99 Youth Lifestyles Survey." Home Office Research Study 209. Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate. 2000.

- 3.25 However, as the survey only covers people up to the age of 30, it can only provide details on young people committing types of crime as a proportion of those 30 and under, not as a proportion of the total adult population.

YOUTH SURVEY

- 3.26 The annual Youth Survey study conducted by MORI for the Youth Justice Board in England and Wales examines young people's experience of crime, as offenders and victims. It examines the levels of offending among young people and the types of crime they commit as well as young people's concerns about their own safety.
- 3.27 The latest Survey is for 2003 and involved a survey of around 5,000 mainstream school pupils aged 11-16 and a separate survey of around 600 excluded pupils aged 10-16.¹¹
- 3.28 As it is a self-reporting study, it provides reasonably accurate prevalence figures for types of crime and anti-social behaviour. It also provides some information on incidence rates on crimes and types of behaviour and some information on young people's fear of crime by asking questions about their safety and concerns about crime. On the downside, it only covers young people up to 16. Nevertheless, it does provide some useful comparable information on youth crime in England and Wales.

EDINBURGH STUDY ON YOUTH TRANSITIONS AND CRIME

- 3.29 The Edinburgh Study on Youth Transitions and Crime (ESYTC) is a longitudinal study of offending and anti-social behaviour by young people. It follows a single year group of around 4,300 young people who started secondary school in Edinburgh in 1998. The year group has now reached school leaving age.
- 3.30 Although it is confined to Edinburgh, the study and its various publications provide much useful information on the prevalence and incidence rates of various types of crime and anti-social behaviour of young people up to the age of 15. The Edinburgh population can be seen as generally reflective of the broader Scottish population, which mostly lives in cities, as it is also highly variable and contrasting, especially through the class ranges.

¹¹ Youth Justice Board, "Youth Survey 2003." 2003.

- 3.31 Useful findings include data on the proportion of young people who have carried out anti-social acts or crimes of various types, together with the proportion who have been caught, in a similar way to the MORI Glasgow Survey. The usefulness of the data is restricted however by the fact that it relates only to young people of 15 and under, and also by the fact that the questions about "getting caught" have been asked in slightly different ways in the different sweeps of the survey.

CAUTIONARY TALES

- 3.32 This is a 1994 study that included an examination of young people and crime in Edinburgh.¹² The study involved the interviewing of 250 11-15 year-olds at a number of local Edinburgh schools. Although the study is a number of years old, relatively small and confined to Edinburgh, it does include a fairly comprehensive examination of young people's offending behaviour, their fear of certain types of crime and their experiences as victims and witnesses of crime. Furthermore, like the "Young people and Crime in Scotland" survey referred to above, it provides data on the proportion of various types of offences that young people report to the police, a factor that we could take into account when devising estimates of crimes committed against young people.

STUDY ON SHOPLIFTING SELF-REPORTING RATES

- 3.33 Farrington (1999)¹³ brought together a number of studies on shoplifting and found that police recorded crimes reflected only between 1 in 100 and 1 in 1,000 of shoplifting incidents in two department stores studied in 1984. Other self-report data from other studies he reported suggested that between 1 in 40 and 1 in 250 shoplifting offences led to a conviction or caution.

A STUDY OF CRIME IN RURAL SCOTLAND

- 3.34 This study draws on a variety of sources of information, including primary research, a review of the existing literature and secondary data sources to build up a picture of the nature and extent of rural crime in Scotland.¹⁴

¹² Simon Anderson et al, "Cautionary tales: young people, crime and policing in Edinburgh." Avebury, Hants. 1994.

¹³ D. P. Farrington, "Measuring, explaining and preventing shoplifting." Security Journal. 12(1). P.9-27. 1999.

¹⁴ Simon Anderson, "A study of crime in rural Scotland." The Scottish Office Central Research Unit. 1997.

- 3.35 The study includes an examination of young people and crime in rural areas. It also discusses some of the differences between rural and urban crime in Scotland as well as perceptions of the fear of crime.

FINDINGS FROM THE BRITISH CRIME SURVEY ON ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AND DISORDER

- 3.36 In the 2000 BCS, people were asked about their perceptions of social and physical problems in their area and their personal experiences of anti-social behaviour.¹⁵ The full results only apply to England and Wales, although some of the measures used are also available from the SCS and the BCS results could also be taken as indicative for Scotland.
- 3.37 Although this exercise does provide some information on peoples' perceptions of disorder and experience of anti-social behaviour, it does not provide statistics on the actual number of incidents of such disorder/behaviour.

THE SCOTTISH OFFICE BASELINE STUDY OF HOUSING MANAGEMENT

- 3.38 The Baseline Study of Housing Management was published in 1995 and questioned over 2,000 tenants about neighbour problems, finding that one in five public sector tenants had experienced such a problem in the previous year.¹⁶ It included an examination of some of the forms of anti-social behaviour that residents were experiencing. These results and results from similar studies are discussed and summarised in an article by Scott and Parkey (1998).¹⁷
- 3.39 Such studies are useful as a source of peoples' perception and experience of anti-social behaviour, but they cannot provide information on either incidence or prevalence rates.

¹⁵ Tracey Budd and Lorraine Sims, "Anti-social behaviour and disorder: findings from the 2000 British Crime Survey." Home Office Research Findings 145. 2001.

¹⁶ "Baseline study of housing management." The Scottish Office. 1995.

¹⁷ Suzie Scott and Hilary Parkey, "Myths and reality: anti-social behaviour in Scotland." Housing Studies. Vol.13. No.3. P.325-345. 1998.

4 ESTIMATING LEVELS OF YOUTH CRIME

METHOD

- 4.1 There are three basic stages in our method for producing estimates of the number of crimes committed by young people.
- **Recorded crime data.** The most consistent and complete source of data that we have on crime is police force data on recorded crime. This police force data was therefore the starting point for our exercise.
 - **Adjustment for unrecorded crime.** Not all crime is reported to the police or recorded by them, therefore we needed to use other sources to adjust recorded crime data so as to take account of unreported and unrecorded crime.
 - **Estimating youth crime.** The last stage of the method involved making estimates of crimes committed by young people using data from the Children’s Hearings system and the courts.
- 4.2 Following this three-stage approach led to the production of the headline figures in Tables 4.1-4.3 and the approach is further explained below.

Table 4.1 Youth Crime Estimates – Recorded Crime			
Crime category	No. of recorded crimes	% of incidents due to young people	No. of recorded crimes due to young people
Violent crime	16,461	42%	6,957
Serious assault	7,631	43%	3,272
Robbery	4,938	60%	2,975
Other	3,892	18%	710
Crimes of indecency	6,552	41%	2,705
Crimes of dishonesty	235,668	54%	127,284
Housebreaking	43,808	55%	24,019
Theft by opening lockfast places	40,000	65%	26,066
Theft of a motor vehicle	22,495	75%	16,914
Shoplifting	29,541	42%	12,420
Other theft	75,003	54%	40,348
Other	24,821	30%	7,516
Fire-raising, vandalism, etc.	95,470	75%	71,953
Fire-raising	3,624	86%	3,134
Vandalism	91,846	75%	68,819
Other crimes	72,883	39%	28,588
Crimes against public justice	22,671	40%	9,094
Handling offensive weapon	9,691	59%	5,728
Drugs	40,379	34%	13,766
Other	142	-	-
ALL CRIME	427,034	56%	237,487
Miscellaneous offences	167,539	47%	79,249
Motor vehicle offences	341,316	26%	87,994
ALL OFFENCES	508,855	33%	167,243
ALL CRIMES AND OFFENCES	935,889	43%	404,730

**Table 4.2
Youth Crime Estimates – Recorded and Unrecorded Crime**

Crime category	No. of recorded crimes due to young people	Multiplier	Source of multiplier	No. of incidents due to young people ('000)	Estimated no. of actual incidents ('000)
Violent crime	6,957			27-34	59-76
Serious assault	3,272	3-4	Scottish Crime Survey (SCS)	10-13	23-31
Robbery	2,975	5-6		15-18	25-30
Other	710	3-4		2-3	12-16
Crimes of indecency	2,705	3-4	British Crime Survey (BCS)	8-11	20-26
Crimes of dishonesty	127,284			1,843-1,951	4,512-4,693
Housebreaking	24,019	2-3	SCS, BCS, Farrington (1999), NERA (2000).	48-72	88-131
Theft by opening lockfast places	26,066	2-3		52-78	80-120
Theft of a motor vehicle	16,914	1-2		17-34	22-45
Shoplifting	12,420	100		1,242	2,954
Other theft	40,348	4-5		161-202	300-375
Other	7,516	43		323	1,067
Fire-raising, vandalism, etc.	71,953			288-359	382-477
Fire-raising	3,134	4-5	SCS, BCS	13-16	15-18
Vandalism	68,819	4-5		275-344	367-459
Other crimes	28,588	N/A		29	N/A
Crimes against public justice	9,094	N/A		9	N/A
Handling offensive weapon	5,728	N/A		6	N/A
Drugs	13,766	N/A		14	N/A
Miscellaneous offences	79,249	N/A		79	N/A
Motor vehicle offences	87,994	N/A		88	N/A

Table 4.3
Youth Crime Estimates – By age and sex

Crime category	% of youth crime due to 15 & under	Estimated no. of actual incidents due to 15 & under ('000)	% of youth crime due to 16-17	Estimated no. of actual incidents due to 16-17 ('000)	% of youth crime due to 18-21	Estimated no. of actual incidents due to 18-21 ('000)	% of youth crime due to males	Estimated no. of actual incidents due to males ('000)	% of youth crime due to females	Estimated no. of actual incidents due to females ('000)
Violent crime	24%	7-9	20%	6-7	56%	15-19	90%	24-30	10%	3-4
Serious assault	28%	2-3	18%	2	61%	6-8	92%	9-12	8%	1
Robbery	21%	4-5	24%	3-4	49%	7-9	89%	13-16	11%	2
Other	25%	0-1	9%	-	67%	1-2	69%	2	31%	0-1
Crimes of indecency	60%	5-6	14%	1	27%	2-3	85%	7-9	14%	1-2
Crimes of dishonesty	34%	648-688	17%	248-267	49%	948-996	85%	1304-1403	15%	540-548
Housebreaking	40%	21-31	17%	8-11	43%	20-30	95%	46-69	5%	2-3
Theft by opening lockfast places	36%	20-29	18%	9-13	46%	24-36	96%	50-76	4%	2
Theft of a motor vehicle	27%	5-9	25%	4-8	47%	8-16	96%	16-33	4%	1
Shoplifting	39%	497	13%	158	48%	587	64%	803	36%	439
Other theft	38%	63-78	17%	27-34	45%	72-89	87%	141-176	13%	21-26
Other	12%	43	14%	42	74%	238	77%	247	23%	77
Fire-raising, vandalism, etc.	65%	185-231	12%	36-44	23%	67-84	90%	260-325	10%	28-34
Fire-raising	81%	10-12	9%	1	10%	1-2	90%	12-14	10%	1
Vandalism	64%	175-219	13%	34-43	23%	66-82	90%	249-311	10%	26-33
Other crimes	24%	7	16%	4	60%	17	90%	26	10%	3
Crimes against public justice	14%	1	18%	2	68%	6	86%	8	14%	1
Handling offensive weapon	38%	2	19%	1	44%	2	96%	6	4%	-
	25%	4	11%	2	63%	9	89%	12	11%	1



Table 4.3
Youth Crime Estimates – By age and sex

Crime category	% of youth crime due to 15 & under	Estimated no. of actual incidents due to 15 & under ('000)	% of youth crime due to 16-17	Estimated no. of actual incidents due to 16-17 ('000)	% of youth crime due to 18-21	Estimated no. of actual incidents due to 18-21 ('000)	% of youth crime due to males	Estimated no. of actual incidents due to males ('000)	% of youth crime due to females	Estimated no. of actual incidents due to females ('000)
Drugs										
Miscellaneous offences	48%	38	14%	11	38%	30	82%	65	18%	14
Motor vehicle offences	10%	8	16%	14	75%	66	95%	83	5%	5
All crimes and offences	36%	899-988	15%	319-349	49%	1145-1214	87%	1769-1942	13%	594-609

Note: Figures may not sum to 100% or to their totals due to rounding.

Recorded Crime

- 4.3 The first step was to request police recorded crime data. We used the same crime and offence classification system used by the police for recorded crime.
- 4.4 However, the offences for which we provide a breakdown of the data take into account the types of offences that young people tend to commit. Therefore, we provide more details on those types of crimes most strongly associated with young people, e.g. crimes of dishonesty (which can be further broken down into housebreaking, shoplifting, etc.), than on those crimes that are not particularly associated with young people, e.g. crimes of indecency. We chose to exclude the “other, other crime” category from the analysis as there were less than 150 of such offences, which includes crimes such as conspiracy to cause explosions, in Scotland as a whole in 2002.
- 4.5 The recorded crime data that we are using is for the last full year of data (2002). As already highlighted, police force data does not record all crime committed, therefore we need to make an adjustment for unrecorded crime.

