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Community Based Practice and Development

in the Probation Service

by Robert Alan Broad

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

A thesis submitted to the Council for National Academic Awards in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

Community based Probation practice and development is concerned with specific forms of Probation Service supervision described here as community Probation work, and other, non-supervisory, practices described as community work and crime prevention work. For both sets of practices the Probation fieldwork team acts as the frame of reference where primacy is given to enhanced service delivery systems, and where the locality is a referral source and a resource, not simply a remote situational context.

The study begins by describing the Probation Service's philanthropic origins, the merger of criminal justice and social work, and the legislative base for, and function of, subsequent supervisory developments. It then explores the variety of ways in which the "community" has recently emerged as an additional focus for Probation intervention. The empirical study into the work of a new Community Probation Team reveals the complexities of translating policy intentions into working community based Probation practices. The bulk of the empirical work is concerned with exploring the ways in which this inner city team defined, implemented and sustained its practices. Evidence is provided for claiming that the implementation of community based Probation practice requires an explicit acknowledgement not only of organisational imperatives, but of other more significant and interdependent factors. External legislative requirements, internal administrative factors and interactional forces (symbolised by client/worker exchanges), the local setting and the national social context, are regarded as particularly significant.

At a theoretical level, and drawing on some of the insights offered by interactionism and functionalism, the study examines the creation of a new Community Probation Team, as one societal reaction, amidst others, to a social problem, namely the 1981 urban disturbances in Brixton. The empirical work suggests that a three-fold conceptual model based on social control, social welfare, and social justice considerations provides a valuable theoretical instrument for analysing community based Probation practice and development. The study ends by drawing together these theoretical features, as well as examining some policy and organisational implications for the Probation Service arising from such work.

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A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T S

I would like to thank the Inner London Probation Service for giving me permission to undertake this study. Additionally I want to thank all the members of the Community Probation Team, as it is referred to in this study, for agreeing to me undertaking the research into their work. I also want to thank the Community Probation Team's clients, and the two Inter-agency estate groups for their co-operation. A special thanks goes to Denise for her sustained interest and patience, and also Denise (again), Trisha, Jane and Judith, amongst others, for their typing. Additionally Sam and Alma's guidance about operating the word processor was invaluable. Finally I would like to acknowledge the continued support and valued guidance I received from my supervisor Dr. A. A. Vass; and Dr. Kenneth Pease for his useful comments and suggestions on previous drafts of this thesis. Without all these people this thesis would not have been possible.

CHAPTER ONE

Research Programme: Aims, Methods, and Scope

Introduction

The Probation Service is a court based agency with statutory powers to supervise offenders. Its main clientele consists of individuals who have been charged by the police with committing an offence, arrested, found guilty by a criminal court, and, afterwards, in some cases as a result of Probation Service recommendations or, in other cases, as a direct result of court sentencing decisions, become clients of the Probation Service. They may be placed directly on supervision by a criminal court or be subject to post-custodial supervision, depending on circumstances and status. The Probation Service's criminal work outside penal institutions can be characterised by its special social work contribution within the criminal justice system as a humanising and supportive force operating according to guidelines laid down by statute, and by administrative decisions. It is a service which has vastly expanded and diversified. For example according to Bochel (1976:50,122,175), in 1908 the Probation Service supervised 8023 persons on Probation Orders; in 1925, 15094 persons; and in 1948, 32,453 persons. In 1961 45,062 persons were placed on Probation Orders (Haxby, 1978:311-312), and as at 31st December 1985 (Home Office, 1986b:7), 151,000 persons were receiving varying forms of supervision,including Probation Orders. This expansion is associated with a number of political, social and professional factors. Principally these have arisen from the additional duties the Probation Service is now expected to perform. More broadly the Service's expansion is also connected with increases, overall, in the numbers of offenders now processed by the courts, increases in and changes patterns of offending, demographic changes in society and, overall, the increasing use made of the

Probation Service by the courts (despite fluctuations concerning, for example, the use of Probation Orders).[1] One general theme of this study is to examine the consequences, in practical and theoretical terms, for a service which has considerably expanded, from somewhat humble beginnings in 1907, the scope and nature of its community based practices and provisions. In particular an examination is made of the implications arising from the expansion of an agency in which terms like control, treatment, punishment, and help often blend and blur together. A second and associated general theme identified in this study focuses on the changing situational context of community based Probation practices. These are broadly identified as the individual context, the group and residential context and, more recently, the community context. The combination of these complementary contexts, as approaches, constitutes community based practice and developments in the Probation Service. The study's literature review examines the Probation Service's background, origins, and subsequent developments, so far as its community based practices are concerned. This is a prelude to providing empirical data to explore in more detail the third, community, context of community based practices.

