

CENTRE FOR POLICING RESEARCH AND LEARNING



The Open
University

ANNUAL REPORT 2021



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FOREWORD

2021 has been a year of continuing challenges for policing, not least the COVID-19 pandemic with its periods of lockdown and changing rules and regulations. There has also been growing concern and public protest about the climate emergency; the working through of the implications of a particular form of Brexit; the Black Lives Matter movement; the appalling murder of Sarah Everard and growing anger about violence against women and girls; the questioning of police legitimacy and much more. Police and academics have had to respond to many new challenges alongside finding ways to work during the pandemic itself.

In this context, the Centre for Policing Research and Learning (CPRL) with its partner forces continues to look forward strategically, in order to be as prepared as possible for future challenges. CPRL has produced a 10-year strategy, aiming to deepen the quality and value of research, education and knowledge into practice for policing. CPRL has also widened its activities to be comparative across public services, so that policing can learn from and contribute to multi-agency partnerships and use knowledge from other public services. For example, continuing professional development (CPD) is more advanced in some other public services, so valuable cross-service learning and borrowing of practices is possible.

The College of Policing has produced Future Operating Environment 2040 which sets out various possible scenarios, from bleak to optimistic, for society in the years ahead. CPRL can help prepare police by creating and applying evidence and education so that knowledge is used in very practical ways.

CPRL's collaborative approach to creating and using knowledge means that its 24 police force partners from all corners of the UK work closely with over 80 Open University academics with diverse areas of expertise. Together we identify, explore, research, test, challenge, teach and apply knowledge which is both rigorous and relevant to policing, meeting the quality standards of both policing and academia. Each institution/group challenges the other to act differently but their collaboration also creates a common language and understanding, synergies and outputs more

valuable than either can accomplish alone. We are proud to be the only national body working in this way in policing, with a Centre chaired by the police and steered by the member forces.



CPRL became a four-nation partnership this year with forces from England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland as partners, sharing and comparing across different jurisdictions, contexts, policies and structures. CPRL can operate at various levels, from local to regional, devolved and UK-wide. The Centre is strengthening its global perspectives by working with international academics at conferences and in journal special issues. For example, CPRL led a fascinating webinar around international perspectives on policing the pandemic in New Zealand, California, in other parts of Europe and in the UK.

A strategic and collaborative approach to research, to learning and to knowledge into practice means that the Centre also aims to undertake work of long-term significance and value. CPRL was already engaged in ongoing research into violence against women and girls, using high-quality, rigorous research/investigation and expertise long before current media interest. During 2021, the teams have taken this further with the Centre's involvement in the large-scale action research project 'Embedding officer learning and wellbeing in rape investigations', exploring rape investigation across the criminal justice system. In another field, research on 'Citizen forensics' aims to understand and, to some extent, predict the digital world of the future, as policing and public behaviours are influenced by digital apps, sophisticated digital equipment, and smart cities. This enables the police to be proactive about future crime, safety and legitimacy.

Action research on changing police recruit training and education in 'Building the evidence base for effective tutoring of police recruits', and the implications of a younger in age and service workforce in 'A narrative review of the literature of the effect of younger police officers in age and service' are being researched. CPRL is contributing a series of short articles about CPD to lead a new vision for the existing workforce. Its research on wellbeing could not be more timely, given the ongoing pressures of the pandemic.

It has not been an easy year. Police, along with many other public services, are exhausted with the pressures of the pandemic, the surge in demand for various services post-lockdown and the

economic hardships in society. Cross-sector research on how to work differently, not harder, is sorely needed. A new project about innovation is useful, as is further work on demand management. Researching whether and how police forces are able to put new knowledge into practice is key to CPRL's work.

Everyone has got used to working on Microsoft Teams, though we all miss a greater degree of the face-to-face interaction which nurtures creativity and informal exploration of ideas and practices. However, we have also discovered benefits, including wider access to CPRL events within forces, and the use of international speakers in webinars. We have created lively discussions online and taken projects forward in imaginative ways. We will continue to work with a blend of both according to context in the future.

In spite of major challenges in society, CPRL continues to make a leading contribution, increasingly visible in the national policing landscape and beyond. It meets, and often exceeds, both police and University expectations. CPRL has been prominent in the national review of research quality of all universities (Research Excellence Framework).

With two new Vice-Chairs joining the Chair and Acting Chair, and with an expanding academic team, we aim to continue to be ambitious and innovative, working at local, national and international level on important topics in research, education and knowledge into practice. Watch this space!



Left to right: Professor Jean Hartley, Academic Director, CPRL, The Open University; **Dr Nick Caveney**, Acting Chair and Chief Superintendent, Hertfordshire Constabulary; **Dr Steven Chase**, Chair and Director of People, Thames Valley Police.

HOW THE CENTRE WORKS

Over the last seven years the Centre has shown ambition, innovation, growth and impact, working collaboratively and equally with 24 police forces and agencies across the UK, and with more than 80 OU academics from a wide range of disciplines. This partnership creates and uses knowledge to improve policing for the benefit of society by producing research and learning that have been employed by police forces across the UK and beyond.

The Centre also works very closely with the main national bodies of policing, including the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC), the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC), and the College of Policing (CoP). CPRL is increasingly taking a national role in research, education and policy and practice advice.

The Centre was founded in 2014 as a partnership with five police forces and a small number of OU academics with the aim to create, explore and use high-quality knowledge to support evidence-based practice and to create better policing, whether through continuous improvement or transformational change.

The Centre is involved in an ambitious programme of work across three streams:

1. Research – undertaking research relevant to policing. Research is jointly decided in partnership between the police and academics. Police partners add valuable insights, expertise and context, while academics bring knowledge of literature and research methods to the design, delivery and interpretation of the research, which generates valuable evidence-based practice.
2. Learning and education – providing a range of blended (online and face-to-face) learning in a series of informal as well as accredited packages that range from bite-sized and free Open Educational Resources to Police Constable Degree Apprenticeships (PCDA) and the PhD studentship programme.
3. Knowledge into practice – increasing the impact of the Centre's work through the exchange, translation and use of its research, learning and education into policing practice. This is supported through an understanding of 'what works' in bridging the 'knowing-doing' gap in management and organizations.

Collaboration and co-production are at the heart of the Centre's approach. The central tenet of CPRL is research into practice and practice into research, combining the best of both academic and police perspectives on a range of challenges, research questions and educational opportunities. It values the contributions which can be made by both academics and practitioners, but particularly by teams comprised of both. There is very much a two-way benefit to this – ensuring the value and relevance of research and its mobilisation into practice; the research feeds into educational pathways and is shared and embedded through knowledge exchange activities.

The police forces and organizations involved in the Centre partnership are:

Avon and Somerset Police	Hampshire Constabulary	Police Scotland
Bedfordshire Police	Hertfordshire Constabulary	Police Service of Northern Ireland
British Transport Police	Lancashire Constabulary	Staffordshire Police
Cambridge Constabulary	Merseyside Police	South Yorkshire Police
Dorset Police	Metropolitan Police Service	Suffolk Constabulary
Gloucestershire Constabulary	National Crime Agency	Thames Valley Police
Greater Manchester Police	Norfolk Constabulary	West Midlands Police
Gwent Police	North Yorkshire Police	Wiltshire Police



As a collaborative venture, the Centre is chaired by the police, with strategic priorities set by both police and academic partners. The partnership governance elects up to three Vice-Chairs, to work with the elected Chair. There is a Steering Group which provides advice and recommendations to the full membership. This strengthens participation and accountability, ensuring that activities meet both police and academic criteria for quality and impact.

On the academic side, the Centre is led by the Academic Director, along with directors responsible for the streams of work in research, learning and knowledge into practice.

The Membership Group meets quarterly to assess activities, suggest new avenues to explore and to discuss and digest findings from the work streams. During the COVID-19 pandemic the meetings moved online, removing the need to travel and encouraging a wide group of police officers and staff to participate.

The Partnership and Advisory Review Board meets once or twice a year to provide strategic challenge and advice to the Centre and ensure that its contributions consist of high-quality academic work which is relevant and valuable to policing. Membership is at senior level across policing, The Open University and other public services, and the third sector.

The Centre for Policing Research and Learning [website](#) gives details of all the research, learning and knowledge into practice initiatives.

2021 A YEAR IN CPRL



National membership

24 force and law enforcement partners

80+

OU academics working as part of the Centre



Online annual conference



40 speakers



Over 200 participants across the 3 days



£680,000 external funding awarded



8

CPRL PhD students



40+

knowledge into practice activities



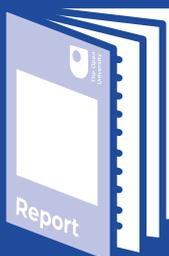
OPENLearn

40,000

learners to free community engagement course in OpenLearn



CPRL shapes national thinking on police CPD



71 academic publications

CPRL research prominent in national Research Excellence Framework submission



22

active research projects

RESEARCH

RESEARCH

Dr Emma Williams, Director of Research and Strategic Partnerships



The themes enable research contributions from a wide range of disciplines and areas of expertise across The Open University, from software engineering and web science, through forensic, social and organizational psychology, to operations management, leadership and management, with much in between. It means that if police partners have particular challenges they wish to explore through research, there is a good chance CPRL will have relevant expertise among its academic network.

The collaboration builds on the expertise and perspectives of both police and academics. The OU has also funded four Senior Practitioner Fellows in 2021, seconded from police forces to work in research teams, building research capability in policing and contributing to the quality of the research undertaken.

External grants awarded and active in 2021 were undertaken to the tune of over £2 million, of which £680,000 was awarded in 2021, showing leverage of the partners' funds and the OU's financial commitment to CPRL.

As well as creating knowledge, CPRL is focused on using knowledge, and we are very pleased that three projects were selected by the University for the national assessment of research quality and impact (Research Excellence Framework).

I joined CPRL to lead the research programme as Director of Research and Strategic Partnerships in January 2021. We warmly thank Professor Graham Pike, former incumbent of that role who built up research in CPRL from its inception, and now continues to lead research teams working with the Centre.

The research programme at CPRL has gathered pace during 2021, with several new external grants, and more academics expressing interest in working with CPRL.

The programme continues to be organized into four themes, which work well for both police and academics.



Figure 1: CPRL research themes

COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS OF THREAT

Dr Lara Frumkin

Lead forces - Greater Manchester Police and Metropolitan Police Service

THE PROBLEM

Research around terrorism tends to focus on the terrorist, counterterrorist law enforcement, protection, and prevention measures. Public perceptions of terrorism are often missed, despite evidence suggesting that trauma and anxiety following terrorist events can occur widely in communities and can be long-lasting. Exaggerated fear of harm can lead to catastrophizing, which is made up of three factors: feelings of helplessness (how helpless someone feels about what they can do in an attack), rumination (how much people think about terrorist threat), and magnification (building up threats in one's mind).

Where terrorists are perceived to be 'outsiders' to someone's local or national community, ethnocentrism may be elevated, driving an 'us versus them' mentality. Other large-scale events may heighten people's levels of anxiety or ethnocentrism too, including changes in the political landscape. Brexit is an example of this, where anxieties may have increased due to lack of information or understanding of the full implications of leaving the EU. Brexit may also have contributed to an 'us versus them' mentality and affected, or been affected by, levels of ethnocentrism.

THE PROJECT

This research uses the context of Brexit to explore how levels of catastrophizing, ethnocentrism and anxiety related to Brexit may have impacted upon perceptions of terrorist threat.

Working with the Greater Manchester Police (GMP) and Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), this research is looking at how catastrophizing, ethnocentrism and anxiety relate to the threat of a terrorist attack.

To examine the relationship between catastrophizing, ethnocentrism, anxiety and Brexit, the following three measures were used:

- Terrorism Catastrophizing Scale (TCS)
- Generalized Anxiety Disorder assessment (GAD)
- Generalized Ethnocentrism Scale (GENE).

The researcher collected data from a representative sample of approximately 1,000 people in England in summer 2019 (baseline data) and again in late December 2020 to early January 2021, in the few remaining days when the UK was part of the EU and in the early days after leaving the EU (labelled as Brexit in this report).

FINDINGS

	BASELINE SUMMER 2019	BREXIT WINTER 2020/21
Ethnocentrism	39%	41%
Anxiety	44%	36%
Catastrophizing: Helplessness	32%	35%
Catastrophizing: Rumination	15%	20%
Catastrophizing: Magnification	46%	33%

The table above shows that:

- There was a slight, but not significant, increase in levels of ethnocentrism from summer 2019 to the Brexit period of winter 2020 – 2021, which may be related to Brexit, but this requires further research.
- Anxiety was lower during Brexit than at the baseline. It should be noted that the Brexit data collection period occurred 10 months into the COVID-19 global pandemic.

- Whilst both slightly higher at the Brexit measure, there were no significant differences in measures of helplessness and rumination about a terrorist threat at baseline compared to Brexit.
- Magnification of the threat of terrorism was significantly higher at baseline than during Brexit (33%), which may provide evidence that where other concerns are magnified, there is a reduction in terrorism-specific magnification.

WHAT NEXT?

The researcher is planning to collect data following a large-scale event to examine how this may affect perceptions of threat. That data will be analysed to determine how levels of fear vary based on events happening on the political and economic stages. Findings will be shared with the MPS and GMP, looking at good practice already being undertaken and will explore where other community initiatives could help to reduce public catastrophizing about terrorism.



INVESTIGATING THE EMERGENCE OF EXPERTISE IN FORENSIC FACE MATCHING OVER TIME

Dr Reuben Moreton

Lead force – Metropolitan Police Service

THE PROBLEM

Recognising the familiar face of a friend, family member or co-worker from an image is a relatively easy task, even from a distance or a fleeting glance. However, the task of matching images of faces we don't know is much harder, and one where people often make mistakes.

Even when images are taken on the same day under similar conditions, people make the wrong face matching decision on average one in five times, when the faces are unfamiliar.

This difficulty is caused, in part, by how much a person's face can vary from one image to the next, known as within-person variability. Another factor that makes face matching difficult is between-person similarity, which is how similar two different people can appear. If two people could easily be mistaken for the same person, this could have profound consequences in applied settings, like policing and forensics.

Not only is matching faces challenging, there are also large individual differences in ability. Some people naturally have exceptional face matching ability and others perform close to chance, making it critical to select the right people for face matching roles.

Despite the difficulty of unfamiliar face matching, it provides vital intelligence and evidence in police investigations.

THE PROJECT

In 2016, while at the Metropolitan Police Service, Reuben Moreton joined CPRL as a part-time PhD student, researching ways to improve performance in forensic face matching. With his background as a forensic face matching practitioner, Reuben's early research focused heavily on the training

and procedures used by forensic experts. He quickly realised that the scope of his PhD was much broader than this, incorporating emerging research on police super recognisers and the growing use of facial recognition algorithms.

Reuben completed a series of empirical studies looking at the limited and forensic experts, as well as the performance of current facial recognition algorithms.

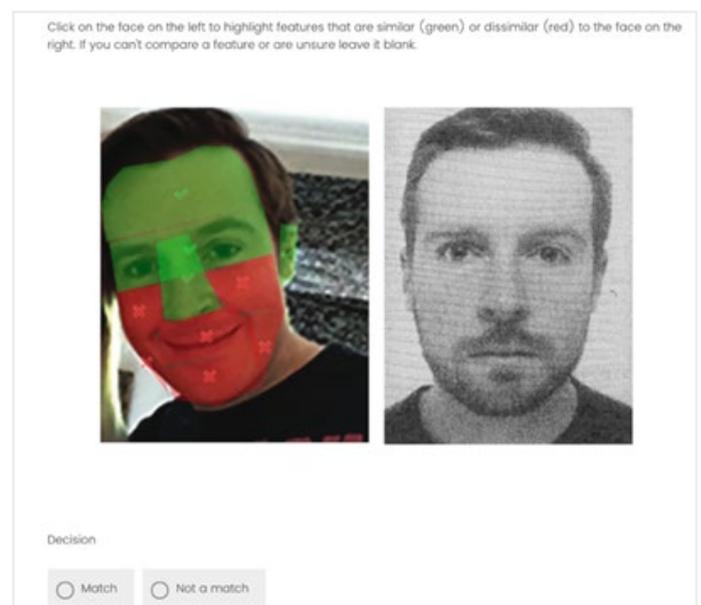


Figure 1: Example face matching interface

FINDINGS

The research resulted in a number of recommendations for face matching in policing and forensics.

 Forensic face examination (e.g. expert evidence)	
Not recommended	
 Do not rely on examinations made by a single examiner	
Recommended	
 If facial recognition algorithm is unavailable	 If facial recognition algorithm is available
 Use examiner teams to make face matching decisions	 If an examiner team is unavailable, individual examiners use algorithm fusion techniques to make face matching decisions
	 Use examiner teams and algorithm fusion techniques to make face matching decisions for higher levels of performance

Figure 2: Recommendations for quick-decision face matching

Recommendations were made for both quick-decision scenarios, where face matching has to be done under time pressure (e.g. for intelligence gathering or access control) and for face matching in a forensic context, where the results can be used as expert evidence in court. The findings from Reuben's first study, an international survey of face matching training courses, have recently been published in Forensic Science International¹.

