



Wales Institute of Social & Economic
Research, Data & Methods

Sefydliad Ymchwil Gymdeithasol ac
Economaid, Data a Dulliau Cymru

Crime, Public Space and Policing - Policy Briefing

Introduction

Significantly, within the Welsh Assembly Government, all crime, public space and policing matters are housed under the umbrella of community safety and Social Justice. The Welsh Assembly Government's approach to these matters, from the appointment of the first minister of Social Justice and Regeneration in 2003 has been an attempt to locate responses to crime in social, not criminal justice. This contrasts starkly with the view from Westminster.

1. Governance Structures

Crime and policing are non-devolved issues, although responsibility for a number of wider community safety issues rests with the Welsh Assembly Government. Within community safety the main areas of overlap are crime reduction, youth crime, anti social behaviour, domestic violence, drug misuse and criminal law on sex offences.

The Home Office has Public Service Agreements which set national targets for five stated targets: reducing crime, reassuring the public and reducing the fear of crime, improving the criminal justice process, reducing the harm caused by illegal drugs and building community cohesion.

1.1 The work of criminal justice agencies in Wales is overseen by the Home Office, the Attorney General's Office and the Department for Constitutional Affairs. Across Wales the work of Criminal Justice System agencies is co-ordinated by four Local Criminal Justice Boards (LCJBs); North Wales, Dyfed Powys, South Wales and Gwent. These boards bring together the chief officers of Criminal Justice agencies to co-ordinate activity and share responsibility for delivering criminal justice in their areas. Boards are comprised of the Police, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), Her Majesty's Court Service (HMCS) and the Probation Trust, the Youth Offending Team (YOT) Manager and the CJS Liaison Manager for the Legal Services Commission in Wales (it also includes the Prison Governor if there is an HMP in the area). It is the responsibility of the LCJB to co-ordinate activity and share responsibility for delivering criminal justice in their area. The work of criminal justice agencies is overseen by the Home Office, the Attorney General's Office and the Department for Constitutional Affairs.

1.2 There are four Welsh Police Forces; North Wales, Dyfed Powys, South Wales and Gwent. Led by a Chief Constable, forces are organised into Basic Command Units (BCUs), four in Dyfed Powys, four in Gwent, three in North Wales and seven in South Wales and below this into smaller Safer Neighbourhood teams. The Home office has responsibility for oversight and co-ordination of these police forces, however there is a Police Liaison Team within the Welsh Assembly Government which consults on citizen and community related projects throughout Wales (for example the Spatial Plan, Local Service Boards).

1.3 Responsibility for offender management is devolved to one office which covers the whole of Wales. The office is led by the Director of Offender Management. The office is responsible for the development and oversight of a regional delivery plan to reduce reoffending. The office leads work through the joint National Offender Management Service and Welsh Assembly Government Reducing Reoffending Board.

1.4 Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) consist of five statutory responsible authorities who are required to work together to agree and deliver community safety priorities. The responsible authorities are the local authority, the police force, the police authority, the fire and rescue authority and the local health board. As a result of the Policing and Crime Bill of 2009, it is anticipated that in 2010 probation will also become a responsible authority. CSPs are required to produce an annual three year rolling plan and an annual strategic assessment. There are 22 Community Service Partnerships in Wales; one in each local authority area. The Crime Director (based in the Welsh Assembly Government) works with the Home Office to monitor the performance of the 22 Community Safety Partnerships in Wales against agreed local crime reduction targets.

2. Key Policy Documents

2.1 *The Crime and Disorder Act (1998)*, supplemented by further legislative changes in the *Police Reform Act, (2002)* and the *Police and Justice Act (2006)* sets out statutory obligations on local authorities and police to form multi agency partnerships to reduce crime and disorder

2.2 *The Crime and Disorder Regulations (2009)* has further supplemented the original and comes into force in Wales on 1 October 2009. One of its provisions is for probation to become a responsible authority in CSPs from April 2010.

2.3 *'Justice for All'* (2007) the Government's 3 year targets for the criminal justice system, tasking the LCJBs to deliver the required improvements

2.4 In addition, the Home Office produces a number of Public Service Agreements, or PSAs which set national targets, for amongst other things, crime reduction. A link to the most recent version (setting out the policy and the remit of all involved organisations) is below. <http://www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/crimereduction020.htm>

3. Key Data Sets (All data sets below are published on an annual basis)

3.1 *The British Crime Survey* (Home Office) produces annual data on attitude to and experience of crime and police forces in England and Wales. Information is available on the Research Development and Statistics Website along with reports and publications from the data in PDF form <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/>

3.2 *Police Recorded Crime in England and Wales* (Home Office) for trends in reported crimes. Does not include crimes that have not been reported to the police or that the police decide not to record. Information and publications as above

3.3 *Offender Management Caseload Statistics* (Ministry of Justice) main characteristics of offenders, activities relating to pre- and post-release supervision and breaches of community sentences, the main characteristics of the prison population, receptions and releases.

3.4 *Annual Police Performance Data* (Home Office) Information relating to policing performance for all police forces in England and Wales. Can be accessed at <http://police.homeoffice.gov.uk/performance-and-measurement/performance-assessment/>

4. Emerging Themes and Questions

The policy agenda is strongly informed by the Government's Strategic Plan for Criminal Justice 2008-2011 and by the new PSAs.

(see http://www.cjonline.gov.uk/downloads/application/pdf/1_Strategic_Plan_ALL.pdf)

The social justice approach of the Welsh Assembly Government is likely to inform the responses of the various LCJBs and CSPs in meeting these targets.