The perception, behaviours and attitudes to crime by residents living within a London council estate

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Course

Geography (Bachelor of Arts)

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Year

2013

**Declaration**

I declare that the main text of this dissertation is no more than 10,000 words, and is all my own work

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Abstract**

This study aims to explore the perceptions of crimes committed by youths, specifically looking at the residents living in one of London’s council estates, St. Raphael’s, in Brent. Furthermore, this study aims to determine the possible reasons behind the crime and to gather opinions on ways of reducing and/or preventing it. The ages of the participants’ will also be a factor that is to be measured to investigate whether the perception of crime differs dependant on the age of the participant. It is thought that a person’s fear of crime will be much greater than the actual amount of crimes committed. Furthermore, it is expected that age will have an effect on the perception of crime in that the older a person is the greater fear they feel. It is proposed that children are affected by the amount of crimes committed in the area, subsequently having a noticeable effect on them aiding in their development of fear of crime thus effecting their education and abilities to perform well in school. The study consisted of a total of 70 randomly selected participants living on or around the London council estate St. Raphael’s. Each participant was given a questionnaire to complete consisting of 14 various questions assessing several factors such as age, gender, fear of crime, feelings regarding societal help such as the Police as well as their feeling on what procedures could be put in place in order to prevent or reduce crime rates within the area. Age and gender were recorded to see whether the perception of crime as well as the fear of crime changes dependant on a person’s age. The results showed that there was a clear relationship between the age of a participant and the perception of crime and the amount of fear the person felt. Furthermore, as expected, it was found that the perception of crime was greater than national crime rates indicated. Thirdly, it was evident that residents of the inner estate had a lower fear of crime than those residents who lived on the outskirts of the estate. Finally, the behaviours of young children are affected by crime but it does not seem to affect them when they are within school thus not having a substantial immediate effect on their education. To conclude, although this study, overall was one of a success and supported the views of literature previously published, in other areas, such as the perception of crime on children and how this affected them it was not a success and actually disproved the initial assumption.

**Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank the University of Central Lancashire for giving me the opportunity to better myself, my family for giving me moral and financial support throughout my three years of study, my partner for helping to keep my head above water when I was close to drowning and finally my supervisor Mark Toogood for giving me the knowledge and skills over my time at university to accomplish this biggest of undertakings.

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5. **Introduction**

The aim of this study is to identify the ways in which crime in St Raphael’s council estate in Brent, London, is perceived by local residents and how this perception affects them. The study also aims to determine possible reasons behind this crime and to gather opinions from residents on ways of reducing and/or preventing it. The ages of the residents that participate will be assessed as well to see whether perceptions of crime differs dependant on the age of the resident. Another aim of the study is to assess the affect crime has on children living on the estate and to determine whether this crime influences their behaviours and attitudes whilst at school. To accomplish these aims a questionnaire was produced with the aim of identifying the perceptions of crime held by those living within St Raphael’s estate, assessing their attitudes towards this crime and noting the ages of the participants as well as their location of residence within the estate. An interview was also conducted with a Head Teacher of a local primary school with the purpose of gathering his/her opinions on how the pupils of the school that originate from St Raphael’s estate are affected by the crime that occurs there.

Although crime in the borough of Brent in North West London has been consistently high for many years and continues to be one of the areas which experience the most amount of crimes, rates have begun to show a decrease over the past few years according to the latest crime rate statistics published by the London Metropolitan Police Department (2012). Although gun crimes are one of the most feared crimes and the most publicised through the media, statistics show that it is actually one of the lowest occurring crimes that are committed in Brent with a total of 71 gun crimes committed in 2012. The crimes that are committed most often were motor vehicle related crime, and residential burglaries, 2,819, 2,835 respectively. This coincides with the study conducted by Brenda Linton, vice chairperson of St Raphael’s Residents’ Association, who met with local residents to find out their views on living in the area. It was found that due to the amount of burglaries in the area many people were scared to go out through fear of having their houses broken into.

This study includes a literature review which discusses a variety of texts that have previously researched the perceptions of crimes within an inner city residential London area. It is also mentioned that although this is the case, previous literature has failed to explore the repercussions that crime and fear of crime has on children and their lives/education thus one of the aims of this study. Previous literature also fails to elaborate on the differences of the perceptions of the participants who live on the outskirts of the high crime areas compared to those who are living within the high crime areas. A methodology section is included explaining how effective the pilot study was as well as giving details regarding the techniques used in the research process and how the data was collated and compiled together. This dissertation also includes a results and discussion section whereby the results of this study are discussed and compared to previous literature. Finally, a conclusion section is included which discusses and develops an overall outcome for the study.

**1.1 Aims and Objectives of the study**

1. To produce and undertake a questionnaire to identify the perceptions and attitudes towards crime in council estates, held by the local residents (of varying ages) living there. The questionnaire will also assess the residents ideas on the reasons behind the crime in the area and what they feel could be done about it.
2. To interview the Headmaster / Mistress or Deputy Head of a local primary school and gather his/her opinion on how students that live in the estate are affected by the crime that occurs there.
3. Analyse the results of the questionnaire and distinguish the common reaction to crime in the area and identify any differences between age groups and between locations of residence.
4. **Literature review**

It is a well-known phenomenon that crime is a universal problem, with the majority of the media reports notifying the public about the crimes committed by youths. Therefore the reason behind why this study was conducted is to explore the perceptions of crime, specifically looking at the residents living in one of London’s council estates, St. Raphael’s, in Brent. Furthermore, this study aims to determine the possible reasons behind the crime and to gather opinions on ways of reducing and/or preventing it. The ages of the participants’ will also be a factor that is to be measured to investigate whether the perception of crime differs dependant on the age of the participant. According to Pain et al, (2001), since the late twentieth century, crime has become one of the leading universal problems within society. Whilst it affects people in their day to day lives it also affects those who have not been a victim of crime through social processes such as the media and political agendas. It is through these types of outlets that it has become clear that crime has developed into a usual and ordinary aspect of life, a part of everyday existence in many places with a large part of the public having experienced some form of crime themselves. The topic of Black youth crime and the portrayal of black youths being dangerous and often delinquent youths in the media have generated considerable publicity in recent years. The constant reporting of recent fatal knife and gun crimes in London involving black youths were substantially highlighted by the media, regardless of crime statistics showing that it is one of the lowest crimes committed. Due to the negative light shone on young black youths, mainly ‘hooded males’ a moral panic was formed surrounding the issue. Various previous literatures draws the conclusion that although the media do in fact portray black youths in a negative way it is agreed black youth crime is a serious problem and therefore cannot be dismissed as a moral panic exacerbated by the media. It is well known that the perceived high rate of black youth crime in the UK has generated much discussion in recent years, with continuous headlines describing a black hooded youth has committed a crime or has been injured/killed. IT has been questioned why black men tend to commit a disproportionate amount of crime compared to white youths. IT may be that this in fact is not the case, and the truth is that the media deems black crimes to be more newsworthy and therefore distributes crimes of this type more often. The media is also known for portraying certain groups in society in a way that generates fear and produces stereotypes and labels. According to Okoronkwo, 2008, ‘Like many large industries, the media is governed by the ever familiar socioeconomic class of person, that being white, middle class, and middle aged men. Their views on society may differ from those not part of this demographic’. It is extremely likely that those who work in the media have, to some degree, an influence on what stories are published and what stories are not therefore aiding in the process of media manipulation, defining or amplifying some issues over others (Jewkes, 2004, p.60).

In the late 90’s there was a growing recognition in the UK that a number of demographic trends and social policies have combined to cluster social and economic disadvantage in particular areas and in particular on social housing estates (Green, 1996; Noble & Smith,1996; Social Exclusion Unit, 1998c). As a consequence some estates have suffered from very high unemployment rates with a substantial amount of those people being youths and a large concentration of children, they also have a high proportion of lone parent families, disaffection from education and high rates of crime and instances of disorder and antisocial behaviour (Power & Tunstall, 1995). According to Page and Burrows (1997), It is a common detail that the social demography of housing estates in the UK has radically changed in the past decade. Underclass theorists and the media have set about and successfully demonised particular estates branding them as ‘out of control’, run by ‘gangs’, beleaguered by ‘neighbours from hell’ and so on (Bagguley & Mann,1992; MacDonald, 1997; Murray, 1990). However, the report of the Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) on neighbourhood renewal recognises that ‘the spatial concentration of disadvantage is at least in part the result of misguided public policy decisions at national, regional and local levels’ (Taylor and Francis online, 2013).