 Quick-decision face matching (e.g. passport control, CCTV)	
Not recommended	
 Do not rely on short professional training courses	 Do not rely only on selection of superior matchers from small samples
Recommended	
 If a facial recognition algorithm is unavailable	 If a facial recognition algorithm is available
 Select superior face matchers by pre-screening and use the wisdom of crowds for face matching decisions	 Select superior face matchers by pre-screening and use algorithm fusion techniques for face matching decisions

Figure 3: Recommendations for expert forensic face matching

WHAT NEXT?

Reuben is now a Visiting Research Fellow at the OU and is continuing his research in forensic face matching with CPRL. His current research is investigating the use of different interfaces to improve performance for quick-decision face matching.

Reuben is also researching the longer-term effects of training and looking at the benefits of collaborative decision-making for trainee forensic face examiners.

¹ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S037907382100267X>

DOMESTIC HOMICIDES AND SUSPECTED VICTIM SUICIDES DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Dr Lis Bates

THE PROBLEM

The COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown in the UK in late March 2020 led to widespread concern from the domestic abuse sector, police, government, and the press about a potentially large rise in domestic abuse (DA) and domestic homicide (DH). Victims faced lockdown measures, restricting support from family, friends, employers, and agencies, alongside some experiencing economic stress.

The UK Government and police leaders wanted reassurance that policing was protecting vulnerable people during lockdown and proactively managing serial and dangerous perpetrators.

THE PROJECT

The 'Domestic Homicides Project' was set up to track the number of domestic homicides and suspected victim suicides in quick-time. Police forces submitted information on a template form to the project every time there was a domestic homicide, unexplained death or suspected suicide of a victim of domestic abuse involving an adult or child of any age.

The project was set up by the [National Police Chiefs' Council](#) and the [College of Policing](#) and funded by the [Home Office](#). It was hosted by the [National Policing Vulnerability Knowledge and Practice Programme](#) (VKPP). CPRL's Senior Research Fellow, Lis Bates, undertook a secondment to the project and analysed 12 months' data on deaths to draw out learning for police and partner agencies to help prevent future deaths.

FINDINGS

The project's first report (published in August 2021) finds that, whilst domestic homicides did not go up substantially during COVID-19 in the 12 months to the end of March 2021, both domestic homicides and suspected victim suicides remain an entrenched and enduring problem. On

average in the UK, 14 adults or children die at the hands of a partner or family member each month.

The project found that COVID-19 acted as an 'escalator and intensifier of existing abuse' in some instances, with victims less able to seek help. It also concluded COVID-19 had not 'caused' domestic homicide, but it had been 'weaponised' by some abusers as both a new tool of control over victims, and – in some cases – as an excuse or defence for abuse and homicide. Evidence from the report also supports existing research that coercive and controlling behaviour is associated with a higher risk of homicide. The findings, for the first time, shine a light on the relationship between domestic abuse and victim suicide, showing that there are at least three apparent suicides every month with a history of domestic abuse, and these are only the cases where the history was known to police.

The report contains conclusions and recommendations for police and other agencies, covering a variety of areas such as: the impact of COVID-19, defining domestic homicide, domestic homicide reviews, implications for risks assessment and partnership working.

WHAT NEXT?

In addition to the recommendations, the report set out lessons for police and other agencies in responding to domestic abuse and preventing domestic homicides and suicides as the country emerges from COVID-19 restrictions:

- Be prepared for an increased risk of domestic homicides and potentially, domestic suicides, particularly intimate partner homicide and victim suicides as some abusers control is taken away by eased restrictions, and other abusers re-gain access to victims.
- Ongoing situational pressures arising from COVID-19, such as unemployment, mental health issues and delays to court cases are likely to continue to impact domestic abuse, domestic homicide and victim suicide.
- Remain alert to 'Covid-blaming' as an excuse or defence by suspects.

The report also highlighted that emerging from lockdown could help reduce the risk of homicide and suicide in some cases by re-establishing support networks and making cases more visible.

The full report and executive summary can be read [here](#).

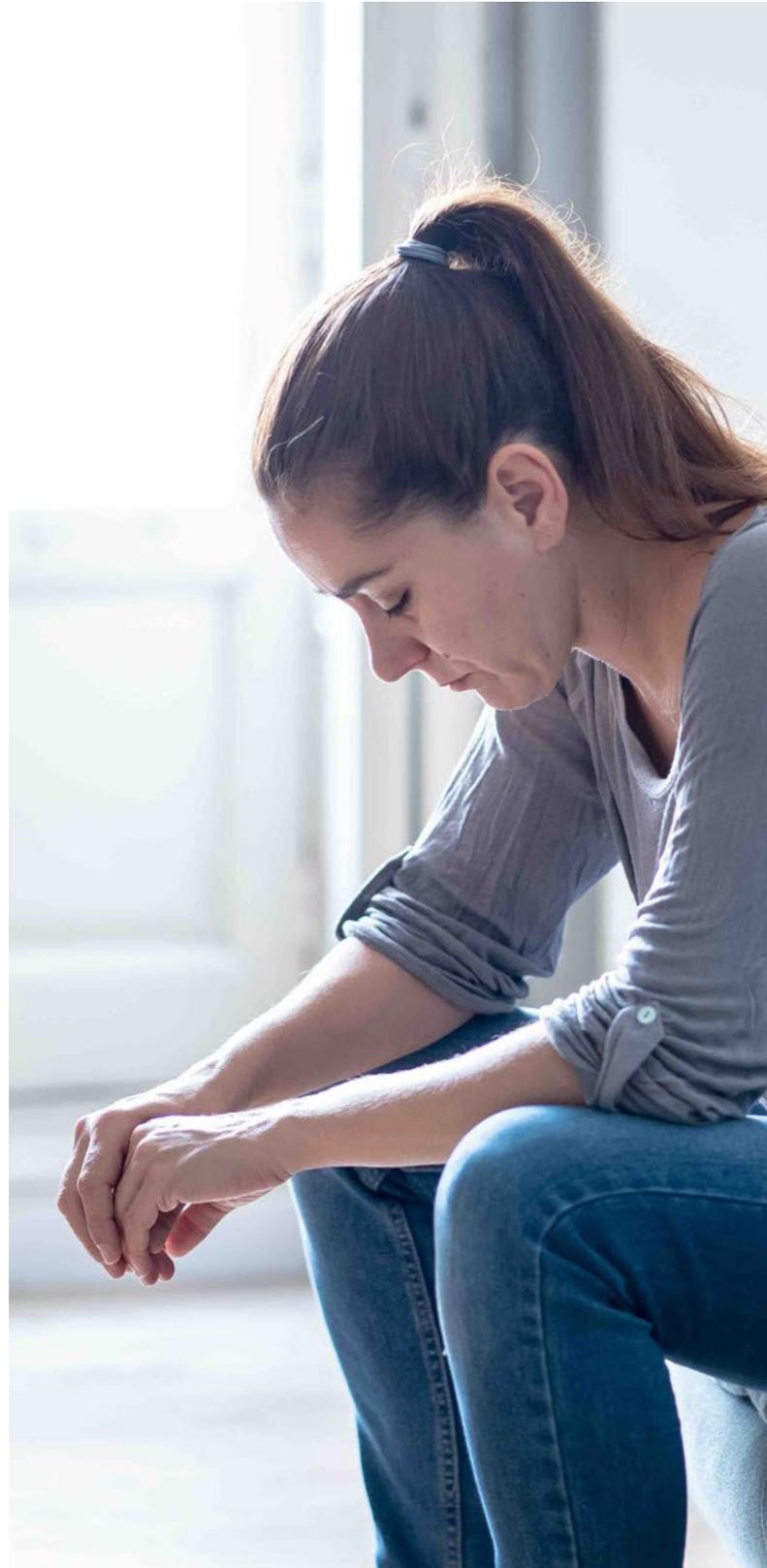


This report builds on the tireless work done over many years by friends and family of victims and the domestic abuse sector to raise awareness of domestic homicide. We are grateful to them for sharing some of those insights through our Stakeholder Group. We would like to thank the police for demonstrating real commitment to learn lessons from domestic homicides. Police leaders have championed this project at the highest levels, and every force has supported this research by sharing data, taking part in interviews and engaging with emerging learning.



Lis Bates

Report lead author and Senior Research Fellow at CPRL at time of reporting



CITIZEN FORENSICS

Professor Arosha Bandara, Professor Bashar Nuseibeh, Professor Graham Pike, Professor Blaine Price, Carlos H. Acre-Plata, Dr Camilla Elphick, Dr Min Zhang, Dr Zoe Walkington, Dr Lara Frumkin, Professor Mark Levine, Dr Richard Philpot (University of Lancaster), Dr Avelie Stuart (University of Exeter)

Lead forces – Gwent Police, Thames Valley Police, Merseyside Police and West Midlands Police

THE PROBLEM

Community policing faces a combination of new challenges and opportunities due to both citizens and police adopting new digital technologies. These digital technologies are increasingly used to record different aspects of citizens’ lives, from activity and location tracking to social interactions and video recordings of life experiences. However, effective use of these technologies to strengthen collaborations between citizens and police requires further examination.

THE PROJECT

The Citizen Forensics project¹ explores how digital technologies impact on, and have the potential to enhance, citizen – police collaboration.

Following an extensive literature review, a taxonomy for Citizen Forensics was produced, specifying four levels of engagement between citizens and the police (see Figure 1).

The four levels of the Citizen Forensics taxonomy range from ‘Crowdsourcing’ of information at level 1, to ‘Self-investigation’ at level 4. As we move up the levels of Citizen Forensics, there is a need for more specialised skills and training. To understand how this taxonomy relates to current practice in citizen – police engagement, we undertook two studies:

1 <https://www.citizenforensics.org>
 2 <http://oro.open.ac.uk/69626/>
 3 <http://oro.open.ac.uk/74072/>

Stakeholder study involved interviews and focus groups with Merseyside Police and Thames Valley Police neighbourhood policing teams and members of the community.

Technology review identification of a set of mobile apps used for citizen – police engagement, which are being analysed to understand their functionality, privacy features and usability.

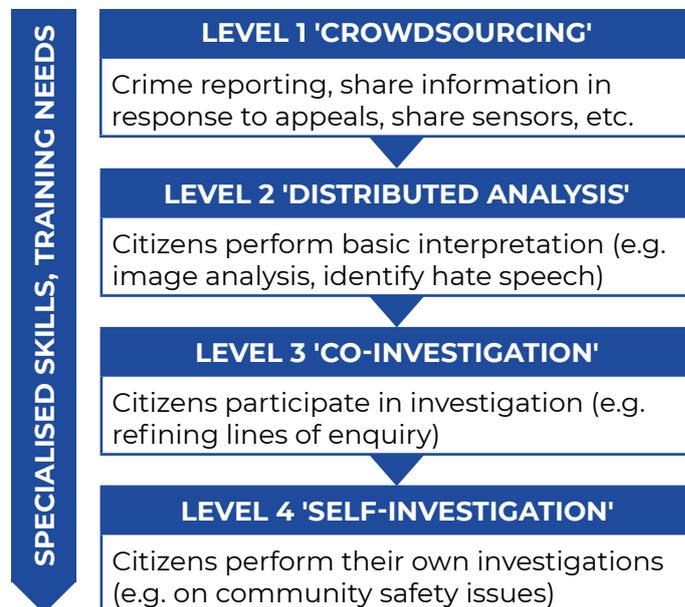


Figure 1: Citizen Forensics taxonomy

OUTPUTS

The early outputs of the project include the Citizen Forensics taxonomy, a review of community policing apps used in Asian countries, and initial findings from the stakeholder study. These were published at the ACM Conference on Computer-Human Interaction (CHI2020)².

The technology review, analysing a set of mobile apps used for citizen – police engagement, was published in the journal of Police Practice and Research³. This work was supported by policing practitioners from Thames Valley Police and presented at a CPRL Membership meeting (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZKrOefUGdiE>).

This project has developed a platform, FriendFace, for conducting a study of the impact of social media use on eyewitness memory, which also includes a survey about how people use social media to engage with the police. This work was recently published in the journal *Frontiers in Psychology* ⁴.

Finally, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the project developed a platform sharing tributes and gratitude to others using an online tool 'Gratitude Tree'⁵ (see Figure 2) aimed at exploring how this behaviour impacts people's attitudes, which is now live.

WHAT NEXT?

The project will explore the relationship between procedural justice and perceptions of legitimacy in citizen – police interactions, based on publicly available video vignettes.

It will also examine the knowledge representation and system modelling needed to enable citizens to explore issues relating to environmental crimes and sustainability issues in their communities.

This study will analyse how both citizens and police officers judge the four key procedural justice predictors of police legitimacy – participation and voice; fairness and neutrality; dignity and respect; and conveying trustworthy motives in real-life policing events. Policing practitioners from West Midlands Police are involved in the design of this research.



Figure 2: Design of Gratitude Tree

4 <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.640513/full>
 5 <https://covidgratitude.me/>

TACKLING MISINFORMATION ONLINE

Professor Harith Alani

Harith is the Deputy Director of the Knowledge Media Institute (KMi) and he has been researching misinformation for several years. He has developed three international projects that explore the topic in more depth. Whilst this research does not sit within CPRL, the breadth of the research may be of interest to police.

THE PROBLEM

The pandemic has created an environment where misinformation is more widely discussed in a context that includes professionals in health, public agencies and policing, as well as members of the public more broadly. A significant gap in research was identified relating to understanding the harm that misinformation causes and how mechanisms could mitigate.



The potential harm and target of any misinformation that's in circulation are not easy to detect computationally. At the moment, most of the work looks at misinformation as if it's all equal. But of course, we know that some are far more harmful than others. We have seen cases where some false claims literally lead to people being killed, others have led to civil unrests.



Harith Alani

Deputy Director of the Knowledge Media Institute

Misinformation is a big challenge because even with the technology that can detect what is credible and what is not, there remains the problem of convincing the public of the truth. Misinformation is both a social and a technical problem.

Current practices rely on fact checkers, for example, that publish articles assessing a particular claim. However, many people don't read these articles because they tend to be too long and too difficult to process. Most people don't know these articles exist, or they don't trust them. The complex long articles assessing and explaining information are therefore competing with very catchy, short, familiar, and exciting claims.

THE PROJECTS

Co-Inform (2018 – 2021) is an international research project funded by the European Commission to study and co-create tools for tackling online misinformation.

HERoS (2020 – 2023) is an international project that aims to produce epidemiological models for COVID-19 that integrates behavioural dynamics, misinformation spread, supply chain disruption, and governance. The KMi team will be studying the spread of misinformation about COVID-19 in social media and will measure the success or failure of misinformation countering initiatives by multiple sources.

CIMPLE (2021 – 2024) stands for Countering Creative Information Manipulation with Explainable Artificial Intelligence (AI). The project is funded by CHIST-ERA and aims to research and develop innovative knowledge-driven solutions for the detection and tracking of online information manipulation, whilst taking into account various AI explainability needs and requirements.

The Co-Inform project looks at general misinformation and the role of fact-checking, how misinformation spreads, how fact-checking works and the impact most of them have. The research developed software tools that could be used alongside online activity, such as social media. The research engages three different stakeholders; the citizens by sharing tools to help anyone assess information; journalists by building the dashboards to help them do in-depth analysis of claims and what can be reported; and the policy makers so that the research can inform policy as well.

The research has implications across media outlets and public agencies including policing; as responders to the harm caused by misinformation leading to civil unrest or crime. Misinformation also has the potential to erode legitimacy and the engagement, influence and impact policing can have in communities.

FINDINGS

The CIRCLE project is in its infancy and seeks to develop this work further by focusing on explainability. The research explores what mechanisms can be used to make the explanations clear and informative, engage wider audiences, and will assess more creative ways of highlighting misinformation and disseminating facts, perhaps through videos, images and other creative and engaging media.

The project developed various algorithms to detect credibility, using AI technology and data sets of previous fact checks. This examines the activity of fact checkers all around the globe, including the articles they have looked at and the decisions they took. A suite of tools was produced, including a browser plug-in, a dashboard for the analysts, and a web tool to assess the credibility of any Twitter account.

Another output of the research has been a 'bot' that is able to disseminate fact-checked information on the Twitter platform, reducing the need for information required/needed by consumers to proactively investigate credibility.



Having the ability to automatically predict the potential harm of claims in circulation can help to quickly focus the fact checkers' attention to which claim they need to target first, and also to focus the attention of the social media platforms, of the media, and even the law enforcement agencies. AI technology can help detecting which misinformation is harmful, either because of what it says, how it says it, how it's spreading, or where it came from.



Harith Alani
Deputy Director of the Knowledge Media institute

IMPACT

The projects have informed the Government's Department for Digital, Culture, Music and Sport (DCMS) on policy and recommendations and has a [Fact Check Observatory](#); an online resource that collates tables and reports, providing an automatically-generated report every week.