Adjusting for unrecorded crime

- 4.6 Police force data was adjusted, or grossed up, using various sources to give a more accurate reflection of the number of actual crimes. These sources included the Scottish Crime Survey (SCS), for estimates of unrecorded crime across a range of personal and household crime types committed against adults. However, given the assumptions involved in deriving these multipliers, some of them unavoidably crude, we felt it more appropriate to provide a range (between two whole numbers) in which these multipliers lie. The exception is for crime categories where the multiplier is very large.
- 4.7 There is SCS data available for violent crime, acquisitive crime and vandalism that is comparable with recorded crime. We used this data to derive a multiplier for each of these crime types in much the same way as the Home Office did in its study on estimating the costs of crime. Since the latest SCS was conducted in 1999, we compared the SCS crime figures with recorded crime in that year to derive the multipliers.

- 4.8 However, the SCS does not take into account crimes committed against children under-16 or crimes committed against commercial or public sector interests. Ideally, we would have preferred to separate out crimes and offences against those under-16 and against commercial premises from recorded crime statistics and produced three versions of Table 4.1 for adult victims of crime, young victims of crime and commercial crime, before pooling them back into one table. An appendix to the initial findings from the 2000 SCS compared recorded crime against adults with SCS findings¹⁸, but it does not differentiate between commercial crime and crime against the under-16s.
- 4.9 “Counting the Cost”, a survey undertaken on crime against business in Scotland provides a measure of unreported commercial crime across a range of crime categories, including vandalism, theft and violence. However, results from this survey could not be used as we did not have the basic recorded commercial crime figures to multiply using results from this survey.
- 4.10 There is no survey of crimes against those under-16. It was our intention to derive multipliers of crimes against the under-16s using young people’s reporting rates for various categories of crime from studies such as Anderson et al (1994) and the 2000 SCS, but, again, since we do not have separate recorded crime figures for those committed against under-16s, we have no basis on which to multiply.
- 4.11 The only solution is to use the multipliers that we have for the number of crimes **committed against adults** (from the comparable exercise that was done between 1999 SCS data and recorded crime) and assume that they are the same for under-16s and commercial crime. This is a major assumption, but unavoidable given the limitations of the data. The derivation of these multipliers is provided in Table 4.4.

Crime type	SCS	Recorded crime against adults	Multiplier
Vandalism	218	55	4.0
Acquisitive crime	120	66	1.8
- Housebreaking	84	36	2.3
- Theft of motor vehicle	18	21	0.9
- Bicycle theft	18	9	2.0
Violence	211	58	3.6
- Assault	188	54	3.5
- Robbery	22	4	5.5
Total comparable crimes	549	180	3.1

¹⁸ MVA, “The 2000 Scottish Crime Survey: First Results.” Crime and Criminal Justice Research Findings No.51. Scottish Executive Central Research Unit. 2000.

- 4.12 These figures provide us with multipliers for violent crime, serious assault (assume the same as for all assault), robbery, other violent crime (assume the same as for assault and robbery together), housebreaking, and vandalism (assume the same for fire-raising).
- 4.13 These are the only comparable categories of crime between the SCS and recorded crime statistics. To produce multipliers for the other categories of crime, we had to examine other sources.
- 4.14 For crimes of indecency, we used the multiplier used by the Home Office in its study of the costs of crime in 2000. Neither the SCS nor the British Crime Survey (BCS) publish details on the level of sexual victimisation due to concerns about the accuracy of the results, but a multiplier was included in the Home Office exercise on measuring the costs of crime, based on BCS estimates, even though it was accepted that the results were tentative.
- 4.15 With the exception of housebreaking, crimes of dishonesty are not comparable between the SCS and recorded crime statistics, so we had to use other sources. We used the Home Office multipliers, derived from the BCS, for theft from a motor vehicle and "other theft". The multiplier for "other crimes of dishonesty" was assumed to be similar to that derived by the Home Office using data from the National Economic Research Associates (NERA).¹⁹ For "theft by opening lockfast places", we used the same multiplier as that for housebreaking, as there is no similar category in the BCS. Using data from Farrington (1999), we used the same multiplier as the Home Office of 100 shoplifting offences for each recorded crime.
- 4.16 For each of the relevant crime types, we applied the multipliers to the recorded crime figures to provide a range of the number of incidents of crime. These are rounded up to the nearest thousand in Table 4.1.
- 4.17 The high estimates for the number of shoplifting and "other dishonesty" incidents (such as reset, fraud and embezzlement) due to young people is very much dependent on the high multipliers for these offence types. As explained above in 4.15, these multipliers are based on discrete pieces of work and were also used by the Home Office in its attempt to estimate the social and economic costs of crime. However, the results are not suggesting that Scotland has over a million shoplifters. Many of these types of offences will be committed by much smaller numbers of offenders who are committing serial offences.

¹⁹ NERA, "The economic cost of fraud: a report for the Home Office and the Serious Fraud Office." NERA, London. 2000.

- 4.18 For all “other crimes” and both major offence types, we chose not to use a multiplier because of the absence of any reliable evidence as to what are the exact number of incidents in each of these categories. Only a small proportion of people committing offences like speeding and dangerous driving are ever caught and, as they do not involve personal or household crime, they will not be picked-up in sources such as the SCS. They are also unlikely to be picked up in self-report studies as people are unlikely to be able to remember every time they have driven dangerously or gone over the speed limit. We can assume that very few of these crime/offence types are recorded, but a multiplier to take account of the unreported crimes and offences would be a complete guess. In the circumstances, we thought it better to simply report the number of recorded crime and offence incidents in these categories and then attempt to estimate the proportion due to young people. The Home Office also did not attempt to calculate incidents of these crimes and offences in its study on the costs of crime.
- 4.19 Surveys like the SCS produce fairly accurate estimates of certain types of crime at a national level, but are much less accurate at a local level due to the much smaller sample sizes. To produce local authority total crime figures, we therefore just simply weighted the results according to each local authority’s share of police recorded crime.

Estimating the number of offences committed by young people

- 4.20 To provide estimates of the proportions of different types of crime committed by young people, we looked at a profile of crimes and offences committed by young people that are dealt with by Children’s Hearings and by the courts. Both these sources provide details on the type of crime, the age and gender of the offender and the local authority area in which the proceedings are taking place. We compared this profile of young people to that of adults who are dealt with by the courts and derived from this simple ratios of charges against young people relative to charges against adults. Using this information, we arrived at estimates for different types of crimes committed by young people by crime type, age, gender and local authority area.
- 4.21 We would also have liked to have used data from the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service on cases that were referred to it, but were not proceeded with in court. However, this data was not readily available.

- 4.22 The base year for this part of the exercise is 2001, as this is the latest year for which full court statistics are available. A problem is that although court statistics by crime type are available by crime type for 2001, the equivalent SCRA data is only available for 2002. To make the courts and the SCRA data comparable, we had to combine the total number of offences proceeded against young people in the courts for 2001 (73,248) and the total number of SCRA offence referrals for 2001 (43,281) to provide a total of 116,529 recorded crime incidents attributed to young people in 2001. As a proportion of cases proceeded against in court and all SCRA offender referrals (276,207), this provides a rough estimate of 42% of all crimes and offences being the responsibility of young people of 21 or under. Given the limitations of the data, in estimating the proportion of crimes that are caused by young people in each crime category, we need to weight the numbers in the SCRA data (for 2002) to reflect total SCRA offender referrals in 2001. Adjustments were also made to account for offences where the crime/offence was unknown. The unknowns were distributed among the crime/offence types according to their share of total crimes and offences.
- 4.23 The weighted SCRA offence referrals are then added to the offence court proceedings data for those 21 and under and the proportion of incidents that these constitute as a proportion of all SCRA offence referrals and all offence proceedings in court (for all ages) is calculated to derive estimates of the proportion of offences caused by young people by crime type. Data from the High Court was excluded from the analysis as it was not possible to assign offences proceeded against here to a local authority area.
- 4.24 The SCRA data by local authority area, age and gender is added to the courts data in the same way and estimates are made of the proportion of offences committed by young people in each of these categories based on their relative shares of total offences data. The results in this report are presented by gender and broad age band. The results by local authority area have been made available to the Scottish Executive, but are not reproduced in this report because the figures in some local authority areas broken down by crime type are sufficiently small for individuals to be recognised.
- 4.25 There are a number of other limitations with the method that are important to bear in mind when using the results obtained. This research does not claim to provide definitive counts of youth crime in Scotland. Some of these limitations are described more fully below.

Few Crimes Result in any Kind of Proceedings

- 4.26 Figure 4.2 outlines the stages involved between a crime being committed and formal action being taken against an offender. At each stage of the process, offenders are filtered out of the system and a relatively small proportion of offences result in formal action being taken against an offender. The relatively low clear up rate for crimes²⁰ (46%) is a major reason why the numbers are dramatically reduced, and in the courts there are very few actual convictions relative to the number of crimes. Not all offences by young people are dealt with by any formal proceedings.
- 4.27 We had to make the assumption that the clear up rates and charge rates for youth and adult crimes are the same. It was necessary to assume that young people are equally likely as adults to avoid detection, charging and conviction as we could not find a source of data that provided information on the relative likelihood of being detected, charged and convicted for young people and for adults.
- 4.28 Our method also makes the assumption that offences that are dealt with by the courts or Hearings systems have the same profiles (in terms of age of offender, local authority area in which proceedings take place, etc.) as offences where no proceedings take place.

Crimes can be committed outwith the area in which the offender resides

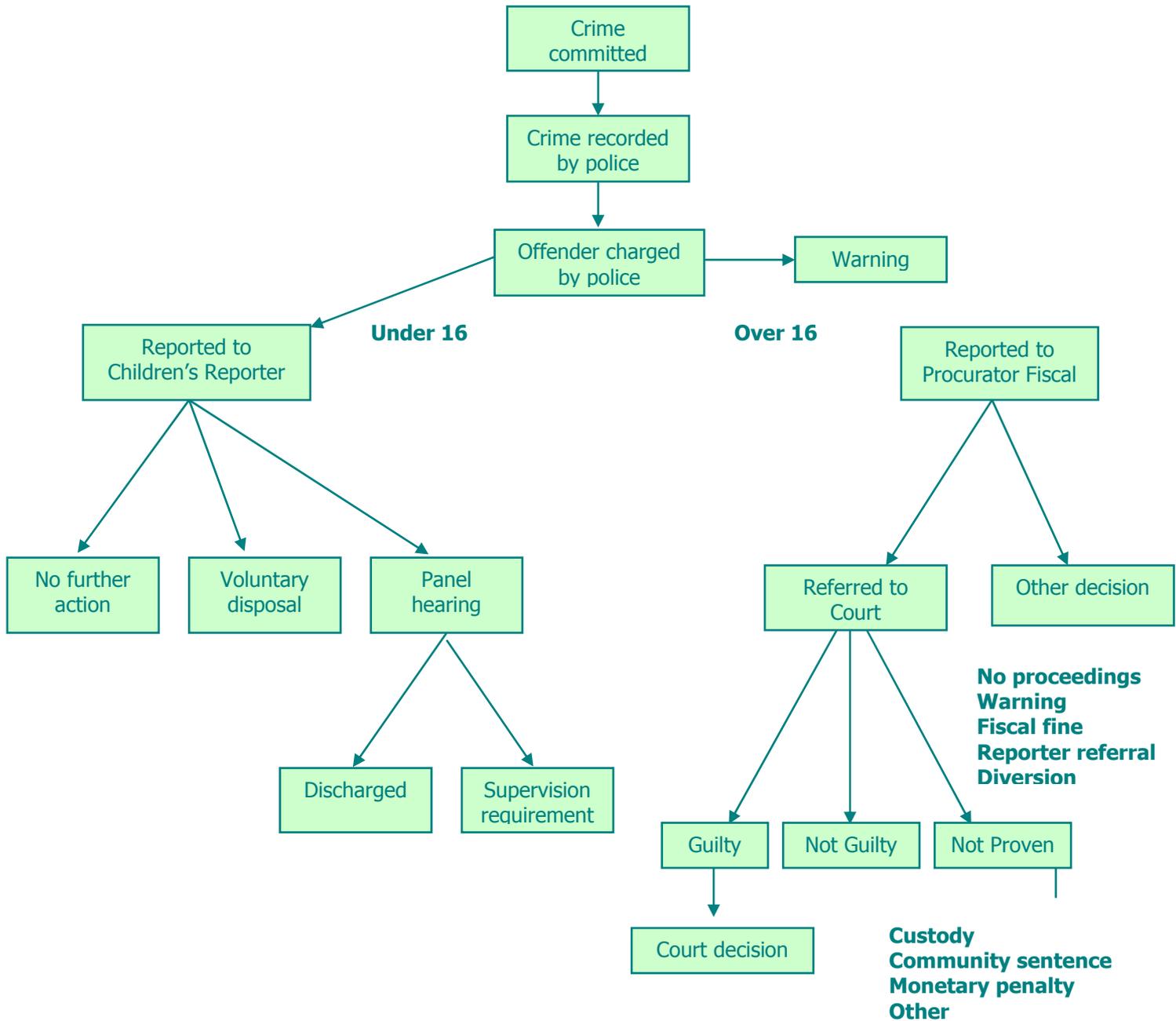
- 4.29 The area in which proceedings take place will not always necessarily be the area in which the crime has been committed: an offender may have committed an offence outwith their home area, but have been dealt with within their home area. However, there is no reliable information on where each offender committed each of their offences and we will have to accept this limitation of the available data and use local authority area in which proceedings take place in estimating youth crime by area.