Certain areas such as council estates in particular are commonly associated with crime. According to the guardian, (2003), only 1 per-cent of the population suffer from repeat victimisation, 2 per cent of the population suffers from just under half of all property crime, and most criminals will commit their offences within 1.8 miles of their own front door, robbing neighbours. Furthermore, the overwhelming majority of the offenders live on council estates consumed by poverty and criminalised by the war against drugs. Donnison (1998) suggests that a possible reason behind the high level of crime in estates is a growing anger in youths who feel socially excluded by mainstream society. In some areas there is a high rate of poverty and crime, and many youths leave school with very little or no qualifications and job prospects, therefore, having no way to support a family as well as having an inability to find a partner that could support a family as they are likely to be in the same position. This coupled with the fear of being attacked or receiving abuse from youths outside the area, plants the seed of frustration and anger in society, which then continues to grow. This anger can apparently manifest itself in three directions; through mobilization and creativity; depression and apathy or delinquency and violence, and thirdly it can aid in the crime associated with estates. In a report published by CiCe (2010) it is suggested that the media plays an important role in influencing and shaping young people’s and adults’ knowledge and understanding as well as their own life experiences. Although the report states that crime rates continue to fall, public perception created by the media remains that crime and violence are increasing. The public’s concern for gun and knife crime grows in relation to media reports and coverage that were common at the time, highlighting the ‘epidemic’ of knife crime amongst London teenagers. Due to the fact that bad news is deemed to be newsworthy it is understandable why the public’s perceptions of crime are so negative. According to Karstedt, ‘Global media increasingly promulgate emotionalised practices of compassion, sympathy, sorrow and rage that position audiences as moral spectators of distant suffering’(Cromby et al, 2009). Karstedt argues that the legal system and the criminal justice system have responded appropriately to these ‘societal changes with a ‘rediscovered’ moral imagination that especially emphasises shame and orients toward public and collective emotion displays’ (Cromby et al, 2009). This shows how powerful an influence the media can be, having a substantial influence on the public’s emotions thus guiding their perceptions on crime in such a negative direction.

Pain, (2000) believes that fear of crime is increasingly seen as inseparable not only from crime and disorder in western cities, but also from a range of economic and social problems concerned with social exclusion relating to gender, race poverty, employment, housing and environmental planning ect. When addressing the problem of gang related crime and fear of crime the Home Office conducted a study which asked the public, much like this study, what they feel the problem of crime is due to and what processes could be put in place to reduce crime rates. After much deliberation there were several programs set up to try to reduce the number of gang related crimes in London. Gang injunctions were made available for under 18-year-olds, new offences of threatening with a knife in a public place or school were introduced, the intention to introduce a new offence of possessing illegal firearms with intent to supply, with a tough maximum penalty of life was announced, the intention to increase the maximum penalty for importation of firearms, also to life was announced as well as dedicating £1.2 million over three years to fund a network of 13 support workers for girls vulnerable to or suffering from gang-related sexual violence. The work done by the home office is continuously making a difference to the lives of young people across the country. In the last year, Jobcentre Plus alone has removed 74 former London gang members off the streets and placed them into education, some form of training or even employment. Furthermore, due to the work of the UK Border Agency which aims to tackle foreign national offenders, seven of the most dangerous gang members have been extradited and a minimum of around 80 gang injunctions have been taken out across the country, imposing conditions on gang members in order to prevent further violence.

Although they are deemed to be the post popular, knife and gun crimes are not the only types of crimes that occur on housing estates. Motor vehicle crimes are also a growing form of crime, particularly amongst youths. A report by The Home Office Police Research Group (1992) states that a ‘large proportion of motor vehicle crime is committed by young males, with 71% of those apprehended for offences of theft or unauthorised taking of a motor vehicle being under 21 years of age’. They found that joy riding is the main motivation for such thefts with youths ‘borrowing’ vehicles for the thrill and excitement that they gain from committing these crimes. However as these youths grew older, their motivations for taking the vehicles embark on a different path as cars became an opportunity for the offender to make money and to gain financial rewards from selling the stolen cars on rather than taking them for the thrill and then leaving them stranded once they had their fun. The report also shows youths as young as 10 years of age were involved in these criminal activities, beginning as passengers and lookouts and then progressing on to thieves themselves as they learnt techniques from older youths. According to a study conducted in London to review the perceptions of youths upon crime, it was found that for the most part, young children tended to be pessimistic when asked whether they feel crime in their area would increase, stay the same or decrease over the next few years. Two thirds of those people asked, aged between 14-17, felt that the level of violence and crime within their area would either increase or at least stay the same over the next few years. It was also found that in comparison, the older students had a more negative perception on crime than the younger students, this may be due to the fact that within these areas the older a person becomes the more likely they will become subject to crime or become a victim of crime therefore their perception of crime becomes increasingly more negative. As Hicks (1996) notes, the perceptions of young people as well as their hopes and dreams for the future are based on their experiences of the present, and can be seen as a ‘mirror’ of their current experiences. Therefore if a person’s childhood is full of fear of crime then it can be expected that their levels of fear will be increased compared to a person whom is not exposed to as much crime whilst growing up. As far back as 1994, British young people were expressing concerns about the rise in violence and crime in their local area. Hicks and Holden, surveying over 400 young people aged 7-18, found that the most frequently mentioned concerns that people had regarding their community tended to be related to the levels of crime and violence that took place, with over 40% of 11 year old mentioning the fear or problem of crime, rising to over 60% of all secondary school students in total mentioning the fear or the problems that crimes cause. Many thought that levels of crime and violence would increase in the future, citing that unemployment, lack of police action, alcohol and drugs are main causes for the increase. This coincides with this study which aims to investigate what the public feel the crime rates are due to. Furthermore, some of the concerns shared reflected the views of the media at that time, for example children worried that violence perpetrated by the IRA might spread to their community. This shows how powerful an outlet the media can be. When asked about the perception of crime, there seemed to be a common theme as to why crime was on the increase. Hicks askes several youths about their opinions as to why they feel crime was on the increase and he found the following; one boy replied ‘cos of all the stabbings’ (11 year old, London), another said ‘gun shootings’ (17 year old, London), and another boy felt it was because ‘knife crime has so escalated’ (17 year old, London). A London 11 year old claimed, when asked what they understood by ‘violence’, that ‘it means when people in, well mainly in Britain, like in London, when people stab each other’ (Minty, Hollingworth, Allan and Holden, 2010).

Violence and crime is seen as social problems associated with social, economic and political disadvantages. There have been attempts at finding ways to prevent or reduce crime in communities, with a case study by Lane and Henry (2001) noting one particular project that attempted to explore the potential of community development as a means of preventing ‘street crime’. The project aimed to increase educational and recreational outlets and opportunities for children and young adults, and promoted social inclusion to combat the exclusion felt to be partly the cause of the societal anger some youths feel. This coincides with this study which aims to see what, if anything can be done to try and reduce the amount of crimes committed by youths. The project also aimed to increase the capacity of local people to deal with social problems in the area. Their outcomes suggest that a combination of social projects, modifications to the built environment in the area as well as community development processes, can be an effective means for creating safer, more neighbourly places with a greater sense of community amongst residents and also effective at achieving social justice outcomes for disadvantaged people, therefore aiding in the reduction of crime rates.

When asking the question ‘What caused these riots and why did the police lose control?’ Some commentators lean towards the fact that the disorder was understandable and justified; some people agreed with the statement that the police “had it coming”. Others felt that the rioting was always going to happen at one point or another due to the continuous increase in unemployment rates and poverty in the area caused by the recession. Some local people were honest about their feelings of resentment towards the police. One student stating that: “The police never talk to us, they ignore us, they don’t think we’re human in this area.” A youth worker claimed: “The way the police treat black people is like we’re nothing.” And a retired accountant who has lived in London, and has lived locally for 30 years reported that some of the police “behave in an arrogant manner that puts people’s backs up”. The lack of confidence in the Police is evident in the reactions given by the public when asked about their perceptions of the Police and how effective they feel the Police are. An example of how the media is portraying youths to be all the same is the short statement reported by a Local London newspaper. They write ‘The small crowds of very young men and women, of every skin colour, typically dressed in almost identical hooded sweatshirts, were on the main streets of the mainly poor neighbourhoods along the city’s north eastern, southern and western boundaries, engaged in running skirmishes with police, looting hundreds of shops, setting dozens of buildings and houses ablaze’. Another example of the media dramatizing facts in order to portray youths in a terrifying and negative light is a statement from the Home secretary, Theresa May, whoy claims that the situation across London and beyond (Birmingham, Leeds, Bristol) is "sheer criminality". She continues ‘in this instance, the nature and scale of the crime is exceptional and seem to be committed by uncontrolled young people and children as young as ten. Terrified and bewildered bystanders watch in horror as their homes and places of work burn. The overt disregard for authority and deliberate disrespect displayed by the rioters reflect a state of notable moral decline. In effect, it would seem that the Mark Duggan shooting did little more than provide an opportunity to release latent and repressed tension and anger’ (The Globe and Mail, 2013). It was argued by many commentators that the current strategy that is adopted by the police force is in part to blame for the escalation of violence. Other observers suggest that the ‘spread of unrest, lawlessness and total sense of fearlessness displayed by these young people is somehow due to a sense of hopelessness on the part of young people who have nothing to lose and nothing to look forward to’. Those who directly experienced the terror first hand on the streets were understandably much less sympathetic for the position that the Police found themselves in and view the trail of destruction as a blatant disregard for authority (Politics.co.uk, 2013).