EMBEDDING OFFICER LEARNING AND WELLBEING IN RAPE AND SERIOUS SEXUAL OFFENCES

Dr Emma Williams, Richard Harding,
Dr Nicky Miller, Dr Rachel Ward, Jennifer
Norman

Lead force – Avon and Somerset Police

THE PROBLEM

In England and Wales, 86% of attrition in rape cases is accounted for by police and victim actions. Despite many inspection reports, research projects and internal reforms aimed at improving the police response to rape allegations, high levels of attrition and low conviction rates for these offences have remained stable over time.

THE PROJECT

In January 2021, CPRL was approached by Professor Betsy Stanko to take a key role in an exciting pathfinder project exploring rape investigation in Avon and Somerset Police. Alongside The Open University, the project involved another four universities (Middlesex University, the University of Birmingham, London Metropolitan University and City University) working across five pillars:

Pillar 1 – A suspect rather than victim-focused investigation.

Pillar 2 – Resources prioritised to disrupt and challenge repeat offenders.

Pillar 3 – Embedding a systematic procedural justice approach to victim engagement.

Pillar 4 – Embedding officer learning and wellbeing at the core of the approach to investigations.

Pillar 5 – The use of data and analytics in rape investigations.

CPRL worked with Avon and Somerset Police on Pillar 4. The work involved a range of methods including focus groups, interviews, a review of learning documentation from the local delivery of the College of Policing's curriculum for Rape and

Serious Sexual Offences officers, and an overview of policies and procedures relating to officer wellbeing.

CPRL worked with Detective Chief Inspector (DCI) Larisa Hunt from Avon and Somerset, the police Pillar 4 lead, and from day one the level of collaboration was incredible. Under the guidance of Chief Constable (CC) Sarah Crew, DCI Hunt opened up every avenue for the research team to explore this area in depth. The leadership from the top of the organization facilitated this project at every level. CC Crew's enthusiasm for the collaboration between the academic and police leads was an excellent example of how the two perspectives can work together to define problems, develop solutions and apply practical outputs in a policing environment.



I have been hugely enthused by the collaborative work we have been doing in Avon and Somerset to transform the police response to rape. In my experience of working with academia, this collaboration is a unique one, bringing together 'knowledge' and 'practice' in an immersive, iterative, and intense process of building understanding, making shared diagnoses and co-designing prototype solutions. I hope that we are on the verge of something special, something transformational and sustainable too, something that will have real-life impact nationally and internationally.

Sarah Crew
Chief Constable, Avon and Somerset Police



FINDINGS

The project integrated a full and holistic array of issues affecting successful investigations of rape and serious sexual assault, including organizational and individual factors. The team produced useful, practical outputs to share this information and inform ways of working.



DCI Hunt's practitioner expertise and experience in this field enabled the CPRL research team to fully understand the complexities faced by Avon and Somerset Police and the force's real desire to improve the investigation of rape, both in the context of victim care and the way their own officers are treated and developed within this area of police work.

WHAT NEXT?

2022 – 2023 will see the implementation of the recommendations arising from the research in Avon and Somerset Police, together with its subsequent evaluation. Furthermore, CPRL embarks upon delivery of 'Embedding officer learning and wellbeing in rape investigations', mirroring the methodology in four further forces to drive transformational change in this area.



I am now working with the project lead in Avon and Somerset to implement the learning and use the products created. I am progressing the work we have completed around reflective supervision, reflective practice and having a trauma-informed approach more widely in the organization. It feels like this is the start of a new and exciting way of working, which could not only improve the service we provide to victims and increase criminal justice outcomes, but also improve the wellbeing of investigators at the same time. It has been a great experience and one I would do all over again.



Larisa Hunt

Detective Chief Inspector, Avon and Somerset Police

BUILDING THE EVIDENCE BASE FOR EFFECTIVE TUTORING OF POLICE RECRUITS

Dr Tom Cockcroft, Dr Benjamin Bowles,
Dr Holly Taylor-Dunn, Dr Nicky Miller,
Dr Emma Williams

Lead forces – Norfolk Constabulary and
Suffolk Constabulary

THE PROBLEM

Much emphasis is placed on the role of the tutor constable in socialising new police recruits into their role. With a huge uplift in police numbers happening quickly across the UK, this is proving challenging for forces for several reasons. The most immediate issue relates to aligning the capacity of tutor constable programmes to meet the increased volume of throughput. At the same time, no identifiable consensus exists about what values or principles underpin this vital role, nor is there a fully formed understanding of the needs of either tutor constables or those new recruits who are supported by them.

Research has consistently shown, across time and place, the importance of informal craft knowledge to the learning and knowledge of new entrants to the police service. This experiential element is vital to new recruits and research has found that the learning of craft knowledge and practice is firmly influenced by officers' peers, and especially by tutors. However, the Police Education Qualification Framework (PEQF) challenges and complements craft knowledge by offering new recruits access to a knowledge base of empirical and disciplinary evidence and theory.

This shift in the demands on the tutor constable role move towards tutors becoming a conduit for academic knowledge to be translated into effective police practice.

However, the tutor constable role is seen as fragile, unstructured, often undertaken unwillingly, with a lack of development plans. There is also little understanding of the curriculum new officers are being taught and, in some cases, tutors themselves are very new in service.

THE PROJECT

This multiphase project has begun by reviewing the different ways of configuring, resourcing and implementing the tutor constable role across a number of forces. By reviewing the models of development, recruitment and ongoing support for these officers and considering them against examples of promising practice from other sectors, the project aims to build some principles of working practices for forces.

FINDINGS

This project was initiated in September 2021 and is due to share findings from Phase 1 in spring 2022.

Early developmental work for this project has generated three main reasons for creating new knowledge about the tutor constable role:

1. The Police Uplift Programme to increase police numbers is an incredible opportunity to expand police capacity to provide security and safety in communities. If Uplift fails to use this opportunity to provide the best available education and organizational socialisation to these new recruits, the police service will experience further difficulties in navigating the challenges that it faces.
2. The opportunity presented by the PEQF in bringing new learning into the organization and mapping it to the craft and experience of current officers has, like Uplift, the chance of defining the next generation of policing. Police officers need to synthesise both experiential and evidence knowledge effectively.
3. Tutoring arrangements have remained relatively static over recent decades whilst both society, and policing, have gone through substantial change. For a role that has such a large impact on new recruits' understanding of the profession of policing, it is vital to properly understand how the role works and what impact it has. The costs of not getting this role right could have wide-ranging impacts for the police in terms of effectiveness, accountability, legitimacy and retention in years to come.

It is undoubtedly the case that this research is driven in part by contemporary changes to the broader landscape of policing. However, the research is not seeking to produce a 'quick fix' series of solutions to a newly emerging issue. For over 30 years, the challenges of the tutor constable role have been a subject of debate and dialogue; the insights from this project will provide a knowledge base which will inform practice around tutoring for many years to come.

WHAT NEXT?

Phase 1 of this project will be completed by the spring 2022, with Phase 2 starting in March 2022.

Phase 2 will involve a deep dive into four or five sample sites, to be agreed with the Centre membership. Engagement with tutor constables will be undertaken to explore the model they are working within, the opportunities and challenges they face, the relationship between local contextual issues and the arrangements which are put in place.



ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING IN ACTION: 2020 – 2021

Dr Leah Tomkins

Lead force – Metropolitan Police Service

THE PROBLEM

CPRL has been working with leaders, officers and staff at the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) to change understandings and practices of Organizational Learning (OL). This has meant helping to shape MPS as a culture of learning and innovation – both in frontline policing and in the centralised functions of strategy, leadership and organizational development¹.

Throughout this work, evidence-based policing (EBP) was considered a 'hot topic', in both organizational and public conversations. There is a widespread assumption that EBP is positive; crystallised by the slogan 'what works'. It is associated with reducing trial and error learning, lessening risk, and focusing on interventions which will be of maximum organizational benefit. Focusing on 'what works' also conjures up images of people cutting through bureaucracy and ideology to just get things done.

However, during the course of this work with MPS, aspects of EBP and 'what works' were increasingly challenged and debated, often tethered to issues of research methodology and the relative value of quantitative and qualitative methods.

THE PROJECT

Using interview and ethnographic data from police officers and staff across a range of ranks and functions, this project developed iteratively, gradually building connections between observations, collected data and academic literature. The research included experimenting with language in discussions with the MPS, using 'what matters' to counter 'what works' and capturing the impact.

FINDINGS

The project developed an approach to put both 'knowledge into practice' and 'practice into knowledge', concluding:

- The notion of 'what works' is often assumed to mean 'what works everywhere'. This sometimes results in one size fits all approaches being prioritised over attunement to context, individual judgement, and tacit as well as explicit knowledge. Also, 'what works' has instrumental connotations that cast policing in quite mechanistic and unfeeling terms.
- The language of EBP and 'what works' is strongly associated with policing's 'blame culture'. If officers do what they have been told 'works', they feel relatively immune from blame. Relatedly, local innovations ('what works well for me/us') are often kept private in case they turn out to attract censure or blame. In short, EBP is at risk of operating against, not for, the psychological safety required for people to be open to learning and innovation.²
- The notion of 'what matters' has some unhelpful connotations. It is interpreted as 'what matters to an individual researcher' as opposed to 'what matters to MPS organizationally', revealing a sharp contrast between individual learning/research and organizational learning/research.
- MPS are not benefitting from broader connections between evidence-based policing and evidence-based medicine, because the 'treatments' version of EBP prioritises instrumental efficacy over other key issues in healthcare. The principal amongst these is the significance of care ethics, and associated skills of relationship management and practical reasoning.

¹ [Organizational Learning and the Metropolitan Police Service Report from the Scoping Study - Open Research Online](#)

² [From Blame to Praise in Policing: Implications for Strategy, Culture, Process and Wellbeing - Open Research Online](#)

IMPACT

This work is being incorporated in ‘Blame to Praise’ conversations, including recently in Special Constable training sessions and staff events for the OL network. It is also having an impact on the design of Basic Command Unit (BCU) OL structures, which are based on a bottom-up approach where all staff are encouraged to input, further challenging any one size fits all connotations linked to ‘what works’. This is part of a broader tonal shift at MPS, including increased use of upward mentoring, which gives explicit permission and encouragement to speak up.

skills of relationship management and practical reasoning at least as much as the ‘what works’ skills of research design and evaluation.

The findings of this project have been published in the prestigious journal *Human Relations*³.



One of the really positive outcomes of having The Open University present at every Organizational Learning Board in the Metropolitan Police is that it's really supported me and other colleagues to challenge executive behaviour, both within that meeting and more generally. So what we've found, actually, is that the Organizational Learning Boards have really changed in their feel, from being completely structured meetings where people don't generally feel free to share their views to more discursive boards that are really making a difference in dealing with wicked issues. And that's almost wholly, I think, due to having The Open University there.



Elisabeth Chapple
Chief Superintendent, Metropolitan Police Service

Understandings of the role of EBP in police professionalism are being reframed. This project emphasises that formal qualifications, skills in research methods and knowledge management are not the only focus of police professionalism. There is an important broader ethos, which includes definitions of the police as professional peacekeepers, who rely on the ‘what matters’



³ <http://oro.open.ac.uk/78550>

LITERATURE REVIEW OF THE EFFECT OF YOUNGER POLICE OFFICERS IN AGE AND IN SERVICE

Dr Emma Williams, Dr Arun Sondhi

THE PROBLEM

The Police Uplift Programme aims to recruit 20,000 new police officers across England and Wales. This recruitment drive falls at a time of increased numbers of officers taking retirement and leaving the service. With the likely new candidate pool being younger in age, questions were raised about how the needs of new recruits may differ from previous generations and what the implications of such a large intake of new recruits might be for the wider service.

THE PROJECT

In January 2021, the Home Office commissioned a literature review examining the likely impact of recruiting 20,000 new police officers, and to identify whether there were any emergent generational considerations that police forces should be aware of when starting such a wide-ranging recruitment drive.

CPRL undertook a narrative review of the available literature and found relatively few peer-reviewed papers on this topic from the policing service. The search strategy was broadened to include grey literature, such as magazine and newspaper articles, blogs, and other sources often provided by frontline police officers. The majority of the materials found were from North America.

There were several issues with assessing such a wide range of grey literature, including how best to assess the quality and robustness of the findings. A new approach to analysis was developed, to facilitate assessment of the material by a derived quality standard. These papers were visually mapped and scored to create a detailed thematic understanding of the literature.

FINDINGS

The study identified generational issues associated with how younger-in-age officers consider their role in the future workplace, including a desire for transparent relationships with managers. This was combined with a clear desire to emphasise the wider public service element of policing.

Younger-in-age police officers were found to be more aware of the need to maintain personal wellbeing and expressed a desire to maintain a functioning work-life balance, which may be perceived to be antagonistic, or counter-cultural, to the prevailing long-hours culture inherent within many police forces.

Police forces can create a positive narrative for new recruits that focuses on adult learning, commitment to public service, and leadership styles that prioritise teamwork, transparency and personal development.



WHAT NEXT?

The review suggested a range of improvements that could be made to the recruitment and retention process to address the likely needs identified for a large intake of new recruits into policing. These findings have created an opportunity to make direct links with other developments in policing, namely 'Embedding officer learning and wellbeing in rape and serious sexual assault investigations', where the findings of this review can be operationalised.



The work has had an impact in a number of areas, such as the National Police Chiefs' Council Workforce Co-ordination Committee and the lead for Oscar Kilo (the National Police Wellbeing Service), who are looking at ways to use the research as evidence for change going forward. It will also play an integral part in any future work the Uplift Programme does on onboarding and working with younger in-service officers.



Emma Player

Project Lead, Organizational Design
Workstream for the Police Uplift Programme

Following on from this review, the Centre has recently been commissioned to build an onboarding map for police forces in England and Wales that will support the successful delivery of the Police Uplift Programme. This second project is being led by Emma Williams together with Frank Sayi, Laura Knight and Nicky Miller.



THE DYNAMICS OF POLICE WORKING WITH ELECTED POLITICIANS

Professor Jean Hartley, Dr Jane Roberts

Lead forces – Dorset Police and North Yorkshire Police

THE PROBLEM

Police leaders work for organizations which are inherently political because they deal with contested and political matters (both formally and informally). Whether it is Black Lives Matter, policing COVID-19 regulations or conducting stop and search, police work is often surrounded by controversy or differences in views and values from varied stakeholders in society. Yet, in the UK, police leaders must not become too closely involved in politics or be seen to be too closely aligned with elected politicians because the model of policing in the UK is based on consent from the public and legislation states that they must maintain operational independence. Their relationship with politicians is even more complex than many other public professionals because police have the power to investigate, arrest and charge elected politicians, a power not available to other public servants. So how do police leaders navigate their roles and relationships with elected politicians, and what leadership capabilities and judgements help them in that?

Although senior police officers have long had to work with elected politicians, the advent in 2012 of directly elected Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) in England and Wales has brought the roles and relationships between senior police officers and politicians into sharper focus. This research examines the working relationships with PCCs, but the focus is on working with other elected politicians in addition, including ward councillors, local authority leaders, MPs, devolved administration politicians and ministers.

While some have argued that politics and administration are separated by clear lines of demarcation, in practice at strategic levels, there is often less a line of separation than a zone¹, a dynamic and sometimes fluid area of overlap where public servant and politician legitimately engage, depending on context. Stepping into such a zone needs to be negotiated with care and delicacy. Indeed, the metaphor 'dancing on ice' has been used by Manzie and Hartley (2013)² to describe the sensitivity of the terrain with regard to senior public officials working in central and local government. There is limited literature in this area and, as far as we know, even more limited knowledge about the way in which the police service interacts with politicians despite the often very sensitive, complex and contested nature of police work and the nature of police accountability within a democratic system.

THE PROJECT

The research focuses on three questions:

1. How do senior police officers and staff understand the roles of elected politicians?
2. How do senior police officers and staff interact with elected politicians?
3. What are the skills of leadership with political astuteness which enable police leaders to be effective and ethical in their work with elected politicians?

It builds on earlier work by Jean Hartley on leadership with political astuteness for public servants but taking into account the particular context and conditions for police leadership.

The research has completed a systematic literature review of the dynamics of police working with politicians but notes that existing literature focuses more on the formal structures of governance, particularly with PCCs rather than on roles, relationships and skills.

1 [Into the Purple Zone: Deconstructing the Politics/Administration Distinction - Open Research Online](#)

2 Manzie, Stella and Hartley, Jean (2013). Dancing on Ice: leadership with political astuteness by senior public servants in the UK. The Open University Business School, Milton Keynes, UK.

The research includes an interview study of 22 senior and aspiring senior police leaders (Chief Constables and Chief Superintendents/ Superintendents). The research also includes 11 interviews with each Chief Constables' political counterpart in their Police and Crime Commissioner. The field work was undertaken during the COVID-19 pandemic and includes reflections from the police leaders about relations before and during the pandemic.

FINDINGS

The outputs so far are the literature review and three conference presentations (available on request).

WHAT NEXT?

The next phase of data collection involves interviews with local authorities. The data will be analysed, and a report and presentation will be compiled to share the findings.



