Crime Reduction Research Series Paper 13

Shootings, Gangs and Violent Incidents in Manchester:
Developing a crime reduction strategy

Karen Bullock and Nick Tilley

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Foreword

This report describes analysis and strategy development for a project aiming to reduce shootings in South Manchester. It attempts to apply problem-oriented policing principles to shootings and other serious violence associated with gangs, principally in South Manchester. Its broad approach follows that of an apparently very effective project in Boston, Massachusetts, which was associated with a rapid and sustained reduction in shootings. The project is one of a number being funded by the targeted policing initiative, part of the government's three-year crime reduction strategy.

Based on a range of quantitative and qualitative data, this report identifies some of the proximate causes of shootings in Manchester. On the basis of the analysis a strategy, involving police and partners, is sketched out. The strategy comprises a mix of preventative and enforcement based activities, some of which are adapted from the Boston model and some of which are tailored to the specific issues identified in Manchester.

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Executive summary

Background

The Targeted Policing Initiative forms part of the Government's Crime Reduction Programme. The initiative comprised a range of evaluated action projects. This report describes preliminary research of one of them, based in Manchester. The project to which this report relates is unusual in that it involved a problem-oriented approach requiring a relatively long, six-month research phase prior to putting measures in place. It is also unusual in attempting to address a major crime problem, serious gang-related violence rather than volume crime. In both of these respects, it draws inspiration from an apparently very successful initiative in Boston, Massachusetts, which was associated with a rapid decline in numbers of fatalities caused by use of guns or knives. The Boston project, like the one being developed in Manchester, also used a problem-oriented approach. The idea in both cases was to gather as systematically as possible reliable information about the nature of the problem and to formulate practical proposals to deal with it in the light of that information. The Boston strategy was to produce a rapid and sustainable reduction in injuries and deaths caused by firearms. Given its purpose, the analysis in Boston was not framed around those underlying social conditions that might foster gangs but which would not be open to alteration in the relatively short term. Rather, it aimed to identify more immediate ('proximate') and modifiable conditions for violent events to occur. This approach has been followed in Manchester.

Methods of research

Using mainly police sources, two data sets were constructed and analysed. These related to shooting incidents and to individuals involved in shootings and/or gangs. In addition a small sample of young men believed by the police to be involved in gangs and gang violence were interviewed about shootings and stabbings and about the circumstances leading up to their involvement in gangs. A semi-structured practitioner focus group was run to canvass informed opinion. Finally, social services files relating to a small subset of gang-members were consulted. None of the data sources used is without problems. Data on

shooting incidents and individuals relate only to those known to and recorded by the authorities. Those interviewed do not comprise a random sample, but were again those known to the authorities who could be readily contacted. Files consulted relate to those suspected by project workers to have had difficulties, again not a random sample.

Analysing the problem

The main findings of the analysis were that:

- violence in general, gun violence and fatal shootings in particular are concentrated in specific small areas of South Manchester
- victims of gun violence in South Manchester are mainly young, black or mixed race males, who themselves have criminal records
- those who have been victims of shootings are at increased risk of being a victim again
- perpetrators of serious gun violence in South Manchester are mainly young black or mixed race males, who have criminal records
- about 60 per cent of shootings are thought to gang related
- there are strong social norms (in particular in providing evidence in court) inhibiting co-operation with police enquiries into gang-related shootings, which undermine successful prosecution of offenders
- alliances are sometimes formed between South Manchester gangs, but conflict is endemic and easily triggered
- gangs in South Manchester are loosely turf-based
- there are significant differences in the origins, activities, and organisation of the four main South Manchester gangs known to the police, though members of all the gangs are involved in a wide range of criminal behaviour
- gang-related criminal behaviour includes drug-related offences, but only as one element of a patchwork of violent and non-violent crime
- gang membership is not just about criminality; for some young males it incorporates a credible lifestyle choice
- gang-membership comprises a mix of same-age local friendship groups, blood relatives and recruits
- the carrying of firearms by gang-members is part protective, and part symbolic, though they are also sometimes used in the commission of violent crime

- the total annual cost of firearms-related violence in South Manchester is estimated to be £5 million
- the current police response to gang-related violence comprises police intelligence-led enforcement operations, though many individual gang-members will also be the focus of other agency activity because of their age and/or behaviour.

The proposed crime reduction strategy

On the basis of the analysis, a strategy, involving police and partners is sketched out. Three elements can be adapted from the Boston project. These are:

1. Applying co-ordinated leverage to gangs through highly publicised multi-agency targeted crackdowns, aimed at gangs using firearms, possessing firearms or taking part in serious assaults
2. Enhancing strong community relations, to obtain neighbourhood support for the targeted crackdowns and to stimulate community efficacy in informal social control and reduction in incivilities
3. Engagement with gang-members to elicit information, to transmit consistent messages about targeted crackdowns, and to provide diversionary services.

Three additional elements are proposed to address the differing conditions for an initiative in Manchester. These are:

4. Development of inter-gang mediation services, to head off and defuse tensions that risk leading to serious incidents of violence, including shootings
5. Protection for victims and repeat victims
6. Sensitisation of agencies to the implications of their actions for gangs and the risks to their members, especially in the light of the provisions of Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act (1998).

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1. Introduction

'Chrome' is a Targeted Policing Initiative receiving funds from the Home Office Crime Reduction Programme. It attempts to apply problem-oriented policing principles (for a description of these, see Goldstein, 1990; Leigh et al, 1996, 1998) to shootings and other serious violence associated with gangs, principally in South Manchester. Its broad approach follows that of an apparently very effective project in Boston, Massachusetts – Operation Ceasefire (Kennedy et al, 1996; Braga et al, 1999).

Projects can never be fully described or fully replicated (Tilley, 1996). It is always necessary to select what are deemed to be their critical elements. The reports of Operation Ceasefire by the Harvard research team, which participated in its development, give an account of the work of Boston and provide compelling evidence of the effectiveness of Operation Ceasefire (see, for example, Braga, et al 1999). Examined on an annual basis homicide victimisation dropped from an average of about 45 to about 15 (Braga et al, 1999).

A visit to Boston was made by a small group from Manchester. This included meetings not only with one of the researchers but also with police, probation, social workers and detached youth workers. There was a consensus that Ceasefire had been significant, though other features of what had been happening in Boston were also deemed crucial to its achievements and the sustained fall in shootings which took place in its wake.

Several distinctive features of the work in Boston have informed the approach to the analysis and strategy development in Manchester:

- The problem addressed in Boston's Operation Ceasefire was that of producing a fall in the numbers of deaths and serious injuries from gunshots and knives suffered by young gang-members. This is the problem that is also addressed in Operation Chrome. In Boston the fall achieved was rapid and sustained. This too would clearly be desirable in Manchester.

- There was an open agenda at the start of the Boston work leading up to Operation Ceasefire. A team at Harvard University, in conjunction with the police and other agencies in Boston, assembled and analysed quite a wide range of data to develop an understanding of gang-related violence in the city (Kennedy et al, 1996; Braga et al, 1999). In Manchester, the police appointed a researcher and an assistant to work with Home Office researchers to collect and analyse data deemed potentially to throw light on the problem of gangs and violence in South Manchester. As in Boston, the researchers began without preconceptions about what they would find and the kinds of intervention that might be suggested. They spent about six months conducting the research described in this report.

- Serious gang violence problems in Boston are on a much larger scale than those in Manchester. Since the numbers of the presenting problems were higher, there was further to fall in Boston. The more central parts of the Greater Manchester area analysed in this report have a population of about 600,000[1] and Boston one of about 500,000.[2] The Manchester area has fewer than ten gangs altogether.[3] Boston had over 60. Manchester has had an average of about seven youth homicides a year from 1997 to 2000. Boston, following their successful preventive efforts, has had an average of 15 per year since 1995. By the standards of most American cities, it has an enviably small one. For Chrome the question is whether Boston has any useful lessons that will allow Manchester's relatively minor shootings problem, by Boston's own standards, to be further lessened.

- The Harvard analysis of shootings in Boston was less concerned with the underlying origins and social structural foundations of gangs and gang life than with the 'proximate' (Ekblom, 1994) causes of the violent events. In Manchester too, the analysis described below has concentrated on shooting events and the constitution of the groups involved. It did not try to identify 'root causes' of gangs.

1. The mid-1998 census update gives a population of 583,557.
2. 1996 census update.
3. Counting gangs is clearly hazardous. It depends on how they are defined and how they are identified. Moreover definition and identification are both tricky. The Manchester data used here come principally from the police, and police concern is with gangs known to be involved in significant amounts of crime. The Manchester police believe they have relatively few problem gangs compared to Boston.

- The Harvard work in Boston informed a strategy that focused initially and primarily on the inhibition of shootings themselves, rather than any deep social causes that may be at work behind the groupings and conflicts that may have been giving rise to them. Likewise, the proposed Manchester strategy includes the prevention of violent events as a main element.

- David Kennedy, who led the Harvard research team in Boston, has emphasised the importance of 'pulling levers' in inhibiting criminal behaviour targeted for prevention. 'Pulling levers' refers to the identification and application of external pressure on those involved in undesirable behaviour (Kennedy, 1997). In Boston's Ceasefire this meant finding as many ways as possible of applying co-ordinated pressure on those liable to engage in serious violence, and informing them that they would trigger application of that pressure if they behaved in the specified ways. A substantial amount of publicity was targeted on gangs telling them that a co-ordinated crackdown would be applied across the board to all members of a gang in the event of one of their number engaging in violent acts. These acts included: 'gun homicide, assault, brandishing, and firing; knife and other homicide and serious assault and possibly other violent and fear-producing behaviour to be assessed on a locale by locale basis' (Kennedy et al, 1996: 167-8). Further publicity was used where crackdowns led to arrests and heavy sentences. Pulling levers was, thus, the principal means of inhibiting gang engagement in serious, violent criminal events. In Manchester too the potential for pulling levers was also explored during the analysis.