They are stereotyping youths as a whole, generalising through clothing for example which then causes negative behaviour towards all youths when in actual fact it is only the minority that cause hindrances and commit crimes. Ironically, the truth is that even members of the affected communities and their spokespersons were quick to distance themselves from the rioters making it abundantly clear that the "hooligans" and "greedy criminals" are not part of their communities and are no reflection of the community as a whole. Listening to the comments made by black leaders in the following days after the riots occurred, it was made extremely clear that they did not want to be associated with such behaviour in any way. It was made sure that there was no association between the background of the man shot during a police operation and the events that followed. Instead, they began to point the blame towards the government, insisting that the riots and how they were dealt with were a reflection of the government and their failures to deliver appropriate services for young people in the area. During the weekend of the London riots, the Labour MP for Tottenham David Lammy was quick to remind us that he represented a community with the highest level of unemployment in London, suggesting that the area was in great need of job opportunities and financial investment in order to try to rectify or reduce crime. Furthermore, it was claimed that the violence that occurred was being committed by people who live outside of the community, shifting the blame from the youths in the community who got involved in the riots. Whilst this might be true, the extreme escalation of the unrest that occurred in areas beyond Tottenham would suggest that unemployment and disadvantage is not necessarily the only or paramount motive or trigger for the current mindless violence that continued to spread across the country for days. It is incontestable that the underlying cause of the current unrest will require a more sophisticated analysis.

It is expected that the residents living in St Raphael’s Estate will have a higher perception of crime rates and will have an inaccurate view of these rates believing that crime is occurring more regularly than actual statistics show. It is assumed that there will be a relationship between the fear of crime and the age of the participant in that the older the participant the greater the concern and fear of crime they have. Furthermore, it is supposed that children are affected by the amount of crimes committed in the area, subsequently having a noticeable effect on them aiding in their development of fear of crime thus effecting their education and abilities to perform well in school. Finally it is proposed that those residents living closer to the heart of the estate (council area) will have less fear of crime compared to those living on the fridges of it (suburban area).

1. **Methodology**

**3.1 Pilot Study**

Before the main study began a pilot study took place to determine whether better results would be gained through the use of either open ended or closed ended questions. The study consisted of 10 participants; 5 were given a questionnaire consisting of mostly closed ended questions which would give quantitative results (see Appendix 1), the other 5 participants were given a questionnaire consisting of mostly open ended questions which would give qualitative results (see Appendix 2). After the pilot study was conducted it was decided that the questionnaire that gave qualitative results was much better therefore was then used in the main study. Data for the pilot study was collected between May 2012 and June 2012.

* 1. **Main Study**

**3.2.1 Participants**

The Study was made up of 70 randomly selected participants whose place of residents fell within the boundaries of St Raphael’s Estate found in the borough of Brent in North West London. Originally stratified sampling was intended to be used to select participants for the study, sampling equally from each age group designated in the study however, the sampling type was changed to random. The study was aimed at both males and females of 18 years of age or older. The ages were separated into four groups; 18-25, 26-40, 41-60 and 61 and older. Originally the age ranges were set to be 10-18 and 30 and older. As the study would involve interacting with young children it would necessitate that anyone involved in the collection of data would need to have an advanced Criminal Record Background (CRB) check done on them beforehand. However the age groups were changed before data collection took place and this made getting CRB checked unnecessary. The data for the study was collected between June 2012 and December 2012. It was explained to each participant that if they were to take part in the study they would be doing so voluntarily and therefore should not expect any payment of any kind.

**3.2.2 Materials**

Each of the 70 participants who took part in the study was given a questionnaire to complete (see Appendix 2). This questionnaire was created with the intention of acquiring data from the participants about their gender, age, place of residents in the estate as well as their awareness of crime in the specified area of the study, their attitudes and opinions to this crime and the impact this crime has on their daily life. The questionnaire would also show whether there is a relationship between the ages of the participants and their perceptions of crime. Each questionnaire was given in hard copy form and the participants were informed that before attempting to complete it that it may take an estimated 15 minutes due to the amount of open ended questions used.

At the beginning of the questionnaire I included a brief that explained to the participants the purpose and aims of the study as well as the participant’s role in the study. This brief also informed the participants of the confidentiality of the study explaining to them that no personal information would be taken down, that in the event that the study results in publication there will be no possibility of the results being associated with any specific individual. It also informed the participant that they had the option of withdrawing from the study at any time before and during the completion of the questionnaire however due to the anonymity of the study, their responses are compiled with the others It will be impossible to determine which are theirs. This information was also repeated in a debrief at the end of the questionnaire along with contact details for myself and my dissertation supervisor as well as contact information for victim support help lines in case either is needed.

**3.2.3 Procedure**

Before beginning the study a risk assessment form needed to be completed by the researchers involved (see Appendix 3). This was necessary as it would make sure that all possible risks to the researchers that could occur during the study were taken note of and precautions were taken against them, as well as making sure the risks involved in the study were not too severe. An ethics for was also completed before the study began (see Appendix 4). This was needed to make sure that the study and research for it were ethically correct and wouldn’t compromise any participant’s well-being or human rights. Part of the process of making the study ethically correct was to make sure that each participant were informed before taking part in the study that they were free to withdraw at any point during it until the point where the questionnaire was completed at which point they would lose the ability. This was due to the anonymity of the study which meant that no personal data that could possibly lead to a participant’s identity being acknowledged would be recorded, but also meant that once a participant’s questionnaire was collected it wouldn’t be possible to distinguish one particular participant’s questionnaire from any other. Participants were informed that by agreeing to take part and completing a questionnaire they were giving their consent for the data collected to be used in the study. All this information was explain to the participant verbally as well as through the brief at the beginning of the questionnaire they were completing.

The questionnaire consisted of 13 open questions and 1 multiple choice question which were used to assess a number of factors about the participant such as their age, gender, their awareness of crime around them and their feelings about this crime, whether they worried/feared it and whether they had ever been a victim of it and their opinions on the reason behind the crime. These questions were chosen to make it possible to gain an understanding as to how residents in the area of study perceived the crime around them and whether it affected their behaviour on a daily basis.

**3.3 Interview**

This part of the study involved the participation of a Head Teacher of a school local St Raphael’s Estate, Brent and at which a large number of children from the study area attended. Data for this part of the study was collected on the 3rd April 2013. It was explained to the Head Teacher that their participation in the study would be of their own volition and that they wouldn’t be receiving any form of payment for taking part.

The Head Teacher was interviewed and asked to answer a set list of questions compiled prior to the interview. These questions were designed with the intention of acquiring data on the opinions the Head Teacher in regards to the crime in the area of study, its effect on the behaviour and attitudes of the children that lived there and who attended their school. The interview consisted of 11 questions and before beginning the Head Teacher was informed that it would take up to an estimated 10 minutes to complete the interview dependant on her responses to the questions.

A brief and debrief similar to the ones included in the questionnaires was also read out to the Head Teacher at the beginning of the interview. This brief/debrief informed the Head Teacher to the nature and purpose of the study and aims of the study they were participating in. It also informed them that they and their school were assured that the information obtained would be held confidentially by the researchers and that no publication resulting from the study would identify anybody or institution by name or make it possible for test results to be linked to any either the Head or their school which in turn would protect the pupils identities also. The brief also informed the Head Teacher that they had the right to withdraw at any time before or during the interview however once it had been completed their right to withdraw would end and that by completing the interview they were agreeing to participate and to have the data gathered during the interview used in the study.

1. **Results and Analysis**

**4.1 Questionnaire**

The results found through this study show that perceptions of crime held by residents living in St Raphael’s council estate in Brent, London are influenced by the location of the estate they reside in. The results showed that a third of participants that took part in the study reside in the inner areas of the estate leaving the other two thirds of participants residing within the outer parts of the estate. From the one third of the participants residing in the inner estate it was found that the majority answered the questionnaire showing a general lack of fear and worry about the crime that occurred in their area while in contrast, those who live in the outer estate worried about and feared crime more. A possible reason for this difference in concern about crime could be that due to the two groups may be surrounded by different amounts of crime as they live in different parts of the estate. Those living in the inner estate may experience higher levels of crime due to the area containing a higher concentration of the estates population. As a result of experiencing more crime, those living there may be desensitised to crime and therefore fear crime less. Those living in the lesser populated outer estate however may be more sensitive to crime around them due to crime occurring less there. Although inner and outer estate residents had varying levels of fear and worry of crime, both groups had similar feeling with regards to the level of crime committed and the amount of anti-social behaviour that occurs in the area.