PUBLIC SERVICES INNOVATION AND POLICING

Professor Jean Hartley, Laurie Knell

Innovation in public services is increasingly seen to be a central plank for many public services, and policing is no exception. Innovation can increase efficiency or effectiveness of public services, can create new services or reach citizens in new ways, and can sometimes increase trust and legitimacy of public services. Policing Vision 2040 notes that future policing will need 'foresight, innovation, and agile adaptation' if it is to meet future societal challenges.



However, innovation is too often seen as a panacea – as though all innovation simply worked and solved problems for organizations. Many innovations fail between creative idea and embedding in the organization – and some should fail because innovation is inevitably venturing into new territory and involves new practices and new habits of mind. Some should also fail as part of a lively experimentation process out of which risk is managed and learning takes place.

So how should innovation be undertaken – so that it draws on frontline experience but is also strategically valuable, so that it takes account of local context but also builds on experiences from elsewhere, and so that innovation can challenge but also fit in (to some extent) with existing practices and cultures?

CPRL are undertaking four pieces of work which can help with these questions in practical ways:

1. PUBLIC INNOVATION LITERATURE REVIEW

Jean Hartley and Laurie Knell are working with Rob Flanagan, Innovation and Knowledge Sharing Manager at the College of Policing, to undertake a literature review on public innovation and its relevance to policing. The review focuses on innovation in public services, so that police innovators, champions and forces can learn from the best across a range of public services. Some features of public innovation differ from those in the private sector. There is much to learn from private sector innovation but the differences are also worth being aware of, for example innovation being used to create better services rather than make a profit; the importance of accountability for risk, change and outcomes; the role of citizens not customers, the importance of sharing not hoarding innovation for the good of society; the role of politicians in innovation which can be beneficial or problematic.

The review aims were shared with the College Innovation Brokers Network, which will also help to design the most accessible ways to share the findings once the review is complete.

2. INNOVATION, EXNOVATION AND INTELLIGENT FAILURE

The second contribution to understanding innovation in policing is the article recently published by Jean and Laurie on '[Innovation, exnovation and intelligent failure](#)'. Examining innovation across all sectors but interested particularly in public innovation, the paper argues for the value of well-planned failure and also for the deliberate killing off of innovations which no longer 'work' or which are 'doomed to succeed'. Exnovation is that process of killing off an innovation when no longer fit for purpose. There is interest in this article from around the world, including from the USA and Australia.

3. INNOVATION IN POLICING SHORT COURSE

The third contribution is through the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) short course on innovation, as part of the suite of videos and other OpenLearn materials created by Paul Walley and Laurie Knell. The course will be launched in early 2022, and will be available not only to PSNI but to other forces and to the general public as well.

4. VALUING PUBLIC INNOVATION

Finally, having researched public innovation over the past two decades, Jean is in the middle of writing a book called 'Valuing Public Innovation'.

This is being written with colleagues Rolf Rønning from Norway, Lars Fuglsang from Denmark and Karin Geuijen from the Netherlands – all countries with an enviable reputation for pioneering public innovations and providing an international perspective. The book is due to be published in 2022.

Follow the developments of the literature review and the book on the Centre's [website](#), and watch out for tweets from Rob Flanagan, Laurie Knell and Jean Hartley on this topic. They are sure to be both practical and challenging preconceptions of innovation.



PROMOTING WELLBEING AND RESILIENCE IN LGBTQ+ YOUTH

Dr Mathijs Lucassen, Professor Louise Wallace, Dr Rajvinder Samra, Alicia Núñez-García, Professor Katherine Brown (University of Hertfordshire), Dr Katharine Rimes (King's College London)

THE PROBLEM

Despite rapid social progress, adolescents who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender/trans, and queer (LGBTQ+) often still experience distressing bullying and victimisation. Mistreatment and socially hostile environments can negatively impact upon their mental and physical health. Addressing the adverse effects of the social violence LGBTQ+ adolescents experience on a day-to-day basis remains a pressing public health challenge.

Many adolescents in harmful social environments cannot leave these, often due to practical constraints around their schooling and economic dependence on their families. Many LGBTQ+ adolescents are geographically isolated away from the dedicated LGBTQ+ charities or support groups that tend to cluster in large urban areas. Most will not have parents who are LGBTQ+. Further adding to these challenges, LGBTQ+ adolescents are thought to be 'coming out' earlier and as a result may not have developed some of the more sophisticated social and emotional skills of LGBTQ+ people who come out as young adults. Hence, there is an urgent need for widely accessible and targeted help to assist LGBTQ+ adolescents to develop the best possible skills to thrive.

THE PROJECT

This research is funded by the Medical Research Council under its Public Health Intervention Development (PHIND) Scheme. There are three main objectives for this project:

- Co-design a media rich 'online rainbow wellbeing' toolkit with LGBTQ+ adolescents, experts in psycho-social coping strategies and public health leaders, including commissioners of services, experts on bullying

prevention, therapists, police, teachers, and youth workers.

- Explore how the online toolkit can be used within UK public health systems by LGBTQ+ youth themselves, and potentially by community organizations and professionals that may benefit from use of the online toolkit, for example as continuing professional development.
- Plan delivery of the intervention, wider implementation of the toolkit and determine the design and measures for a future effectiveness study.

FINDINGS



This project only began in September 2021 but early indications from reviewing the literature show that although LGBTQ+ adolescents are a 'high risk' population, few research-informed interventions have been developed for them. Coping strategies that are evidence-based for the general population and fine-tuned with LGBTQ+ adolescents in mind, for example with strategies that assist them to manage LGBTQ+ stigma and victimisation, offer considerable potential. This is particularly evident where they are delivered in an engaging manner and focus on enhancing coping skills and building resilience.

WHAT NEXT?

The project will fill an important gap in the research literature regarding the cognitive and behavioural coping strategies that can enhance resilience for LGBTQ+ youth. This project will therefore benefit researchers as well as public health leaders.

The project has been presented to the CPRL membership group. Member forces will receive updates as the research develops, and how the toolkit can support forces and frontline officers' understanding of LGBTQ+ bullying.

The findings will inform the existing debate and contribute to the development of future interventions, in addition to increasing use of the online toolkit. Planned dissemination methods include:

- contributions to online sites and blogs
- presentations at conferences and meetings for researchers and those supporting LGBTQ+ adolescents in the UK and internationally
- publication of at least two academic papers that will be added to open access repositories.



LEARNING AND EDUCATION

LEARNING AND EDUCATION

Dr Paul Walley, Director of Learning

It has been another busy and exciting year developing policing learning activities.

The Centre is developing and delivering learning in a wide range of formats. Our existing work to produce Open Education Resources (OERs), such as the courses with Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), continues.

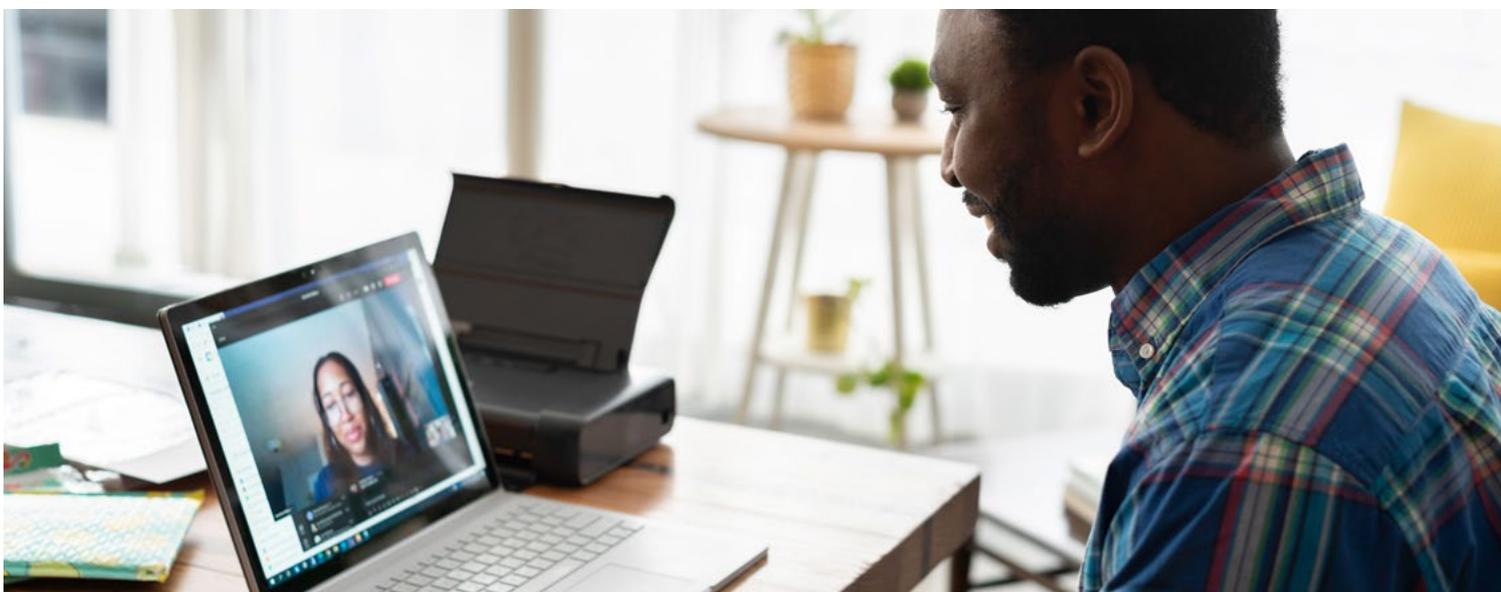
Four additional courses have been added this year to the portfolio of OpenLearn modules on Community Engagement, with a further four new courses currently in development. These courses attract large numbers of students, with the module 'Sure I know how to talk to people' now having over 40,000 unique visitors to the material.

The value of blended learning for training and professional development is gaining recognition and momentum, particularly following over a year of restricted travel. CPRL excels at adapting material to support learning and development online, which is evidenced by its high completion rates across OpenLearn modules.



Figure 1: Community engagement and policing: OpenLearn modules produced in association with the Police Service of Northern Ireland

The Centre is now also looking to enhance some of our accredited learning where we are exploring a pilot project to develop postgraduate qualifications such as a Postgraduate Certificate in Police Analysis. Our work to promote and offer PhD study also continues to prosper with a wide number of applicants for PhD places and lots of interest from police forces.



CPD IN 10 YEARS' TIME



One key aim in 2022 is to shape how some police CPD is delivered, working to complement the tremendous efforts of our Executive Education team, led by Liz Moody, who have developed Leadership and Management CPD courses this year.

As part of our 10-year plan, the Centre has set objectives to steadily increase our involvement in providing CPD opportunities in policing. In the short term CPRL continues to develop free, Open Educational Resources such as those produced for PSNI, and we are looking to pilot other CPD activities soon.

In the longer term CPRL aims to provide accredited routes to qualifications based upon policing CPD. Our ultimate goal is to help steer policing towards effective CPD and the Centre has conducted research to identify critical success factors for effective CPD. The diagram above summarises the main factors identified in our work and our aim to influence these in policing.

CPRL have recruited a new lecturer in Policing Professional Development, further increasing the talent and experience of this team. New materials in this area will span a much wider range of topics and aims to extend from police officer development to include analysts, performance management and business intelligence.

Furthermore, both Jean Hartley and Paul Walley have been appointed to the College of Policing CPD Steering Group where they will support the College in their plans to improve involvement of police and staff in CPD. Its aim is to help create a vision of what CPD in policing will look like in years to come.

POLICING INSIGHT SERIES

Complementing our work developing CPD for policing, in November CPRL reached an agreement to publish articles on a fortnightly basis in the professional journal Policing Insight between November 2021 and May 2022. Including an introductory article that first appeared on 11th November, there will be 14 articles written by members from CPRL and the Policing and Organisational Practice team with the common thread 'Continuing Professional Development in Policing'.

The first article, written by Matt Jones and entitled 'Shaking off the historical shackles of NCALT: Time to think differently about "blended learning"?' demonstrates how approaches to blended learning have improved over time, creating good opportunities for CPD.

Future articles by the entire CPRL team cover a wide range of issues including success factors in CPD, innovation in the delivery of CPD, knowledge into practice and the use of tutor constables.



IMPROVEMENT SCIENCE IN POLICING AND EDUCATION

Dr Paul Walley

The last two years have shown that all organizations can be presented with new problems to solve, and often solutions need to be identified, devised, and implemented in a short span of time.

Successful organizations regularly demonstrate their ability to solve such problems using the skills of the existing workforce, enabled with the right processes, and supported by their leadership team.

CPRL has worked with many police forces in the UK that tend to take a project-based approach to problem-solving, and often project teams are tasked to deliver high-intensity change to solve a key problem over a very short time frame. In such cases project teams are formed, the work happens quickly and then the team disbands and moves on to the next challenge.

Less evident in policing is continuous improvement, whereby people are constantly tasked to find ways of improving their own processes so that the system incrementally becomes more effective or efficient.

Improvement Science as an approach to problem-solving has real potential in policing. Improvement Science originated in healthcare over 20 years ago, based around the work of W Edwards Deming. It provides an evidence-informed approach to continuous improvement where problem-solving is structured to provide rapid-cycle change, coupled with evidence generation.

The evidence base is established through the problem-solving cycle of Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA), which offers practitioners a structured approach to diagnosing problems and testing solutions. The PDSA approach rapidly builds local knowledge of effective solutions that can be shared with others.

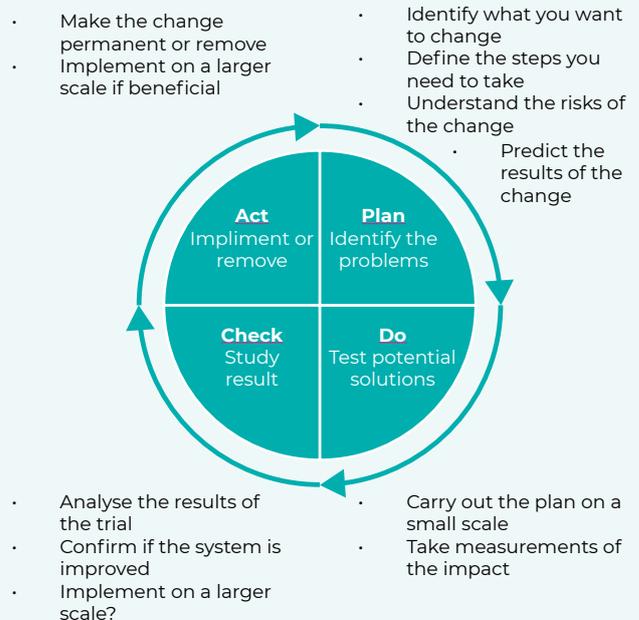


Figure 1: PDSA cycle

This year CPRL has been involved in two action research projects that have taken an Improvement Science approach to problem-solving: one in education and one in policing.

The education project has the aim of improving access to education in a number of countries including Uzbekistan, Honduras and Ghana alongside work on leadership in the Philippines.

The first ‘field test’ of our main project took place in October where various tests of the use of online learning in remote areas were carried out. The important feature of this PDSA was to discover what does not work as well as what works, so that knowledge can be embedded when the work is scaled up. The key message is that failure happens, no one is blamed, and learning takes place – with the evidence collected and the knowledge retained. This focus on learning and progression is particularly important in contexts where emergencies, immediate crises and protracted conflict are part of the wider environment of the study.

This project persevered through hurricanes, power cuts, flooding, pandemic-related curfews and the impact of local armed conflict.

The policing project involved testing the first stage of this approach with South Yorkshire Police. The process of developing online learning was examined in a workshop and an 'A3 plan' was developed, mapping out how to analyse and improve this process. The A3 planning tool is very useful for structuring a process improvement activity, using a disciplined methodology and preventing jumping to solutions. A rapid 'process map' was produced, demonstrating the existing process (see Figure 2).

The process map was used to identify the parts in the process that are likely to produce errors or delays. Here you can use a process mapping 'bolo list' ('be on the lookout') where wasted effort or errors are spotted. Some of the main items on this bolo list include:

- incorrect assumptions
- duplication of work
- insufficient flexibility
- complex processing
- too many intermediaries to 'expedite' or 'coordinate'
- lack of standardisation.

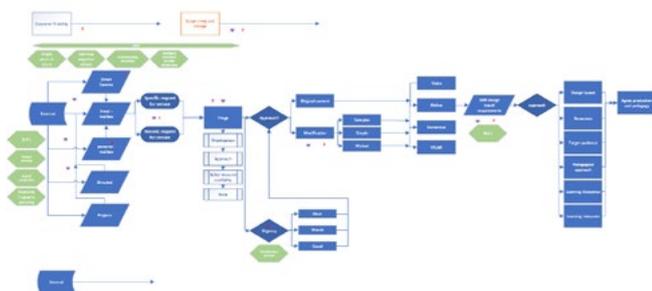


Figure 2: Rapid 'process map'¹

The PDSA approach identified where work was coming into South Yorkshire Police from a variety of uncontrolled sources. There was limited external understanding of the amount of work being requested and the time needed to complete it. Some of the work had hidden complexity that was not fully recognised. The South Yorkshire Police team were able to conduct four separate actions in response to this analysis:

- First, they issued a survey to their internal customers that was used to guide future changes. The feedback highlighted the need to standardise the process in place to request work and provide guidance in timescales and lesson content.
- Second, the survey findings were used to create a work commissioning document, together with a template for requests coming in by email.
- Third, they were able to develop an accessible list of all work requests active in their system, showing a description of the work, its priority, progress status, completion deadline and other additional comments.
- Finally, each project has its own catchup document that allows Digital Learning Managers to maintain regular contact with those requesting work.