²⁰ A crime or offence is regarded as cleared up where there exists a sufficiency of evidence under Scots law to justify consideration of criminal proceedings notwithstanding that a report is not submitted to the Procurator Fiscal because either (i) by standing agreement with the Procurator Fiscal, the police warn the accused due to the minor nature of the offence, or (ii) reporting is inappropriate due to the age of the accused, death of the accused or other similar circumstances.

There will be some double-counting

- 4.30 Some cases are referred jointly to the Reporter and to the Procurator Fiscal, for example serious offences involving a youth under-16, and a youth over 16 who is placed under supervision. The Procurator Fiscal can also make the decision to refer a young person to the Reporter. However, there is no reliable information on the number of these cases by type of crime, gender, age, etc., therefore there will be some double-counting in our method for estimating the levels of youth crime, but we do not believe that this problem is of such a significant extent to question the validity of this exercise.

Figure 4.2. The criminal justice process in Scotland.



Note: some cases can be jointly reported to both the Children's Report and to the Procurator Fiscal, for example in cases where the child is under 16 and has been charged with a serious offences or in cases where the person is over 16 and is under a supervision requirement. The court may also choose to refer a child to the Reporter.

- 4.31 An alternative method would have been to use self-reporting data of studies of the whole population to estimate the proportion of crime committed by young people relative to the rest of the population. We could then compare the proportion of offences committed by young people relative to the whole population for these crime types and apply this proportion to the total crime figures.
- 4.32 A major difficulty with this method, however, is that there is no one survey that could provide this sort of information. The National Centre for Social Research is currently undertaking a similar exercise for the Home Office, but the results are not as yet available.
- 4.33 However, as a check on our calculations, we can compare our results to other work that has been undertaken. For example, we know from previous research that:
- young people under-18 account for between 25% and 33% of all offences in England and Wales and the US²¹;
 - a range of international studies has shown that most juvenile crime is theft-related and only a small proportion of juvenile crime is violent²²;
 - young men commit a far higher proportion of crime than young women and in the UK in 1995 young men under-21 accounted for 80% of recorded offences cleared up and attributed to this age group²³; and
 - the peak age for offending is usually in the late teens, with official statistics in the UK suggesting that it is 18 for young men and 15 for women.²⁴
- 4.34 But it has to be accepted that there are few genuine sources of comparison given that few studies attempt to measure incidence rates for the age group and all the types of crime in which we are interested.

²¹ Rutter et al, "Anti-social behaviour by young people." Cambridge University Press. 1998.

²² Rutter et al, op. cit.

²³ Home Office, "Aspects of crime – gender." Home Office Research and Statistics Directorate, London. 1997.

²⁴ Home Office, Criminal Statistics England and Wales 2001." Research, Development and Statistics Directorate, London. 2002.

ESTIMATES OF YOUTH CRIME

- 4.35 The headline results in Table 4.1 show that young people, 21 and under, are responsible for over 40% of crimes and offences in Scotland. Results from Table 4.3. The under-15 account for 16-17% of all crime, the under-18 for about 22-23% and the 18-21 for 21%. The estimates therefore for those under-18 is slightly lower than the range previous research indicates as being between one-quarter and one-third of all crime. As expected, the peak age for offending seems to be the late teens and early twenties. Also as expected, most youth crime is theft-related, particularly shoplifting.
- 4.36 Young men account for a very high proportion of youth crime, at around 87% of all crime attributable to the under-21 age group, this is slightly higher than previous research suggests. Females only account for around 13% of all youth crime, but relatively large proportions of shoplifting offences and other types of violent crime (which includes cruel and unnatural treatment of children).
- 4.37 As anticipated, young people account for high proportions of types of theft, vandalism, fire-raising and offences involving handling offensive weapons and a lower proportion of crimes involving indecency. Perhaps the one very surprising result from Table 4.1. is the relatively low proportion of drug crime being the responsibility of young people (one-third), but, as argued earlier in the report, very few drug offences are detected and result in any form of proceedings. The proportion of shoplifting offences due to young people (42%) is also lower than anticipated, but it may be a reflection of young people being less likely to be formally charged with a shoplifting offence.
- 4.38 Among the detailed results in Table 4.3., it was expected that the under-15s would account for relatively high proportions of fire-raising and vandalism and relatively low proportions of violent crime and other crimes. What was not expected was the high proportion of crimes of indecency attributable to this age group (60% of all youth crime). Crimes of indecency includes rape, attempted rape, lewd and indecent behaviour and offences such as prostitution. It is not clear why those under-15 appear more likely to commit such offences compared to the rest of those under-21.
- 4.39 Those 16-17 commit relatively high proportions of motor vehicle theft and robbery. However, nearly half youth crime is attributable to those aged 18-21, particularly violent crime, other crimes of dishonesty such as fraud and reset, crimes against public justice such as bail offences and motor vehicle offences. This age group commits relatively few crimes of vandalism.

- 4.40 The research does appear to show the scale of the numbers of crimes and offences involving young people in Scotland, with young people being responsible for around 30,000 incidents of violent crime, over 48,000 break-ins, around 20,000-30,000 motor vehicle thefts, over 1 million counts of shoplifting and around 300,000 acts of vandalism.

5 MEASURING INDICATORS OF ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

INTRODUCTION

- 5.1 Anti-social behaviour is recognised to be a serious problem in many Scottish communities and a strategy for addressing the issue has been widely welcomed by many key stakeholders. (See "A Report on the Consultation Responses to Putting Our Communities First: A Strategy for Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour). It is also notable that some, but not all, anti-social behaviour involves young people both as victims as well as perpetrators of these offences.
- 5.2 In this section we discuss the difficulties in arriving at a useful, and indeed reliable, measure of anti-social behaviour and conclude that an approach that involves key indicators – generally measures of impact – may be a more helpful route to take. This is because it is highly unlikely that we will ever be able to generate accurate figures for the total amount of anti-social behaviour, given that such a high proportion goes unreported and unrecorded. We describe a number of key datasets that provide the best available information on the extent of anti-social behaviour in Scotland.

DIFFICULTIES IN ESTIMATION

- 5.3 Estimating prevalence and incidence levels for anti-social behaviour is much more problematic than for equivalent levels of crime. A fundamental difficulty is that there is no generally accepted definition of anti-social behaviour.^{25, 26} The legal definition that is used in England - "acting in a manner that caused or was likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not in the same household as the defendant"²⁷ - is too broad to be helpful.
- 5.4 Conceptually it is more useful to think of the problem as a spectrum of behaviour types ranging from *neighbour* problems (a dispute arising from nuisance, e.g. noise) and *neighbourhood* problems (incivilities within public spaces e.g. littering) at one end of the scale to those resulting in a legally definable *crime or offence* at the other end (e.g. vandalism, fire-raising, breach of the peace, etc.)²⁸.

²⁵ Policy Action Team 8: Anti- Social Behaviour

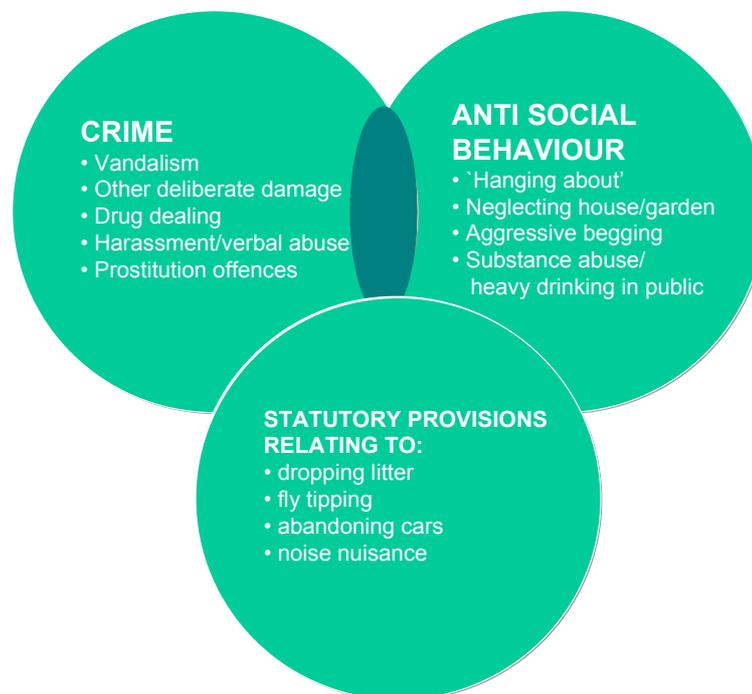
²⁶ *A Report on the Consultation Responses to Putting Our Communities First: A Strategy for Tackling Anti-social Behaviour*, Scottish Executive Development Department, 2003.

²⁷ Crime and Disorder Act 1998

²⁸ *Myths and Reality: Anti-Social Behaviour in Scotland*, Scott & Parkey, Housing Studies, Vol 13, No3, pp325 – 345.

- 5.5 Some of these behaviours are captured by criminal statistics, e.g. vandalism and fire-raising, but many other forms are not reliably and consistently recorded throughout the country. Other forms of anti-social behaviour, for instance noise nuisance and fly-tipping, may be reported to the local authority who have statutory powers to deal with them, and there is a further potential overlap between the data sources in that non-compliance with orders issued by local authorities may then become a crime. This is outlined in Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1. Overview of crime and anti-social behaviour.



- 5.6 Furthermore, many behaviours that are termed “youth nuisance” are not actually recognised as crimes at all and different police forces record incidents of these behaviours under different categories, such as “youth nuisance”, “youths causing annoyance” and “community problems”. Given these problems, it is not actually known how frequently “youth nuisance” behaviour take place.
- 5.7 An additional problem in measurement is that what constitutes anti-social behaviour is highly subjective. For example, some people may regard a group of youths hanging around a bus stop as nuisance behaviour, but others will regard it as perfectly normal. The Youthlink survey suggests that over half of young people like to spend time ‘hanging about on the streets.’

- 5.8 A small survey of the eight police forces in Scotland was conducted by the research team as part of this study. This concluded that, at present, the level of consistency with which anti-social behaviour is recorded across Scotland is poor, although there are examples of good practice. Therefore police warnings data would not give us a true estimate of scale of the problem across the country as a whole, although for some areas (e.g. Tayside and Dumfries & Galloway), reasonably good, recent data does exist.
- 5.9 The introduction of the Scottish Executive's proposals on Restorative Justice²⁹ should ultimately bring a degree of standardisation to the approach when a programme has been fully established in each force area. However, some police forces are further ahead than others in introducing a plan that addresses these proposals.
- 5.10 To properly assess the problem of anti-social behaviour would require a study that attempted to estimate the proportion of people who perceived various possible forms of anti-social behaviour to be a problem. This will have difficulties because what people perceive to be anti-social behaviour is very subjective and may or may not be justified. To produce estimates of incidence levels of anti-social behaviour would require a self-reporting study involving young people on the types of anti-social behaviour they engage in and the frequency of this behaviour. This has not been done in Scotland on a sufficient scale to give reliable results.
- 5.11 One final option is to review the data held by the SCRA on "no case to answer" cases. Many of these will involve anti-social behaviour and, paradoxically, can lead to some form of action being taken, e.g. referring back the case to the local authority or agreeing an approach with the family or another agency. However, this will only give us limited information and will not be sufficient to provide reliable estimates for what will be vast numbers of behavioural types.
- 5.12 In view of these shortcomings of available data, we have opted for an approach that looks at a number of key indicators of different types of anti-social behaviour, drawing on information provided by a variety of datasets. An outline of our approach is discussed later in this section and is followed by a description of the main sources of information on anti-social behaviour. First of all, however, we review briefly the impact of anti-social behaviour by young people and how its various effects might be traced.