Throughout the study a reoccurring theme appeared regarding the thoughts and feelings about the competence of the Police. Results revealed that most residents feel that the Police are not doing enough to protect both the residents and the community, when asked if they have been a victim of crime and reported it to the Police the general feedback was that due to lack of trust and confidence in the Police very little crimes committed against the residents were actually reported. Originally it was expected that the reason behind why people would not report crimes to the Police was through fear of persecution from those offenders who had been reported, thus causing repeat victimisation. In actuality, the reason for people not reporting crimes is, as mentioned previously, due to lack of trust and confidence in the Police. This coincides with previous literature whereby one newspaper article explained how the lack of confidence in the Police is evident in the reactions given by the public when asked about their perceptions of the Police and how effective they feel the Police are. One retired accountant who has lived in London, and has lived locally for 30 years reported that some of the police “behave in an arrogant manner that puts people’s backs up” (The Globe and Mail, 2011).

It was also found that, as expected, age has a major impact on a person’s perception of both safety and crime. The results show that the older participants (aged 60+) had a much higher perception of crime rates than the younger participants (18-25). This being the case, it was found that the high perception of crime is apparent throughout the age ranges. Furthermore, results show that age is a contributing factor to the amount of worry a person feels regarding crime. The younger participants either had little or no worries regarding crime whereby in contrast the older participants tended to stay indoors at night if they could. This may be due to the fact that younger participants expressed that they wouldn’t go out alone at night and therefore felt safer in numbers, having a knock on effect on the worries of crime for older people who fear ‘gangs’. Furthermore, a relationship between age and the level of safety seems to be apparent through the trends in a higher feeling of safety for younger people compared to the older participants. This being said, it was found that age did not contribute to the amount of safety a person felt whilst in the comfort of their own homes.

The amount of worry a person tends to feel concerning crime was found to have no connection to the amount of crimes a person has been a victim too thus suggesting that other outlets other than the amount of crimes committed have a major influence on the amount the public worry about crime. A well-known outlet which has a major influence of the public is the media. This coincides with previous literature whereby Karstedt states that ‘Global media increasingly promulgate emotionalised practices of compassion, sympathy, sorrow and rage that position audiences as moral spectators of distant suffering’(Cromby et al, 2009). Out of the 70 participants that took part in the study, 16 had never experienced crime against themselves, leaving 54 participants having experienced being a victim of crime in their lifetime. Out of those 54 participants, a total of 21 stated that the offender was a juvenile whilst 18 said that an adult committed the crime against them. This suggests that the perception of crime that links youths as the cause of the majority of crimes that occur is unfounded as the study shows that there is very little difference between the numbers of crimes committed by juveniles compared with the number of crimes committed by adults. Furthermore the study shows that again there is very little difference between the amount of crimes committed solely by a juvenile or adult when compared with crimes committed by both kinds of offenders working together. Media is a powerful outlet which can be seen to influence the perceptions of the general public. These results coincide with previous literature conducted by Karstedt who argues that the legal system and the criminal justice system have responded appropriately to ‘societal changes with a ‘rediscovered’ moral imagination that especially emphasises shame and orients toward public and collective emotion displays’ (Cromby et al, 2009). This shows how powerful an influence the media can be, having a substantial influence on the public’s emotions thus guiding their perceptions on crime in such a negative direction.

Furthermore, amongst the 41 males and 29 females that took part in the study it was found that overall, females had a greater worry about crime than males and also had a higher perception of crime rates. From studying the analysis it was found that females tended to be much more cautious when walking alone at night and would try to refrain from going out at night or would go out making sure somebody else was present if they had the choice. This may be due to the fact that females can be deemed to be the more fragile gender whereas males are more ‘macho’ and like to be seen as the stronger, less fearless gender. These attitudes may have been reflected in the answers given by the participants. Overall 100% of those who participated in the study felt safe whilst walking alone during the day whereas in contrast, 3 quarters of participants felt varying levels of fear and unease while walking alone at night. Those participants who were 60+ in age felt the most fear at night with the large majority stating that they would refrain from travelling or even leaving their homes once it became dark through worry for their safety and fear of being victimised. Also, although they felt safe travelling alone during the day many stated that they still remained conscious of their surroundings and often travelled with another person whenever possible. Those participants who fell into the 18-25 age range were distinctly less wary of travelling alone in the dark with females participants making up the majority of those who were. Unlike with older participants however this wariness in young females was in some instances stated to be caused by a fear of the dark and not a fear of being victimised.

As a result of the wariness residents felt whilst travelling alone in the dark many of the participants said they did feel unsafe whilst travelling in the dark stated that they took precautions when it was necessary to feel safer. A common precaution for those who were 60+ as mentioned previously was to avoid leaving their homes altogether once the sun went down. The large majority of participants through all age groups took the precaution of ensuring to avoid certain routes, to stay in well-lit areas and to maintain and high level of awareness of their surroundings. There were however, examples of some participants taking what would be considered extreme precautions. One participant stated that they took the precaution of wearing steel toe capped boots daily whilst another participant made sure to carry a butterfly knife on their person at all times. This shows that a person’s perception and fear of crime can affect people’s behaviours and can even drive individuals to extremes in an effort to stay safe from victimisation.

From the responses given in the study drug dealing, substance abuse (drugs and alcohol), robbery and burglary are the crimes considered to be most common in St Raphael’s estate whilst highly publicised offences such as knife and gun crime were not acknowledged big issue. This again may show the influence the media has on public perceptions of crime as although knife and gun crimes occur rarely they are reported about often in the media and dramatised frequently which poses the idea that these crimes happen in high frequency and are a major problem. Actual crime stats however coincide with the results found in the study as residential burglaries rate as one of the highest occurring crimes in the borough of Brent at 2,835 reported incidents last year whilst robbery of a person had a reported 1,451 cases. Gun crime on the other hand had only 71 cases in the year, one of the lowest occurring crimes in Brent according to the London Metropolitan Police Department (2012).

Lack of respect in young people caused by a lack of discipline from parents was a consistent theme given by participants in response to being asked what they felt were the main causes of crime and antisocial behaviour in their area. The majority of participants felt that many parents did not take responsibility for their children’s behaviour, letting them roam the streets and cause disturbances with no repercussions for an easy life. This in turn caused a lack of respect of authority in both parent/child relationships as well as with members of the public. The combination of unemployment and young parents was another factor that was seen to be linked to the increase in crime rates. Furthermore, it was recorded that acultural acceptance by youths was present who link alcohol and drugs to having a good time. A lesser occurring, but still pertinent theme which occurred regarding the reasons behind crime was the amount of immigrants living in the area. It was found that the residents felt that the growing community of Somali immigrants in the area were involved in a lot of high end crime and are thought to be the main cause of the rise in burglaries within the area. Due to their numbers and organisational skills they go undetected by the Police and therefore continue committing crimes and continue to be a hindrance on the residents of the community. In order for crime rates to begin to decrease several ideas were provided which suggested building recreational centres in the area to give those youths who commit crimes out of boredom something else to focus their energy on. It was suggested that by putting something like this in place, it will encourage youths to stay off the streets and bond with each other in a more positive way enforcing a sense of community back into the area. It was also suggested that parent’s should be punished for the continuous bad behaviour of their children, in the hope that through the threat of repercussions the parents would be forced to take control of their children.

When the participants were asked how they felt crime rates had changed in their area over the past three years, results showed an overall consensus that crime rates had increased as a whole. In accordance with recent crime statistics of the area this is not the case, in fact crimes had decreased a substantial amount, reaching 31,438 reported crimes committed in 2011 compared to 27,752 reported crimes in 2012 (London Metropolitan Police Department, 2013). This shows that residents have a much greater perception of crime when compared to actual crimes committed.

**4.2 Interview**

The general consensus from the interview was that children are very rarely affected by crime during school but certain behaviours are occasionally acted out in an antisocial manner although these instances did not occur as frequently as initially thought. The head teacher gave details of a few incidents where children had approached a member of staff with concerns of crime however these are few and far between. Through correspondence before the interview took place, the head teacher offered to provide two sets of questionnaires that had been previously distributed to both the children and the parents in the local school. The results from the questionnaires completed by the pupils found that crime does not affect children within the school on a day to day basis, the children are worried about crime when they are outside of school but not within school hours. It seems to act as a safe haven for children whereby the only fears they have are everyday school fears such as being bullied or playground fights. This does not fully support the hypothesis in the fact that it was expected to find that crime does in fact have an effect on the education of children. It does however partially support the hypothesis due to the fact that outside of school children do have a fear and understanding of crime. Due to these findings it could be suggested that there are other reasons as to why children leave school with little or no qualifications due to the fact that outside of school crime affects them but inside school it has been found that their worries consist of normal school worries such as fighting or bullying. It might be that the school is doing a very good job at shielding the children from the outside world and therefore crime, ensuring their safety thus reducing fear of crime making sure it is not an issue whilst they are in the safety of the school. Furthermore, fear of crime in older students (secondary school and higher) tends to be a constant factor whereas for children it is only when they are not in school allowing school to represent itself as a safe haven, something that the older students do not have, hence why some commit so many crimes out of boredom or lack of support. The questionnaire completed by the parents found that they have the same views with regards that the school shields their children from outside crimes as the study conducted by the local school shows that they majority of parents do not have worries about their children and crime whilst they are in school. They only worries they have coincide with the children’s fears and school life. Once out of school, like the children, the parents do fear crime and the safety of their children.