- The Harvard team's reports of Operation Ceasefire and the reduction in shootings in Boston point out the range of interventions and provisions that had been in place prior to Ceasefire itself. The visit paid by the Manchester team to Boston revealed that agency personnel believe these to have been crucial to the sustained fall in shootings in Boston. Streetworkers (detached youth workers who engage with young people in or on the fringes of gangs); police-station based social workers providing support to families and young people in need coming to the attention of the police; a patrolling probation service working flexible hours alongside the police; prosecutors oriented to the local community needs; a police service committed to a philosophy of community policing; targeted employment services providing jobs to those otherwise drawn to gangs and gang life; and the involvement of a coalition of clergy were all highlighted. The timing of the fall

in shootings in Boston, and comparisons with patterns in other cities, strongly suggest that Ceasefire was crucial. The Harvard team refer to Ceasefire's creation of a 'firewall' behind which other measures could bite and have their effects. In Manchester specific gang-focused youth provision had not been made, social workers are not attached to police stations, and differing probation and police service traditions operate. The question for Manchester in drawing on Boston was of what needed to be put in place and what practically could be put in place to sustain a fall once a firewall had been created, providing one could be created through a targeted crackdown.

- Administratively, Boston unlike Manchester has a mayor whose responsibilities include policing as well as other city physical and social services within Boston. Boston's mayor was deemed crucial in insisting on co-operation and a co-ordinated strategy by members of all agencies with whom meetings took place during the Manchester group's visit to Boston. There appeared to be a remarkable working consensus over strategies and tactics, though this may of course reflect the choice of those to whom the visiting group was introduced. In Manchester, a steering group comprising senior police officers supervised the work of Chrome in the early stages, since police are the grant holders. Manchester's Executive Partnership Group, operating under the auspices of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, has supported and facilitated the initiative. Over time a multi-agency group has taken over responsibility for project oversight and implementation.

It needs to be emphasised from the start that there has been no suspension of police action whilst the data-collection and analysis has proceeded. Indeed, a long line of operations, including for example, Balboa, Eagle, Jugular, Magnet, and Saxe has been continued. These operations have focused on 'traditional police enforcement'.

The next section of the report deals with methodology. The subsequent sections analyse data relating to crime patterns in Manchester. They begin with overall patterns of offences and in particular those where crime reports suggest firearms may have been used, whether or not shots were fired, moving on to a more detailed analysis of confirmed shootings. The report then turns to a discussion of some of the attributes of the gangs in South Manchester where shootings are most concentrated. The final section of the report recapitulates on the main points and sketches the ingredients of a possible strategy to supplement existing police responses, drawing where possible on the Boston work.

2. Sources of data

The research stage of this project draws on the techniques employed by the Boston gun project. The aim was to 'apply quantitative and qualitative research techniques to create an assessment of the nature of and dynamics driving youth violence' (c.f. Braga et al, 1999). 'Youth' was defined as 'age 24 and under.' Box 1 details the data sources used by the team in Boston.

Box 1: Some Boston data sources

- Data from Boston Police Department, the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms
- The US Attorney
- The Massachusetts Department of Probation
- City of Boston youth outreach workers
- Massachusetts Department of Parole
- City of Boston school police
- Members of the line level working group
- Interviews with young probationers

Several data sources have been used in the preparation of this report:

Recorded crime statistics

Recorded crime statistics for Greater Manchester Police (GMP) from April 1998 to September 2000 were interrogated. Initially it was anticipated that data would be available for the whole of GMP. For practical reasons this was not possible and data were provided for the C and A divisions and F1, F2 and M1 subdivisions.

Two databases were established especially for the project:

Shootings

A database containing information on police confirmed shootings that occurred between January 1997 and November 2000 in Greater Manchester Police area was created. Data were collected primarily from the Greater Manchester Police Intelligence Control System (GMPICS). The GMPICS system stores force wide intelligence on crimes and individuals. Additionally some use was made of the HOLMES database that is maintained by the Force Intelligence Bureau. In some cases information sought in this study could not be obtained from these sources, presumably because it was not available to the police, had not been collected or was not recorded in these places.

Individuals

A second database was constructed from information relating to individuals who had been identified by GMP as having had involvement in gangs or in shootings. The database was limited to people aged under 25 living in South Manchester, who had come to the attention of the police for involvement in shootings or gangs since 1997[4].

Data were collected on victims of shootings and the 'known' offenders, even where evidence had not been sufficient to obtain a conviction in court. The database also included information on people considered by GMP to be gang-members whether or not they had been linked in any way to shootings. Information was almost wholly collected from GMPICS. It should be pointed out that these data are likely to underestimate the numbers of people with gang involvement because they only focus on those who had come to the attention of the police.

Interviews

Statistical data were supplemented with information taken from interviews with 23 males who were considered to be gang-members by GMP and by canvassing informed opinion from those within the police and beyond.

Fifteen semi-structured interviews were held with gang-members who were in prison. Gang-members were identified through GMPICS. Where individuals were found to be in prison, the governor was asked to give permission for staff to ask them if they were willing to be interviewed by Home Office researchers. In this sense, the sample of interviewees was self-selected. However, only two people who were approached refused to be interviewed.

4. The age limit was imposed partly to resemble the Boston analyses and partly because of time constraints.

Interviewees were asked questions related to carrying firearms and other weapons, violence and gang membership. It was appreciated early on that interviewees might not have been willing to discuss such activities or tell the truth about them. Interviewees were told in advance the exact nature of the questions that were to be asked and why we were asking them. Interviewees were reassured that the information that they gave us would remain confidential. It was also possible to check the accuracy of some of their answers through the databases relating to shootings and gang membership.

A further six interviews were held with gang-members who were not in prison. Again, gang-members were identified through GMPICS. Access was arranged through their YOT (Youth Offending Team) workers, who arranged the times for the interviews. It should be noted that in all cases the young person's YOT worker attended these interviews. In one case the young person's parent also attended the interview.

The following is a brief summary of characteristics of all those interviewed:

- all interviewees were male
- the average age of interviewees was 25 (the age was known in 19 cases)
- sixteen interviewees were Afro-Caribbean or mixed race and five were white
- fifteen interviews were conducted in prison, one at the young person's home, three at the YOT office and two in other public places.

A semi-structured practitioner focus group was held. It consisted of 12 self-selected police officers who had experience with or knowledge of gangs in South Manchester.

Information related to 13 gang-members who were known to the social services was also collected by project staff from case files. These cases comprised neither a random sample of case files nor a random sample of those believed to be gang-members or associates. Short timescales, and uncertainties over their representativeness, make it difficult to interpret these data. More use of them is likely within the project implementation phase.

General background information has also been gathered from discussions with non-police agencies, where relevant to serious youth violence. These included the probation service, various local authority departments, schools and hospitals.

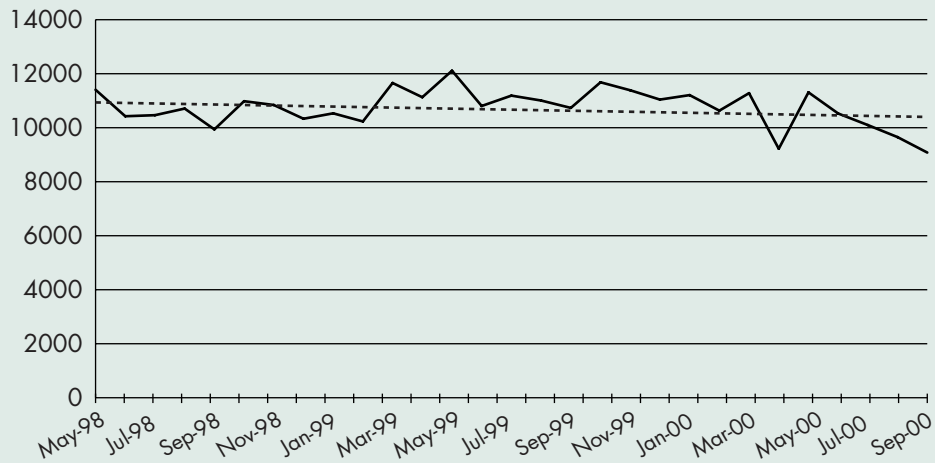
None of the data sources used is without difficulties. The data on shooting incidents relate only to those that came to the attention of the police, were confirmed and were recorded. The data on individuals involved in gangs are largely a function of police intelligence. The interviewees were not randomly selected. They comprised those who were readily available, largely because of their involvement in the criminal justice system. The practitioner group comprised self-selected police officers who had had some encounters with gangs. The social services files examined comprised those thought likely to prove interesting to the project staff who interrogated them. Moreover, as is often the case with data collected for other purposes, extraction and use for aggregate analysis was technically difficult and we were dependent on the accuracy and completeness with which available information was recorded. The project workers employed by GMP took responsibility for the data extraction and we were dependent on their skills in finding police information to complete the data-set template we constructed. The analysis is based on the best information that we thought could be made available, not on an ideal set.

3. Trends in crimes, serious violence and crimes involving firearms in Manchester

There were 321,589 crimes recorded between April 1998 and September 2000 in the divisions for which data were available in Manchester.[5] The total amount of crime was falling over this period. Map 1 shows the areas of Greater Manchester to which these data refer.

Serious crime was rare as a proportion of all crimes in Manchester. There were 44 murders, 89 attempted murders, 2,574 serious woundings and 32,054 less serious woundings between April 1998 and September 2000. Overall these crime types accounted for less than 11 per cent of all crimes. Less than one per cent were serious woundings, attempted murders or murders.

Figure 1: All recorded crime, April 1998 to September 2000

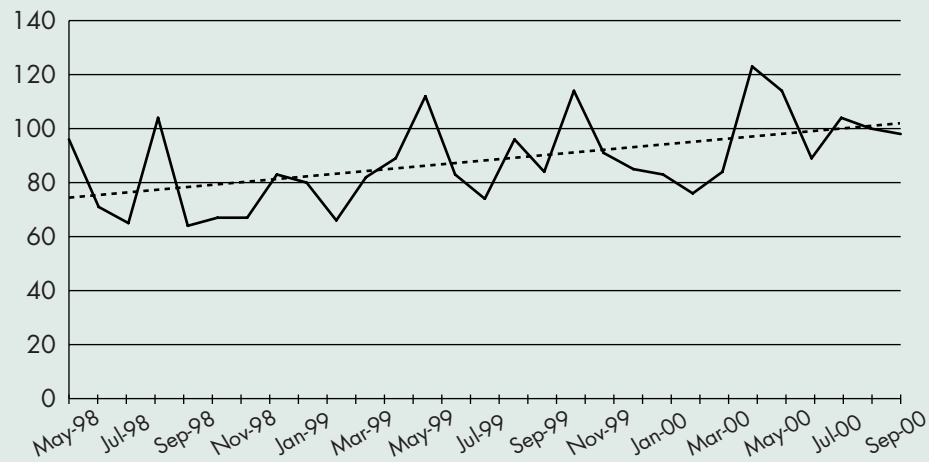


5. It was not possible to obtain crime figures for the whole of Greater Manchester Police. Recorded crime figures were obtained for A1, A2, A3, C1, C2, C3, C4, F1 and M1.