²⁹ *Putting Our Communities First: A Strategy for Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour*, Scottish Executive, 2003.

TRACING THE IMPACT OF ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

- 5.13 There is no comprehensive or systematic way in which one can provide a definitive assessment of the impact of anti-social behaviour or the fear of youth crime. It is, however, possible to unpack some of the ways in which these may impact on the lives of individuals and communities.
- 5.14 The effects of youth crime are generally thought of in terms of the direct effects on individuals who are confronted by problems related to youth crime, which can be both short-term and longer-term. These might include:
- repairing or replacing any property stolen or damaged;
 - time spent dealing with the consequences of such behaviour (e.g. telephoning the police, engaging with the criminal justice system, clearing up) and not spent, as a result, on other things – e.g. employment, childcare, etc.;
 - physical or psychological impacts (such as injuries sustained in an assault, anxiety, etc.); and
 - consequences for individual behaviour (avoidance of particular areas or situations, impact on work and leisure activities, etc.)
- 5.15 Of course, this tends to assume on a one-to-one model of the offender-victim relationship. In the case of anti-social behaviour, however, the relationship is more likely to be one-to-many. In other words, a single act or occurrence of anti-social behaviour may impact on a wide range of different people, and do so differently in relation to each. For example, if a group of young people spend an evening drinking and socialising noisily outside a shop, leaving behind them broken glass and graffiti, who might be affected and how? The shop owner would have to clear up the debris and spend time trying to remove the graffiti. They might have to delay their opening time the next morning and lose custom as a result, quite apart from the impact on their business during the course of the evening itself. Local people may have felt intimidated by the commotion and are unwilling to walk past the young people, with consequences for their ability to access local facilities. People living nearby may have had their sleep disrupted and had to spend time contacting the local police. The police themselves will have had to expend time dealing with the problem, even if there was no clear evidence of an actual crime being committed, with consequences for their ability to deal effectively with more serious incidents.

- 5.16 Quite how such diverse impacts could be traced or quantified is far from clear. Moreover, it makes little sense to assume a standard cost or impact for a particular form of behaviour, since the significance of that behaviour is determined less by what is actually done (e.g. a window broken, a group of young people hanging around drinking) than by who is affected by it. If a group of young people choose to hang around in the woods, drinking and using drugs, the impact for the wider community is negligible, even if the risks to the young people themselves may be heightened by their lack of visibility. Indeed, it could even be argued that such behaviour is not anti-social behaviour, since no-one else is likely to be affected by it. Moreover, the sensibilities of different communities vary greatly: what appears frightening or alarming to the residents of one neighbourhood may pass unnoticed in another.
- 5.17 So far, we have discussed only the impact of youth crime and anti-social behaviour on individuals. In aggregation, however, these individual-level impacts begin to have wider consequences for the functioning of communities as a whole. If, for example, an area develops a reputation for rowdiness or young people hanging around the streets, visitors from other areas may be deterred, with consequences for the profitability and viability of shops and other local services. New businesses may become reluctant to invest in the area.
- 5.18 If visible signs of anti-social behaviour, such as broken glass and graffiti are not swiftly dealt with, further problems are more likely to ensue. This is the phenomenon captured famously in Wilson and Kelling's (1982) 'broken windows' thesis. They argued that visible signs of decay, if left uncorrected, undercut residents' own efforts to maintain their homes and neighbourhoods and to control unruly behaviour. "If a window in a building is broken and left unrepaired," they wrote, "all the rest of the windows will soon be broken. . . . One unrepaired window is a signal that no one cares, so breaking more windows costs nothing. . . . Untended property becomes fair game for people out for fun or plunder."³⁰

³⁰ James Q. Wilson and George L. Kelling, "Broken windows: the police and neighbourhood safety." *Atlantic Monthly*. 29, 3. P.29-38. 1982.

KEY INDICATORS

- 5.19 It is possible to produce a point estimate, at least for some forms of anti-social behaviour, by taking data on recorded anti-social behaviour and grossing up using multipliers based on self report studies, etc. This is done in Tables 4.1 and 4.2 for anti-social behaviour that are also crime types, e.g. vandalism and fire-raising. However, given the difficulties in defining other forms of anti-social behaviour as well as the lack of data sources by which these behaviour types are accurately recorded, we do not believe that it is possible to provide estimates of other types of anti-social behaviour.
- 5.20 We instead favour a 'key indicators' approach that involves drawing evidence from public perception surveys. The key sources for these in Scotland are the Scottish Household Survey (SHS), the Youth Lifestyles Survey, the Edinburgh Study of Youth Transitions and Crime, and the 1995 Baseline Study on Housing Management. The SHS is particularly relevant and, because of its scale, it provides a useful source of data at local authority level; in consequence, it forms the main focus of this section.
- 5.21 Listed below in Table 5.1 are a range of behaviour types that are classified as anti-social by the Government's multi-agency Policy Action Team on Anti-social Behaviour. The table provides details on the availability of Scottish data sources to measure them, if any, and the limitations of these sources.
- 5.22 The focus of the Policy Action Team on neighbourhood renewal was particularly on acts that cause problems in residential neighbourhoods and less on behaviour in areas such as town centres. It does not, for example, include dropping litter as an offence, even though this is an offence for which people can be fined.

Table 5.1
Measuring Types of Anti-Social Behaviour

Anti-social behaviour type	Data sources	Limitations of sources
Substance abuse/Illegal drinking/Drunkenness/ Drug dealing	Scottish Household Survey (SHS), Recorded crime data, SCRA data.	SHS is an opinion survey based on a large sample of the population (c. 30,000), but it does not record actual incidents of behaviour. Recorded crime and SCRA data are only likely to record a very small number of such incidents and not all forms of this behaviour will be anti-social.
Intimidating gatherings of young people in public places	SHS, SCRO (possibly)	SHS data – see above comment. SCRO data is unlikely to provide a complete record.
Vandalism/Graffiti/Other deliberate damage	SHS, recorded crime data, SCRA data, SCS and “Counting the Cost”.	These multiple sources should provide a robust estimate of the number of incidents of this behaviour, although there is likely to be considerable under-reporting on the more minor forms of behaviour, such as graffiti. SHS data – see above comment.
Littering/fly-tipping/abandoning cars	SHS	See above comment.
Noise nuisance	SHS, SCRO (possibly)	SHS, SCRO data is unlikely to provide a complete record.
Run down homes/ Unkempt gardens	No reliable source.	
Rough sleeping/ aggressive begging	No reliable source.	
Harassment/Verbal abuse (including racism and homophobia)	Recorded crime data, SCRA data.	Recorded crime and SCRA data only likely to record a very small number of such incidents.
Prostitution/ Kerb-crawling	Recorded crime data, SCRA data.	Recorded crime and SCRA data only likely to record a very small number of such incidents.
Nuisance from vehicles (including parking and abandonment)	No reliable source.	

5.23 The studies mentioned above have been reviewed in the context of this assessment of the scale of anti-social behaviour and the relevant findings are highlighted below.

PERCEPTION SURVEYS ON ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Scottish Household Survey

- 5.24 The Scottish Household Survey is a continuous survey based on a sample of the general population in private residences in Scotland. It started in 1999 and is funded by the Scottish Executive and undertaken by a partnership of NFO System Three Social Research and MORI Scotland. The most recent publication is the Annual Report for 2001/02, which is based on data from 30,639 households and 28,685 individuals collected in 2001/ 2002.
- 5.25 The aim of the survey is to provide representative information about the composition, characteristics and behaviours of Scottish households. A number of the topics covered are of particular interest in the context of this study.
- Neighbourhood ratings as a place to live – 2001/02 survey.
 - Experience of neighbourhood problems/ disputes – 2001/02 survey.
 - Perceptions of safety from crime – 2002 survey only (discussed in Section 6 – Fear of Crime).
 - Experience of crime (2001 survey only).
- 5.26 The SHS does not tell us how many of the problem issues are attributable to young people, with one exception. The SHS contains one question which specifically asks about groups of young people hanging about. However the wording of the question is as follows “How common would you say the following things are in this neighbourhood?” The third item on the list then presented is “groups of young people hanging around on the street”. Respondents have the option of stating whether this is “very common”, “fairly common”, “not very common”, “not at all common”, or “don’t know”.
- 5.27 Thus the survey treats the mere act of young people hanging about in the street as problematic, regardless of whether they are actually intimidating or whether there are any other more specific anti-social behaviours being committed.

Neighbourhood Ratings

- 5.28 The overwhelming majority of adults interviewed for the SHS have a positive opinion of their neighbourhoods with over 90% saying their area is a “very good” or a “fairly good” place to live. However, there is considerable variation in this opinion between tenures, with only around one-third of social rented tenants saying their area is a very good place to live, compared with over 50% of those buying their home and over 60% of those who own their home outright. The groups that have the least favourable opinion of their own neighbourhood are those living in social rented accommodation (local authority or housing association properties).
- 5.29 Table 5.2 summarises the response to the this question for the two extreme opinions, i.e. the area is a very good or very poor place to live.

Household Tenure	Very Good	Very Poor
Owned Outright	63	1
Buying with loan/ mortgage	53	1
Rented – Local Authority	36	8
Rented – Housing Association	33	6
Rented – Private Landlord	45	2
Other	53	4
All	51	3

Source: Scottish Household Survey, 2001/2002, Table 4.26

- 5.30 The general opinion on the quality of the neighbourhood also varies by household type, with single parents being significantly more likely than other household types (families, pensioners and single adults) to say their area is a poor place to live. Finally, residents in rural areas are more likely than those in urban areas to rate their areas highly.

Experience of Neighbourhood Problems

- 5.31 The SHS asks about a number of neighbourhood problems, such as noisy neighbours, groups of young people hanging around, litter, vandalism and drug problems. Across all areas the relative frequency of the problems is similar. Litter and groups of young people hanging around being the most common issues and having noisy neighbours is the least common problem (Table 5.3).

- 5.32 The types of problems asked about in the survey are most commonly experienced in areas of social housing and by single parent, single adult and large family households. They are also more commonly features of urban rather than rural living. People living in rural areas are the least likely to experience these types of problems.

Table 5.3
Experience of Neighbourhood Problems by Household Tenure
 (% saying each is very or fairly common)

Household Tenure	Owned Out-right	Buying through loan/mortgage	Social Rented	Rented Privately	Other	All
Noisy Neighbours	4	5	14	11	8	8
Vandalism/ Graffiti/ Damage to Property	13	15	31	16	19	19
Groups of Young People Hanging Around	21	31	44	30	29	32
People Drinking or Using Drugs	13	19	35	25	23	22
Rubbish or Litter Lying Around	25	27	38	31	31	30
Base	7,742	10,627	8,112	1,682	522	28,685
Social Rented – through either the local authority or a housing association						
Source: Scottish Household Survey, 2001/2002, Table 4.34						

- 5.33 Table 5.4 highlights the extent to which the incidence of neighbourhood problems varies throughout Scotland. The proportion of adults reporting that each of the 5 problem types is very or fairly common has been ranked by local authority area and this shows clearly the urban/ rural dimension to the scale of these anti-social behavioural issues.
- 5.34 Glasgow has the highest proportions of adults stating that each of these problems is common in their neighbourhoods. North Lanarkshire and Edinburgh also have high proportions of adults mentioning particular issues such as litter and noisy neighbours (Edinburgh) or people using drink or drugs (North Lanarkshire). Rural areas such as the Highlands and Islands and Southern Scotland tend to have lower proportions mentioning these types of issues.

Groups of Young People

- 5.35 The issue of groups of young people hanging around is of particular relevance to this study. There is considerable variation in the extent to which this is reported as very or fairly common, ranging from 6-7% in Orkney, Shetland and the Western Isles to over 40% in Glasgow, West Dumbartonshire, Clackmannan, Falkirk and Midlothian.