* 1. **Limitations**

Whilst conducting this study I came across a few problems that needed to be rectified. The first problem that arose was with regards to the sampling of my participants for the study. Although I was able to get 70 participants of all ages, a higher number would be needed in order to be able to generalise the findings and to gain a greater validity. I also originally intended for my sampling to be stratified with an equal number of participants in each age group but upon beginning to gather the data I soon found that this was not possible and the sampling became randomised. This was due to factors such as the residents that were available at the time as well as the ages of the participants hindering my progress due to reluctance to take part. Finally, the data gathered only concentrated on one area of London and so therefore cannot be generalised over the whole of the city.

**4.4 Future Work**

For future work it is suggested that more estates are covered in order to be able to get a general perception of crime within estates throughout the whole of London. Also, if more than one primary school was to be interviewed, these results could be collated together to gain a stronger validity. It may also be beneficial to interview the head teachers and pupils of secondary schools in order to explore the differences, if any, in perceptions of crime dependant on a person’s age. To close, it is recommended that a larger sampling pool is to be used for anyone who wishes to develop on this study in further detail as this would give a much stronger validity.

1. **Conclusion**

At length, it was found that age does in fact affect the perception of crime within an area with older residents having a much higher perception and fear of crime overall. It was also established that the location of a person can substantially affect perception, in the case of this study those living within the inner estate perceived crime to be less than those who lived on the outer parts of the estate. Finally it was discovered that although crime has some effect on children, its influence is less substantial than what was initially hypothesised. When outside of school, children have a clear understanding of crime, but this does not seem to affect them whilst they are in school and therefore has little to no direct effect on their education or behaviour in school. There has been a substantial amount of literature reviewed which supports the theories of this study and therefore, to close this study was overall one of a success, with the results gathered supporting the hypotheses.

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**7.0 Appendix**

Participant Information Sheet  
Name and status of researcher:   
Nathan Wauchope  
(Third Year Undergraduate Geography Student)

Title of study/project: The perception of crime by residents within a London Council Estate

Nature of project: This investigation is an undergraduate third year student project.

Purpose of study: The study aims to identify the ways in which crime in St. Raphael’s council estate in Brent, London is perceived by local residents and how this perception affects them. The study also aims to determine possible reasons behind this crime and to gather opinions on ways of reducing and/or preventing it. The ages of the participants will also be assessed to see whether the perceptions of crime differ dependant on the age of the participants’.

Procedures and Participants Role: You will be asked to complete a range of questions regarding several topics about your day to day thoughts and feelings on crime. This should take no longer than fifteen minutes. We will also ask you your age and record your gender. No personal data of any kind that will lead to the acknowledgement of a person’s identity will be recorded.

Please Note:

You have the right to withdraw from the project/study at any time without prejudice before or while completing the questionnaire and all of the data you have supplied up to this point will be destroyed. Once all of the tests and measures have been completed and your results incorporated into the database since these are anonymous it will not be possible to remove your data at this stage. If there are any questions that you would like to ask or any issues that you would like to raise, then please ask me now.

Age:

18-25 26-40 41-60 61+

Gender:

Male Female

Location:

Inner Estate Outer Estate

1. Have you ever experienced a crime against yourself?

Yes

No

2. Was the person who committed a crime against you a juvenile or an adult?  
Juvenile

Adult

Both

Neither

3. Please answer the following questions as truthfully as possible regarding your worries of crime, putting one of the following responses next to each sentence; Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree.

I am afraid of being raped or sexually assaulted   
I am afraid of being attacked by someone with a weapon   
I am afraid of having my money/possessions taken from me   
I am afraid to go out at night because I might become a victim of crime   
I am afraid that someone will break into my house while I’m away   
Fear of criminal victimisation prevents me from doing things I would like to do

4. How much of a problem these types of crimes are in your area? Please put one of the following responses next to each of the crimes; Very big problem, Fairly big problem, Neutral, Not a big problem, No problem at all.

Noisy neighbours or loud parties   
Teenagers hanging around on the streets   
People sleeping rough on the streets or in other public places   
Rubbish or litter lying around   
Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property or vehicles   
People being attacked or harassed because of their skin colour, ethnic origin or religion   
People using or dealing drugs   
People being drunk or rowdy in public places   
  
5. How safe do you feel walking alone in your area after dark?

Very safe

Fairly safe

A little unsafe

Very unsafe

I do not feel safe enough to ever walk alone in my area after dark

6. When walking around at night, do you ever feel unsafe due to the following:  
Your age  
Too ill/sick/disabled  
Having children with you  
Fear of being mugged or physically attacked  
Fear of burglary/vandalism  
Fear of the dark/night  
Fear of going out on your own  
Other  
None of the above

7. How safe do you feel walking alone in this area during the day?

Very safe  
Fairly safe  
A little unsafe  
Very unsafe

8. How safe do you feel when you are alone in your own home at night?   
Very safe  
Fairly safe  
A little unsafe  
Very unsafe

9. When you are out after dark, how often do you perform any of the following options as a precaution against crime? Put one of the following responses next to each sentence; Always, Usually, Occasionally, Sometimes, Never

Avoid walking near certain types of people   
Plan your routes to avoid certain streets or areas   
Get someone to go out with you   
Make special transport arrangements e.g. taxi   
Always Usually Occasionally Sometimes Never  
Carry a personal alarm   
Carry some means of self-defence   
  
10. How much you worry about the following crimes happening to you or someone in your family? Put one of the following responses next to each sentence; A lot, A little, Neutral, Not at all

Having your vehicle damaged by vandals   
Having your vehicle stolen   
Having your vehicle broken into and something stolen from it   
Having your house broken into and something stolen   
Being mugged or robbed of a handbag, wallet, etc   
Being verbally abused in the street   
Being physically assaulted in the street   
Getting involved with illegal drugs   
Being a victim of racial abuse or attacks   
Being involved in a road traffic accident due to speeding traffic/drunk driving

11. Thinking specifically about your area, how common do you think the following crimes are? Put one of the following responses next to each sentence; Very common, Fairly common, Neutral, Fairly uncommon, Very uncommon

Having your vehicle damaged by vandals   
Having your vehicle stolen   
Having your vehicle broken into and something stolen from it   
Burglary   
Shoplifting   
Vandalism to buildings, public property   
Assault or abuse on the street   
Being mugged or robbed of a handbag, wallet, etc   
Domestic violence   
Speeding/drunk driving   
Racial abuse or attacks   
Underage drinking   
Drug taking/dealing   
  
12. Do you think that crime and antisocial behaviour in the area may be linked to Illegal drug use?  
Yes

No

Not sure

13. How much would you say the crime rate has changed over the last 3 years ago in your area?  
A major increase in crime  
A slight increase in crime  
About the same  
A slight decrease in crime  
A major decrease in crime

14. In the last 12 months, were you the victim of a property crime such as someone attempting to steal or stealing your car, breaking into, or trying to break into your home, or vandalizing your property?   
Yes

No

15. Did you report it to the police?   
Yes

No

N/A

16. If No was this due to:  
Fear of consequences from offenders  
No trust in the police  
Did not want to act on the crime  
Other (please specify) ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….

17. In the last 12 months, did anyone take, or attempt to take, something directly from you by using force, or threat of force?   
Yes

No

18. Did you report it to the police?  
Yes

No

N/A

19. If No was this due to:  
Fear of consequences from offenders  
No trust in the police  
Did not want to act on the crime  
Other (please specify) ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….

20. In the last 12 months, did anyone threaten to hit, attack, or assault you?  
Yes

No

21. Did you report it to the police?  
Yes

No

N/A

22. If No was this due to:  
Fear of consequences from offenders  
No trust in the police  
Did not want to act on the crime  
Other (please specify) ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….

23. In the last 12 months, did anyone injure you with a weapon or assault you with physical force?  
Yes

No

24. Did you report it to the police?   
Yes

No

N/a

25. If No was this due to:  
Fear of consequences from offenders  
No trust in the police  
Did not want to act on the crime  
Other (please specify) ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….