Map 1: Map of Manchester: areas of GMP covered by research

There were 2,649 recorded crimes involving firearms in the divisions for which we had data in Manchester over the period April 1998 to September 2000. Crimes involving firearms accounted for less than one per cent of all recorded crimes. However, despite the relatively low number of crimes involving firearms and an overall fall in crime during this time period, the number of crimes involving firearms increased. Figure 2 shows the trend in crimes involving firearms between April 1998 and September 2000.

Figure 2: All recorded crimes involving firearms, April 1998 to September 2000



Where are crimes, serious violence and crimes involving firearms occurring?

Two sub-divisions experienced higher crime rates than the others, especially where violence was involved. Discounting the city centre,[6] comparing total recorded crime rates per 1, 000 head of population over the 30 month data period, in the divisions for which data were assembled, there were 1.3 crimes in Greenheys and Longsight for every one in the remaining subdivisions. The rate for murder in Greenheys and Longsight was four times that in the remaining subdivisions and for attempted murder the rate was twice that found elsewhere.

6. The large number of non-resident population in city centres makes crime rates based on population misleading. The A3 sub-division covers the citycentre.

Crimes that involved firearms were also more likely to occur in Longsight and Greenheys than they were in any of the other subdivisions for which figures were available.[7] Between April 1998 and September 2000, there were eight recorded crimes involving firearms per 1,000 head of population in Longsight and Greenheys compared with four per 1,000 head of population for all of the other subdivisions. Overall, there were 2.2 crimes involving firearms in Longsight or Greenheys for every one crime involving a firearm recorded elsewhere. In addition, the most serious crimes involving firearms occurred in Longsight or Greenheys much more frequently than they did anywhere else. There were seven times more murders using firearms, almost five times more attempted murders and six times more serious woundings. Map two shows the distribution of incidents involving firearms by subdivision.

Who are victims of crime, serious violence and crimes involving firearms?

Gender and crime in Manchester

In relation to recorded crimes overall, men were more likely to be victims of crime than women. For every one female victim of recorded crime there were 1.4 male victims. Men, however, were many times more likely to be victims of serious recorded crimes than were women. Men were five times more likely to be seriously wounded; four times more likely to experience attempted murder and six times more likely to be murdered.

The victims of crimes involving firearms were also more likely to be men. There were three times as many male than female victims of crimes involving a firearm. Men were much more likely to be the victims of the most serious crime involving firearms. All the murder victims were men. Men were the victims of 12 times more attempted murders than women, six times more serious woundings and were twice as likely to be victims of less serious woundings.

Age and crime in Manchester

Over all, those aged between 16 and 25 were most likely to be victims of crimes. They were also the most likely to be victims of the most serious crimes. They suffered:

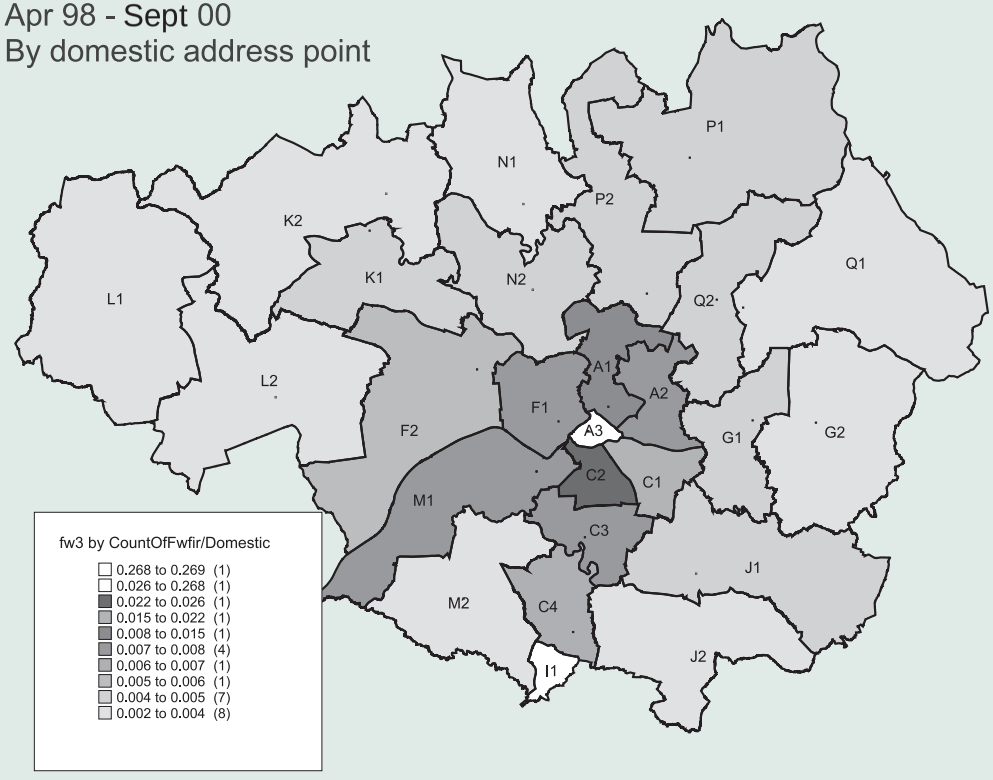
- 11 of the 42 murders for which age data was available (26 per cent)
- 26 of the 81 attempted murders and for which age data was available (32 per cent)

7. Firearms-related incidents include those where it is alleged that a firearm was involved. It does not mean that in all cases a working weapon was present or that it was discharged. The later section on shootings relates to incidents where it was confirmed that one or more shots had been fired.

Map 2. Crimes involving firearms 1998 to 2000

Forcewide count of Crime involving
'Guns used'
Apr 98 - Sept 00
By domestic address point

A3 & I1 = minimal Address points - Discounted



Subdiv	Domestic	CountOfFwfir
A1	30,500	270
A2	32,012	255
A3	4,334	114
C1	32,367	502
C2	21,510	476
C3	39,214	299
C4	31,400	204
F1	41,686	317
F2	63,600	326
G1	47,887	196
G2	48,135	172
I1	41	11
J1	67,004	273
J2	55,656	186
K1	44,716	188
K2	68,416	193
L1	71,360	208
L2	58,362	213
M1	39,560	292
M2	51,988	183
N1	36,765	129
N2	41,115	185
P1	54,446	222
P2	34,949	162
Q1	39,278	155
Q2	53,542	221

Source CPA GMP

- 948 of the 2,429 serious woundings for which age data were available (39 per cent).

Those aged between 16 and 25 experienced 53 per cent of all crimes involving firearms, and were most likely to be the victims the most serious crimes involving firearms:

- seven of the 13 murders for which age data were available
- nineteen of the 32 attempted murders for which age data were available
- half (48) of the 96 serious woundings for which age data were available.

Ethnicity and crime in Manchester

The ethnicity[9] of the victim was known in 177,592 crimes (55 per cent of all) and in 1,664 cases of crimes involving firearms (63 per cent of all). There were differences in the extent and type of victimisation on the basis of ethnicity. It was only possible to obtain crude figures for population breakdown of subdivisions by ethnicity. However, it was found that people from minority ethnic communities were more likely to be victims of crime than white people were. Overall there were 264 crimes per 1,000 head of white population compared with 369 per 1,000 head of the non-white population.

People from minority ethnic communities experienced substantially higher rates of serious crime. Information was available for 39 murders, 74 attempted murders and 2,134 serious woundings and it was found that people from minority ethnic backgrounds were:

- five times more likely to be victims of murder
- five times more likely to be victims of attempted murder
- almost twice as likely to be victims of serious wounding as white people.[10]

Overall, the rate per 1,000 head of white population for all crimes that involved firearms was 1.9 compared with 6.2 per 1,000 head of minority ethnic population. There were 3.3 times as many victims of crimes involving firearms from minority ethnic backgrounds as there were white victims.

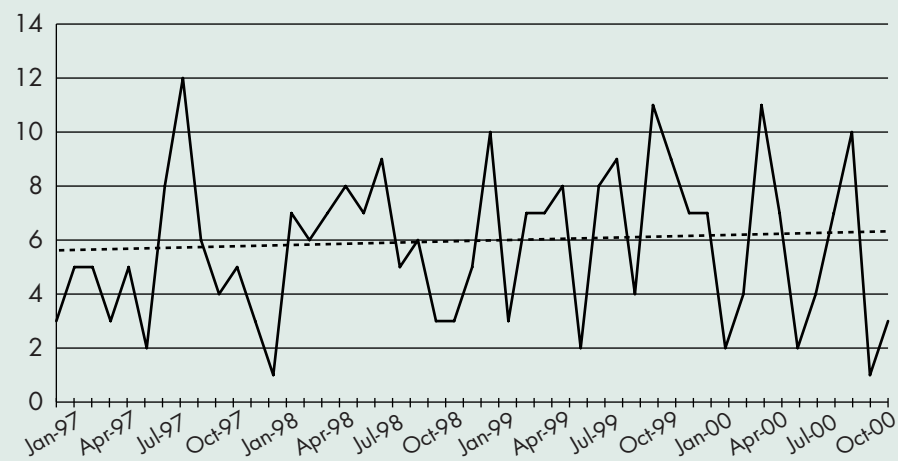
9. Ethnicity was recorded as specified by the Police National Computer codes, hence it is based on the police officer's assessment based on appearance. It is a crude way of determining a person's ethnicity but the best that we had.
10. Indexing rates with 100 as the national rate for the pooled 1988 and 1992 samples, the British Crime Survey found that the risks of violence amongst the Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi population were average (100), for white people slightly lower than average (95) and for black people substantially higher than average (160). The differential risks varied by context for violent events. For example the white population experienced the highest rates in pubs and clubs, and experienced the lowest rates for mugging. Afro-Caribbeans experienced the highest rates of domestic violence, street violence and mugging and amongst the lowest rates for work-based violence. Asians experienced the highest rates for home-based violence, but the lowest for domestic violence and violence in pubs and clubs (Mayhew et al, 1993).

- eight out of the 11 victims of murders involving firearms (for which data on victim ethnicity were available) were from minority ethnic backgrounds
- twenty two out of the 35 attempted murders for which data were available were those from ethnic minoirty backgrounds
- almost half (44per cent) of serious woundings for which data were available were those from ethnic minoirty backgrounds.