Table 5.4
Experience of Neighbourhood Problems by Local Authority Area (% of respondents saying each is very or fairly common), 2001/02*

	Noisy neighbours/ loud parties		Vandalism/ graffiti/ Property damage		Groups of young people		People drinking/ using drugs		Rubbish/ litter lying around		Base
	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	
Aberdeen City	8	6=	20	8=	27	19=	22	12	19	27=	1,164
Aberdeenshire	3	29=	11	25	23	23=	13	25=	21	25	1,127
Angus	7	11=	14	18=	24	22	15	21=	26	16=	635
Argyll & Bute	5	21=	13	20=	19	27=	15	21=	23	20=	548
Clackmannanshire	12	2	27	3	43	3	32	2=	35	5=	520
Dumfries & Galloway	4	26=	10	26	23	23=	15	21=	20	26	775
Dundee City	10	3=	15	15=	26	21	18	19	23	20=	788
East Ayrshire	7	11=	22	5	34	9	30	4=	34	6=	670
East Dumbartonshire	4	26=	15	15=	30	12=	21	13=	30	12	556
East Lothian	5	21=	12	22=	29	16=	14	24	22	24	553
East Renfrewshire	6	17=	12	22=	30	12=	13	25=	32	10	506
Edinburgh City	9	5	21	6=	31	11	21	13=	39	3	2,234
Eilean Siar	3	29=	1	32	7	30=	5	30	10	31	630
Falkirk	7	11=	19	10=	41	4	28	6	35	5=	746
Fife	7	11=	17	14	30	12=	23	10=	26	16=	1,768
Glasgow City	13	1	36	1	46	1=	34	1	44	1	3,037
Highland	6	17=	9	27	21	26	16	20	23	20=	1,081
Inverclyde	8	6=	20	8=	38	6=	26	7	33	9	499
Midlothian	7	11=	21	6=	40	5	25	8=	38	4	604
Moray	5	21=	6	29	17	29	11	28	16	29	581
North Ayrshire	6	17=	15	15=	29	16=	20	15=	28	13	728
North Lanarkshire	8	6=	23	4	38	6=	30	4=	31	11	1,547
Orkney	3	29=	3	30=	6	32	4	31=	6	32	615
Perth & Kinross	6	17=	12	22=	23	23=	13	25=	19	27=	675
Renfrewshire	8	6=	19	10=	33	10	20	15=	27	14=	899

Table 5.4
Experience of Neighbourhood Problems by Local Authority Area (% of respondents saying each is very or fairly common), 2001/02*

	Noisy neighbours/ loud parties		Vandalism/ graffiti/ Property damage		Groups of young people		People drinking/ using drugs		Rubbish/ litter lying around		Base
	%	<i>Rank</i>	%	<i>Rank</i>	%	<i>Rank</i>	%	<i>Rank</i>	%	<i>Rank</i>	
Scottish Borders	4	26=	7	28	19	27=	10	29	24	18=	609
Shetland	2	32	3	30=	7	30=	4	31=	12	30	606
South Ayrshire	5	21=	14	18=	27	19=	19	18	27	14=	654
South Lanarkshire	5	21=	18	12=	30	12=	25	8=	27	14=	1,527
Stirling	8	6=	13	20=	29	16=	20	15=	24	18=	570
West Dumbartonshire	10	3=	28	2	46	1=	32	2=	40	2	499
West Lothian	7	11=	18	12=	36	8	23	10=	34	6=	734
Scotland	8	-	19	-	32	-	22	-	30	-	28,685

* This survey has been designed to be statistically representative at the local authority level for the two year period at the 95% confidence interval.
 Source: Scottish Household Survey, 2001/2002, Table 4.36. The maximum margin of error was for a sample size of 500 and a response of 50%. In this worst case scenario, the margin of error was +/- 5.3%. Generally, for the larger councils, the margins of error were very much smaller.

- 5.36 The margin of error on these results for the cities in Scotland is shown in Table 5.5. The main point to note is that the survey was designed to generate results which were reasonably reliable at the local authority level, therefore all figures provide a fairly good indicator of the extent to which these issues are generally of concern to the public in the areas concerned.
- 5.37 The margin of error reduces with larger sample sizes and for extremes of results. For example, on a sample of 3,000 responses (Glasgow) and a result of 13% (the percentage of people reporting that noisy neighbours/ loud parties are a very or fairly common problem in their areas), we are 95% confident that the true proportion of the population at large which view this as a problem is between 11.5% and 14.5%.
- 5.38 Conversely, the margin of error increases with smaller sample sizes and mid-ranging results (i.e. responses of around 50%). Aberdeen has the smallest sample size of all the cities (788 responses) therefore the margins of error on these results tend to be greater than for the other cities. The figure with the highest margin of error is the 27% of respondents who said that groups of young people hanging around was a very or fairly common problem in their area. On this result, we are 95% confident that the true proportion of the population in Aberdeen that view this to be a problem is between 23.8% and 30.2%.

Table 5.5 Margin of Error on "Neighbourhood Problems" Results for Scotland's Cities				
	Aberdeen City	Dundee City	Edinburgh City	Glasgow City
Noisy Neighbours/ loud parties				
% saying problem is very/ fairly common	8	10	9	13
Rank (out of 32)	6=	3=	5	1
Sample Size	1,164	788	2,234	3,037
Margin of Error	+/-2.2%	+/-2.2%	+/-1.6%	+/-1.5%
Vandalism/ Graffiti/ Property Damage				
% saying problem is very/ fairly common	20	15	21	36
Rank (out of 32)	8=	15=	6=	1
Sample Size	1,164	788	2,234	3,037
Margin of Error	+/-3.0%	+/-2.7%	+/-2.1%	+/-2.0%
Groups of Young People Hanging Around				
% saying problem is very/ fairly common	27	26	31	46
Rank (out of 32)	19=	21	11	1=
Sample Size	1,164	788	2,234	3,037
Margin of Error	+/-3.2%	+/-3.2%	+/-2.4%	+/-2.1%
People drinking/ taking drugs				
% saying problem is very/ fairly common	22	18	21	34
Rank (out of 32)	12	19	13=	1
Sample Size	1,164	788	2,234	3,037
Margin of Error	+/-3.0%	+/-3.0%	+/-2.1%	+/-2.0%
Rubbish/ Litter lying around				
% saying problem is very/ fairly common	19	23	39	44
Rank (out of 32)	27=	20=	3	1
Sample Size	1,164	788	2,234	3,037
Margin of Error	+/-3.0%	+/-3.2%	+/-2.6%	+/-2.1%

Source: Scotland's People Volume 7: Results from the 2001/02 Scottish Household Survey, Table A-1.

Neighbour Disputes

- 5.39 The incidence of neighbour disputes is also a topic that is covered by the SHS, and although it should not be automatically concluded that a high proportion of those who create such problems will be young people, the findings show that young adults (aged 16 to 24) are slightly more likely to experience these problems than those aged 45+. It is likely that anti-social behaviour may be involved in cases of dispute.
- 5.40 Overall, 91% of adults aged 16+ do not experience any form of neighbour dispute (Table 5.6). Among young to middle-aged adults (aged 16 – 44), this proportion falls to 87% and a larger proportion in this age band report frequent (i.e. 4 or more) cases of dispute in the past 12 months.

Table 5.6
Experience of Neighbour Disputes in the Past 12 Months by Age Group
(% of adults)

	16 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 59	60 to 74	75 plus	All
Never/ nothing serious	87	86	89	92	95	97	91
<i>Any serious disputes</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>9</i>
Once	7	6	5	4	2	1	4
Twice	2	3	2	1	1	0	2
Three times	1	1	1	1	0	0	1
Four or more times	3	4	3	2	1	1	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Base	2,324	4,514	5,344	6,617	6,348	3,534	28,681

Source: Scottish Household Survey, 2001/2002, Table 4.37

5.41 Those living in large urban areas are more likely to report a more frequent level of disputes with neighbours. Disputes are also more commonly experienced by:

- single parents;
- those in large households (containing three or more children);
- those in social rented accommodation; and
- those in maisonette/ flatted properties.

Self Report Data on Anti- Social Behaviour by Young People

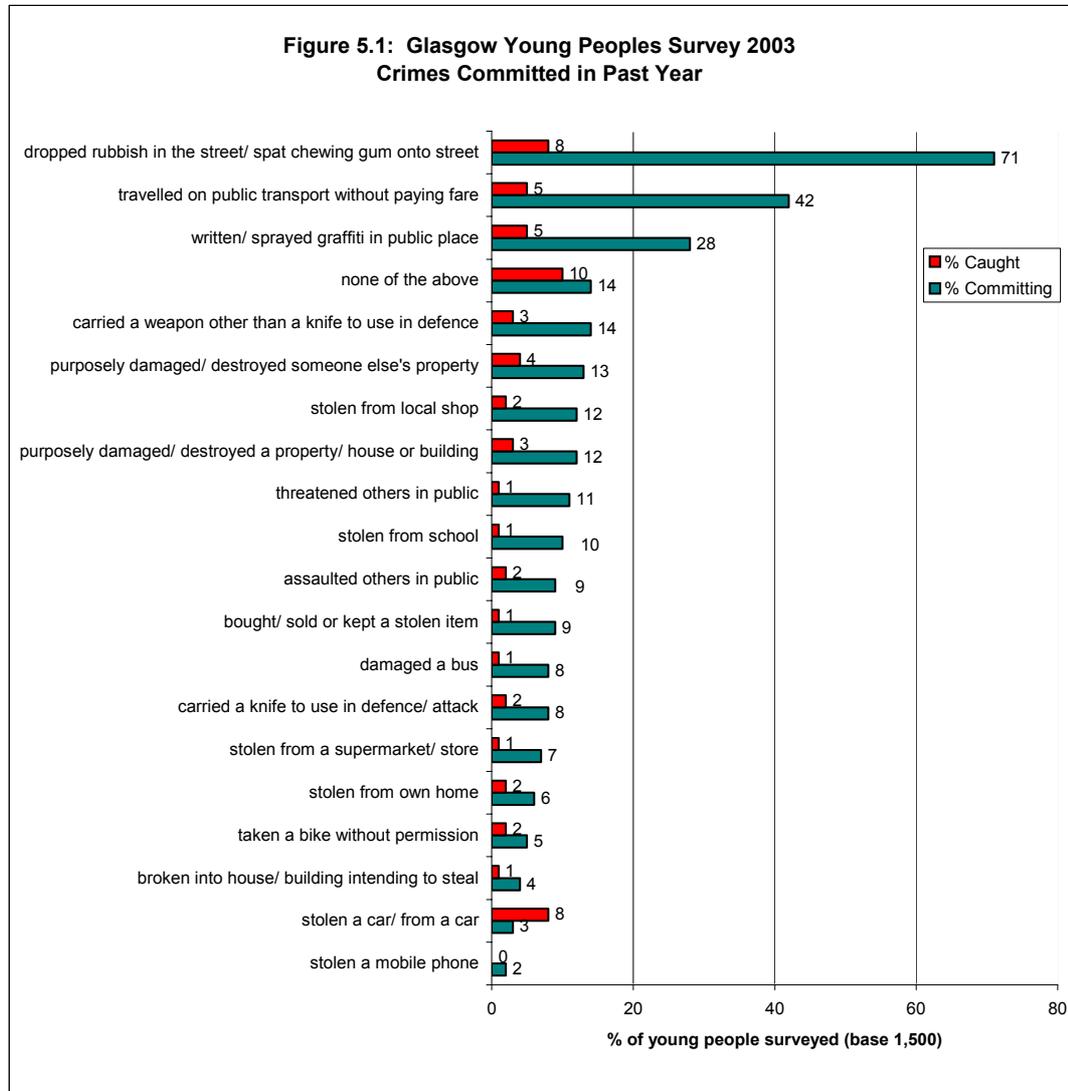
5.42 There have been a number of self report studies where young people indicate the extent to which they have been involved in crime and in various types of anti-social behaviour. Some of these studies also provide information about whether the young person was 'caught' by an adult or other authority figure carrying out the criminal or anti-social act.

5.43 While these studies confirm that a very high proportion of anti-social behaviour by young people goes unobserved - and thus unreported and undetected - the way that they report data on getting caught³¹ makes it difficult to use the information to gross up recorded anti- social behaviour to provide a true record of the level of anti-social behaviour.

³¹ The emphasis is generally on 'getting caught', rather than whether the incident led to a charge by the police

- 5.44 One of the most important self report studies is the Edinburgh Youth Transitions study. In addition to information about self reported levels of anti-social behaviour, the Edinburgh study also has the potential to link this data with neighbourhood conditions as all the data collected has been geo-coded using postcode information for the individual young person.
- 5.45 One of the main aims of the Edinburgh study is stated to be to :
- " examine the interactions between individual level factors (e.g. personality, family, etc) and neighbourhood level factors (e.g. the physical environment in which people live, social controls within the community, etc) which contribute to criminal offending. In order to study the social geography of Edinburgh and understand these neighbourhood level factors better, a computerised geographic information system (GIS) has been developed . Various sources of geo-coded data are being examined, including police recorded crime statistics, census data and locally available data from the City of Edinburgh Council on unemployment, land use and housing.*
- 5.46 The information about neighbourhoods is being used to study crime patterns in three main ways:
- The postcode of each member of the cohort has been geo-coded, so any piece of information about members of the cohort (including their offending behaviour) can be visualised spatially (on a map) and compared with other pieces of geo-coded information (e.g. local unemployment). This information can also be entered into a database and analysed statistically, to provide a better understanding of offending behaviour in the context of the environment in which young people live.
 - The GIS has also been used to define 91 neighbourhoods in Edinburgh, based on six census characteristics indicating levels of social stress and police recorded crime data. Two matched case study areas have been selected on the basis that they have similar social and physical characteristics, but very different crime rates. Ethnographic and observational research has been carried out in these areas, and the research team are currently examining the factors that might explain these contrasting crime rates between areas.
 - An Edinburgh-wide community study will be conducted in 2002. This will involve surveying a representative sample of the adult population to examine the influences of neighbourhood and community on crime and criminality in Edinburgh. In particular, this work will seek to identify the informal mechanisms by which communities control crime and anti-social behaviour.