This work has already shown improvement in relations and communication within the team, resulting in positive feedback from those involved. Moving swiftly from problem diagnosis to implementing and testing solutions was found to be one of the most positive and engaging features of the PDSA approach.

Improvement activity needs those involved to be given the time and space to conduct the PDSA experiments without being redirected to operational commitments. This action research project continues to highlight this redirection of people and time as one of the biggest challenges to implementing continuous learning.

¹ Rapid 'process map' available on request

POLICING DEGREE APPRENTICESHIPS

Dr Matthew Jones, Jo Lambert

As the team responsible for the development of the OU's accredited policing degree programmes, the Policing Organisation and Practice (POP) team have continued to strengthen the partnerships and programme portfolio this year. To date, 132 students have participated in one of the OU's policing degrees.

The Police Constable Degree Apprentice (PCDA) programme launched in 2020, despite the challenges and restrictions of COVID-19, and saw its first ever cohort of 27 student officers from North Yorkshire Police complete Year 1 in the summer of this year. Year 2 delivery has begun and the production of the final year of the degree apprentice programme is currently underway.



The officers have benefited from the OU's unique method of blended learning from the very start, richly combining module materials delivered on the OU's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), with expert input sessions from trainers in North Yorkshire Police, and support from OU Practice and Academic Tutors. The blend of work-based learning with academic learning has enabled the student officers to complete their studies flexibly around their operational duties.



Starting from scratch is no easy feat and the results of excellence and influence of policing practice are clear in the assessments I have reviewed. It has been a pleasure to read the student officers' work and to see how they are progressing as reflective, ethical officers – something they and their employers should be very proud of.



External examiner



The range of assessment tasks allows students to demonstrate their knowledge and achievement in different ways. Some of the stronger students who had really engaged with the tasks are critically evaluating the contribution of theory to practice, through well-designed assessment tasks. The team should be commended for this, it really illustrates the whole rationale for the PEQF in advancing policing as a profession and it was heartening to see them focusing on the 'why' as well as the 'what' of policing.



External examiner

This year the POP team welcomed **two police secondees into the team** – from Devon and Cornwall Police and the National Crime Agency.

The POP programme portfolio continues to grow with the development of the **Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) apprenticeship** and a **Police Special Constables learning programme** – both of which combine the strengths of our blended learning approach to provide flexibility and engaging professional learning for police organizations.

Further information can be provided about these programmes on request.



The key strengths of the OU's accredited degree programme include:

50 years of expertise in delivering learning to part-time and professional students.

A strong social mission that matches onto the organizational objectives and priorities of police partners.

Experienced provider of PEQF with capabilities and resources to support collaborative delivery with our police partners.

Distinctive blended approach allows students to engage with their learning at a time, pace and duration that meets the demands of their personal and professional lives.

Activity-based learning facilitates student application of academic knowledge to professional police practice.

Co-production of up to 35 programmes per year with the BBC, for TV, radio, digital and online channels and platform – used as learning resources, for example *The MET: Policing London* and *The Detectives*.

We are a national University with local presence. We have a national network of academic and practice tutors who often combine their professional practice with their tutor role at the OU to support students with their learning.

We continue to seek opportunities to expand our PEQF and wider programme partnerships. If you would like any further information, please contact [Jo Lambert](#) from POP.

PHD SUCCESS

This year CPRL celebrated its first studentship PhD completion. In June, Dr Reuben Moreton successfully defended his PhD thesis titled 'Expertise in Applied Face Matching: Training, Forensic Examiners, Super Matchers and Algorithms' and this is [available online](#). More detail on Reuben's thesis can be found on page 12 of this report.

This achievement celebrates the first CPRL-supported doctorate and Reuben was particularly positive about the support he had received from his supervisors, all of whom are based in the Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences (FASS).

Reuben's supervision team included Graham Pike (Director of Research in the Centre until December 2020), Catriona Havard and Ailsa Strathie.

Other students are making great progress and CPRL expects more completions soon. Recruitment continues to the part-time PhD programme.

CPRL works across all faculties to provide PhD supervision in a wide range of disciplines relevant to policing, and many of the PhDs supported by CPRL are cross-disciplinary.

CPRL provides studentships that subsidise the fees for PhD study.

For anyone interested in studying for a PhD, feel free to contact us at any time. We can provide advice to individuals thinking of doing a PhD and we are also able to present information about PhDs to larger audiences if any forces would like this.

For PhD study starting in October 2022 or February 2023 please get in touch as soon as possible – we would like to see applications ideally by the end of March 2022. Contact Paul Walley paul.walley@open.ac.uk in the first instance. For further advice on how to apply for a PhD in any of our Faculties see [How to Apply | Research Degrees | Open University](#).



PHD CASE STUDY: INDECENT IMAGES OF CHILDREN

Nicole Woodhall, National Crime Agency

Nicole is currently undertaking a PhD part-time after securing a scholarship with CPRL in 2018. Outside of her PhD, Nicole works for the National Crime Agency as a Senior Manager, leading the National Assessment Centre Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) team. In 2021 Nicole was invited to present her research at an ESRC-funded conference on Serious and Organised Crime, hosted by UK Research and Innovation Partnership for Conflict, Crime and Security Research.

Nicole describes her PhD experience:

In both my professional and academic career, I strive to increase understanding and knowledge in relation to the CSA threat, using this to inform policy, operating procedure, and law enforcement response.

RESEARCH FOCUS

My current research focuses on the social harms that are implicit to self-generated incident images of children (SGII). In keeping with my passion for problem-solving, I aim to understand these harms and the impact they have on law enforcement and the wider response to indecent images of children (IloC).

Previous research has failed to acknowledge the different types and categorisations of IloC and the varying levels of harm associated with them. One such sub-category of IloC is SGII, which will be the focus of this research, aiming to explore what harms are implicit in SGII and how this knowledge can inform law enforcement operating procedure.

METHODS

To complete my research, I will be carrying out a mixed methods design, utilising quantitative data to establish the extent of the SGII problem facing law enforcement and qualitative case studies and interviews to explore the harms resulting from SGII and the demand they create.

EMERGING INSIGHTS

Self-generated images, 'youth produced sexual imagery' or 'sexting' are all terms used interchangeably in the literature to describe images or videos that an individual has taken of themselves and shared with a person or a platform.

SGII is traditionally thought to be the result of coercion or grooming. However this is increasingly being shown to be a conscious choice by young people to engage in the behaviour. The distribution of SGII of children is providing offenders with easy-to-access IloC images, especially as these are readily available and easily accessed on the web.

However, what is not clear is how much demand this imagery is creating for law enforcement and other public bodies; the new social harms that are emerging as a result; and how these can be managed. My PhD will help answer these questions and fill gaps in knowledge by exploring the impact that self-generated indecent images have on law enforcement and the harms that are implicit to them.

I will be reaching out to police forces and practitioners who work in the indecent imagery of children arena over the course of the next few months. If you would like any further information about my research, its aims and my planned methodology, please contact me at: Nicole.woodhall@open.ac.uk.

KNOWLEDGE INTO PRACTICE

KNOWLEDGE INTO PRACTICE

Dr Nicky Miller, Director of Knowledge into Practice

This year has been busy for CPRL and there have been a number of different ways in which we have ensured that the knowledge that we have co-developed in partnership has been integrated into both academic and policing practice.

Seven examples of CPRL activities that have integrated 'knowledge into practice' are presented below:

1. DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF A COLLEGE OF POLICING WEBINAR ON THE LEADERSHIP OF CPD

Jean Hartley shared her expertise and contributed to the College of Policing's webinar series entitled 'CPD in focus: Leading and developing a positive learning culture in policing'.

The series explores the important role of leaders in creating a positive learning and development culture within teams, departments, and organizations, and was run by the College of Policing. Jean led a session on the 'Leadership of learning in the whirlwind', where she drew on ideas and research from across a wide range of public services, including policing. She explored questions such as "What is CPD if it is taking place in a whirlwind of activity?", "How can leaders influence interest and take-up of CPD?", "What is the role of leadership in fostering a learning culture?", and "What's in it for leaders to do this?"

The session was described as "brilliant and inspirational" and "thought-provoking".

2. SHARING ACADEMIC EXPERTISE ON THE NATIONAL STAGE

The Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) held its national conference online in June 2021. With keynote speeches from the Prime Minister, Home Secretary and the PFEW Chair, and inputs from the barrister and commentator Robert Rinder and previous Head

of Communications at 10 Downing Street, Alistair Campbell, it was an impactful event that reached over 1,000 viewers.

CPRL's Emma Williams ran a main-stage conference session focusing upon the issues affecting recruitment and training of new officers. The session involved senior leaders from across policing, including Assistant Commissioner Helen Ball – Metropolitan Police Lead for Professionalism; Police Crime Commissioner Kim McGuinness - The Association of Police and Crime Commissioners Lead for Workforce Development; and Jo Noakes - College of Policing Director for Workforce Development.



Dr Williams' input to the session was insightful and provided a useful balance to assessments of progress within policing development. The emphasis that was placed, from an academic perspective, on the necessity to blend theoretical learning into practical events, integrating the academic element of recruit training with policing craft knowledge, was welcomed and appropriate for those in attendance. Further, Dr Williams was able to support the thoughts of PFEW representatives with a research-based knowledge of the vital, but sometimes neglected role of the tutor within the workplace and the inconsistencies of implementation across policing of the Police Education Qualification Framework, leading to a lack of standardisation of development. Challenging the notion within policing that learning and development is an 'abstraction' as opposed to the right thing to do to invest in the service and its people. The voice of a leading academic in policing, highlighting the need for academic policing delivery to understand the craft and blend its approach to learning, was an impactful message to receive, calling for greater oversight of delivery of learning and its outcomes.



Dave Bamber

Police Federation of England and Wales,
Head of Learning and Development

3. PROVIDING ADVICE ON STUDY TACTICS FOR ONLINE LEARNING

In October, Paul Walley, Director of Learning, and Sean Bell, Lecturer in Policing Organisation and Practice, held an online seminar for the College of Policing's Academic Support Network, about studying for degrees by blended learning. The network brings together police officers and staff across the UK who are undertaking academic study, and those recently awarded College Bursaries were invited to attend.

The focus of the seminar was to offer advice and tips about studying online. Paul and Sean highlighted the preparation that students should make before they start their degrees, including creating the right space for study, whether this is at home, work or other locations. Students were taken through the range of learning activities that can be expected on well-designed online courses, such as simulations and games, activities involving data analysis or creative work. The importance of reflective work and keeping a good record of the application of theory to their own work experience was emphasised as an effective method of study. Other study skills, such as the preparation of assignments and exam revision, were also covered.

Students were encouraged to try out their study skills with some of The Open University's relevant OpenLearn [free courses](#).



I think the students were surprised by how much free material the OU provides when supporting study. We were delighted that we could help out in this way.



Paul Walley
Director of Learning



Paul and Sean gave a really helpful and responsive presentation for the Academic Support Network which gave them tips on re-starting studying and also covered some of the anxieties about higher education learning. Paul's expertise on distance-learning was insightful and his experience at teaching and coaching students via the OU was invaluable. Sean gave practical suggestions to students about managing study with work commitments, selecting research topics and avoiding impostor syndrome.



Jo Wilkinson
College of Policing, What Works Manager

4. HOSTING A MASTERCLASS

In May, Emma Williams was approached by Cambridgeshire Constabulary to present at one of their online 'Police Futures' masterclass events on the subject of procedural and organizational justice.

Police Futures is a talent management programme that both identifies high-potential police officers already serving and recruits high-potential graduates into the policing service. Police Futures supports them with mentoring, development opportunities and masterclass programmes that underpin and encourage their professional development.

The masterclass was designed in collaboration with Emma and Superintendent James Sutherland from Cambridgeshire Constabulary. He was keen to ensure that the masterclass was informed by academic research that was communicated in a persuasive and easy to understand style.

“

Emma’s Masterclass this morning met all our expectations and more. Emma managed to provide an overview of the wide-ranging topic of organizational and procedural justice in a way that was accessible to officers approaching the topic for the first time. She was able to take the theoretical aspects and relate it to the operational experience of police officers with examples of how to use organizational and procedural justice for improved outcomes. Emma’s audience were police officers who have been identified as having leadership qualities and who are likely to rise to senior ranks within policing. The officers are currently at a very junior point of their service and consequently, Emma’s input to them is likely to have a positive impact on their leadership style and the wider policing organization for many years to come.

”

James Sutherland
Superintendent

5. BRINGING BACK LEARNING FROM OTHER ACADEMICS

Nicky Miller, Director of Knowledge into Practice, was selected in a national competitive application process to be part of a team of evaluators for the Knowledge Exchange Concordat. This is a sector-led initiative aimed at enhancing and improving knowledge exchange between universities and a wide range of partners including business, public sector, charity/voluntary bodies and local government/national bodies. Evaluators from universities across the UK were formed into groups to evaluate institutional knowledge exchange action plans that combine relevant experience, experience outside of higher education and those who are new to the sector.

“

This role provided a great opportunity to apply my understanding of Knowledge Exchange (KE) strategies, principles, best practice and tools to support the embedding of KE behaviours on a national scale which, in turn, will deliver increased organizational effectiveness for the academic sector. I am motivated by a keen desire to contribute to influencing the development of a culture of continuous improvement for universities around KE. Furthermore, taking on this role allowed me (and CPRL) to develop a dynamic knowledge base on ‘what works’ in KE. I look forward to motivating and inspiring others to want to be actively engaged with this.

”

Nicky Miller
Director of Knowledge into Practice





The evaluator role has been crucial to ensuring that both individual institutions receive valuable and supportive feedback on their action plans and good practice is identified and shared with the wider sector. The evaluators are the experts who provide advice on the institutional approach to the self-evaluation and action plan, their identified priority actions and approaches and activities that are good practice and innovative. Their advice will boost and improve institutional development of effective knowledge exchange, but also increase the collective impact of knowledge exchange through the sharing of good practice.



Greg Wade
Universities UK, Policy Manager

6. SHARING ACADEMIC EXPERTISE TO INFLUENCE POLICY

Helen Selby-Fell, Senior Lecturer in Policing Organization and Practice, began working with Daniel Allen, Keele University, in late 2020 to research various facets of 'dog theft' exploring not just the extent and nature of dog theft in England and Wales but also the victim impact. Their work provided a clearer insight into the extent of the problem, highlighting the limitations and caveats associated with various sources of 'dog theft' data; specifically that it is not a dedicated crime type under Home Office Crime Recording which makes it difficult for forces to manage.

Early research findings were used to inform OPAL's (national intelligence unit focused on serious organised acquisitive crime) 'National Dog Theft Summary', that was circulated to all forces in England and Wales in March 2021. The researchers attended meetings with the Home Office,

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and presented their research to the newly established 'Pet Theft Taskforce'. This resulted in the Home Office publication of a [Pet Theft Taskforce Policy Paper](#) in which their research was heavily cited.

The report made a number of recommendations designed to tackle the theft of dogs, including the development of legislative options for a new 'pet abduction' offence to acknowledge the welfare of sentient animals.

Helen welcomes the recommendations but she emphasises the need for further research to continue to build the evidence base to inform the development of policing, and wider, response to dog theft and dog-related criminality more broadly in the UK.

7. EDITING A THEMED ISSUE OF PUBLIC MONEY AND MANAGEMENT

The inspiration for this PMM themed issue 'Learning from Success, Near Miss and Failure'² arose from the CPRL's 2020 annual academic-practitioner conference in the policing field which considered success, near miss and failure as a basis for learning. It features several CPRL academics and research project findings.

In the field of innovation, learn more about 'exnovation and intelligent failure' in this [article](#) by Jean Hartley and Laurie Knell.

The dangers of the '70:20:10 rule' in learning and development are explored by Richard Harding in this punchy [article](#), providing a cautionary note to those who might find this 'rule' attractive.

A short [debate piece](#) from Nicky Miller challenges us all to think about the role of academic-practitioner partnerships in bridging the gap between research and practice.

1 Selby-Fell, H. and Allen, D. (2021) Dog Theft: What can we infer from the evidence so far? 24th February 2021. Available at: <http://www.pettheftreform.com/research>

2 [Public Money & Management, Volume 42, Number 1, January 2022](#)

INTERNATIONAL ROUND TABLE: POLICING THE PANDEMIC

Professor Jean Hartley

In April, a group of police practitioners and academics from New Zealand, the Netherlands, UK and USA met online to discuss similarities and differences across the policing of the pandemic and the recovery from the most intense period of the pandemic. The panel was part of an international conference run by the International Research Society for Public Management.