Trends in shootings in Manchester

There were 270 confirmed shootings in the area covered by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) between January 1997 and November 2000. Figure 3 shows the distribution of shootings during this period. These comprise shootings that have been confirmed by GMP, not simple reports of suspected shootings. They will, of course, undercount all shootings, since many will not be reported and correct suspicions may not always be open in practice to confirmation.

Figure 3: All recorded shootings between January 1997 and November 2000 in GMP



The location of shootings

There have been shootings in all subdivisions in Manchester. The crude rate of shootings per head of population in Manchester was 0.01 per 1,000 population over the four years 1997 to 2000. Most occurred in C1 and C2 subdivisions, Longsight and Greenheys. Longsight and Greenheys account for 57 per cent of all shootings in Manchester.[11] For every 1,000 head of population in Longsight and Greenheys there were 1.4 shootings. For every shooting that occurred elsewhere in Greater Manchester, 35 occurred in Longsight or Greenheys.

There are marked patterns of repeat victimisation in shootings. Being shot is a strong predictor of being shot again. Whilst the risk of being shot amongst the total population may be only 0.01 per 1,000 over four years, once shot the risk rises to 80 per 1,000. Amongst those shot twice the risk of being shot a third time rises to as much as 180 per 1,000.

Most shootings occurred within a couple of relatively small groups of beats. Map 3 shows the rate of shootings within these beats.

What guns are used in Manchester shootings?

There was not a great deal of evidence available about the guns that were used in the shootings in Manchester[12]. The type of gun used was known in 217 out of the 270 recorded shootings between January 1997 and November 2000. The guns used most frequently were small, handheld weapons. Semi-automatic pistols were used in 48 per cent, revolvers 26 per cent and shotguns 18 per cent of shootings in Manchester. There was evidence to show that slightly under one-quarter (22 per cent) of the 217 guns had been used before but little is known about the previous offender. In addition little is known about the gun manufacturer and model. Of the 217 guns, the manufacturer was identified in 57 cases and the model in 34 cases.

The calibre of the weapon was identified in 147 of the 270 shootings. The calibre of a handgun is one possible measure of lethality in civilian settings (see Zimring, 1972). Large calibre (e.g. 9mm and over) weapons potentially are many times more lethal than small calibre weapons. Eighty two per cent of those weapons for which the calibre was identified were large calibre.

11. C1 accounts for 24per cent and C2 accounts for 33 per cent.
12. That is not to say that in all cases this information does not exist. These analyses refer to information that was available.

Map 3: Shooting incidents January 1997 to November 2000

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The number of shots fired was determined in 205 of the 270 shootings. Only one shot was fired in 40 per cent of the shootings. For the rest, two shots or more were fired. In 19per cent of the shootings six or more shots were fired. The distance of the shot fired was only determined in ten of the 270 cases. Of those most (eight) were fired from close range or point blank.

Injuries sustained

The extent of the injuries sustained by the victims of shootings was known in 185 of the 270 shootings. In total, 16 per cent of shootings where injuries sustained are known resulted in death, 42 per cent in serious injury, 34 per cent in a minor injury and 9 per cent of cases in no injury at all.

Evidence obtained from the scene

Evidence from victims and witnesses

There were witnesses to shootings in 140 cases. In 125 of these, a witness made a statement. The witness withdrew the statement in three cases. The witness identified the offender in 16 of the shootings and gave evidence in court in one instance.

The picture presented for evidence collected from victims was similar. Victim statements were given in 137 cases and were withdrawn in 20 cases. Fourteen victims identified the offender but there were no cases where victims gave evidence in court.

Physical evidence

It was unusual for the gun used in a shooting to be recovered. Only 30 were recovered between January 1997 and December 2000. Very little is known about these guns. Out of the 30 recovered, serial numbers were found on only three and the country of origin was identified for five guns (one each from the USA, Czechoslovakia and 'East Europe' and two from Italy).

Bullets were recovered in 141 of the shootings and cartridges in 129. Other evidence recovered included DNA, fingerprints, magnum clips and footwear, though from only a small number of the shootings. DNA was recovered in ten cases, clips in six, finger prints in 18 and footwear in seven cases.

The outcome of shootings in Manchester

In most (68 per cent) shootings in Manchester the offender was not detained. A conviction was secured in only eight per cent of the cases. At the time of writing the outcome of a further six per cent of shootings was pending.

Victims

Information was known about 46 of the victims of shootings in Manchester. Of these victims:

- nine were shot dead
- the average age was 20
- 35 were identified as Afro-Caribbean, eight were white and three were Asian
- one was female
- thirty lived in South Manchester sub division; 15 in C1, 11 C2, three in C3 and one in C4
- eight had also been identified as offenders of shootings
- 13 had previously been arrested for gun offences and five had previous convictions for gun offences
- 35 of the victims had a conviction for a range of offences including traffic violations, assault and criminal damage. On average, those who had been convicted had seven convictions. There was an average of 5.3 convictions amongst all victims.
- 43 had been previously arrested. The mean average number of arrests was 11.

Offenders of shootings

Very little was known about the offenders in respect to shootings in Manchester. The offender was convicted in a very small number of cases, which limits what can be said about offenders with any certainty. However, GMP intelligence data identified the likely offender in 32 shooting incidents. Of these suspects:

- the average age was 21
- 22 were identified as Afro-Caribbean, two as Asian and eight as white

- 19 of the offenders lived in C division; nine in C1, four in C2, four in C3 and two in C4
- eight had been shot themselves, three were subsequently shot dead
- ten of the offenders had stood trial for homicide and two had been convicted
- twenty-six had been arrested for gun offences
- the average number of arrests per offender for gun offences was 1.4
- ten had a conviction for gun offences
- 31 had been previously been arrested. The mean average number of arrests per offender was 14
- on average, offenders had 3.4 convictions – for a range of offences including criminal damage, traffic offences, kidnap and indecent assault.

Table 1 compares known shooting victims and offenders across a range of attributes. The similarities are striking.

Table 1: Comparison of known attributes of suspected shooters and victims of shootings

	Victims of shootings n=46	Shooters n=32
Average age	20	21
Afro-Caribbean	76 per cent	69 per cent
White	17 per cent	25 per cent
Male	98 per cent	100 per cent
Live in 'C' division	65 per cent	59 per cent
Average number of arrests	11	14
Average number of convictions	5.3	3.4

Summary

Crimes involving firearms

- Total crime levels fell in the divisions for which data were available between April 1998 and September 2000.
- Recorded crimes involving firearms increased during this period.
- The most serious crimes, and crimes involving firearms are most likely to occur in the subdivisions of Longsight and Greenheys.

- Men were more likely to be victims of recorded crime than women were. Men were many times more likely to be victims of recorded serious crime and crimes involving firearms.
- People from minority ethnic backgrounds were more likely to be victims of recorded crime than white people were. They were more likely to be victims of serious crime and crimes involving firearms.
- Those aged between 19 and 25 were most likely to be victims of recorded crimes involving firearms and the most serious offences.

Shootings

- There were 270 confirmed shootings between January 1997 and November 2000 in Manchester. Overall the number of shootings in Manchester increased between January 1997 and November 2000.
- Confirmed shootings are most likely to occur in the Longsight and Greenheys sub-divisions.
- The guns used most frequently were small, handheld weapons.
- It was rare for the gun used in a shooting to be recovered. Other physical evidence is recovered in varying degrees. Bullets and cartridges are regularly recovered but DNA, fingerprints and footwear marks are not.
- Very few (eight per cent) of the confirmed shootings in Manchester over the period had resulted in a conviction. As a result, very little is known with certainty about the offenders.
- Those strongly suspected by the police of having discharged firearms in confirmed shootings and victims of shootings share a range of demographic and offending history attributes.

4. South Manchester gangs

The definition of gangs is problematic (see Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 1994 for a discussion). In one sense almost all who belong to informal groups might be deemed to be 'gang' members, though few of these would include crime as a major focus of activity. Most adolescents, in particular, belong to peer groups. These often act collectively and many are involved in minor crimes of various kinds (see Gabor, 1994). In this sense, though gangs whose activities include low-level delinquency are not universal they are common. Mares (1998) identified a wide range of groups of people which could loosely be described as gangs in many areas of Manchester, including some suburban parts. The delinquency, characteristics and organisation of these groups was enormously diverse. For the purposes of this paper 'gangs' will given a more restricted meaning. The term will be used to refer to relatively enduring identifiable groups of young people who see themselves as members of those groups, and who commit crime as part of that membership. This accords with a recent description used in a US Department of Justice Publication. A youth gang is said 'commonly to be thought of as a self-formed association of peers having the following characteristics: a gang name and recognised symbols, identifiable leadership, a geographic territory, a regular meeting pattern, and collective actions to carry out illegal activities' (Howell, 1997).

An overview of contemporary South Manchester gangs

There are currently four major South Manchester gangs as defined here for the purposes of this research, and currently known to the police. These are Gooch, Doddington, Pitt Bull Crew and Longsight Crew. It must be remembered, though, that the situation regarding gangs is fluid – groups break up, new groups form, members come and go. What we have is a snapshot of the situation in 2000/2001. The main features of these gangs, as known to the authorities and described in interviews, are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Characteristics of the main South Manchester gangs and their identified members

	Gooch	Doddington	Longsight Crew	Pitt Bull Crew	Total
Number of known members aged under 25	64	30	67	26	187
Proportion of members under 17	8%	3%	12%	19%	10%
Proportion of members 17 to 20	35%	13%	42%	46%	35%
Proportion of members 21 to 24	58%	83%	45%	35%	54%
Annual arrests per member under 17*	1.9	2	1.8	2.8	2.1
Annual arrests per member 17-20*	1.8	1.1	1.7	3.4	1.8
Annual arrests per member 21-24*	0.7	0.8	0.5	1.6	0.7
Percentage of known members who are black	86%	100%	75%	73%	79%
Percentage of known members who are male	92%	100%	100%	88%	96%
Conflicts with other groups	Doddington Longsight Crew	Gooch Pitt Bull Crew	Gooch Pitt Bull Crew	Doddington Longsight	
Alliances/truces with other groups	Doddington Longsight Crew Pitt Bull Crew	Gooch Longsight Crew	Gooch Pitt Bull Crew Doddington	Longsight Crew Gooch	
Year gang first emerged	1988 to 1990	1988 to 1991	1996 to 1997	1999	

* The figures for arrests relate to all known gang members. If those over 21 only are taken, and their arrest career is looked at, much the same pattern emerges. The figures for Gooch arrests for under 17 year olds, 17-to-20-year-old and those aged 21 and over are 1.8, 1.7 and 0.7. The equivalent for Doddington is 1.9, 1.3 and 0.8, for Longsight 1.9, 1.3 and 0.5, and for Pitt Bull 3, 1.9 and 1.6. If, however, current age cohorts are taken, a slightly different pattern is found: for all gangs the 17-20-year-old group have the highest arrest rates. For Pitt Bull, of course, for all members this mid age range is also most often arrested.