- 5.47 Some relevant findings from another self-report study, the Youthlink survey, include the following.
- The most popular spare time activity among Scotland's 11-16 year olds is listening to music (81%). Over half (52%) like to spend time 'hanging about on the streets'; a quarter attend youth clubs or other clubs and 9% attend uniformed clubs. Older young people (17-25 year olds) most like to watch TV in their spare time (81%). Just 3% attend youth work activities.
 - One in ten young people reported to having been a victim of racist abuse, but attitudes appear to be predominantly non-racist - at least seven in ten young people regard using terms such as 'chinky' or 'paki', speaking negatively in private about people from different ethnic backgrounds and being impolite or verbally offensive to people from different ethnic backgrounds to be either slightly or strongly racist.
- 5.48 The finding that over half of young people like to spend time hanging about on the streets is an important one, given that this is an activity which it is proposed should be subject to further control.
- 5.49 The Glasgow Youth Survey concluded that while most young people say that they have not actually broken the law in the past year, many admit to a range of criminal and/or anti-social behaviour. A summary of crime/anti-social behaviour types admitted to is shown in Figure 5.1, together with the proportion of young people who claim to have been caught for the act.
- 5.50 These findings cannot be strictly compared with our estimates of youth crime as they consider prevalence rather than incident rates, but they do demonstrate the extent of the amount of crime and anti-social behaviour that is not reported or recorded, particularly for crimes like shoplifting and vandalism.



Source: MORI Scotland

5.51 The figure shows:

- How common certain forms of anti-social behaviour are amongst young people – particularly litter dropping, fare- dodging and graffiti; and
- how certain types of crime and anti-social behaviour are likely to go undetected, for example, fewer than 20% of young people who have stolen from shops were detected, and an even lower proportion are likely to have been charged.

Experience of Crime

- 5.52 The 2001 sweep of the SHS asked interviewees about their actual experience of crimes (rather than their perceptions). The results provide an interesting additional dimension to the overall scale of these problems by detailing where and by whom they are most likely to be experienced. Unfortunately, these questions were not repeated in the 2002 survey therefore the base data for these questions relates to a different group of people than the data from the SHS that has so far been discussed. The data are presented in Table 5.7.
- 5.53 With the exception of vandalism, which was experienced by 10% of adults across the sample, all of the remaining crimes (i.e. housebreaking, motor vehicle theft, assault) were fairly uncommon. Housebreaking had been experienced by between 1% (Fife, Highlands and Islands, Lothian) and 4% of adults (South Lanarkshire) over the past year. Motor vehicle theft had been experienced by less than 1% of adults in Southern Scotland and 6% of adults in North Lanarkshire. In no area had more than 2% of adults experienced physical assault.

Table 5.7
Experience of Crime by Area , 2001
(% of adults experiencing crime in the past year)

Area	House-breaking (once or more)	Motor Vehicle Theft (once or more)	Vandalism (once or more)	Physical Assault (once or more)	Base
Edinburgh	2	2	11	1	1,179
Glasgow	3	2	14	2	1,585
Fife	1	3	8	1	865
North Lanarkshire	3	6	12	1	793
South Lanarkshire	4	3	10	1	781
Highlands and Islands	1	1	5	0	2,033
Grampian	3	2	9	1	1,174
Tayside	2	3	8	2	1,031
Central	3	1	8	2	931
Dumbartonshire	3	2	16	2	544
Renfrewshire & Inverclyde	2	3	12	1	999
Ayrshire	2	2	10	1	1,077
Lothians	1	2	13	2	941
Southern Scotland	2	0	6	1	704
All	2	2	10	1	14,637

Source: *Scotland's People, Volume 5 Annual Report, Results from the 2001 Scottish Household Survey*, Scottish Executive, Table 2.34

- 5.54 There is some variation in the experience of crime across different households and different neighbourhood types.
- Single adult households and single parent households reported higher rates of housebreaking than other household types.

- Adults in the privately rented sector are more likely to experience housebreaking.
- Vehicle theft is more common among adults living in the social rented sector than in other tenures.
- Vandalism is more common in urban areas than in rural areas.

CRIME AGAINST COMMERCIAL AND PUBLIC PROPERTIES

- 5.55 So far, this section has considered perceptions of anti-social behaviour that have been reported by adults living in private households. However, there are other types of anti-social behaviour that also need to be taken into account. The costs of types of crime and anti-social behaviour against commercial properties and public buildings/places, e.g. schools, bus shelters, etc., can be more easily identified.
- 5.56 The extent of crime against commercial property has most recently been covered in Scotland by the "Counting the Cost" survey of 2,500 businesses, which was undertaken in 1999³².
- 5.57 The key conclusions from this study were:
- 58% of businesses reviewed experienced crime in 1998;
 - 50% had experienced property crime (vandalism/ break-in);
 - crime is heavily targeted at a relatively small proportion of businesses;
 - there are links between working patterns and the risk of crime and between geography and the risk of crime; and
 - the cost of crime to all 5 sectors under review in the study in Scotland in 1998 was £678M.
- 5.58 Although it is not known precisely who the perpetrators of these crimes are, and therefore not possible to attribute an exact proportion of this cost to young people, high proportions of vandalism & break-ins are committed by young people.

³² *Counting the Cost: Crime Against Business in Scotland*, Scottish Executive CRU, 2000.

- 5.59 Anti-social behaviour resulting in crime against public properties/littering of public places will have a measurable economic cost that is documented by the relevant public agency or department. The most recently published source in this respect relates to the cost of vandalism and fire-raising to schools in Scotland. Audit Scotland reported that by 2001, this amounted to £8.3 million, down from £12 million in 1995³³. It further reports that the majority of councils suffer over £1,000 worth of damage per school per year, on average.
- 5.60 Further data on the cost of damage to other public properties in Scotland could not be traced at the time of writing this report (nothing relevant in this respect had been published by either the Scottish Executive or by Audit Scotland).

CONCLUSIONS

- 5.61 To summarise the evidence on the scale of anti-social behaviour, Table 5.8 pulls together the available survey evidence for Scotland under the main anti-social behaviour types as classified by the Government's multi-agency Policy Action Team.

³³ *Vandalism and Fire in Schools Cost Councils Over £8 million Last Year*, Audit Scotland, Press Release, 25 June 2002.

Table 5.8**Estimating Types of Anti-Social Behaviour**

Anti-social behaviour type	Research Evidence on Scale of Problem	Source
Substance abuse/Illegal drinking/ Drunkenness/Drug dealing	22% of adults surveyed in the Scottish Household Survey reported this as a "very" or "fairly common" problem in their areas. The proportion increases to 35% in areas of social rented housing.	SHS
Intimidating gatherings of young people in public places	32% of adults surveyed reported very or fairly common to have groups of young people hanging around in the street.	SHS
Vandalism/Graffiti/Other deliberate damage	19% of adults reported problems with vandalism to be very or fairly common. In 2001, damage to schools in Scotland was estimated to have cost the local authorities £8 million. Damage to commercial properties for 5 key sectors was estimated to have cost businesses £678 million in 1998.	SHS, Counting the Cost, Audit Scotland
Littering/fly-tipping/abandoning cars	30% of adults consider littering to be a very or fairly common problem in their area.	SHS
Noise nuisance	8% of adults reported that noisy neighbours were a very or a fairly common problem in their areas.	SHS
Run down homes/Unkempt gardens	No survey evidence found	
Rough sleeping/aggressive begging	No survey evidence found	
Harassment/Verbal abuse (including racism and homophobia)	7% of adults surveyed expressed concern about being attacked due to skin colour/ethnic origin or religion. 17% of adults surveyed were worried about being insulted/pestered generally in the street ³⁴ .	SHS
Prostitution/Kerb-crawling	No survey evidence found	
Nuisance from vehicles (including parking and abandonment)	No survey evidence found	

³⁴ See *Attitudes to Discrimination in Scotland*, Scottish Executive Research Findings No.7/2003 for further research evidence on the issues of racial discrimination and homophobia.

6 MEASURING FEAR OF YOUTH CRIME

INTRODUCTION

- 6.1 The research has not identified any studies that shed light on fear of crime committed specifically by young people in Scotland. Instead, surveys tend to ask general questions relating to the fear of all crime, of which the fear of youth crime will form only one element. We begin by placing the UK and Scotland's position in a broader international context, before presenting the main survey evidence on the fear of crime. The sources that we have focused on are the Scottish Crime Survey and the Scottish Household Survey.

DIFFICULTIES IN ESTIMATION

- 6.2 It could be argued that much of the fear of crime is fear of youth crime, both in the sense that young people generally form a useful depository for anxieties about public order and that, as we have seen, a significant proportion of all crime is actually committed by young people. The definition of youth will however vary depending on who is being asked. If survey respondents are asked how worried they are about walking alone in their area after dark or about having their home broken into, their images of likely offenders are almost certainly of young men. Survey questions are not, however, generally framed in such a way that it would be possible to separate out fear of youth crime from fear of adult crime in any precise way.
- 6.3 The only survey questions in widespread use that refer specifically to young people tend to be ones that address perceptions of 'incivilities' and anti-social behaviour.

KEY INDICATORS

- 6.4 A key indicators approach, based on survey data, is the best way forward in this area. There is, clearly, no real and measurable level of fear of crime, only competing constructions of crime-related public anxieties. Instead, we include data, available at local, national and international levels on matters such as:
- peoples' perceptions of their own safety;
 - their level of worry about specific crime types;
 - their perceived crime risk; and
 - their perceptions of how common specific youth-related problems are in respondents' areas.

- 6.5 First of all, however, we offer some comments about the actual *impact* of fear of youth crime.

THE IMPACT OF FEAR OF YOUTH CRIME

- 6.6 This discussion cannot really be separated from that of the impact of anti-social behaviour by young people more generally. The impacts of fear of crime, too, are diverse and difficult to quantify, and are felt at the level of both individuals and communities. The impact on individuals can range from the minor (taking sensible precautions to avoid victimisation) to the severe (debilitating and pervasive anxiety that constricts and shapes everyday activities).
- 6.7 At the level of communities, fear of crime itself can make crime itself more likely, since it has the effect of keeping people off the streets. If public spaces are abandoned because they are seen as dangerous, they actually become more dangerous, since the level of surveillance is reduced and both individual safety and the security of property are jeopardised as a result.
- 6.8 The fear of crime also undermines the ability of communities to respond to and deal effectively with difficult situations, since it erodes social trust and makes it more likely that residents will resort to formal criminal justice when problems occur. In other words, it is better for residents of particular communities to feel that they can talk to each other about problems relating to young people, or talk to those young people themselves. If they feel they have no choice but to involve the police, because of anxiety about their own safety, the divisions and suspicions that exist will be reinforced.

BENCHMARKING THE UK'S POSITION

- 6.9 A recent Eurobarometer report (April 2003)³⁵ placed the UK among the top 3 member states where feelings of insecurity after dark are greatest. When asked, "how safe do you feel walking alone after dark in the area where you live?", 19% of respondents in the UK said that they felt very unsafe. Only respondents in Greece and Italy reported greater feelings of insecurity. Respondents in the most northerly member states were most likely to report the greatest feelings of security (60% of respondents in Denmark reported that they felt very safe when walking alone in their area after dark).

³⁵ Analysis of Public Attitudes to Insecurity, Fear of Crime and Crime Prevention: Eurobarometer 58.0, European Commission, DG Press B/1/UTM D(2003), 25 April, 2003. The survey was carried out in Autumn 2002 and questioned 16,100 people, of which 1,300 were resident in the UK.