26. Was the person who did this to you a:  
Stranger  
Casual Acquaintance  
A family member (including an unmarried partner living in your home)  
A person or people who are well-known to you, excluding family  
You did not see anyone  
N/A

27. How much of a problem do you think the following are in your area? Put one of the following responses next to each sentence; Very Small, Small, Neutral, Large, Very Large

People not being made to take responsibility for the behaviour of their children   
Lack of activities for young people   
Limited safe play areas for children   
Lack of community recreation facilities   
People not treating other people with respect and consideration   
Noisy neighbours or loud parties   
Teenagers hanging around on the streets   
Rubbish and litter lying around   
People being drunk and rowdy in public spaces   
Drink related violence   
Insufficient street lighting   
Inadequate public transport   
Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property or vehicles   
Unemployment   
People using or dealing drugs   
Drunk driving

28. Over the past three years, do you believe that crime in your community has decreased?  
Yes  
No

29. Do you feel law enforcement is doing a good job of protecting you and your community?  
Yes  
No

30. What do you feel if anything could be done to reduce the amount of crimes committed in your area?  
……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

POST PROCEDURE DEBRIEF AND INFORMATION  
Thank you very much for taking part in this research. Your help and co-operation is greatly appreciated. The purpose of this research project is to identify the ways in which crime in St. Raphael’s council estate in Brent, London is perceived by local residents and how this perception affects them. The study also aims to determine possible reasons behind this crime and to gather opinions on ways of reducing and/or preventing it. The ages of the participants will also be assessed to see whether the perceptions of crime differ dependant on the age of the participants’.

The information obtained from yourself and other participants will be analysed together to provide an overall indication of the perception of crime and how this affects the behaviour of resident’s in the area. The information obtained will be held confidentially by the researchers and no publication resulting from this study will identify you by name or make it possible for tests results to be linked to individuals.   
Both mine and my Supervisor’s contact details are on the attached sheet. If you would like a summary of the results when the project has been completed or want to discuss anything you think important please do not hesitate to contact us.

Researcher: Nathan Wauchope (NWauchope@uclan.ac.uk)  
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Victims of Crime: sources of help and advice  
If you are worried about becoming a victim of crime, the Internet addresses below are for websites containing various ways of getting help if you should need it. Contact numbers and addresses are also provided.  
<http://www.victimsupport.org.uk/Help-for-victims>  
Tel. 08453030900  
<https://www.gov.uk/get-support-as-a-victim-of-crime>  
Telephone number is dependent on the area you live in, but this site allows you easy access to the correct phone number

Participant Information Sheet  
Name and status of researcher:   
Nathan Wauchope  
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Procedures and Participants Role: You will be asked to complete a range of questions regarding several topics about your day to day thoughts and feelings on crime. This should take no longer than fifteen minutes. We will also ask you your age and record your gender. No personal data of any kind that will lead to the acknowledgement of a person’s identity will be recorded.

Please Note:

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Age: 18-25 26-40 41-60 61+

Gender: Male Female

Location:

Inner Estate Outer Estate

1. Have you ever experienced a crime against yourself?   
 Yes No

2. Was the person who committed a crime against you a juvenile or an adult?  
 Juvenile Adult Both Neither

3. Do you worry about becoming a victim of crime? If so which crimes do you worry about and how strong is this worry?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

4. How much do you feel crime is a problem within your area and which crimes (e.g. drug dealing, robbery, assault etc) do you feel are most common?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

5. How safe do you feel walking alone in your area after dark and if you feel unsafe for what reason do you feel this way?

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6. In comparison do you feel safe walking alone in your area during the day?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

7. Do you take any safety precautions when you are walking in the dark (e.g. Carry personal alarms, a means of self-defence, take/avoid certain routes, etc) and how often do you do this?

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8. What do you think crime and anti-social behaviour in your area is linked to?

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9. How much do you feel crime rates have changed in your area over the last 3 years? What in your opinion is the cause of this change?

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10. In the last year have you been a victim of a crime? If yes, what happened?

……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………...............................................................................................................................

11. Did you report the crime to the police and if not what reason did you have for not doing so?

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12. In relation to your local area, how much of a problem do you think the following are? Next to each problem put one of the following responses; Very Small, Small, Neutral, Large, Very Large.

People not being made to take responsibility for the behaviour of their children   
Lack of activities for young people   
Limited safe play areas for children   
Lack of community recreation facilities   
People not treating other people with respect and consideration   
Noisy neighbours or loud parties   
Teenagers hanging around on the streets   
Rubbish and litter lying around   
People being drunk and rowdy in public spaces   
Drink related violence   
Insufficient street lighting   
Inadequate public transport   
Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property or vehicles   
Unemployment   
People using or dealing drugs   
Drunk driving

13. Do you believe law enforcement is doing a good job of protecting you and your community?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

14. What do you feel, if anything could be done to reduce the amount of crimes committed in your area?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

POST PROCEDURE DEBRIEF AND INFORMATION  
Thank you very much for taking part in this research. Your help and co-operation is greatly appreciated. The purpose of this research project is to identify the ways in which crime in St. Raphael’s council estate in Brent, London is perceived by local residents and how this perception affects them. The study also aims to determine possible reasons behind this crime and to gather opinions on ways of reducing and/or preventing it. The ages of the participants will also be assessed to see whether the perceptions of crime differ dependant on the age of the participants’.  
The information obtained from yourself and other participants will be analysed together to provide an overall indication of the perception of crime and how this affects the behaviour of resident’s in the area. The information obtained will be held confidentially by the researchers and no publication resulting from this study will identify you by name or make it possible for tests results to be linked to individuals.   
Both mine and my Supervisor’s contact details are on the attached sheet. If you would like a summary of the results when the project has been completed or want to discuss anything you think important please do not hesitate to contact us.

Researcher: Nathan Wauchope (NWauchope@uclan.ac.uk)  
Supervisor: Mark Toogood   
School of Built and Natural Environment  
University of Central Lancashire,   
PRESTON,   
PR1 2HE   
tel: (01772) 893528  
e-mail: MToogood@uclan.ac.uk

Victims of Crime: sources of help and advice  
If you are worried about becoming a victim of crime, the Internet addresses below are for websites containing various ways of getting help if you should need it. Contact numbers and addresses are also provided.  
<http://www.victimsupport.org.uk/Help-for-victims>  
Tel. 08453030900  
<https://www.gov.uk/get-support-as-a-victim-of-crime>  
Telephone number is dependent on the area you live in, but this site allows you easy access to the correct phone number

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Health, Safety and Environment SectionRISK ASSESSMENT FORM | uclanlogo July 2007 |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Risk Assessment For** |  | **Assessment Undertaken By** |  | **Assessment Reviewed** |
| **Service / Faculty / Dept**: SBNE |  | Name: N. Wauchope |  | **Name:** |
| **Location of Activity**: St Raphael’s Estate, Brent, London |  | **Date: 20/03/2012** |  | **Date:** |
| **Activity:** Survey of local residents in the estate |  | **Signed by Head of Dept / equivalent** |  |  |
| **REF:** |  | **Date** |  |  |

| **List significant hazards here:** | **List groups of people who are at risk:** | **List existing controls, or refer to safety procedures etc.** | **For risks, which are not adequately controlled, list the action needed.** | **Remaining level of risk: high, med or low** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **A1) Transportation: Walking** | **N.Wauchope** | Area selected for study is well known to participant.  Always carry fully charged mobile phone.  Distance to travel is kept to a minimum.  Bottled water kept on hand to prevent de-hydration. |  | **Low** |
| **A2) Lone working** | **N.Wauchope** | Avoid lone working where possible especially if it is in an unfamiliar area.  Take a third Part to assist in the survey.  Always carry fully charged mobile phone.  Location information given to friend / family member along with estimated time of return. |  | **Low** |
| **B1) Involvement of External Organisations: Primary School** | **N.Wauchope** | Before attempting to enter the premises of the school, proper authorisation in the form of an arranged appointment will be made. Follow Visitors procedure set by the school and only move within designated areas.  CRB clearance will be gained before interacting with school children. |  | **Low** |
| **B5) Slips, trips and falls when walking** | **N.Wauchope** | Use of appropriate clothing and footwear. Mobile phones to contact emergency services. Take into account environment and the kind of clothing and footwear required. |  | **Low** |
| **B5) Personal Security** | **N.Wauchope** | Mobile phone number and information given to friend / family member as to the location of the survey and estimated time to return. |  | **Low** |
| **B5) Violence and Agression** | **N.Wauchope** | Ensure all surveys are carried out in a safe environment. Make sure a working timetable is discussed and a fully charged mobile phone is carried at all times. |  | **Low** |
| **B5) Weather** | **N.Wauchope** | Avoid skin exposure even if some cloud cover and use high factor sun block. Stop work if conditions begin to create significant increases in risk. Carry suitable clothing for change in conditions. Be aware of signs of hypothermia and / or sun stroke. |  | **Low** |
| **B5) Dog Attack** | **N.Wauchope** | Do not approach any dog that is on a lead. Only approach the dog and owner if invited to do so. |  | **Low** |

# Application for safety and ethical approval for all projects

## School of Built and Natural Environment

All undergraduate, postgraduate, commercial and research projects need ethical approval. No field work, experimentation or work with participants can start until approval is granted. The questions below should be completed by the Principal Investigator or supervisor of the proposed project. Where projects involve students, the Principal Investigator is always the supervisor and never the student.

For **undergraduate** and **postgraduate taught** projects: use the questions to identify whether the project should be referred to the relevant Ethics Committee.