Rachel Tolber from Redlands Police, California; Ian Barnes from New Zealand Police; Wouter Stol an academic and former practitioner from the Dutch Police; Steven Chase and Emma Baillie from Thames Valley Police in the UK as well as Phil Davies from Greater Manchester Police in the UK, all talked about the practical steps, the unexpected turns and the adaptation to change as the pandemic progressed. The webinar was chaired by Jean Hartley and Edoardo Ongaro of The Open University.

The police in the panel varied from the small local police force of Redlands with under 100 officers, through larger forces with over 10,000 officers in the UK, to the national police force in New Zealand. At the country level, forces varied in what they had to contend with – some had major outbreaks of the disease while others were able to keep infection largely at bay. Some issues were very similar: setting up command structures to deal with the initial crisis, working out the implications for a range of functions including changing rotas, protecting staff in various ways, how vehicle workshops were organised, shifting a lot of learning and training online, working with partner organizations in new ways, protecting vulnerable people, such as the homeless and those suffering domestic abuse, working out new ways of interacting with people on the street and in custody suites, using the drop in volume crime to focus more on serious and organised crime. Others were different – how NZP worked with Māori communities, how Redlands dealt with anti-police protests in the wake of the death of George Floyd.

The initial work of adapting services and shifts was made more complicated by other social pressures, for which COVID-19 and the lockdown was also an accelerant. Black Lives Matter protests took place during lockdown regulations; in California the lockdown led to financial pressures, with redundancies of police just at the time that officers were needed.

Recovery was also part of the online discussion – it was noted that police excel at responding to crisis but that it was harder to focus energy on recovery, which also needed careful planning. Some new challenges arose – for example, in the recovery phase in Redlands, the police prepared for potential anti-vax protests given that they were happening in several large cities. All forces made fast-paced changes and innovations which are likely to outlast the pandemic.

Overall, the participants appeared to enjoy and gain value from reflecting and comparing experiences.



From top left to right:
International
 Ian Barnes – New Zealand; Wouter Stol – Netherlands; Rachel Tolber – USA
UK
 Emma Baillie, Steven Chase, Phil Davies, Jean Hartley, Edoardo Ongaro

SHARING KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND PEOPLE

The ability to support secondments that inform and influence knowledge and practice is a key strength of CPRL. This year academics have shared their knowledge and expertise on secondments to other institutions, whilst welcoming police practitioners and academics to work on a variety of CPRL research projects. In addition, there are five external academics and experts from policing working with CPRL as Visiting Fellows and Professors.

ACADEMICS FROM OTHER UNIVERSITIES WORKING WITH CPRL

Dr Tom Cockcroft



Tom Cockcroft, Reader in Criminology is seconded to CPRL to work on the project, 'Building the evidence base for effective tutoring of police recruits'.

An authority on police culture, Tom's most recent work has seen him explore the challenges for police organizations in developing effective cybercrime training; the challenges of applying transformational leadership models to police contexts; the experiences of police officers studying on higher education programmes; the relationship between police culture and the police professionalisation agenda and the impact of new knowledge paradigms in policing.

In addition to this, he has recently worked on a major College of Policing/Higher Education Funding Council for England funded piece of research, with West Yorkshire Police entitled 'An Evidence-Based Approach to Fighting Cyber Crime from the Frontline: Improving the Effectiveness and Efficiency of Investigating Cyber Enabled Crime'.

His career has seen him work with a host of police and criminal justice organizations both in the UK and international contexts including West Yorkshire Police, Europol, the Home Office and the Bundeskriminalamt (the German Federal Police). He is the author of *Police Culture: Themes and Concepts* (Routledge, 2012) and *Police Culture: Research and Practice* (Policy Press, 2020). He also sits on the editorial board *Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice* (Oxford University Press) and is a Series Editor for *Routledge Advances in Police Practice and Knowledge*.

“

This piece of research speaks directly to my interests around police culture, knowledge and education and will, I hope, lead to greater insight around how best to support new police recruits as they join the organization. Likewise, being part of such a dynamic and active research centre will provide tremendous opportunities to work with and learn from a range of practitioners and academics.

”

Professor Jason Roach,
University of Huddersfield



Jason Roach joined CPRL as a Visiting Professor in June 2021 for three years. Jason is a Professor of Psychology and Policing, a Chartered Psychologist and Director of the Secure Societies Institute at the University of Huddersfield. He has been working in academia for almost twenty years; previously he worked for the UK Home Office and began his working life in mental health and psychiatric services from 1992 to 2001. His main areas of research interest are police and offender decision-making (especially in criminal investigations); crime prevention (using behavioural science approaches such as ‘Nudge’), violent crime (including child homicide), and the Self-Selection Policing approach, which he co-invented with Professor Ken Pease, which identifies how serious criminals can be uncovered by the small crimes they commit (Roach and Pease, 2016). He has co-written and co-edited four books and published over 40 academic papers and book chapters for edited works. He is also Editor in Chief for the Police Journal.

Jason was asked why he become a Visiting Professor at CPRL and what contribution he felt he could make to work and further development?



It is simply because I want to be part of the diverse and forward-thinking policing research and training embodied by CPRL. As for what contribution I can make to CPRL, I hope to add my particular brand of knowledge and experience to the work with partnership forces that CPRL staff are currently engaged in. For example, in the areas of crime prevention and criminal investigation, but also in other ways including bidding for external research and consultancy funding, presenting at annual conferences, working with CPRL postgraduate students, and contributing to police training development. I always work under the mantra of ‘research is something done with, not to, police’ and I believe that CPRL shares that value.



REFLECTIONS: THE SENIOR PRACTITIONER FELLOWSHIP SCHEME

Senior Practitioner Fellows are police officers or staff, on secondment to a research team at the Centre for three to six months. Fellows are appointed through a person specification and interview.

They are recruited to identified projects and contribute to research design, data collection, analysis and writing up practitioner and academic publications. The approach derives from the commitment to co-research, drawing on the insights from police and academics working together.

This year the CPRL partnership benefitted from four Senior Practitioner Fellowships which are funded by the Centre. These were three-month

secondments to allow an officer from a member force to work on a research project for a dedicated period of time. This included Lucy Bottomley (Thames Valley Police) and Rebecca Collard (Avon and Somerset Police) being seconded to work on the 'Victim (dis)engagement in domestic abuse and rape cases' research project with Lis Bates and Anna Hopkins.

Debbie Kerridge from Cambridgeshire Constabulary worked with Nicky Miller on the project 'Research into practice and practice into research?'. Keeley Watts from GMP worked on the 'Mobilising for change' project with Richard Harding.

The value for the secondee is working inside a university and learning more about how research is designed and carried out. This improves the evidence-based practice skills of the Fellow, which they can take back into their organization. For academics, the research is more fully grounded in policing practices.

Two officers who joined the Centre as Senior Practitioner Fellows this year share their experiences.

Lucy Bottomley, Thames Valley Police

I joined the Centre for Policing Research and Learning (CPRL) at The Open University on a three-month secondment as a Senior Practitioner Fellow from Thames Valley Police. After attending a selection board in London in 2020, and a period of Covid leading to a few months' delays, I started my secondment in January 2021. I was immediately met with a friendly, smart and passionate team who really made me feel welcome in a new world of academia.

I was given opportunities not only to work on the 'Victim (dis)engagement in domestic abuse and rape cases' project, which was, and continues to be, such an amazing experience, but also encouraged to look outside of

the circle to attend further seminars, groups and training – something which I normally would have no access to as a Response Sergeant. I had access to many interesting meetings and exposure to a lot of the fantastic research CPRL is doing. This really enforced for me how many people are passionate about improving the police service nationally and the hard work involved in this. The three months flew by, where I participated in a review of police practice and policy around rape and domestic abuse, assisting in designing police focus groups and learning huge amounts as I went.

Since returning, there is ongoing work around DV in Milton Keynes and force-wide. I am feeding back to the force strategic group the benefits of CPRL but also taking what I have learnt to improve our evidence-based practice to make it more rigorous and looking to find ways to get involved in further research projects while still a Visiting Fellow with CPRL. Whilst back working with my force, I am still actively involved in the 'Victim (dis)engagement in domestic abuse and rape cases' project and am looking forward to working with the team on the upcoming police focus groups. We are presenting to the European Conference of Domestic Violence – certainly something that I never thought I would be involved with and that is another fantastic opportunity that CPRL has created for me. I am excited to continue to work with such a fantastic team on such great work and look forward to the next few months.

Debbie Kerridge, Cambridgeshire Constabulary

I couldn't have foretold when I went to London for my interview in early 2020 how life as we knew it was about to fundamentally change, with the country going into lockdown just days before I was due to start my three-month fellowship. After months of delays and false starts due to the pandemic, my first day at CPRL in January 2021 coincided with day one of home-schooling my two small boys for the second time. My experience

was never going to be the one that I had initially anticipated, but I was comforted by the knowledge that I was working for an organization whose core ethos is based around flexibility and blended learning; I couldn't have been in better hands. Whilst I have yet to meet any of the team in person, they could not have been more welcoming or supportive. Indeed, how the team had adapted to the challenges of lockdown actually gave me unanticipated insights and ideas that I have already implemented with my own team back in the workplace. On reflection, the situation likely facilitated opportunities that might not have otherwise been possible. Utilising online platforms, I was able to attend several training sessions, webinars, conferences and even work with and observe focus groups with other academics. There is so much fascinating work going on at the OU and learning opportunities, both of which I was encouraged to embrace.

I had successfully applied for a research fellowship aimed at supporting Dr Nicky Miller with a project exploring how police forces actually translate research evidence into everyday decision-making and practice. My normal role as a Strategic Intelligence Analyst requires me to collate, assimilate and interpret large quantities of data in order to build hypotheses and ultimately inform understanding of policing issues and target activity. I have also completed academic study myself, been an Evidence-Based Policing Champion within force and been involved in sharing data with universities in the course of my analytical role, so I was particularly interested in this area of research and developing my understanding of how research can be better embedded into everyday activity.

As part of this project, I was responsible for conducting interviews with representatives from member forces to map out what tools and processes they use to facilitate this translation of knowledge into practice. This exposed me to a diverse audience of professionals at all levels. I found listening to the challenges that they face particularly interesting and I thank them for speaking so candidly. Whilst the project remains ongoing, I learned a great deal about the mechanisms used by forces across the country to disseminate and highlight the importance of

research in guiding practice, many of which I hope to adapt and utilise back in my role to raise the profile and awareness of in-house research and analysis.

Working alongside such passionate and enthusiastic academics within CPRL also provided me with many insights, such as an understanding that despite the clear desire and benefits of collaborative research, the working practices of academia and policing are often juxtaposed and can cause challenges. Not least in relation to timescales, with policing often very reactive and driven by a need to focus on short-term issues and fast-time results, whereas the research needed to fully understand the richer detail around criminal justice problems can often take months, if not years. A key strength of CPRL, in my opinion, is their recognition of this and a strong emphasis on bridging that gap and producing research that is as practical and useful as possible. The necessity for quick yet robust research into the effects of the pandemic on criminality has made great advances in this area and it will be interesting to see what lessons can be maintained going forward.

Would I recommend applying for the Senior Practitioner Fellowship? I already have! Having been engaged in one role and in one organization for over 15 years, I initially felt some trepidation in undertaking something new, but I am so pleased that I did. My confidence grew from day one and it was gratifying to see how the everyday knowledge, experience and practice that I took for granted, was valued by CPRL. I genuinely found the experience to be mutually beneficial and would thoroughly recommend the fellowship as an opportunity to stretch your thinking, experience another organization and add practitioner perspective to important questions that may affect us all.

REFLECTIONS: ACADEMIC SECONDMENT TO POLICING

Dr Lis Bates

CPRL has built a strong tradition of secondments from policing into academic research but what about the other way around – can academic secondments into policing prove similarly productive?

Lis led the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) research in the Centre for the past two years. During this time she was approached by the police National Domestic Abuse Coordinator to join the new project being established by the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) to track domestic homicides since the pandemic - 'Domestic homicides and suspected victim suicides during the COVID-19 pandemic' project, described as a research case study on page 14. Lis was seconded half-time from CPRL to help establish the project and lead the research and academic work. Lis tells us about her experience below.

What was involved with the project?

Our newly established project team harnessed the strengths of both research and operational policing to produce a truly cross-disciplinary team. On the policing side we were ably led by Angie Whitaker, the National DA Coordinator and a retired West Midlands Detective Superintendent, with strategic leadership from four police chiefs – the NPCC leads for Domestic Abuse, Homicide, Suicide, and Vulnerability. On the academic side, as well as myself, we recruited a talented team of academics with PhD expertise in coercive control and in policing vulnerability.

The project gathered all domestic homicides and suspected victim suicides with a police-recorded history of domestic abuse. We produced monthly 'rapid learning' briefings for police forces and the College of Policing, culminating in a 12-month report launched in August 2021 and generating widespread press coverage.

What made this project, and this academic-policing collaboration, so successful?

- First, high-level buy-in from senior police leaders from the outset was crucial. Having close interest from four police chiefs holding the relevant topical briefs made a huge difference to project impact. We were able to draw on their knowledge and strategic expertise to shape the project and ensure that our recommendations reflected policing priorities and avoided pitfalls.
- Second, in our project lead Angie we had a respected and knowledgeable police officer who had great relationships with domestic abuse leads from all forces. This was invaluable for project management, access to information and interpretation of findings. For example, Angie was able to follow up individual cases with force leads and quickly get confirmation of missing details, to ensure that all homicides were submitted to the project.
- Third, we had a talented research team. This was important as it brought some academic independence and objectivity to the analysis, as well as complementary skill sets in team members who brought both qualitative and quantitative methodological expertise. In the same way, the link with CPRL brought academic rigour and credibility.
- Fourth, being hosted by the Vulnerability, Knowledge and Practice Programme (VKPP) gave the project links to other vulnerability and policing experts and allowed learning to be shared with and from related research projects.

What were the benefits of the secondment?

For me, the opportunity to work on a high-profile, topical piece of research which addressed a crucial gap in knowledge at a point in time where it could have significant impact.

For police, the opportunity to bring in skilled independent academics to lead analysis and reporting and build a truly cross-disciplinary team between policing and academia.

For CPRL, early access to emerging findings from the project – for instance, at the CPRL annual conference 2021 - and association with a high-profile, high-impact research study.

The value of the secondment and our work was recognised by the police chiefs sponsoring the project. They wrote to the team in August:



We are writing to express our sincere appreciation for your research which will undoubtedly improve our understanding of domestic homicide and our response to domestic abuse. You have successfully gathered a wealth of information and data from police forces despite the pressures of the Coronavirus pandemic and used this effectively to help us understand how we, with other agencies, might seek to better protect victims. You have worked incredibly hard to build an effective relationship with numerous stakeholders across policing and the domestic abuse sector and grappled with many and various opinions on this emotive subject.

Every domestic homicide is an awful tragedy and the established domestic homicide review process can take many months or even years to identify learning. Your work has enabled us to quickly understand the impact of the pandemic upon domestic homicide and to identify critical areas for further research. At a time when many have feared a significant increase in domestic homicide, your invaluable work will reassure many but also galvanise efforts to prevent the awful consequences of domestic abuse. Thank you and congratulations on producing such great research.



The project has now been funded by the Home Office until 2022 and we hope it will continue beyond. I hope that my positive experience of this secondment into police highlights the benefits of these collaborations to all parties and I would certainly encourage others to take such opportunities if they can!



SUPPORTING RESEARCHERS' WELLBEING

Dr Holly Taylor-Dunn, Dr Dominic Reed,
Dr Anna Hopkins, Dr Shona Morrison

In July 2021, a CPRL research project exploring the decisions of victims/survivors of rape, sexual assault and domestic abuse to engage or disengage with the Criminal Justice System (CJS) moved into its second phase of data collection. The interview stream of the project was designed to gather survivors' experiences of reporting domestic abuse and rape to the police. In total, 50 interviews will be conducted as part of this research.

Conducting interviews either over the telephone or via Microsoft Teams places some important ethical considerations for survivors taking part. With the increased distance in not being with them physically whilst the interview is taking place, it is important to check with them where they are, where the abusers are or might be, whether they feel safe and whether they are confident to be able to talk in a space that feels private for them. The survivor could be speaking about their traumatic experience in the same environment where the trauma occurred. Are they sitting comfortably on their sofa? Therefore the same sofa and room where some of the abuse has occurred? The same space which still to this day prevents them from being able to leave due to heightened anxiety and depression?

In particular, conducting interviews over the telephone without any visual cues makes it difficult for the interviewer to gauge how the interview is emotionally impacting upon the survivor. This in turn places an additional responsibility on the interviewer to regularly check during the interview how the survivor is feeling, do they feel they need to stop, go for a cup of tea, have a comfort break? Once the interview has finished, who is around to support them, do they need any additional support services and what are they going to do as something positive now that they have finished with the interview?