An approach is identified, through empirical work, in which generic field work teams, using one team as an example, attempt to engage in work with groups and organisations within the locality as an additional aspect of the team's statutory work with clients. Evidence is provided to suggest that aspects of the Service's community approach mark a recent and distinctive shift in Probation practice. This "community" approach to Probation practices embraces notions of greater community accessibility to the Probation Service by existing clients (referred to in this study as community Probation work), similar to community social work as identified and supported in the main body of, for example, the Barclay Report (1982:206-211). It also embraces, though in practice, it appears, much less significantly, notions of crime prevention and community work in which various individuals and groups within the locality can become workers(as sponsors) or potential or actual clients.

Unfortunately little has been written about this recent development in community based Probation practices and this is the first time, so far as I am aware, that the processes and practices of this work have been subject to published research. There appears, perhaps suprisingly, to be little detailed knowledge about the everyday experience and dilemmas of such work, except occasional but nevertheless useful summaries which focus mostly on policy matters (by, for example, Henderson 1986), or on one specific project, (see, for example, Celnick, 1985, 1985a). An analysis of overall historical, policy, and theoretical developments in this field, contained in one study, has been lacking. However there has not been, or so it would appear, a lack of policy interest in the subject. The details of this interest are explored in Chapter Three but it is pertinent here to note that the Home Office in particular has expressed its wishes for the Probation Service to become "involved in the wider community" in various publications about the Probation Service's objectives and priorities (including Home Office, 1984, 1984a). This broader role envisaged for the Probation Service was subsequently confirmed through changes to the existing Probation Rules (Home Office, 1984b). Furthermore the notion of Inter-agency work between the Probation Service and various other agencies is one that has been strongly supported by a number of government departments (detailed in Home Office, 1984c). Additionally a substantial number, but by no means all, of Probation Services in England and Wales have given an undertaking in their local statements of objectives and priorities to engage in a variety of ways in work in the wider community (Lloyd, 1986). Lastly, at this stage, it is argued that the suggestions for the Probation Service to get more involved "in the community" appears to have received a fillip as a result of both urban disturbances in 1981 and 1985, and wider interests in crime prevention work involving the Probation Service (see, for example, Laycock and Pease, 1985; Central Council of Probation Committees, 1986, 1987). The study presents an account of these recent community developments and provides a detailed analysis of the work done into this subject area by one inner city team, referred to as the Community Probation Team. It

is argued that these recent developments cannot be seen in isolation from the Probation Service's historical and criminal justice context.

Aims

One general aim of this thesis is to demonstrate that changes to community based Probation practice, as distinct from policy statements, cannot be isolated from a range of external and internal factors. These include the broader social and economic setting, the Probation Service's historical context, its relationship with the criminal justice system, and its dominant tradition of offering an individualised system of service delivery to its clients. The second general aim is to demonstrate that the implementation of certain forms of community based Probation practice, particularly in inner city areas, requires an explicit acknowledgement of the factors influencing the relationship between, on the one hand, stated goals and intentions, and, on the other hand, unfolding operational practices. These consist of both internal factors; organisational imperatives, administrative obligations, interactional forces, and discretionary opportunities for action by staff, and external factors; legislative requirements, the local setting for community based Probation practice, and the national social context. The third general aim is to provide an understanding, first, of the assumptions, explicit or otherwise, which informed the operational practices of the Community Probation Team, as the thesis's case study, and, second, the processes by which these assumptions became operationalised. It is argued here, for example, in respect of the former, that ideas of self-improvement utilised by a number of prominent philanthropic welfare organisations in the nineteenth century which preceeded the Probation Service, re-emerged in a different guise in the work of the new Community Probation Team in Brixton in the 1980's, whilst simultaneously, some of the team's initial aims were presented as innovative and progressive. Additionally the thesis aims to provide explanations for the eventual

marginalisation of, and extra-mural status accorded to, these more innovative ideas.