The development of the four gangs

The first of the recent problematic South Manchester gangs to emerge, Gooch and Doddington, were made up of groups of local friends growing up together, whose relationships to one another eventually evolved into distinctive identifiable groups involved in crime. Because of the way they emerged, it is not possible to give a precise time for their beginnings. Though they have had periodic truces there is longstanding conflict between Gooch and Doddington. The Pitt Bull Crew emerged following a conflict and fatal shooting within Doddington. After the split the Pitt Bull Crew became a distinct entity, whose initial core members were related to the dead Doddington member and whose raison d'être was in part to take revenge. The Longsight Crew also crystallised as a group following the (unintended and misdirected) fatal shooting of the brother of a main player by a member of Gooch. As with the Pit Bull Crew, its members too had previously been associated with Doddington.

Numbers in gangs

Partly because of the problem of definition and partly because of the fluidity of gang membership, it is difficult to gauge total membership. At the time of writing police knew of just under 200 individuals aged under 25 who are associated with these four groups, and a further 30 who have some gang-connection but not uniquely to any one of these gangs. Taking account of older associates, limitations to police information, and younger people who may currently be involved only at the margins it is estimated that as many of 470 in all may be playing a part in South Manchester gangs in 2001. It is even more difficult to estimate numbers of gang-members in the past. In 1995 to 1996 only two main gangs existed (Gooch and Doddington) and local practitioners' best guess is that their total membership amounted to no more than 200.

Gang attributes

From the information available, the South Manchester gangs appear to share a number of attributes:

- known members are mainly black or mixed race: 79 per cent were Afro-Caribbean, 16 per cent were white, four per cent were Asian, and one per cent from Oriental backgrounds

- seven out of every eight identified members of gangs were born in Greater Manchester, and only one in 40 was born outside the UK
- there are relatively few known female members of any of the gangs; overall only 11 per cent were female and they tended to play supporting rather than central roles, for example providing 'safe' houses for male members
- no gang-members interviewed had completed fulltime education
- known members are prolific offenders involved in a very wide range of criminal behaviour
  - the average number of arrests per gang-member was 12
  - only a small number of known gang-members (2 per cent) had not been arrested at all
  - one person had been arrested 51 times
  - there was an average of 2.1 convictions per gang member
- gang-members had been involved in murder, rape, indecent assault, robbery, burglary, drugs offences, theft, handling stolen goods, fraud, criminal damage, perversion of the course of justice, and traffic violations of various sorts etc, as well as firearms-related offences.
- more than eight out of ten known members of all gangs had their first arrest before they were 17; nine out of ten of those known to have been involved in shootings had first been arrested before they were 17
- rates of arrest amongst gang-members tend to decline as they become older
- weapons carrying is widespread amongst members
- all the gangs are turf-based, with their own particular areas
- each gang comprises a core of main players, together with 'ordinary members', 'runners' acting on behalf of members, and 'associates', who may have connections with more than one gang or provide networks of support, for instance safe houses.

Police opinion, supported in interviews with gang-members, suggest that there are long-running conflicts between the South Manchester gangs which erupt from time to time, resulting in serious injuries. There are, however, also occasional and unstable truces and alliances between some of them, though some conflicts appear to be so deep-rooted that no alliance is conceivable.

The relationships to gangs outside South Manchester are difficult to determine. Local practitioners distinguish between 'crime firms' and 'gangs'. Crime 'firms' are seen in Greater Manchester to be more organised, more instrumental, and more specifically focused on crime than street gangs. Members tend to be white, older and less visible in public places. There have evidently been conflicts in the past between South Manchester gangs and 'crime firms' of this kind based in Salford. The latter have reputedly tended to traffic mainly in different drugs from the South Manchester gangs, have been more involved in providing protection for clubs in central Manchester, and have been more organised. Moreover many key members are serving sentences in prison at the time of writing. So long as the groups are not in competition, conflict may be sporadic and only muted. The groups are, nevertheless, known to each other and weapons are evidently sometimes passed between them. There have also been conflicts as well as alliances with groups in Cheetham Hill, though again physical separation and ethnic differences appear to reduce occasions for meeting and for tensions to arise.

The individual gangs and their members

Members of all four known South Manchester gangs live in Greenheys and Longsight but particular gangs are represented in individual areas. The Longsight Crew and Pit Bull Crew are found especially in parts of Longsight, and Gooch and Doddington in parts of Greenheys.

Apart from their attachment to different areas, there are other distinct attributes of the individual gangs. Assuming the police data available are representative Gooch and Longsight are substantially bigger than Doddington or Pit Bull Crew. Doddington and Gooch are more ethnically homogeneous than Longsight Crew or Pit Bull Crew. The age profiles of the gangs vary. Newer gangs tend to be comprised of younger members, presumably with much of their offending careers in front of them. At the time of writing the Doddington gang has relatively few known young members: two-thirds are 23 or over. The Longsight Crew seems to comprise two main cohorts – one aged about 18 and the other 21 to 22. The Pit Bull Crew has no major age groups but members are evenly spread from their early teens to 20s: two to four at every age between 15 and 23. The Gooch Gang has a normal, 'bell-shaped' distribution, peaking at 20 to 22. It appears that Doddington's criminal activities in South Manchester are reducing or becoming less visible. We were told by GMP staff that their leader has moved to another city and that the gang may be re-establishing itself there. Relocation also presumably offers a way of withdrawing from dangerous and costly inter-gang hostilities.

Recruitment into gangs

Recruits to established gangs appear to come mainly from blood relatives of those who already belong, friends of members, and disaffected street youths who are interested in finding a gang home and willing to provide services to more senior members.

The gang may have provided a refuge for some where they could be free from domestic pressures. It also offered a source of respect as well, of course, as an apparently relatively rich and glamorous lifestyle, notwithstanding the risks.

As one of the six gang member interviewees not in custody, a 16-year-old, put it,

> *I first became aware of gangs when I was about nine. I was hanging around on the streets…. There was nothing else to do. Where would we go play football round here? I don't like football anyway. You can't always go round your mate's house to play when your mate's mum doesn't want you there and your mum doesn't want your mates at your house. The streets are where we hang round… A kid I knew was related to one of the (gang members) maybe. They hung around together. I knew they were different from other lads. They had money and drove around in cars. I did stuff for them – delivered stuff, drugs I suppose. Some school mates have joined gangs. They were attracted to the cars and money. You can get girls. You see the older guys and they're living it up. It's one way of living that seems good – money and respect and if you're 'in' you're 'in'. But it's scary getting in too far…*

Another respondent, this time a 15-year-old said:

> *I was in contact with gangs first when I was about 12. They were other guys in the same area – older – not losers. I didn't really know what they did except deal some drugs. Every kid knows who the dealers are and the dealers all work for the gangs… Being on the streets appealed. You get some money. They (gang associates) are your friends. They look out for you. You don't want to be there all the time but it's better than home.*

A 17-year-old put his recruitment this way:

> *I became aware of the gangs when I was 10 or 11. I didn't really meet any gang-members until I moved to Longsight when I was 14. I knew them but didn't really meet them. My brother was in the gang. They came to our house. There were a few others I*

knew from school. I got to know X (a main player). He was with my brother and asked me to work for him, selling drugs. You looked up to the older guys. You can make some money with them. It makes you hard. It was easy. It can be exciting at times. It's not always like that. A lot of the time it's hanging around, being bored, or delivering drugs.

Leaving gangs presents problems. Many of those interviewed in as well as out of prison were reluctant fully to identify with gangs, and those who admitted to being fully immersed said they would prefer to leave, but faced difficulties in doing so. The reasons given for wanting to withdraw from gang life had largely to do with the dangers associated with membership. These were in part related to the punishments received and expected, and in part to the risks from violence from other gangs. The difficulties in leaving had to do with gang loyalty, with ongoing involvement in continuing inter-gang conflicts, and with lack of perceived alternative opportunities. Several respondents deemed themselves 'marked men', for whom those in other gangs would literally be gunning. Asked about where he might be in five years' time one incarcerated respondent said he expected to be dead. Gang loyalty and gang protection both conspired to pull people in, and keep them in. Moreover, realistically non-gang related alternative lifestyles would be hard for most members easily to take up. Several also felt attached to their local areas. Here, however, others defined them in terms of their gang-associations. Immersion in gangs in these ways can bestow a respected and valued identity that becomes hard to shake off. Though gang life might appeal initially because of its promise of freedom from one set of real problems and limitations, it comes eventually to hem members in with another set of problems and limitations.

Summary

'Gangs' are taken here to refer to relatively enduring identifiable groups of young people who see themselves as members of those groups, and who commit crime as part of that membership. The following patterns emerge from the data we were able to assemble:

- there are four established major South Manchester 'gangs' known to the police
- new gang recruits appear to be drawn mainly from relatives of existing members and disaffected street children, attracted by the gang security and the apparent material rewards
- identified members of all four South Manchester gangs are most commonly young, Afro-Caribbean, male and born in Britain

- members of gangs are involved in a wide range of offences
- rates of arrest tend to tail off as members enter their 20s
- there are endemic conflicts between gangs. Whilst there are periodic truces and alliances between gangs, these are fragile and violent conflict erupts easily
- gangs can be hard to leave because of perceived lack of local alternative opportunities.

5. Gangs, weapons and shootings

Carrying weapons

Interviews with a small sample of 15 gang-members in custody found that guns or knives are carried routinely, and injuries are common. Half admitted to carrying knives though all had friends who carried them; only a fifth admitted to carrying guns, though half said they had friends who did so. All had friends who had been injured with a gun or knife; 80 per cent had friends who had used a gun or knife; three-quarters had themselves been injured with a knife or gun. Despite the commonness of weapons carrying and use, 12 of the 13 expressing a view said they would prefer not to carry weapons. They claimed that they were carried principally for defensive purposes. If it were not necessary to carry them they would not do so. Because weapons carrying is normal by potential foes it is felt essential that they be carried in the event of an attack, and as a deterrence. As one of them said:

> *People carry guns for protection. If you know that someone is trying to shoot you then you have to carry a gun to protect yourself. Because xxx was shot I felt I was a target. People assume that you are involved (in violence) because you live in a particular area.*

Shootings

We looked in some detail at records of known shootings. Table 3 shows what police records reveal about the attrition rates of gang-related shootings that have taken place in South Manchester since 1997. It shows shootings where there was not thought to be any gang involvement and then shootings that have been attributed to particular gangs.