* If you answer “No” to questions, then do not apply for approval.
* If you answer “Yes” to **any** of the questions, please discuss them with your supervisor. If your supervisor is confident that you can follow standard forms, protocols or approaches, then your supervisor can approve your application. If your supervisor is not, then the application should be sent for approval.

For **research, commercial and other** projects: use the questions to help compile suitable evidence to support your application.

* If you answer “No” to questions, then your application is likely to be approved quickly.
* If you answer “Yes” to **any** of the questions, please provide evidence relating to the management of the activity. If your approach seems appropriate, then your application is likely to be approved quickly.

Submit the application form and any supporting evidence to an appropriate Ethics Committee. Different committees might have different approval processes.

Principal Investigators, or project supervisors, are responsible for ensuring that all activities fall within the principles set down in the [University Code of Conduct for Research](http://www.uclan.ac.uk/information/research/research_degrees/ethics_research_governance.php) and the [University Ethical Principles for Teaching, Research, Knowledge Transfer, Consultancy and Related Activities](http://www.uclan.ac.uk/information/research/research_degrees/ethics_research_governance.php). They are also responsible for exercising appropriate professional judgment in undertaking this review and evaluating the activity according to the criteria laid down in this application. If you are uncertain about any sections of this document, or need further information and guidance, please consult a member of the relevant School Ethics Committee.

TheSchool Ethics and Safety Committees are to ensure that you comply with the University’s ethical principles in the conduct of the activity. Committees can ask for clarification or set conditions for you to meet before approval is granted.

Expiry and review: The principal investigator is responsible for ensuring activities are reviewed. Normally:

* each year: review risk assessments: check for changes to hazards and training refreshers
* after 5 years: review ethics: check for new laws, practices
* closure: dispose of [materials](http://www.uclan.ac.uk/information/services/fm/environment/files/Hazardous_Waste_Disposal_GuidancePDF.pdf) and [sensitive data](http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/secretariat/policiesandpublications/informationsystemssecurity/guidelines/guide11/) properly

Refer to the relevant documents from the following links:

1. [Ethical Principles](http://www.uclan.ac.uk/scitech/files/aethics.doc) for Research, Consultancy, Practical Work and Related Activities
2. [Research Governance](http://www.uclan.ac.uk/information/research/research_degrees/ethics_research_governance.php) (Multiple documents)
3. [Health, Safety & Environment](http://www.uclan.ac.uk/information/services/fm/safety_and_health/guidance_procedures.php) (Multiple documents)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 Project synopsis |  | | | Approver: | | | | Cmte number: | | | |
| 1.1 Title | The perception of crime by residents within a London council estate | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.2 Project type | Original research |  | Research degree |  | PG taught |  | UG taught | | X | Commercial |  |
| 1.3 Short description  in layman's terms [no acronyms or jargon] | This Undergraduate dissertation project aims to identify the ways in which crime in a council estate is perceived by local residents and how this perception affects them. The study also aims to determine possible reasons behind this crime and to gather opinions on ways of reducing and/or preventing it. A mostly qualitative survey will be undertaken through a questionnaire and interview within one particular council estate in North West London. | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.4 Dates | Start June 2012 | | | End April 2013 | | | | | | | |
| 1.5 School of ….. | Built and Natural Environment | | | | | | | | | | |

2 Participants

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 2.1 Project supervisor /principal investigator: name, position and original signature | Project Supervisor: M. Toogood  Principle Investigator: N.Wauchope |
| 2.2 Co-workers:  names and positions  [eg student] | None |

3 External collaborators  
3.1 List external collaborating bodies  
3.2 Provide evidence of any ethical approvals obtained [or needed] by external collaborators  
3.3 Indicate whether confidentiality agreements have been or will be completed

Read any associated procedures and guidance or follow any associated checklist, and delete, Yes or No, for each characteristic in A) to F) below.

If you respond **No**, then in your judgment you believe that the characteristic is irrelevant to the activity.

If you respond **Yes**, then you should **provide relevant documentation** [including [risk assessments](http://www.uclan.ac.uk/information/services/fm/safety_and_health/risk_assessment_guidance.php)] with the application, and cross-reference to it, eg A2 or B9. **Use reference numbers of standard** forms, protocols and approaches and risk assessments where they exist.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * 1. Does the activity involve [field work](http://www.uclan.ac.uk/information/services/fm/safety_and_health/field_trips.php) or [travel](http://www.uclan.ac.uk/information/services/fm/safety_and_health/staff_travel.php) to unfamiliar places? If Yes:  1. Does the activity involve field work or leaving the campus [eg [overseas](http://www.uclan.ac.uk/information/services/fm/safety_and_health/staff_travel.php)]? 2. Does the field work involve a ‘party’ of participants or [lone working](http://www.uclan.ac.uk/information/services/fm/safety_and_health/lone_working.php) ? 3. Does the activity involve children visiting from [schools?](http://www.uclan.ac.uk/information/services/fm/safety_and_health/school_visits.php) | A) Yes   1. Yes 2. Yes 3. No |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| B) Does the activity involve humans other than the investigators? If Yes:   1. Will the activity involve any external organisation for which separate and specific ethics clearance is required (e.g. NHS; school; any criminal justice agencies including the Police, CPS, Prison Service)? – start this now [CRB clearance process at [Loughborough](http://www.lboro.ac.uk/admin/personnel/recordchecks.html); [Uclan contact](http://www.uclan.ac.uk/information/services/sas/admissions/staff_list.php) Carole Knight] 2. Does the activity involve participants who are unable to give their informed consent (e.g. children, people with severe learning disabilities, unconscious patients etc.) or who may not be able to give valid consent (e.g. people experiencing mental health difficulties)? 3. Does the activity require participants to give informed consent? [consent guidance at [City U](http://www.city.ac.uk/acdev/academic_framework/re/guidance_consent.html)] 4. Does the activity raise issues involving the potential abuse or misuse of power and authority which might compromise the validity of participants’ consent (e.g. relationships of line management or training)? 5. Is there a potential risk arising from the project of physical, social, emotional or psychological harm to the researchers or participants? 6. Does the activity involve the researchers and/or participants in the potential disclosure of any information relating to illegal activities; the observation of illegal activities; or the possession, viewing or storage (whether in hard copy of electronic format) which may be illegal? 7. Will deception of the participant be necessary during the activity? 8. Does the activity (e.g. art) aim to shock or offend? 9. Will the activity involve invasion of privacy or access to confidential information about people without their permission? 10. Does the activity involve medical research with humans, clinical trials or use human tissue samples or body fluids? 11. Does the activity involve excavation and study of human remains? | B) Yes   1. Yes 2. No 3. No 4. No 5. Yes 6. No 7. No 8. No 9. No 10. No 11. No |
| C) Does the activity involve animals and other forms of life? If Yes:   1. Does the activity involve scientific procedures being applied to a vertebrate animal (other than humans) or an octopus? 2. Does the activity involve work with micro-organisms? 3. Does the activity involve genetic modification? 4. Does the activity involve collection of rare plants? | C) No   1. No 2. No 3. No 4. No |
| D) Does the activity involve [data](http://www.uclan.ac.uk/information/services/sds/dpa_foia_management/data_protection.php) about human subjects? If Yes:   1. After using the data protection [compliance checklist](http://www.uclan.ac.uk/information/services/sds/dpa_foia_management/advice.php), have you any data protection [requirements](http://www.uclan.ac.uk/information/services/sds/dpa_foia_management/DP_code_of_practice.php)? 2. After answering the data protection [security processing questions](http://www.uclan.ac.uk/information/services/sds/dpa_foia_management/advice.php), have you any security [requirements](http://www.uclan.ac.uk/information/services/sds/dpa_foia_management/DP_code_of_practice.php#SECURITY)? [[Data storage](http://www.uclan.ac.uk/health/research/data_storage.php)] [[keep raw data for 5 years](http://www.uclan.ac.uk/health/research/data_storage.php)] | D) Yes   1. No 2. No |
| E) Does the activity involve [hazardous substances](http://www.uclan.ac.uk/information/services/fm/safety_and_health/coshh.php)? If Yes:   1. Does the activity involve substances injurious to human or animal health or to the [environment](http://www.uclan.ac.uk/information/services/fm/environment/files/Hazardous_Waste_Disposal_GuidancePDF.pdf)? Substances must be disposed properly. 2. Does the activity involve igniting, exploding, heating or freezing substances? | E) No   1. No 2. No |
| F) Other activities:   1. Does the activity relate to military equipment, weapons or the Defence Industry? 2. Are you aware of any ethical concerns about the company/ organisation, e.g. its product has a harmful effect on humans, animals or the environment;  it has a record of supporting repressive regimes; does it have ethical practices for its workers and for the safe disposal of products? | F)   1. No 2. No |
| Note: in all cases funding should not be accepted from tobacco-related industries |  |

If you respond **Yes**, then you should **provide relevant documentation** [including [risk assessments](http://www.uclan.ac.uk/information/services/fm/safety_and_health/risk_assessment_guidance.php)] with the application, and cross-reference to it, eg A2 or B9. **Use reference numbers of standard** forms, protocols and approaches and risk assessments where they exist.