As a result of the sensitive and sometimes traumatic nature of the interviews being conducted, alongside the additional challenges posed by the pandemic, the research lead, Lis Bates, requested access to clinical supervision for the team. This request was fully supported by the management of CPRL; a resource that is very rarely made available to researchers in this field.



This is a place for them to talk about their work, how they are feeling about it, how it is affecting them and to work with any images or narratives that they keep experiencing in their minds. These images come from what they hear from both perpetrators and from the survivors/victims. Unfortunately, our minds cannot hear or read something without forming a dialogue and image. It is this that can result in vicarious trauma which can result in the member of staff experiencing the same symptoms that the survivor/victim experienced. This can lead to secondary PTSD in staff. My role is to allow them to identify any changes that they are experiencing in either their work or personal life that would indicate that they are being affected by their work and the material they encounter. It is for me to do my utmost within that hour to try and alleviate the mental disturbance.



Claire Lodge

BACP Registered and Accredited Counsellor /
Psychotherapist

This article shares personal reflections from some of the research team regarding the practical and ethical challenges of conducting this research (particularly during a pandemic) and the fantastic support made available by the Centre.



**PERSONAL REFLECTION –
SHONA MORRISON**

“In 1991 (the same year the film Silence of the Lambs was released), I began post-doctorate research on extremely violent men. Over the next three years, I visited and interviewed hundreds of males in prisons around the country. Some of those men remained with me in my mind for weeks or months afterwards, but there is a handful I still think about today. Some remain in my head because of the terrible things they did, but mostly, it is what had happened to them in their lives that I think about. We knew nothing about Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) then. There is one story in particular that still invokes the same horror that I experienced at the time I read his notes. I did not even meet this individual but came across him when working in Australia monitoring deaths in custody, after he had hung himself in prison. What happened to him as a child was so horrific I have never been able to get the image out of my head. Research in the field of criminology, by its nature, exposes us to the worst of humankind. Clinical supervision should be mandatory. I wish I had had it 30 years ago.”

Whilst they are sat in their homes where possibly some of the abuse has occurred, I’m sat in my own home at times listening to my dog bark and worrying the participant will hear him. I put the phone down once the interview has finished and the woman I have just spoken to is in my office and all around. I look at my to-do list which suddenly pales into insignificance. It’s been really important being able to speak to my fellow team mates and share the stories of the interviewees, share how it has affected me. Having access to clinical supervision is so beneficial because as the survivors might be in the space where their abuse has occurred, we continue to work in the space where we experienced their trauma. This makes it difficult to switch off from it and the general feeling of helplessness towards the survivor is extremely heightened.”



**PERSONAL REFLECTION –
ANNA HOPKINS**

“As a former police officer, I have dealt with many survivors of both domestic violence and abuse and sexual violence. I have also placed great importance on my manner when interacting with these survivors and tried my best to communicate to them how much I respected them for telling me their stories. I have hugged survivors, touched their arm, held their hands and patted their backs when dealing with their traumatic experiences. I have cried with them and for them and have tried to base our interactions as two humans talking as much as possible.



**PERSONAL REFLECTION –
HOLLY TAYLOR-DUNN**

“I have only recently joined the OU’s CPRL and have been very fortunate to join this research team. I have worked in the domestic abuse field for 20 years, both in practice (working for the police and a Women’s Aid organization) and in academia (leading a Masters’ degree in Understanding Domestic and Sexual Violence). I have led several research projects involving interviews very similar to this study. However, this is the first time I have had access to clinical supervision in an academic role. I have found this resource to be hugely valuable; firstly because it has created a space to have an honest conversation about the emotional impact of the research and secondly, because it is a clear acknowledgement that research in this field can involve a cost to researchers’ emotional wellbeing. It says a lot about the Centre and the research lead that they have put in place this support, especially at a time when there is less distinction between work and personal space due to the pandemic.”

CPRL ANNUAL CONFERENCE: RESILIENCE IN POLICING AND PUBLICS

The theme of the CPRL annual conference was 'Resilience in Policing and Publics'. The conference hosted a great array of speakers with contributions from academics and police practitioners along with some other public services, drawing on but not limited to OU research in collaboration with partner police agencies. The conference reflected different perspectives in furthering our understanding of resilience, whether it was planned, adaptive or everyday resilience.

Conference delivery included:

- keynote speakers
- parallel sessions
- workshops
- lightning talks.

Delegates were able to:

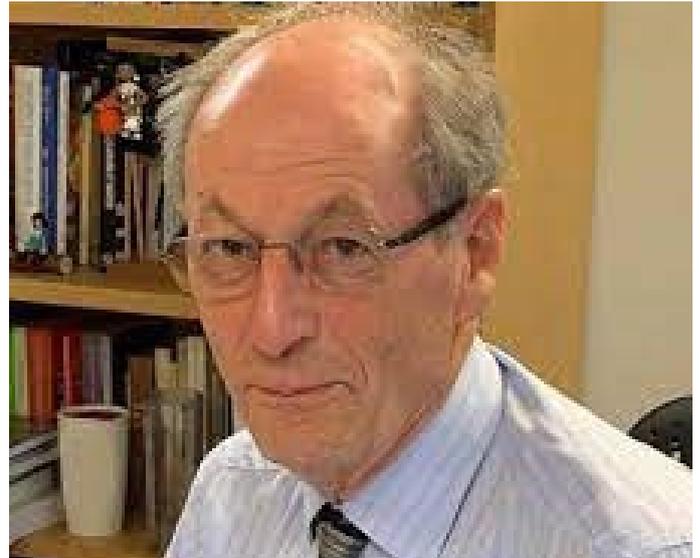
- explore new research findings
- discuss their relevance and applicability to policy and practice
- share good or interesting ideas.

Each day of the conference dealt with different types of resilience important to policing and the publics that included:

- resilience of the pandemic
- resilience, health and the environment
- organizational resilience
- digital resilience
- the resilience of evidence-based approaches.

The programme afforded great opportunities to hear from a range of renowned speakers such as Professor Sir Michael Marmot (pictured right) and Dame Stella Manzie from the public sector and contributions from police partners showcasing their research-informed initiatives in building resilience. This included Inspector Jenny Richards from West Midlands Police exploring how coaching can build resilience and Inspector

Caroline Hay of Thames Valley Police with CPRL's Dr Emma Williams on the role of WeCops in building social media resilience within policing.



My organization recently became members, so this was our first opportunity to see what was on offer from CPRL. Given that dealing with the pandemic is still evolving even as we come out of lockdown and success of the vaccination programme, it was interesting to see what insights had emerged so far.



Conference delegate

CPRL's multi-disciplinary approach was showcased, including sessions addressing climate change and reflections about resilience and the environment from Deputy Chief Constable Julian Moss, West Mercia Police, on his experiences of flooding disasters. One of the OU's senior climate scientists, Professor Neil Edwards shared thoughts on climate change and its impact on policing.

We also heard from several OU colleagues on different aspects of digital resilience, as well as work by Dr Gini Harrison with Professor Graham Pike on assessing the mental health and wellbeing of the emergency responder community in the UK.

“

Of the sessions I did go to, I felt they directed critical discussions that were very meaningful in both a practical (strategic and operational) and academic sense.

”

Conference delegate

Professor Jean Hartley and Dr Jane Roberts gave an input on their current research with Police and Crime Commissioners on ‘Leading at the Political Interface’ when exploring organizational resilience. The members-only workshop on ‘Senior Police Decision-Making during COVID-19’ led by Professor Mark Fenton-O’Creedy with Dr Ben Bowles, Dr Nicky Miller and Dr Helen Selby-Fell resulted in a very constructive discussion on the emerging findings from their current research with two partner forces.

The highlight of the conference for many was the first day which provided an opportunity to hear different perspectives on policing the pandemic – the national viewpoint from the Chair of the National Police Chiefs Council, Martin Hewitt, the Welsh perspective provided by Deputy Chief Constable Amanda Blakeman (Gwent Police) and Deputy Assistant Commissioner Matt Twist about challenges for the Metropolitan Police Service.

“

It had a relaxed and friendly feel to the event which is important for collaboration.

”

Conference delegate

Dr Sarah Charman and her team from the University of Portsmouth analysed the pandemic from the perspective of the public and their attitudes towards policing and compliance from one police force. The depth of discussion around COVID-19 and the understanding of the different approaches taken by forces were acknowledged as valuable insights.

Running the conference online this year increased the international breadth of debate as international speakers from as far as Tasmania and America were able to join. The virtual nature of the conference also enabled a greater range of delegates to participate over the three days.

The ability to dip in and out of sessions was valued by delegates as they could organise their working day around the sessions they were particularly interested in.



WEBINAR SERIES: REFLECTIONS IN POLICING

Dr Nicky Miller

The Centre's webinar series 'Reflections in Policing' gave a platform to police experts and leading academics to share their knowledge, experience and perspectives on a wide range of topics. The webinars were free to attend and are recorded and made available, together with the slides, in the members area.

1. ELLEN ERNST KOSSEK, PH.D., PURDUE UNIVERSITY

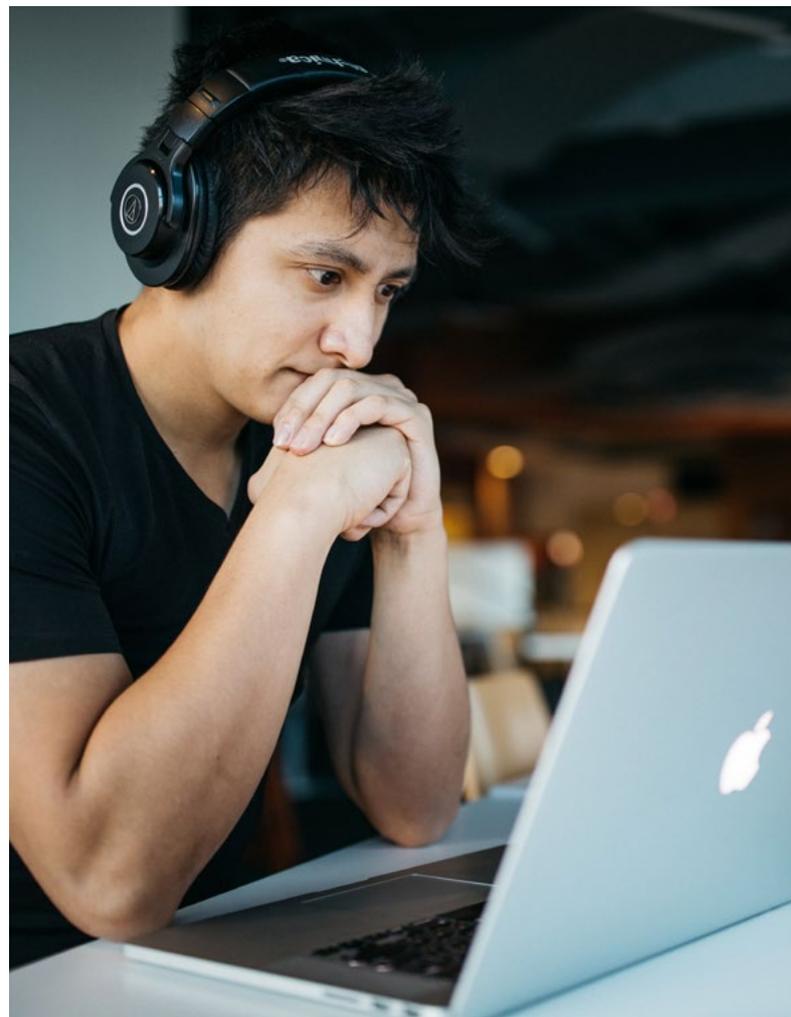
Ellen Kossek, a leading US academic with many accolades for her work, delivered the first webinar of 2021 on 'Managing Work-life Boundaries during Covid'. The webinar identified and discussed three factors that affect the boundaries between work and personal life for wellbeing; helped us to understand the pros and cons of the different boundary management styles with colleagues, family, supervisor, and team members; and, to learn about boundary management techniques that can help to address work and life challenges to improve effectiveness at work and home in this age of tethered work. The webinar was well attended with about 70 participants, being a mixture of both academics and policing professionals.

2. MIKE CUNNINGHAM, FORMER CEO OF THE COLLEGE OF POLICING

Mike Cunningham with experience in many senior police leadership roles, reflected on his time in service including at the College of Policing which was characterised by several significant changes to policing, such as the implementation of the Police Education Qualifications Framework (PEQF), developing police leadership, the recruitment of an additional 20,000 officers and, of course, the police response to the pandemic. The webinar was well attended with 69 delegates, 50 of which were CPRL police members, representing nine force partners as well as those from the OU.

3. ANDY RHODES, FORMER CHIEF CONSTABLE OF LANCASHIRE CONSTABULARY

Andy Rhodes drew on his experiences as national police lead for wellbeing before and during the pandemic, arguing that the evidence base for workforce wellbeing has stood up under pressure. He put forward the case for adopting a whole-system approach and provided research and data to support this case. The webinar was well attended with 81 delegates, including one from the Ethiopian Police Force. It generated a great deal of lively discussion covering points such as how we can change organizational culture regarding trauma-informed policing and the role of compassionate leadership.



PARTNERSHIPS

PARTNERSHIPS

Dr Emma Williams

NEW POLICE PARTNERS

This year CPRL welcomed another five forces into membership, bringing the total to 24 police agency partners:

- Norfolk Constabulary
- Suffolk Constabulary
- Staffordshire Police
- Wiltshire Police
- Police Scotland.

This marked an exciting milestone as CPRL now has representation across all four nations of the United Kingdom, opening up opportunities for research that cross organizational and cultural boundaries and increasing the knowledge base and contexts of policing.

Hear from two of our new force partners:

STAFFORDSHIRE POLICE



Temporary Assistant Chief Constable Jennie Mattinson is Staffordshire's portfolio lead for evidence-based practice and innovation which invites universities, police partners and practitioners to collaborate on research.

“

Staffordshire Police are looking forward to being an active part of CPRL and want to collaborate with The Open University and partners to promote research that can positively impact on police policy, practice and culture.

”

Jennie Mattinson
Temporary Assistant Chief Constable

In the forthcoming months Staffordshire will be working hard to communicate and connect the workforce with the benefits of CPRL. Evidence-based practice through research has only been formalised in recent years within Staffordshire, and this new membership to CPRL will assist to promote the evidence-based agenda.

NORFOLK AND SUFFOLK CONSTABULARIES

Andrew Whinney discusses the reasons for Norfolk and Suffolk being so keen to get involved.

“I have been aware of the work of the Centre for some years, and having expressed an interest in finding out more, I was invited to come along to one of the Membership Group meetings last year to find out what the Centre is all about. I am passionate about the benefits that taking an evidence-based approach to policing can have, and as the strategic lead for evidence-based practice for both forces, I was intrigued to find out more about how Norfolk and Suffolk could benefit from joining the partnership and in turn, how we could best support the Centre in achieving its aims.

I was immediately impressed by the engagement of members at that first group meeting and having discussed all that the Centre had to offer with Professor Jean Hartley and colleagues, it was clear that the Centre offered something new and exciting in the world of police-academic partnerships.

It is abundantly clear that one of the fundamental principles of the Centre is collaboration. From the opportunities for officers and staff to take part in secondments to the Centre to be fully immersed in research and to bring that learning back to their home organization, through to the way forces and academics from the Centre work together to decide upon research projects and work together to produce that research – it is collaborative working at its best.

The opportunities CPRL offers to translate research into practice was another key point for me. In order for evidence-based practice to be adopted in policing, it is so important that officers and staff can engage with the research and understand the 'so what' in a quick and easily accessible way. The evidence cafés offered by the Centre seem to be an excellent way of achieving just that, in a targeted and engaging way. During the current climate, these types of events are more challenging to deliver but I know there are plans to move evidence cafés online in the near future!

I have also been especially impressed by the learning opportunities offered by the Centre. Even before joining, I have encouraged my teams to make use of the excellent Open Educational Resources (OERs) for their continuous professional development. With many new recruits to policing entering via the PCDA and PEQF, we must remember that many of our officers and staff who are longer in service may not have had the same opportunities for development, at least in terms of evidence-based practice. The resources offered by the Centre are high-quality, accessible and very relevant to policing, and I look forward to seeing how they develop in the future."



NEW MEMBERS OF THE CENTRE TEAM

CPRL is delighted to welcome new members to the team.

In January 2021, Emma Williams joined CPRL as Director of Research and Strategic Partnerships.

Camilla Elphick from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) has joined the Centre as a CPRL Hub member, further developing the CPRL interdisciplinary portfolio. She shares her experience of working with the Hub on page 65.

Debbie Kerridge, Lucy Bottomley, Keeley Watts and Rebecca Collard were seconded to CPRL from their respective forces to support research projects. Debbie and Lucy share their experiences as Senior Practitioner Fellows on page 52.

The department for Policing Organisation and Practice (POP) welcomed new lecturers to their team this year, four of which are also working on CPRL research projects – Sarah-Jane Lennie, Shona Morrison, Holly Taylor-Dunn and Frank Sayi.

Justin Partridge and Jason Roach were appointed as a Visiting Fellows, and Tom Cockcroft is working on tutor constable research whilst on secondment.