Table 3: Shootings committed by gang status

	No gang	Longsight Crew	Pit Bull Crew	Gooch	Dodding-ton	Other gang	Total
Data from intelligence records on likely offenders of shootings							
Offender of a shooting	4	4	3	10	6	5	32
Shot someone dead	1	1	1	6	2	2	13
*Arrests and convictions for gun-related offences**							
Arrested for gun offence	4	15	8	15	10	7	59
Convicted for gun offence	2	4	2	5	3	1	17
Trials and convictions for shootings							
Stood trial for shooting	0	3	1	6	1	1	12
Conviction for shooting	0	0	0	2	0	0	2

* Gun-related offences, of course, include many crimes that do not involve shooting, also includes cases that have just gone to court, where there may be later convictions.

It is clear that cases rarely result in convictions, even when police have sufficient evidence to make an arrest. Whilst gang-members were sometimes prepared initially to co-operate with police enquiries, they were very rarely willing to maintain co-operation and to present evidence in court. Interviews with imprisoned gang-members reveal strongly held norms of non-co-operation with police enquiries. Those who would otherwise wish to help the police feel under pressure to adhere to the norms. As one put it in relation to an injury he had sustained, where he withdrew co-operation following the negative response from fellow gang members:

> *When I gave evidence to the police previously it backfired, so I didn't talk to them. They put pressure on but I said, no. The kid who stabbed me got beaten up.*

Another said that when he was hurt

> *The police were called by the hospital. But there was nothing they could do. No witnesses and no complaint was made. I would not complain to the police because my own gang would frown upon it. Under-reporting is common and we don't want the police involved.*

Even in the most serious cases of crime it is not deemed right for gang-members to involve the police. Where opposing gangs are involved any retribution deemed necessary is handled informally between the gangs. In some cases respondents claimed that they carried weapons and took matters into their own hands because of shortcomings in the justice system. As a further respondent put it:

> *People might stop if they thought that others weren't carrying guns that might just make others think that they were an easy target. British justice is ridiculous. Police failings make others take matters into their own hands. They take on justice themselves thereby making it personal. In the ghetto it is eye for an eye and this escalates the problem.*

In regard to cases where gang-members were arrested or charged with offences, those witnesses, be they gang-members or others, who might have provided evidence were reputedly deterred from doing so by intimidation and/or pay-offs from gangs.

Differences between gang and non-gang shootings

It has been estimated that 60 per cent of shootings in Manchester involved gang-members either as the victim, the offender or both. Table 4 shows the frequency and percentages of shootings for each category of gang involvement.

Table 4: Shootings and gang association

	Frequency of cases	per cent of all cases
Neither gang members	113	42
Offender gang member	36	13
Victim gang member	58	21
Both gang members	63	23
Total	270	100

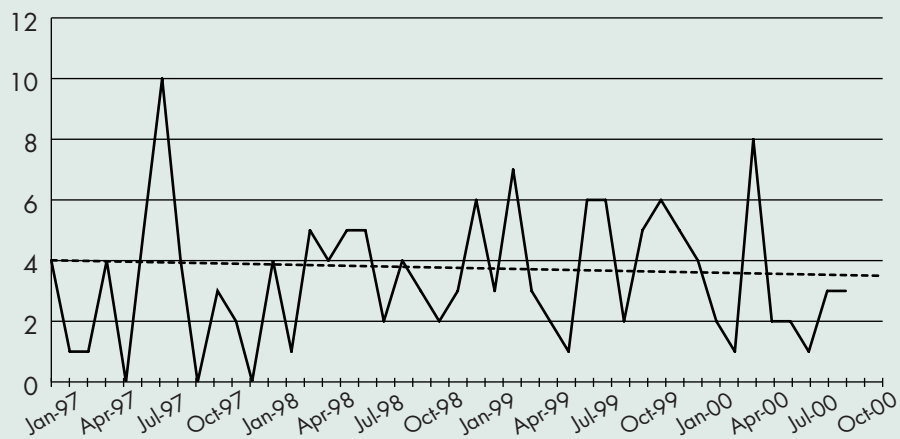
Missing 1

The following is a description of some of the more marked differences in trends between the shootings that involved gang-members and ones that did not.

Rates of shootings

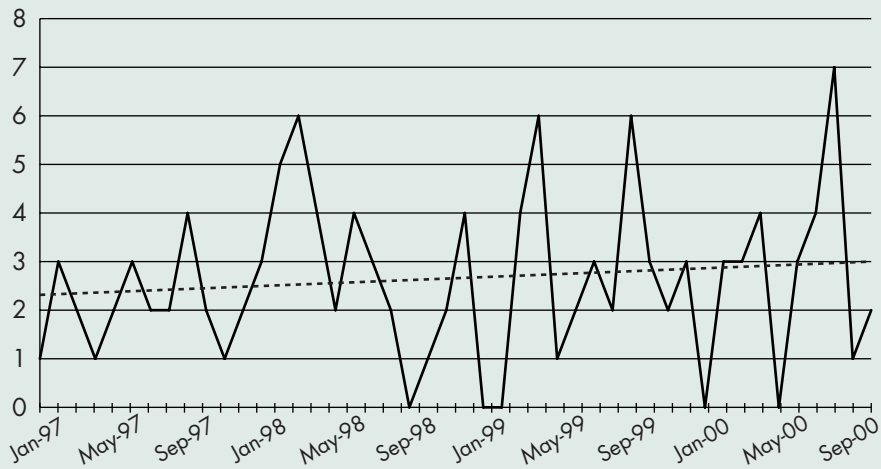
Where there is no evidence that the shooting involved gang-members there was a small fall in the number of shootings between January 1997 and November 2000 in Manchester. This fall can be seen in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Shootings with no gang involvement January 1997 to November 2000



The number of shootings increased where there was known gang-member involvement between January 1997 and November 2000. The steepest rise in shootings has occurred where there is evidence that both the offender and the victim of a shooting were gang members. There have also been rises in the number of shootings where there is evidence that only the offender was a gang member and where only the victim was a gang member. Figure 5 shows the increases in shootings involving gang-members between January 1997 and November 2000.

Figure 5: Shootings between January 1997 and November 2000 where there is evidence of gang involvement



Location of shootings

There was some difference in the locations of shootings that have gang involvement and ones that do not. Shootings that involved gang-members were more likely to occur in the Longsight or Greenheys subdivisions. Fifty per cent (57) of all shootings where neither the victim nor the offender was a gang member occurred in Longsight or Greenheys. This compared with 62 per cent (98) of shootings where there was evidence of gang involvement in the shooting.

Injuries sustained

The extent of the injuries sustained by the victims of shootings was known in 185 of the 270 shootings. Table 5 shows the extent of injuries sustained by gang involvement.

Table 5: Injuries sustained by gang status of the shootings, 1997 to 2000

	Neither	Victim gang	Offender gang	Both gang	Total
Death	6	5	6	12	29
Major injury	23	19	10	25	77
Minor injury	23	19	8	13	63
No injury	11	0	2	3	16
Total	63	43	26	53	185

Overall the most serious injuries were associated with shootings in which there was some known gang membership:

- 23 out of the 29 deaths (80 per cent) from shootings involved gang-members
- 54 of the 77 (70 per cent) most serious injuries involved gangs members
- 40 of the 63 (63 per cent) of the least serious injuries involved gang-members
- Five out of the 16 (31 per cent) shootings that resulted in no injuries involved gang members.

Costs of gang-related shootings in Manchester

The Home Office has estimated the social and economic costs of a variety of crimes.[13] Appendix 1 shows the breakdown of the economic costs for agencies and the wider social costs for victims and their families, at year 2000 prices. The data need to be treated with caution. Estimating social costs is a hazardous and contestable business. Moreover, these are average costs and in practice individual incidents will vary enormously in their costs. In particular most gang-related shootings would fall into the 'hard to solve' category and hence the costs of investigating them would be far greater. These data, whilst an underestimate, nevertheless provide ballpark figures for the costs of the offences examined here and are the best we have.

We have estimated that since January 1997 gang shootings have resulted in:

- 23 deaths

13. Estimates derived from Brand, S. and Price, R. (2000) *The Social and Economic Costs of Crime.* Home Office Research Study 217. London: Home Office.

- 54 serious woundings and
- 40 other woundings.

On the basis of these estimates the cost of gang-related shootings in the Greater Manchester Police area since January 1997 – which is the time period for which we have data on shootings – is £32,400,000. This is £8,100,000 per year including the estimated 'social costs'. Appendix 2 breaks down the estimated costs to different public services.

On the basis of these figures, gang-related shootings in GMP cost these public services in all about £354,905 per annum. Of this about two-thirds fall within South Manchester, at a cost of roughly £236,600 to public services and just over £5 million overall.

Future shootings and future gangs

The ongoing conflicts between gangs mean that future shootings between members can be expected. These reflect in part a general mutual hostility, against the background of which specific incidents are easily ignited in a host of different ways. They reflect also a number of particular scores yet to be settled. Those spoken to in prison were not sanguine about the possibility of disrupting the self-sustaining cycles of gang-violence in which they knew themselves to be implicated. As one respondent put it:

> *Nothing will ever stop anyone using a weapon. Whatever the police do, there will be weapons. There's always a way round it. That's just how things are. They won't stop. Kids will carry on. Say my uncle got killed. I'll get his (the killer's) nephews.*

This chapter, alongside the previous one, has provided a snapshot of gangs operating in South Manchester. The picture, though, is a dynamic one. Schisms in existing gangs could easily occur. There are some signs of gang migration. Gangs comprising primarily a local peer group may dissipate over time as members become older, following normal patterns of reducing levels of criminal behaviour. Moreover new peer groups may metamorphose into gangs, especially in a context where there are others.

Summary

- Gang-members routinely carry weapons, largely they claim for self-protection.
- Norms within gangs proscribe co-operation with the police in investigating the offences, and where it occurs initially it is rarely sustained.
- Few police arrests result in successful convictions for firearms offences or fatal shootings.
- Gang-related shootings appear to be increasing whilst shootings unrelated to gangs are falling slightly.
- Gang-related shootings are concentrated in Longsight and Greenheys in South Manchester.
- Shootings with known gang-member involvement result in deaths and serious injuries at a higher rate than shootings with no apparent gang-relationship.
- The cost of gang-related shootings in Greater Manchester over the past four years is estimated to be in the region of £8 million per annum overall, about £236,600 of this falling to the police, health service, probation and prisons.