These standard forms are being followed [cross reference to the characteristic, eg A2]:

A1 - See Risk Assessment

A2 - See Risk Assessment

B1 – CRB Clearance Required

B5 - See Risk Assessment

D – Qualitative aspects of the research will be undertaken in line with the requirements of the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Acts. The research will not rely on audio, video, photographic or any other recording medium and participants will not be identified from the responses they provide. Informed consent will be sought from all participants in accordance with the guidelines set out in the UCLan: Ethical Principles for teaching, research, consultancy, knowledge transfer and related activities.

**Transcript of Interview with Headmistress from a local school**

Briefing

Firstly I would like to thank you for taking some time out of your day to speak with me, I greatly appreciate it. The intention of this interview is to gather your opinions on how the students at your school, who reside at St Raphael’s estate, are affected by the crimes which occur there. I ask you to answer these questions as truthful as possible and therefore if you feel that the children from the estate are not affected substantially by crime or you feel they suffer greatly then please do voice your opinion on the matter. The study aims to identify the ways in which crime in St. Raphael’s council estate is perceived by local residents and how this perception affects them. The study also aims to determine possible reasons behind this crime and to gather opinions on ways of reducing and/or preventing it.

By answering all of the following questions you are consenting to be part of my study and thereby giving permission for the data gathered to be used for the purpose of my dissertation for my Undergraduate Degree. Any information given will be used for academic purposes only and will be disposed of correctly once it is no longer needed. The identity of yourself and your school will be kept anonymous and no identifying data will be recorded that could lead to the acknowledgement of you or your school. You have the right to withdraw at any point before or during the interview but once the interview has been completed, you no longer have the right to withdraw. By completing the interview you agree to and understand the terms stated. If you have any questions regarding anything I have just said, please feel free to ask me now.

\*The Head teacher had no questions at this time\*

Interview

**Me:** My first question is, in your experience, have you or other members of staff had many instances whereby students approach you with a crime related problem within St Raphael’s Estate?

**Head Teacher:** To my knowledge there haven’t been many, although there have been a few instances.

**Me:** Did you find that the crimes involved in these instances were more of a petty nature as opposed to the more serious types of crimes?

**Head Teacher:** Not in my experience. The things that are usually brought to me are mostly to do with drug and knife crime. There have also occasionally been cases of sexual deviancy.

**Me:** In your experience, have you or other members of staff had many instances whereby students approach you with a problem concerning the fear of crime within the stated area?

**Head Teacher:** Yes we have. It’s their fear of crime that actually impacts on them the most rather than actually being victims of crime.

**Me:** Do you feel the fear was justified?

**Head Teacher:** Well, the area report certainly puts the area as a high crime area so I would say their fear is justified.

**Me:** Does the fear of crime in those children residing in St Raphael’s Estate affect the performance and/or behaviour compared to those living in other areas?

**Head Teacher:** I would say yes.

**Me:** In what way?

**Head Teacher:** Children do at times ‘act out’ certain behaviours especially on the playground.

**Me:** Do you feel that there is a difference in the way the children feel when walking around the stated area in the day time compared to at night?

**Head Teacher:** Yes there is a clear difference.

**Me:** What is the difference?

**Head Teacher:** Very few children are allowed out to play in places such as parks in the evenings compared to in the day when they are.

**Me:** From speaking to your students, do you feel that they feel more, less or the same amount of fear when walking through St. Raphael’s estate compared to when walking through other areas?

**Head Teacher:** Mostly the same level of fear whether it’s in the estate or somewhere else however, the area near the park is the area that causes most fear.

**Me:** Why does the park cause the most fear?

**Head Teacher:** That’s the area that the children are most afraid to walk through because it is the place that teenagers that are involved in or related to crime tend to congregate.

**Me:** Do you feel crime is a reoccurring problem with relation to your student’s day to day lives?

**Head Teacher:** Yes it is and will continue to be while crime in the area is as high as it is.

Debrief

Thank you very much for taking part in this research. Your help and co-operation is greatly appreciated. The information obtained from today’s interview will be analysed to provide an overall indication of the perception of crime and how this affects the behaviour of resident’s in the area. The information obtained today will be held completely confidentially.

I’m providing both mine and my Supervisor’s contact details so that if you would like a summary of the results when the project has been completed or want to discuss anything you think important please do not hesitate to contact us. Thank you again.

**Pupil Questionnaire**

Date: 12th February 2010

Interview Conducted by Deputy Head of the school

Participants from Year 3 to Year 6 (19 Pupils in total)

I am in year; 3 4 5 6

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **All the time** | | **Most of the time** | | **Sometimes** | | **Never** | | **Don’t know** |
| Do you think pupils feel safe in the school? | 1 | | 12 | | 6 | |  | |  |
| Does the school teach you about how to be safe from harm? (Pupils felt that teachers didn’t always discuss the issues when and how the children wanted it discussed) | 8 | | 7 | | 3 | |  | | 1 |
| Do you know what to do when threatened? | 12 | | 5 | | 1 | | 1 | |  |
| Do you know what to do if you are worried about something, in or out of school? | 14 | | 2 | | 2 | | 1 | |  |
| What do you know about internet safety? | Hide your identity  Don’t give telephone numbers  Facebook is unsuitable  Don’t go on pop ups  Don’t send rude messages  Talk only to people you know  Don’t accept bad behaviour  Don’t talk to strangers  Don’t play games if you have to pay  Don’t go on websites you are not sure about  Most children were clear but it is an area that needs further investigation with children. | | | | | | | | |
| What is bullying? | Action that makes you feel different or unhappy  Discriminatory, abusive and threatening behaviour  Persistent behaviour  Can be physical or verbal  Overall all the children showed clear understanding of what is bullying and were confident about what to do if faced with it. | | | | | | | | |
| Do you always take the right action if you see bullying? | 9 | 7 | | 3 | |  | |  | |
| Who do you go to for help? Parents, Teachers, Friends, P2B, Other adults/Staff | | | | | | | | | |

What worries you?

Out of school: Shootings, guns, knives, drugs, smoking, people getting hurt, grandparents dying, threatening behaviour of secondary school children, gangs.

In school: Low grades / levels, homework, not having friends, bullying (poverty related), children answering back, fighting in the playground, teachers not dealing with issues (related to the same child/ren).

The Best safety feature of the school is:

P2B, Teachers, CCTV, Office, Friends, Fobs, Alarms, already feel safe.

One thing I would improve to make the school safer is:

Badges and Fobs for all children, more CCTV / Alarms / Guards / Police, Electronic Wristbands.

**1st March 2010**

Parents Questionnaire

The school would like the views of parents on how secure the children feel about dealing with challenges to their safety. Please support us by filling in the questionnaire. If you need to add further comments you can do so at the back of the form.

Thank you

**My Child is in:**

**Nursery Reception Year 1 Year 2 Year 3 Year 4 Year 5 Year 6 LCC**

(2) (3) (10) (12) (7) (15) (13) (8) (2)

**Total =** 58

**The school encourages my child to:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Agree** | **Strongly Agree** | **Neither Agree nor Disagree** | **Don’t feel can Answer** | **Disagree** | **Disagree**  **Strongly** |
| **Feel safe at school** | 47 | 27 | 1 |  |  |  |
| **Know what to do when worried** | 41 | 12 | 1 | 5 |  |  |
| **Know what to do when threatened** | 36 | 15 | 2 | 6 |  |  |
| **Know about internet safety** | 36 | 13 | 3 | 3 | 1 |  |
| **Deal with bullying** | 38 | 11 | 4 | 4 | 1 |  |
| **My child is happy at school** | 41 | 16 | 2 | 1 |  |  |

**What worries you about keeping children safe?**

Nothing

Children running and bumping into each other in the playground

Too many doors allowing access

Internet safety and chat sites

Bullying

Road and street safety

Not knowing the children’s daily routines

How the internet use is monitored

Stories in the media i.e. kidnapping

Predators

Fire

More adults in the playground to watch children

Children going with friends for outings

**The best safety feature of the school is:**

Monitoring by teachers to see how children feel in the class

Secure / locked doors

Excellent school

Learning and behaviour

Anti-bullying policy

Road crossing

Security / electric gate

Communication

General security in and outside the school

School patrol

Classes

The cameras, CCTV

A very caring school

Children outside when raining / snowing

Being able to speak to class teachers

Office reception / intercom

Alarm

Fire extinguishers

No access through the front door am/pm

E-learning training session

All good

**One thing I would improve to make the school safer is:**

Already a safe school

Road safety and teach green cross code

Smile even more!

Challenge unfamiliar faces

Less slippery floors

Send home the rules re: Internet and cyber bullying

More teachers patrolling before school

Lunchtimes

Parents blocking the front gates with cars

A regular 1:1 session with the teacher

To increase the number of children acting as school monitors

More involvement from community and police officers to talk about safety-role play