- 6.10 Respondents were also asked to estimate the likelihood that they might fall victim to different types of crime in the next 12 months. Examples of the crime to which they might fall victim ranged from theft to burglary and robbery. Across the EU, respondents were most likely to say that they feared becoming the victims of theft (29%), followed by burglary or break-in at home (26%). The fear of crime involving personal attacks such as assault or mugging was slightly lower. Greek respondents were the most apprehensive about becoming the victims of crime in every category, closely followed by those in France. The UK was the fifth out of the 15 countries where fear of crime was greatest.
- 6.11 With regard to the effect of policing, at least half of all respondents in every country agreed that better policing would help to prevent crime. The greatest dissatisfaction with the work of the police is displayed in the UK, Netherlands, Sweden and Italy where less than half of all respondents agreed that the police are doing a good job.
- 6.12 Finally, while there was no information on how significant crime committed specifically by young people was in people's fears, they were asked about the most effective way of dealing with crime by young people. Respondents were more likely to believe that young people can be deterred from committing crime more by means of actively targeting them as the subject of crime prevention programmes (85%) than by means of tougher sentencing policy (62%). However respondents in Portugal, Ireland and the UK differed from this general view, and considered that tougher sentencing was almost as useful a deterrent as crime prevention programmes.

FEAR OF CRIME IN ENGLAND AND WALES

- 6.13 For England and Wales, the best source of information on fear of crime comes from the British Crime Survey (BCS) that provides, among other things, information about levels of crime and public attitudes to crime and other Home Office issues. The BCS moved to an annual cycle from 2001/02, with 40,000 interviews of people aged 16 or over now taking place per year in England and Wales.
- 6.14 In the 2002/03 survey, approximately one in five (21.7%) interviewees perceived there to be high levels of disorder. A similar proportion (20.6%) were very worried about violent crime, 16.6% were very worried about car crime and 14.7% were very worried about burglary (Table 6.1).

Table 6.1**Fear of Crime in England & Wales (British Crime Survey), 2002/03**

ACORN Classification of Areas*	Very worried about burglary	High level of worry about car crime	High level of worry about violent crime	High levels of perceived disorder
Thriving	9.0	10.5	12.3	8.6
Expanding	10.9	13.1	16.8	14.7
Rising	12.5	16.3	20.2	25.6
Settling	13.6	16.5	19.0	19.2
Aspiring	17.8	20.0	23.9	26.5
Striving	23.5	27.5	31.8	38.9
All Neighbourhoods	14.7	16.6	20.6	21.7

* Definitions are as follows:

- Thriving: wealthy, affluent, home-owning areas. Commuters and prosperous older people.
- Expanding: affluent working couples and families with mortgages, plus homeowners.
- Rising: well-off professional singles and couples, living in town and city areas.
- Settling: established home-owning areas, skilled workers.
- Aspiring: mature communities, new homeowners and multi-ethnic areas.
- Striving: council estates with elderly, lone parent or unemployed residents. Multi-ethnic, low-income areas.

Source: British Crime Survey, 2002/03, Table 6.02

- 6.15 Female respondents were more likely than males to say that crime is very worrying. Worries about crime were greatest in both striving and aspiring areas and were perceptibly lower in thriving and expanding neighbourhoods.
- 6.16 Table 6.5 presents similar data for Scotland as a whole (data are not gathered according to the ACORN classification). Although, the questions asked in the Scottish survey are not entirely the same, this source indicates that fear of housebreaking and car theft (31% and 27% of adults respectively) is a greater concern in Scotland than it is in England where proportionately fewer adults are reported to be very worried about equivalent crimes (15% and 17%). Worry about violent crime is similarly reported as a concern in both the British and the Scottish crime surveys.
- 6.17 Therefore while the UK is high on the list of EU countries where fear of crime is strong, the population in Scotland appear to be more fearful than the UK average about becoming victim to certain types of crime.

FEAR OF CRIME IN SCOTLAND

Scottish Crime Survey

- 6.18 The Scottish equivalent of the British Crime Survey offers similar insights for the country as a whole. The 2000 Scottish Crime Survey (SCS) is the most recent available³⁶ and reflects the opinions of 5,045 adults aged 16+ living in private homes across the country.
- 6.19 To generate a wider base of information, two versions of the main questionnaire were issued during the SCS (Main A and Main B). The core questions were the same on both forms, "Main A" then contained a section on the criminal justice system while "Main B" was concerned with attitudes towards public safety and experience (victimisation) of different types of crime. These latter "fear of crime" questions were only asked of half of the sample (c. 2,500 people) and the significance of the results is lower than that for the whole sample.
- 6.20 In order to gauge the extent to which people view crime as a serious problem in general, respondents were asked to rank a range of social problems in Scotland ("extremely serious", "quite serious", "not very serious", "not a problem". Crime ranked as the second highest concern, after drug abuse, on a scale of eight social concerns, with 28% of respondents considering crime to be a "serious problem". This was a significantly smaller proportion than the 44% who felt this to be the case in the 1996 survey, indicating that people's perceptions of crime appear to be falling in line with the drop in crime reported to the SCS over the same period.
- 6.21 Respondents who had lived in their locality for over two years were asked whether they thought the level of crime in their area had changed over this time. The majority (48%) felt that crime rates had not changed, 17% felt that there was "a lot more" crime, 24% felt that there was "a little more" crime, and only 7% felt that there was "a little less" or "a lot less crime" than two years beforehand.

³⁶ The 2003 survey results had been gathered but could not be made available by the Scottish Executive at the time of writing the report (October 2003). However, we understand that in future years, the scale of the survey will be greatly increased from 5,000 face-to-face to 30,000 telephone interviews to allow results to be analysed at the local authority level. The survey will also move to an annual basis and for 2004 at least, the questions will remain similar to the 2000 and 2003 sweeps.

- 6.22 Further analysis of this question shows that perceptions on the level of crime varies between the gender of respondent, their social grouping, age, house type and settlement size (see Table A.1). In general, females and older people perceived there to be more crime in the local area than two years beforehand. A higher perceived level of crime was also reported by residents in council/housing association properties, those in lower income groups (C2, D and E), those in high rise or tenement accommodation and those in towns (with a population ranging from 1,000 to 999,999).
- 6.23 Table A.2 in the appendix shows people’s perceptions of how common certain types of crime are in their local areas. Housebreaking is the most commonly perceived problem. The problem is particularly a concern in lower income households/ areas where the reported levels of muggings and physical attack are also higher than the Scottish average.

Scottish Household Survey (SHS)

- 6.24 The SHS also asks questions relating to feelings of personal safety. Due to its much larger scale, the results can be taken to be more statistically representative of the feelings of the population as a whole.
- 6.25 The 2002 survey asked a general perception question on the extent to which the interviewees’ quality of life is affected by fear of crime. The results by age and sex are summarised in Table 6.2

Table 6.2											
Extent to Which Quality of Life is Affected by Fear of Crime											
	Fear Rating (% of adult population)										Base
	<i>No effect on quality of life</i>					<i>Total effect on quality of life</i>					
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Male	35	27	17	7	7	3	2	1	0	0	5,967
Female	28	22	19	9	10	4	4	2	1	1	8,071
Age Band											
16 to 24	26	26	21	10	9	3	3	1	1	1	1,119
25 to 34	28	26	19	8	8	4	4	2	0	1	2,149
35 to 44	30	25	20	7	8	4	3	2	1	1	2,640
45 to 59	33	24	19	7	8	3	2	2	1	1	3,272
60 to 74	34	24	16	8	10	3	3	2	1	1	3,134
75 plus	35	24	16	7	10	2	2	2	1	0	1,723
All	31	25	18	8	9	3	3	2	1	1	14,037

Source: Scottish Household Survey, 2001/2002, Table 4.66

- 6.26 As reported in other surveys, females are more likely to experience stronger feelings of anxiety about crime than males. It is also more commonly experienced by young people, particularly those aged under 24, rather than those aged over 45.
- 6.27 However, the victimisation statistics suggest that this fear is disproportionate to the degree of risk faced. That is, those most at risk of experiencing violent crime are males in the 16 to 24 age group, whereas those most fearful are females of all ages. The suggestion is that the worry experienced by females especially is not proportionate to the level of risk, whereas for males the opposite is the case. However, it can be seen as rationale for women to worry more than men about certain types of crime not because the risks are higher, but, particularly where sexual violence is involved, the consequences are seen as more serious.
- 6.28 This issue is also addressed by the Scottish Crime Survey (Table A.3 in the Appendix), which confirms these findings.

Table 6.3
Has the Respondent been a Victim of any type of Physical Assault in their Neighbourhood?
(2001/ 2002 surveys, % of adult population)

	<i>No</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Base</i>
Male	98	2	100	12,163
Female	99	1	100	16,495
Age Band				
16 to 24	96	4	100	2,320
25 to 34	98	2	100	4,509
35 to 44	98	2	100	5,341
45 to 59	99	1	100	6,610
60 to 74	99	1	100	6,347
75 plus	100	0	100	3,530
All	98	2	100	28,657

Source: Scottish Household Survey, 2001/2002, Table 4.67

- 6.29 The survey also addresses perceptions on fear of crime associated with both travelling on public transport in the evenings and feelings of safety when walking alone after dark and being at home alone in the evenings. The responses are summarised in Table 6.4 for key categories of respondent (male, female, young people (16 – 24) and all respondents)³⁷.

³⁷ Again the Scottish Crime Survey also asks similar questions on feelings of safety after dark. The main results are summarised in Table A.4 in the Appendix. As the Household Survey is based on a much larger sample (14,000 responses compared to 5,000 in the Crime Survey) it has been analysed in more depth in this section.

Table 6.4
Perceptions of Safety After Dark on Public Transport and Alone in Local Areas
(% of adults)

	Very Safe	Fairly Safe	Not Partic. safe	Not Safe at All	Don't Know	Total	Base
<i>Bus Users (2001/02 data)</i>							
Male	34	55	7	1	2	100	2,735
Female	21	61	13	4	2	100	3,338
Aged 16 – 24	26	62	9	2	0	100	1,045
All People	27	58	10	3	2	100	6,073
<i>Non-Bus Users (2001/02 data)</i>							
Male	25	39	9	5	23	100	9,403
Female	11	36	18	11	24	100	13,120
Aged 16 – 24	23	43	12	6	16	100	1,268
All People	17	38	14	8	24	100	22,522
<i>Train Users (2001/02 data)</i>							
Male	35	54	7	1	3	100	2,192
Female	18	58	16	5	4	100	2,241
Aged 16 – 24	26	60	9	4	1	100	653
All People	27	56	11	3	3	100	4,433
<i>Train Non-Users (2001/02 data)</i>							
Male	20	34	7	5	34	100	9,844
Female	7	28	17	12	36	100	14,071
Aged 16 – 24	15	37	11	7	30	100	1,635
All People	13	31	13	9	35	100	23,914
<i>Walking Alone (2002 data only)</i>							
Male	48	36	9	4	3	100	5,968
Female	22	40	20	13	5	100	8,074
Aged 16 – 24	34	42	16	7	1	100	1,120
All People	34	38	15	9	4	100	14,041
<i>Home Alone (2002 data only)</i>							
Male	79	19	1	0	0	100	5,968
Female	65	29	4	1	0	100	8,074
Aged 16 – 24	68	25	5	1	0	100	1,120
All People	71	25	3	1	0	100	14,041

Source: Scottish Household Survey, 2001/2002, Tables 4.51, 4.54, 4.59, 4.61

6.30 The key points of the Survey are:

- non-bus and train users are more concerned about their safety from crime when using these services than those who use the services regularly, although a large proportion of respondents did not have a view on safety from crime on public transport;
- generally people feel least anxious about crime when in their own homes after dark, but a small minority, mainly women, do not feel safe when alone at home;
- people feel similarly anxious about safety from crime when walking alone in their own areas after dark and when using public transport; and
- women and young people tend to be more fearful of crime in any situation than male interviewees.

6.31 The SHS also asks respondents about their worries of experiencing different types of crime (Table 6.5). Housebreaking and having a car stolen are the most common concerns. Again, women and young people tend to be more fearful than men about becoming victims of all types of crime.

Table 6.5
Worries About Crime
 (2002 survey only, % of adult population saying very worried or fairly worried about each Crime Type)

Crime Type	Male	Female	Aged 16 - 24	All
Housebreaking & burglary	27	35	31	31
Being mugged/ robbed	16	29	28	23
Having car stolen	25	29	36	27
Having things stolen from car	26	28	35	27
Being sexually assaulted/ raped	4	24	22	16
Being physically attacked or assaulted in street	15	27	27	22
Being insulted or pestered by anyone in street/ public place	11	22	24	17
Being physically attacked bec of skin colour/ ethnic origin/ religion ³⁸	5	9	9	7

Source: Scottish Household Survey, 2002, Table 4.65

Glasgow Youth Survey

6.32 The Glasgow Youth Survey, conducted in 2003, made a number of observations of the fear of crime among young people in the Glasgow area.