6. Ways forward

Main findings of the research

Shootings

1. Violence in general, gun violence in particular and fatal shootings most specifically are concentrated in some specific small areas of South Manchester
2. Victims of gun violence in Manchester are mainly young, black or mixed race males, who have criminal records.
3. Suspected perpetrators of serious gun violence in Manchester tend to have similar attributes to victims.
4. Those who have been victims of shootings are at increased risk of repeat incidents.
5. The total annual cost of firearms related violence in South Manchester is estimated as £5 million.
6. Young black male victims of shootings in South Manchester were generally known to have been involved in gangs.
7. About 60 per cent of shootings are thought to be gang related.

Gangs

8. There are differences in the make-up, origins, activities, and organisation of the four main South Manchester gangs, though members of all are involved in a wide range of criminal behaviour.
9. Gang-membership comprised a mix of same-age local friendship groups, blood relatives and recruits.
10. Gang-related criminal behaviour includes drug-related offences, but only as one element of a patchwork of violent and non-violent crime.
11. Rates of arrest for gang-members tend to fall as they age.
12. Gangs in South Manchester are loosely area-based.
13. Alliances are sometimes formed between some South Manchester gangs, but conflict is endemic and easily triggered.
14. Firearms carrying by gang-members is at least partly protective and police intelligence records suggest that it may also be part symbolic and part instrumental for the commission of violent crime.

15. There are strong norms of non-co-operation in police enquiries into gang-related shootings, in particular in giving evidence, which undermine successful prosecution of offenders.

Towards a strategy to reduce shootings and serious injuries

The primary concern is to save lives and to reduce serious injury. So what are the most promising interventions to try?

Three elements of the Boston response to gang-related serious violence, shown in Box 2, appear potentially to be relevant in the South Manchester context in the light of our findings, and form part of the strategy to reduce it.

Box 2: Boston inspired elements of a strategy to reduce gang related serious violence in South Manchester

1. Applying co-ordinated leverage to gangs through highly publicised multi-agency targeted crackdowns, that gangs will precipitate by specified behaviour, for example members' possession or use of firearms, or involvement in other serious assault.
2. Enhancing strong community relations, to obtain neighbourhood support for targeted crackdowns and also to stimulate community efficacy in informal social control and reduction in incivilities.
3. Engagement with gang-members to elicit information, to transmit consistent messages about targeted crackdowns, and to provide diversionary services for gang-members and those on the fringes of gangs.

Adapting leverage through Operation Ceasefire

South Manchester gangs differ from one another and from archetypal American gangs. Yet they appear to be sufficiently structured to be open to response as entities in themselves. Leverage through a Ceasefire-like approach would supplement, not replace, existing police response. It would involve communicating to gangs the promise that they would be the target of a sustained and co-ordinated crackdown in the event of any of their members' known or suspected use or possession of firearms or involvement in other serious violence. In some cases the potential to exercise leverage on individual gang-members might be increased by, for example, modifying the terms proposed for probation orders or the conditions attached to Anti-Social Behaviour Orders etc.

As in Boston, in Manchester there exist a range of agencies with enforcement responsibilities that could take part in a targeted crackdown. These include:

- police
- probation
- the local authority: housing; social services, environmental health, trading standards and education welfare services
- DVLA
- the TV licence authority
- the Crown Prosecution Service
- the courts.

None of these agencies is able to focus on all enforcement opportunities in all places and at all times. Their concerted and co-ordinated attention to specific groups in the event of their violent behaviour or use of guns would comprise the leverage that it is hoped would act as an effective disincentive. Each gang might be expected to enforce compliance in its collective interest. Crackdowns of this sort, of course, do not depend on the identification of specific offenders and their successful prosecution (though this is not, of course, excluded). Instead, the focus is on the group itself, and disrupting its activities. Once risks of violence were reduced, it was hoped in Boston that a 'firebreak' would be created where the defensive carrying of weapons would become unnecessary. Opportunities to use them would then, of course, also reduce. A similar pattern might be expected in Manchester.

A crucial element of Ceasefire was publicity. Gang leaders were met at the beginning and told what would happen if members behaved in specified ways. Examples of crackdowns were well publicised. Leaflets were distributed. The mass media were engaged.

No effort was made to adopt zero-tolerance to gangs from the start or to dissolve gangs – these were deemed too ambitious and to require too many resources. The focus was specifically on preventing the most harmful violence. This more modest aim and the co-ordinated crackdowns promised could realistically and credibly be implemented. This may be the case in South Manchester also.

Community relations

The context furnished by the nature of community relations will be crucial to the successful targeting, implementation and reception of crackdowns.

There is a serious risk that crackdowns will backfire in the absence of good, trusting relationships between authorities and communities (see Scarman, 1981). If police and other enforcement activities are perceived to be unjust, this may provoke further non-co-operation amongst gang-members and stimulate it amongst other sections of the community. It was not possible during the research phase of Chrome directly to tap levels of community support of or confidence in local agencies, nor to measure members' awareness of or response to the gang-related activities evidently taking place in their neighbourhood.

Members of the community are potentially crucial sources of information about the behaviour of gangs and their members. They may also provide a range of services enabling enforcement agencies to act effectively. For example, community members might give statements, provide access to premises, permit use of premises for covert observation etc.

Most social control is effected informally within communities and through co-operation with official agencies. Where informal social control is already strong and where agency relationships with communities are already close, all that may be needed is a carefully thought-through presentation and explanation of Chrome. If informal social control is weak and/or if the communities' relationships with agencies are not already sufficiently close and trusting, it may be important to effect changes, though this is liable to be difficult and to be a long-term matter. If it is believed that there is a significant risk of community scepticism or hostility, quick wins meeting community needs may be helpful in improving community trust. This might, for example, take the form of improvements in lighting, gating, changes in forms of traffic control, provision for quick removal of graffiti, etc. Some level of community engagement will be necessary for the major, crackdown side of the proposed Chrome strategy. In the longer term there may be scope to enhance the level and quality of grass-roots engagement with the community.

In Boston, the police in particular had developed a community style of policing and officers were evidently often instrumental in drawing other services into the community. In this way they could be seen to be useful to the community and not exclusively to be engaged in heavy-handed enforcement. It appeared that the community was kept on side and were evidently supportive. There may be scope in South Manchester to enhance the level and quality of grass-roots engagement with the community, especially in those areas where shootings are most common. The intention would be to enforce sensitively in the light of community members' concerns, and to create levels of community trust that would provide a basis for support when crackdowns against gang-members were taking place. In Boston the clergy were actively

involved in supporting the efforts to reduce gang-related violence. Again in Manchester the participation of leaders within the local black communities might usefully be canvassed.

Community engagement might usefully both help furnish conditions for the targeted crackdowns, and attempt to catalyse increases in collective efficacy, i.e. the capacity of communities collectively to effect informal social control over their members (Sampson et al, 1997). It is likely that catalysing collective efficacy will become easier with the firebreak in gang-related violence aimed for through the targeted crackdowns, and provide an improved basis for self-maintaining, sustained effects.

Engagement with gang members

In Boston, various means had been established for engaging with gang-members and with those hanging around on streets where gangs are active. Youth workers and social workers in particular focused on this group. Though overtly co-operating with enforcement agencies as part of the co-ordinated efforts to reduce violence, youth workers and social workers were primarily providing services they hoped would be valued by gang-members and other disaffected youth at risk of involvement. Gang-focused youth and social work explicitly co-operating with targeted crackdowns may be appropriate in selected areas of South Manchester also.

In Boston, there were employment programmes aiming to offer paid work for youths wishing to take it. The vibrancy of the local economy meant that reasonable jobs were available. This may not be the case in Manchester. Yet, both for those who might otherwise be attracted to gang life and its promise of economic benefits, and for those who tire of the lifestyle and its risks employment opportunities comprise one incentive to opt out. In South Manchester it might make sense to support business start-ups, and to engage existing enterprises to try to provide opportunities for those anxious to adopt non-gang lifestyles where they are already involved in gangs or are at risk of becoming so.

The potential benefits of engagement with gang-members and others on the streets at risk of involvement are clear. They are a source of intelligence. Consistent messages to them will add credibility to crackdown promises. Direct services can be provided aiming to deal with specific problems that may put them at risk of gang involvement, and which may provide a route out to those who want to stop participating.

Three additional elements to the proposed strategy are specific to the differing conditions for an initiative in Manchester. These are shown in Box 3.

Box 3: Supplementary elements of a strategy to reduce gang related serious violence in South Manchester

4. Development of inter-gang mediation services, to head off and defuse tensions that risk leading to serious incidents of violence, including shootings.
5. Targeted protection for victims and repeat victims.
6. Sensitisation of agencies to the implications of their actions for gangs and the risks to their members, especially in the light of the provisions of Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act (1998).

Inter-gang mediation services

To address long-standing inter-gang rivalries and emerging tensions that can evidently easily trigger shootings and series of shootings, there might be benefits in developing facilities for mediation between gangs. In the face of crackdowns if they use weapons, gang leaders might be persuaded to opt for mediation to resolve disputes.

Reducing repeat victimisation

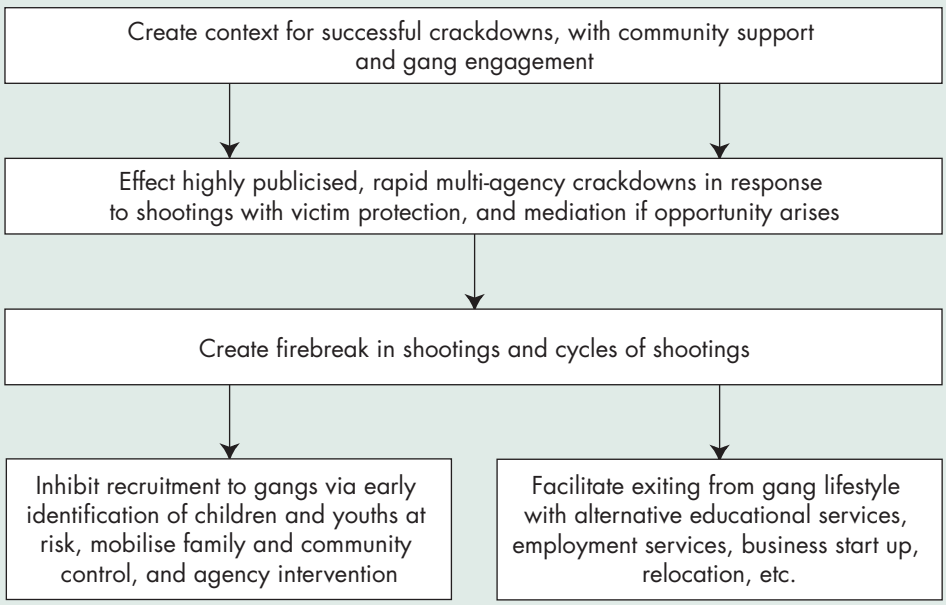
Across a wide range of offences there is now evidence that victimisation predicts risk of future victimisation. This is the case for shootings in Manchester also. Those who have been shot could usefully be apprised of their risks and helped to reduce them.