The success of the 'Embedding officer learning and wellbeing in rape and serious sexual offences cases' project, described on page 20, has meant the team has increased to include Arun Sondhi, Linda Maguire and Daniela Abinashi as researchers.

From left to right (in order of start date):



EXPERIENCES OF WORKING WITH CPRL WITHIN THE OU

Dr Camilla Elphick, CPRL, Hub member,
Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences,
The Open University



I will continue to be involved in citizen forensic research exploring areas such as policing legitimacy (e.g. stop and search practices) and green criminology (e.g. pro-environmental policing or community initiatives). I am most interested in cognitive forensic psychology (e.g. eyewitness memory) and the conceptualisation and development of well-crafted digital technology for good (e.g. apps to complement existing policing).

I look forward to taking on this new role at a time of rapid change where there is urgent need to consider the future of policing. I love research that finds creative ways of tackling real-world issues and look forward to sharing project ideas. If you are interested in finding out more about me, please go to my [Open University webpage](#).

I am very excited to have started a new role as a Lecturer in Psychology. As part of my new role, I will liaise between CPRL and the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) as a Hub member. This will include finding engaging ways to communicate ideas between researchers and practitioners, finding solutions to research dilemmas, and matching research needs to expertise and resources.

My last role was working as a postdoctoral Research Associate on the Citizen Forensics project. In this capacity, I led research exploring how to develop and improve [digital policing](#), a project that demonstrated that [searching for a criminal online](#) can affect eyewitness identification accuracy, and was a key player in the creation of an online [Gratitude Tree](#).

EVIDENCE, DIFFERENCE, AND ADAPTATION: MY JOURNEY FROM POLICING TO ACADEMIA

Justin Partridge, Postgraduate Researcher,
University of Leeds and Visiting Research
Fellow, CPRL, The Open University



Justin is a former Assistant Chief Officer for Regional Collaboration at Humberside Police and was the force representative for the Centre (2014 – 2020). Here, he shares some personal reflections on policing and research.

1. RESEARCH IS USEFUL...BUT

I joined policing in 2003, from London Fire Brigade, and have just left policing to do a PhD at Leeds. I had some experience with academic research driving practice in the fire service, but I found that in policing, despite much research by people far cleverer than me, despite academic input on the Strategic Command Course over the years, and despite some significant amount

of funding, evidence-based policing research still seems to be seen as a curiosity on the margins of 'real policing'. Evidence-based policing is too often seen as a minority interest, and subject to the whim of chief officers and senior managers who may support or not such approaches.

Research has had real policing impact in areas as diverse as policing crypto currencies, mobile phone use whilst driving, victim engagement in domestic abuse cases, online grooming of children, the impact of police buildings on public perceptions of policing and many more. More is still needed.

2. WE ARE NOT QUITE SURE WHAT THE PURPOSE OF RESEARCH IS

All police managers want to better understand the issues they face, evaluate changes, and often there is a willingness to use university research to assist with this. However, the time and resources allocated to this research is often far too little, and often focused on a force specific issue rather than the wider issues. I have seen research requests that seek a detailed research-based report in a few weeks on a very narrow issue. Where a force is prepared to pay for this then this may be achievable, but the wider usefulness – what academics would call generalisability – of such a quick and narrowly focused piece of research is limited. The best quality research I have seen falls from a longer set of partnerships between universities and police forces at both personal and organizational levels. This allows the two parties to understand the needs of the other, and to co-develop meaningful research that can meet the needs of both. As the Chair of the Centre is fond of saying, good research is about putting research into practice and practice into research.

Forces that gain the most from academic research have long-standing relationships with individual academics and universities, are open to suggestions to improve research activities and provide wide access to universities in order to improve the generalisability of the research.

3. THE TERM 'EVIDENCE-BASED POLICING' IS STILL NOT WELL UNDERSTOOD

Evidence in policing has a different (although related) meaning, specific to criminal cases. The Home Office (2020)¹ states that although there are many definitions of evidence, in essence it includes information provided to a court to assist with decision-making, and it tends to prove the truth, or probability about a fact.

Evidence in both policing and academic research is used to guide and inform – a single piece of evidence will rarely stand in isolation and prove a fact beyond all doubt. When put together with other facts it may, however, suggest areas for further examination and start to outline a larger picture of the facts that can be used to persuade others. Like in policing, academic research requires steps that to an outsider may seem unnecessary – checking that all other reasonable explanations have been excluded for example, and following strict ethical procedures, all of which need to be recorded and logged for others to review (and criticise). Professional judgement is vital in both fields, and both researchers and police officers will be asked to justify decisions taken and methods used.

4. UNIVERSITIES AND POLICE FORCES WORK AT DIFFERENT SPEEDS

The biggest source of frustration from both sides, is the speed of the evidence gathering and presentation process. Academic researchers are used to taking many months to prepare, gather, and analyse evidence, and then many more months to get their paper published. Police forces are under pressure to react rapidly, gather evidence before it can be lost, prepare packages for court, move on to the next case. Police forces want to know right now what they can implement to make policing better, more effective at fighting crime, more responsive to public and political desires. Academic researchers, whilst still very interested in those same issues, want to ensure the evidence is robust enough to get published in a top-level academic journal. One of the major

culture shocks I experienced when moving to academia was the time and effort it takes to get a paper published; most papers are rejected multiple times from multiple journals, requiring major re-writing and editing before they finally get published. For example, I commissioned some research into the experience of officers and staff working in collaboration and the research was done in 2016, but the paper was only published in 2021².

5. AN AGENDA FOR PROGRESS

So, what works well in police-academic practice and what could be improved? My personal agenda for change is as follows:

1. Seek long-term partnerships that are open and wide-ranging, not narrow and focused on single and/or short-term issues.
2. Academics need to recognise the pressures of pace in forces and produce interim reports that drive research in policing.
3. Value different universities with different skills and experience. Whilst there is a benefit in having a strong relationship with a local university, there are benefits from wider partnerships with other academic institutions.
4. Recognise the value of research in policing. There are no shortage of academics seeking access to policing, there are plenty of people in policing who value research, and, as this annual report shows, lots of research has been undertaken that will improve policing. However, the drive at the highest levels of the UK criminal justice system is still lacking in a way that is very different from other professions such as medicine, information technology, teaching, etc.

Hopefully as someone who has moved from policing to academia, I will be able to make some contribution to the above – as someone who is reading this report I would challenge you to think about how you too could champion police-academic work.

1 Home Office. 2020. Evidence in criminal investigations. London: HMSO.

2 L'Hoiry, X. 2021. 'It's like I'm having an affair': Cross-force police collaborations as complex problems.

CPRL GOVERNANCE

The Centre is chaired by Dr Steven Chase, Director of People from Thames Valley Police. The governance structure includes three Vice-Chairs who are nominated representatives from CPRL's policing partners.

The role of the Vice-Chairs is to provide support to the Chair and work towards the aims and objectives of the Centre. Role holders represent the interests of member forces in discussions and expedited decisions and provide practitioner feedback to inform recommendations. The role is fundamental to the collaborative design of the Centre, where Vice-Chairs act as advocates for the partnership.

Working in a strategic capacity the Vice-Chairs have supported the Centre by engaging with senior teams in member forces, building links with other policing organizations and giving inputs to Membership Group meetings. They also provide support in operational activities, including participating in recruitment panels and the annual conference, developing and reviewing articles and research proposals, and contributing to the annual report and social media marketing of CPRL.

The Partnership Advisory and Review Board (PARB) guides the work of the Centre and advises on its financial, academic and partnership performance.

The PARB was established to help oversee the Centre activities and provide scrutiny and review, outside of the formal Steering and Membership Groups. The Board's purpose is to develop, challenge and offer professional advice to Centre Management and the Centre Steering Group on its contribution to high-quality academic work, which is relevant and valuable to policing.

The Board is chaired by Professor Mark Fenton-O'Creevy based in the Faculty of Business and Law at The Open University.

Membership includes senior representatives from:

- Steering and Membership Groups
- The Open University
- National Police Chiefs' Council
- College of Policing
- member forces
- international academia
- voluntary sector
- health sector.



GOVERNANCE CHANGES

This year has seen some changes in the people holding key governance positions with the Centre.

Chief Superintendent Chris Naughton stepped down as Vice-Chair in June. He spent some time reflecting on his time in the role and shares his experience and insights on how the Centre has evolved.



What motivated you to take on the role of Vice-Chair in CPRL?

I was very keen to get involved in helping to shape the future direction of the Centre and support its growth and development, playing a key role in helping to further the understanding between academics and policing so that the Centre results in mutual benefit for all.

Can you give me three words that sum up your experience as a Vice-Chair?

Growth, understanding and, exciting.

Growth – it has been a really interesting journey for me as I have been involved since the inception of the Centre back in 2013 – 14 and it has grown so much in that time, as have I in terms of personal growth; it has been a privilege to have been involved from the start.

In terms of understanding, you can see a real difference now in the understanding of academics within the Centre in relation to where British policing is going.

It has, at times, been exciting like when suddenly you are asked to run a session with about 10 chief officers across the country, getting them thinking about future policing challenges that CPRL could help address. That was an exciting and rewarding challenge; keeping your heart rate below 180 and not trying to sweat too much!

What has been your proudest moment or biggest accomplishment in the Vice-Chair role?

The proudest moment was, I think, related to my most exciting moment. This was seeing the most senior leaders of British policing, in the form of the very senior chief officers, coming around a table to share their thoughts for where policing is going in the next five to ten years, and them seeing the Centre as being a key enabler there. I don't think we were in that space a few years ago. I think we've grown into that space and having that recognition that there's value to be added through the partnership and the Centre, and that is recognised by the most senior police leaders who are involved in agreeing policy and delivery.

It has involved years of slowly building that added value and strong reputation – the Centre now has that recognition at senior level. The partnership represents a large part of UK policing and the Centre, as part of a national university, is conducting important research on a national level and, to some extent, an international level. It has an ability to be agile across the different themes coming out of policing and is being recognised accordingly. The Centre has a trusted reputation and I think that is a strong commodity within policing.

What would be the key advice that you give to your replacement?

Get stuck in and add value. There are opportunities to be a flag bearer for your own force, and to increase the reputation of your force and for UK policing. Say 'yes' to opportunities as they come up as much as possible and see yourself as being that key link between policing and academics – use that ability to translate between the two as the language of policing and academia is very different at times. As a Vice-Chair you are quite uniquely placed to say 'this is what policing needs' and to help the academic

members develop their understanding of the context in which policing operates. There's such positivity and potential between the two.

What's been your most frustrating experience?

Not having enough time. I would have loved to have given a lot more to the role but there needs to be a recognition, especially if you are a more senior leader, that we are very busy people with our day jobs and we bolt things on – it is all about having the ability to carve out time to give to the role. The role is so worthy, and it needs time and that's something that I personally have struggled with.

What do you think sets the Centre apart from other such partnerships?

I think the scale of the partnership – that it is truly across the UK with all four nations represented – England, Wales, Northern Ireland and more recently, Scotland. The scale of the partnership is unique. I also feel that the national presence of the OU as a blended learning provider and its grounding principles of learning for all really sets it apart from others. It moulds well with national policing, providing a truly universal offering. I also think from a policing perspective, the Centre is very agile due to its scale. The Centre does not reflect academics telling us "we are academics who are interested in this" but instead asks "what are the policing challenges that we can help with?" and "let's find somebody who can do that". The Centre's agility to respond due to the broad range of academic expertise across the whole University makes it very attractive.

How do you think we can encourage police officers to get involved in the Centre?

Raising awareness and sharing the value of the Centre. I've always been very much an advocate and pushing the Centre, promoting and marketing it. It is about raising officers' awareness, and this should also include the fact that the Centre provides the flexibility for new entry officers to undertake the policing degree; a lot of officers are, at the moment struggling with the demands of the degree when it is delivered face-to-face and the OU is such a great option as it offers that flexibility to blended learning with the in-depth

knowledge and expertise of its lecturing staff. I would also like to encourage more officers to get more involved in the research – using research to innovate and develop policing at an operational level.

How has your attitude towards research evidence and policing changed over the years since being part of CPRL?

I have been very lucky to have been involved in the Centre since the very beginning where this idea of evidence-based policing and academic partnership was developed. I have seen that grow all the way through, where now it is approaching the norm in many parts of policing. We now routinely ask questions such as "What is the evidence base for this?", "What does the research say?" These questions were not asked five to six years ago but I am hearing it routinely now. We are now in a space where academic-police partnerships have become normalized to a large degree. Getting the research evidence into practice is still, however, a real challenge for police. We are slowly getting better with it, but it is difficult to get ahead of this as we are so often consumed by the 'here and now' and getting through the latest threat, risk and harm challenges we face.

How did you find the experience of working with academics in a university?

It has been great fun and I have really enjoyed it and have developed lasting partnerships and friendships based on mutual respect and understanding. We all add value to keeping the public safe in different ways, don't we? We have shared goals and objectives – the motivation to improve public safety is what brings us together.

What are your hopes for the future of the Centre?

For it to continue to grow and become universal across British policing. To be the 'go-to' partner for academic research and to be a key influencer on both the national and international stage. To be able to use the knowledge created in the Centre to improve policing and then to widen its reach into other emergency services, social care, etc.

NEW VICE-CHAIRS

Following elections in October 2021, CPRL welcomes Amanda Blakeman from Gwent Police and Phil Davies from Greater Manchester Police as the Centre's new Vice-Chairs.

Deputy Chief Constable Amanda Blakeman has nearly 30 years in policing where she has held multiple roles. In 2008 she led the development of the critical processes around identifying and disrupting Organised Crime Groups. She has led the delivery of policing operations on a local level and as a specialist as Head of Public Protection and Head of Operational Support across a strategic alliance, as well as being a Specialist Strategic Firearms Commander.



Amanda Blakeman
Gwent Police

Amanda was appointed as Deputy Chief Constable for West Mercia Police in February 2017 before moving to Gwent as a Deputy in 2019. Since then, she has had experience as a Senior Responsible Officer, the lead for Performance, Strategy and Continuous Improvement, SIRO, Professional Standards, firearms policy with overarching responsibility for People Services, Corporate Communications and Legal Services. DCC Blakeman leads the National Police Chiefs Council portfolios for Serious Organised Acquisitive Crime, Police National Database and Disability and is also the all-Wales lead for Violence Against Women and Girls and Child-centred Policing.

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I believe the experience and the passion that I have for policing, as well as the experience I have in Wales, as a non-devolved service working in a devolved environment, will bring a different dimension to the Vice-Chair role and hopefully will add further depth to the discussion. I have invested over time in my own CPD and now see this as an opportunity to give something back to the development of policing for the future.

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Phil Davies
Great Manchester Police

Chief Superintendent Phil Davies from GMP has been an active member of CPRL for many years as a police officer and also as a member of The Open University's research community as a part-time PhD student where he is studying 'Applications of Complexity Theory in Policing: How agent-based simulation can support police policy-making'. He brings with him a vast amount of experience as a senior leader within one of the UK's largest police forces, particularly within the disciplines of programme management, organization-wide thematic governance, and operational critical incident command. He is a keen advocate of academic-police partnerships, where he has worked closely not just with the Centre but also with universities in the North West for the benefit of his force's evidence-based policing agenda. Phil is also a member of the Superintendent's Association National Executive Committee where he represents the interests of his peers and the service as part of the team elected to engage with key political, regulatory, and policy leaders in policing.

“

I have always been a strong advocate for close working relationships between police and academic institutions, and the Centre has grown into an important forum for the police service nationally to engage with practical and useful academic work. It is an honour to be selected for this role in supporting the continued development and growth of this collaboration.

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PUBLICATIONS

PUBLICATIONS

All publications are available for free, for personal use from The Open University's Open Access library http://oro.open.ac.uk/view/research_centre/cprl.html or by request to the first author, who can be contacted via oupc@open.ac.uk. Embedded hyperlinks to publications can be found if using the electronic version of the annual report.

Many are published journal articles which can also be obtained through university libraries to those with access.

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ROLES AND CONTACTS

Dr Steven Chase, Chair of the Centre to April 2022 (Director of People, Thames Valley Police)

Dr Nick Caveney, Acting Chair (Chief Superintendent, Hertfordshire Constabulary)

Professor Jean Hartley, Academic Director, The Open University

Dr Emma Williams, Director of Research and Strategic Partnerships, The Open University

Dr Paul Walley, Director of Learning, The Open University

Dr Nicky Miller, Director of Knowledge into Practice, The Open University

Dr Matthew Jones, Director of Policing Organisation and Practice, The Open University to April 2022

Jennifer Norman, Director of Policing Organisation and Practice, The Open University from April 2022

Deputy Chief Constable Amanda Blakeman, Vice-Chair (Gwent Police) Appointed October 2021

Chief Superintendent Phil Davies, Vice-Chair (Greater Manchester Police) Appointed October 2021

Chief Superintendent Chris Naughton, Vice-Chair (Dorset Police) Resigned September 2021

Heather Barrett, Head of Strategy, Partnerships and Operations, The Open University

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