- Only 17% of respondents said they felt very safe in areas around where they live and almost half felt fairly safe. However, greater anxiety is reflected in the fact that a quarter said that they do not feel very safe and one in ten "not at all safe" in their local area.
- The most commonly mentioned situation in which young people feel unsafe is when they see gangs and drug users. More than half feel unsafe in rough areas and walking through dark areas.
- Three in five young people said that they felt either very or fairly worried about being attacked in the street or other public place. Very young people (11 year olds) and girls are most likely to feel worried about being attacked in the street, along with young people from black and ethnic backgrounds. In contrast, just one in six said that they actually have been attacked in the last year, with this being most common among boys aged 14 – 15.

³⁸ In Scotland, which has a relatively low representation of ethnic minorities, much of this concern is likely to be focused on sectarian assaults.

CONCLUSIONS

- 6.33 The available surveys tell us a great deal about which types of crimes people worry about and in which locations. However other than one opinion question in the Household Survey (how common are young people hanging around in the street in this area), these sources relate to fear of crime in general rather than fear of crime committed by young people per se.
- 6.34 It is likely to be very difficult to quantify the impact of these fears, although it has to be acknowledged that patterns of expenditure may be influenced and there may be an impact on location decisions or employment choices, e.g. people stop using local shops where the threat of crime is perceived to be high, or people take taxis to avoid being alone on the streets or on public transport.
- 6.35 The first step in assessing cost would entail assessing the extent to which behaviour is altered as a consequence of such fears and then to assess the costs of these altered behaviour patterns. However, the difficulties of any such exercise are likely to be considerable, and it will not be possible to separate out the impact of the fear of youth crime from broader fears about crime unless heroic assumptions are used to do so.

7 FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

- 7.1 It is possible from existing data sources to provide estimates of youth crime levels in Scotland, but given the limitations of these sources and the number of significant assumptions that had to be made to produce them, they should only be treated as being indicative of the true level of youth crime and not, in any way, definitive counts.
- 7.2 We estimate that young people are responsible for just over 40% of all crimes and offences in Scotland, with much higher proportions for crimes involving vandalism and fire-raising and dishonesty. Most youth crime is theft-related.
- 7.3 This exercise should be seen as a “one-off”. We would not advise that the same method is used year-on-year to track levels of youth crime. This is principally because criminal justice policy and the implementation of this policy by the criminal justice agencies will be the main variables in determining the number of youths apprehended for offences rather than the changing behaviour of youths. For example, any “crackdown” on certain types of crime associated with young people, such as vandalism, should see the proportion of young people going through the Children’s Hearing system or the courts increasing, even if the number of these offences being committed by young people remains the same, and, as a consequence, our method of estimating youth crime will show an increase in crimes due to young people even when none has occurred.
- 7.4 It is much more difficult to produce estimates of anti-social behaviour types. In fact, we would conclude that, with the exception of criminal forms of anti-social behaviour like vandalism and fire-raising that are separately recorded in the crime statistics, we do not think that it is possible to provide estimates of types anti-social behaviour from existing data sources. Even if we could, it would perhaps be unhelpful in any case given that the definition of anti-social behaviour is so subjective and different types of behaviour affect different people in different ways. We would argue that it is much more helpful to consider anti-social behaviour in terms of the number of people it affects and its impact on people. There are already existing sources that attempt to do this, like the SHS. The SHS found littering and groups of young people hanging around to be those most commonly identified by people, but it is not clear from the survey as to just how significant a problem such behaviour is for communities or how much of anti-social behaviour is attributable to young people.

- 7.5 The concept of fear of youth crime is even more problematic. There are no existing sources that attempt to measure this concept and there remains much discussion within the criminal justice field as to what “fear of crime” actually constitutes. Again, there is evidence from sources like Eurobarometer, that attempt to measure the fear of crime (not just youth crime) and, again, we would suggest that this concept is considered in terms of its impact on people. From what evidence that is available, there does seem to be more anxiety about crime in Scotland and the rest of the UK compared to most of the rest of Europe, particularly violent crime, car crime and burglary.

APPENDIX A

Appendix A: Scottish Crime Survey Data Tables

Table A.1 Public Perceptions of Crime in Scotland: all Scotland (1999)*		
	% of respondents saying:	
	"Crime is an extremely serious problem in Scotland today"	"there is more crime in this area than two years ago"
Male		
- 16-24	24.9	37.1
- 25-59	26.7	42.7
- 60+	23.7	37.9
- Total	14.3	33.2
Female		
- 16-24	31.2	42.2
- 25-59	32.3	45.6
- 60+	33.8	46.1
- Total	32.5	45.4
Tenure		
- Owner Occupier	25.1	38.9
- Rented from council/ housing association	37.0	49.5
- Rented Privately	23.3	35.4
Socio-Economic Group		
- A	11.8	38.2
- B	18.4	34.4
- C1	25.9	40.2
- C2	30.4	45.2
- D	30.4	45.4
- E	46.2	45.6
Building Type		
- House	26.5	40.6
- High Rise	35.0	52.2
- Low Rise	38.1	46.0
- Tenement	29.9	45.6
Settlement Size		
- Over 1 million	31.4	40.2
- 100,000 – 999,999	29.8	43.7
- 10,000 – 99,999	30.1	44.0
- 1,000 – 9,999	24.2	46.2
- Under 1,000	28.9	35.9
Total	28.3	41.8
* Base number of responses = 5,059		
Source: Scottish Crime Survey 2000, Table Appendix A7.1		

Table A.2 Public Perceptions of Crime in Local Area: all Scotland (1999)*			
	% of respondents saying "very common" in their area		
	People having their homes broken into	People being mugged or robbed	People being attacked or assaulted
Male			
- 16-24	2.9	1.6	2.9
- 25-59	4.7	1.6	2.0
- 60+	3.8	0.8	0.8
- Total	4.2	1.4	1.9
Female			
- 16-24	5.8	1.3	3.2
- 25-59	7.4	2.0	3.2
- 60+	5.9	1.1	2.0
- Total	6.8	1.7	2.9
Tenure			
- Owner Occupier	4.2	0.6	1.1
- Rented from council/ housing association	9.3	4.1	5.7
- Rented Privately	4.1	*	1.2
Socio-Economic Group			
- A	2.7	-	-
- B	3.5	-	-
- C1	3.1	0.3	1.0
- C2	7.2	1.7	2.8
- D	6.3	2.9	3.6
- E	15.2	6.0	8.7
Building Type			
- House	4.6	0.9	1.5
- High Rise	4.0	-	-
- Low Rise	10.9	5.5	7.3
- Tenement	7.5	3.6	4.0
Settlement Size			
- Over 1 million	5.5	2.6	3.1
- 100,000 – 999,999	6.0	1.8	1.9
- 10,000 – 99,999	7.5	1.5	2.7
- 1,000 – 9,999	4.2	0.7	1.7
- Under 1,000	4.9	-	1.8
Total	6.0	2.0	2.0
* Base number of responses = 2,542			
Source: Scottish Crime Survey 2000, Table Appendix A7.2			

Table A.3

Public Anxieties about Becoming a Victim of Crime: all Scotland (1999)*

	Ever worry about you or someone you live with becoming a victim of crime (%)	% of respondents "very worried" about:		
		Having their home broken into	Being mugged or robbed	Being assaulted or attacked
Male				
- 16-24	32.4	5.6	5.5	6.9
- 25-59	48.5	9.3	4.2	4.3
- 60+	38.6	8.2	7.3	4.9
- Total	43.8	8.5	5.1	4.8
Female				
- 16-24	53.3	6.4	11.1	13.9
- 25-59	57.2	16.1	16.6	17.3
- 60+	36.5	14.0	16.6	14.6
- Total	51.5	14.2	15.9	16.1
Tenure				
- Owner Occupier	48.2	9.2	8.5	8.3
- Rented from council/ housing association	48.2	17.7	17.2	17.3
- Rented Privately	40.1	5.6	3.6	5.6
Socio-Economic Group				
- A	45.6	10.6	4.3	5.1
- B	46.0	6.1	6.8	5.8
- C1	47.9	7.9	7.3	8.2
- C2	53.3	13.3	11.6	11.3
- D	47.3	14.9	14.5	13.4
- E	39.0	19.5	18.7	19.5
Building Type				
- House	46.9	10.9	10.2	9.7
- High Rise	58.9	12.2	11.9	14.5
- Low Rise	51.3	17.1	15.2	18.4
- Tenement	48.3	10.7	10.4	10.6
Settlement Size				
- Over 1 million	53.1	10.9	10.3	9.6
- 100,000 – 999,999	49.9	11.6	11.2	11.7
- 10,000 – 99,999	45.9	14.8	13.2	13.2
- 1,000 – 9,999	46.6	9.0	8.7	8.8
- Under 1,000	26.2	8.1	7.2	8.6
Total	47.5	11.4	10.7	10.6

* Base number of responses = 2,542

Source: Scottish Crime Survey 2000, Table Appendix A7.4

Table A.4 Feelings of Safety After Dark: all Scotland (1999)*				
	% of respondents feeling "very safe" and "very unsafe":			
	Walking alone in their area after dark		Being alone in their home at night	
	Very Safe	Very Unsafe	Very Safe	Very Unsafe
Male				
- 16-24	42.9	1.8	79.1	-
- 25-59	43.6	2.9	74.9	0.2
- 60+	25.3	6.3	64.1	1.0
- Total	39.4	3.5	73.1	0.4
Female				
- 16-24	15.5	11.9	54.1	4.0
- 25-59	16.5	13.7	55.3	2.0
- 60+	10.5	22.7	50.3	1.7
- Total	14.7	16.0	53.7	2.2
Tenure				
- Owner Occupier	28.6	7.5	67.1	0.6
- Rented from council/ housing association	20.2	16.3	50.5	3.0
- Rented Privately	30.4	8.4	74.9	-
Socio-Economic Group				
- A	42.8	3.3	78.9	-
- B	33.1	4.0	72.5	0.3
- C1	27.2	7.9	66.8	0.6
- C2	26.1	10.3	62.7	0.9
- D	22.7	13.4	58.1	1.9
- E	20.3	20.5	42.5	6.0
Building Type				
- House	28.8	8.7	64.5	1.1
- High Rise	9.5	11.9	50.6	-
- Low Rise	18.1	14.9	56.7	2.4
- Tenement	22.2	13.8	58.9	2.1
Settlement Size				
- Over 1 million	20.0	10.8	57.5	1.3
- 100,000 – 999,999	20.5	11.2	68.3	1.5
- 10,000 – 99,999	21.5	13.2	55.9	2.1
- 1,000 – 9,999	32.6	6.7	67.4	0.8
- Under 1,000	58.4	6.9	78.2	-
Total				
* Base number of responses = 5,059				
Source: Scottish Crime Survey 2000, Table Appendix A7.3				

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B

Notes on classification of crimes and offences

Non-sexual crimes of violence

Serious assault – includes murder and culpable homicide (including the statutory crimes of causing death by dangerous driving while under the influence of drink or drugs). An assault is classified as “serious” if the victim sustained an injury resulting in detention in hospital as an in-patient or any of the following injuries whether or not he was detained in hospital: fractures, concussion, internal injuries, crushing, severe cuts or lacerations or severe general assault requiring medical treatment.

Robbery – includes offences involving intent to rob.

Other violence – includes threats and extortion and cruel and unnatural treatment of children.

Crimes of indecency

Includes rape, assault with intent to rape, indecent assault, lewd and libidinous practices against children, indecent exposure and offences connected with prostitution.

Crimes involving dishonesty

Housebreaking – includes commercial as well as domestic premises.

Other theft – includes theft of pedal cycles

Other dishonesty – includes statutory fraud, forgery, reset and embezzlement

Fire-raising, vandalism, etc.

Vandalism, etc. – includes malicious mischief, vandalism and reckless conduct with firearms.

Other crimes

Crimes against public justice – includes perjury, resisting arrest, bail offences (other than absconding or re-offending) and wasting police time.

Handling offensive weapons – comprises carrying offensive weapons, restriction of offensive weapons license.

Drugs – includes importation, possession and supply of controlled drugs.

Other – includes conspiracy and explosives offences.

Miscellaneous offences

Includes petty assault, breach of the peace, drunkenness, offences against local legislation, offences involving animals/plants, offences against liquor licensing laws and offences against environmental legislation.

Motor vehicle offences

Includes dangerous and careless driving, drunk driving (including failure to provide breath, blood or urine samples), speeding, unlawful use of a vehicle and vehicle defect offences.

APPENDIX C1 & C2

APPENDIX C1: BIBLIOGRAPHY OF CORE REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

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