Agency sensitisation

Housing allocation decisions, street lighting policies, graffiti removal arrangements, social services care decisions, school exclusions policies and practices, educational welfare actions, Crown Prosecution Service decisions, etc. all potentially bear on the opportunities and incentives for gang activity in general and/or for shootings in particular. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act (1998) imposes responsibilities on police and local authorities to attend to the potential consequences of their work for crime and disorder. This obligation and the habit of thought suggested by it might usefully incorporate attention to gangs and the associated risks of serious injury and death, in particular from firearms but also from other weapons. It is a habit of thought that could also beneficially be adopted by other agencies not covered by the legislation.

Figure 6 shows the logic of the main elements of the proposed strategy, drawn together into an overall model.

Figure 6: The logic of the proposed strategy



Planning the details of what to do

The broad strands of this strategy were agreed by Manchester's Executive Partnership Group in Spring 2001, though details of what exactly would be implemented are to be worked out subsequently by project workers.

Figures seven to nine speculatively sketch out how some elements of the strategy might be operationalised in practice. Clearly an early task will be to work through detailed plans. There is only a year's funding. It will be important to prioritise that which can realistically be put in place in the short term and to begin its implementation. Though potentially important, especially for long-term effects, agency sensitisation and inter-gang mediation are likely to take quite a long time to develop and fully put in place. Other elements of the strategy do not depend on them in the short term.

Figure 7: Targeted crackdowns

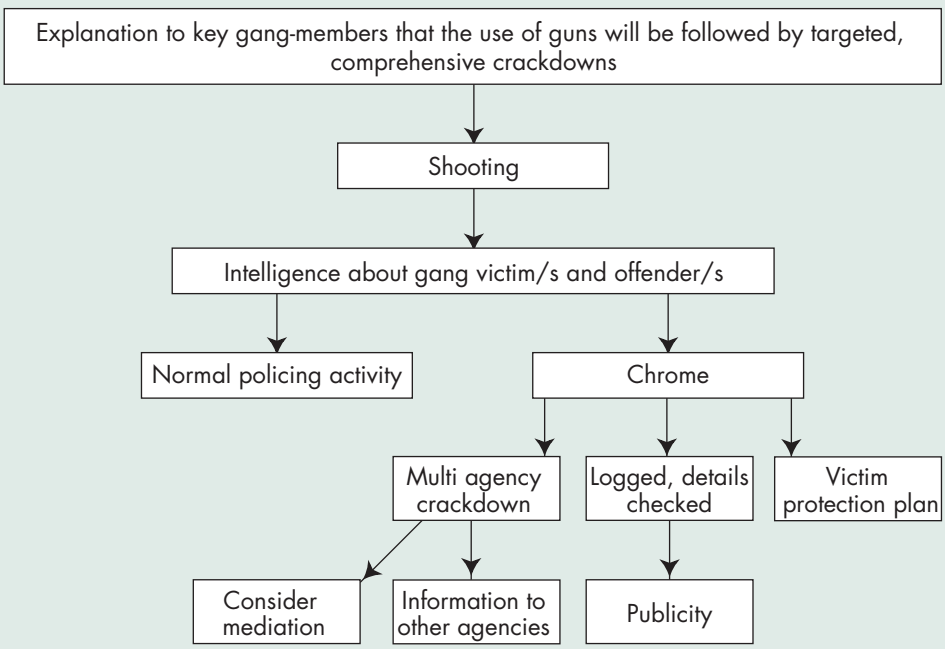
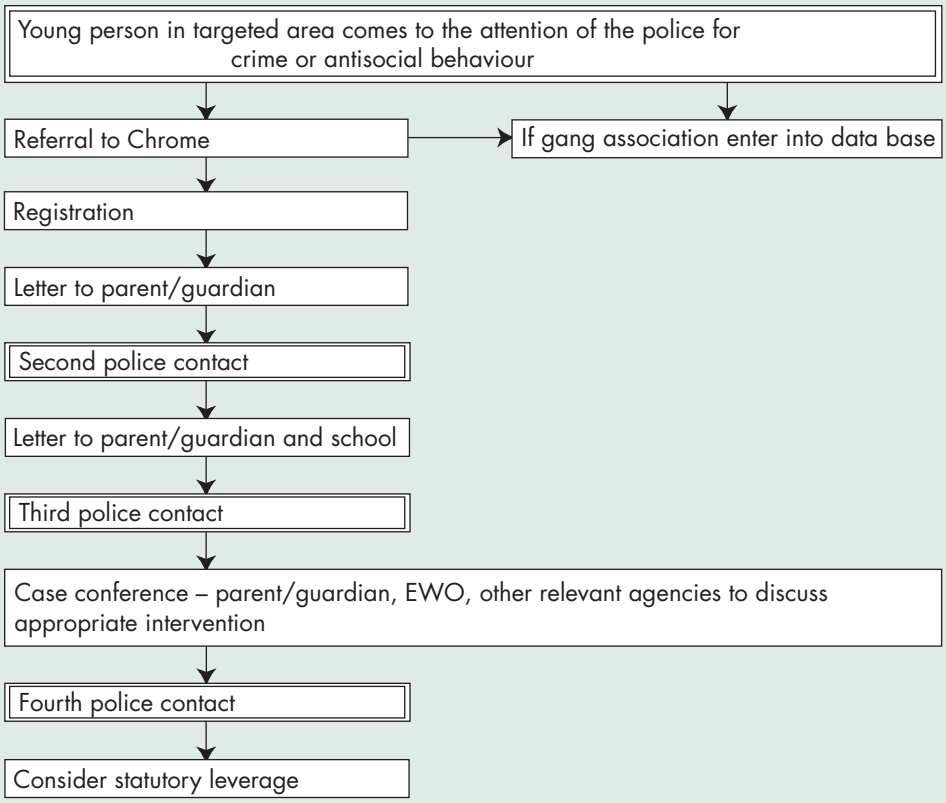
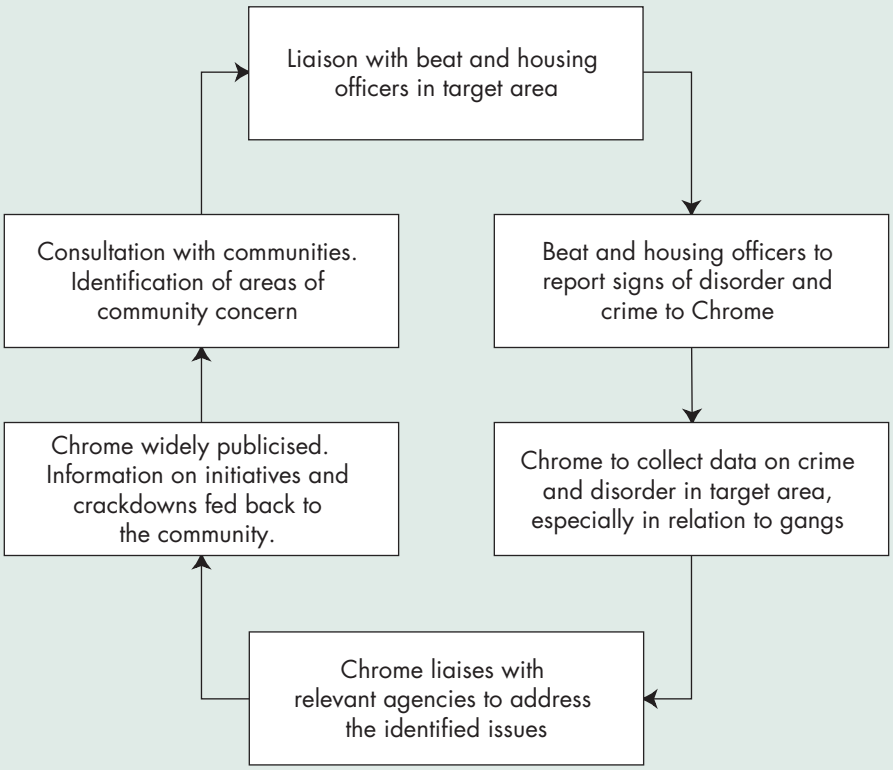


Figure 8: Example of recruitment inhibition intervention plan [14]



14. This has been adapted from a juvenile referral scheme based in Lancashire.

Figure 9: Enhancing community relations



Appendix 1

The costs of murder, serious wounding and other woundings

Category of cost	Best estimate £ per incident*		
	Murder	Serious wounding	Other wounding
In anticipation of crime			
Defensive expenditure	0	0	0
As a consequence of crime	1,100,000	120,000	730
Physical and emotional impact	700,000	97,000	120
Victim services	4,700	6	6
Lost output	370,000	14,000	400
Health services	630	8,500	200
In response to crime	22,000	13,000	1,300
Police activity	11,000	6,700	620
Prosecution	410	250	20
Magistrates courts	100	60	6
Crown court	720	440	40
Jury service	90	60	5
Legal aid	1,100	650	60
Non legal aid defence	250	150	10
Probation service	430	260	20
Prison service	4,200	2600	240
Other CJS costs	1,700	1,100	100
Criminal injuries compensation admin	2,000	1,200	110
Total cost per incident	1,100,000	130,000	2,000

* All figures rounded up

Appendix 2

Breakdown of costs of shooting in Manchester for police, probation, prison service and health services

	Murder		Serious wounding		Less serious wounding	
	Total (£)	Total per year (£)	Total (£)	Total per year (£)	Total (£)	Total per year (£)
Police	253,000	63,250	361,800	90,450	52,000	13,000
Health service	14,490	3,623	459,000	114,750	8,000	2,000
Probation	9,890	2,473	14,040	3,510	800	200
Prison service	96,600	24,150	140,400	35,100	9,600	2,400
Total	373,980	93,495	975,240	243,810	70,400	17,600

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