Following the preceding introduction, and once the aims of each chapter have been presented here, this chapter continues with an account of the formulation of the research programme, the research methods used, and the thesis's scope. Considerable emphasis is given to providing an account of the nature and scope of the data collected for the fieldwork, as well as describing its purpose and some difficulties encountered in undertaking this research. Within the broad framework of community based Probation practice Chapter Two aims to provide an examination of the Probation Service's social work origins, its changing role and direction within the criminal justice system and its eventual occupancy of a "professional servicing role". The identification of the poor, as well as the criminal "classes", as designated, potential or actual, social welfare recipients in some nineteenth century urban areas provides a platform for a discussion about the purpose, role, and limits of social work interventions at that time which are associated with early forms of community based Probation practice. Overall the chapter illustrates the ways in which, formally at least, community based Probation developments have continually changed and expanded in a more correctional and contractual direction whilst their implementation still retains opportunities for discretionary actions to influence, and shape outcomes. It also aims to illustrate the changing demands placed on community based Probation practices, their broad terms of reference, and the ways in which they are accomodated within a compassionate and judicial framework. Finally, and admittedly based on limited evidence, it begins to identify some of the factors which are associated with the practice outcomes, intentional or otherwise, of policy statements about community based Probation developments.

In Chapter Three a conceptual framework is provided as a means of understanding the thesis's key terms. These are Probation Service community developments, community Probation work, crime prevention work, and community work. It then

charts the different ways in which, since 1963 in particular, terms such as community developments have been interpreted by the Probation Service, the Home Office, and other relevant organisations. This has been done in order to demonstrate that recent government initiatives concerning the Probation Service, particularly since 1983, appear to denote a further extension to the Probation Service's role, namely one which authorises further involvement within localities, and not simply additional statutory duties concerning the supervision of individuals. Chapter Four provides an analysis of the practical responses to date concerning Probation Service community developments. Within the context of possibilities for policy development it aims to demonstrate that, to date, the majority of recent responses appear highly localised, suggest an "urban bias", and are fragmented. Furthermore, and significantly, the chapter aims to demonstrate that these developments appear to resemble different forms of existing community Probation work rather than representing extended forms of community work or crime prevention work. Evidence is provided for suggesting that some of the urban disturbances in England during 1981 appear to have given further encouragement to certain Probation Service community developments. Chapter Five highlights the current economic and social context within which inner city Probation Service community developments generally, and the case study in particular, are located. The chapter also examines aspects of the public debate that, in part, followed in the wake of the 1980, 1981 and 1985 urban disturbances in England. It identifies the majority of the mass media's dominant terms of reference and "constructed realities" used to portray those events, as social problems. It also describes the government's immediate responses and longer term changes to criminal legislation and policing methods.

Chapter Six begins the task of unravelling some of the daily mysteries of, medium term developments in, and implications arising from community based Probation practice by focussing on a case study. It aims to analyse the rationale for, and creation of, a new Community Probation Team introduced into the Brixton area of London, and representing one

organisational response to the 1981 disturbances in that area. The chapter describes the new team's and its organisation's initial aspirations for this new unit, and as a forerunner to subsequent chapters, presents an account of the deprived nature of the inner city area it was to serve and service. An impressionistic sketch of a typical day in the life of the unit is also included as a counter to stated aims, and as an indication of some of the difficulties that were encountered. Chapter Seven's contribution is significant in the ways in which it presents insights into the ways in which the Community Probation Team's members activated or operationalised their perceptions about their roles and duties, as well as their criteria for "client eligibility". An examination of a sample of the Community Probation Team's Social Inquiry Reports reveals the ways in which a range of individual and social problems were understood, presented, and classified to produce indicators for Probation intervention. The chapter also intends to begin to raise the issue of the relationship between discretionary team practices, the creation of "mini-policies", and organisational policies.

Chapter Eight aims to record and analyse the ways in which, as a counter to individual work, the Community Probation Team introduced and attempted to sustain various group programmes for their clients. The chapter suggests that the organisational framework, staff expectations about their role, as well as the type of help offered to clients, albeit located within an informal group, not formal interview setting, largely account for the lack of meaning eventually ascribed to those activities. The main aim of Chapter Eight then is to begin to peel away the rhetoric about the Community Probation Team's stated aims and goals, and reproduce, as clearly and honestly as possible, the recorded experiences of daily interaction concerning the group work projects. The contribution of Chapter Nine is that whilst maintaining the analysis of daily encounters and activities, this time beyond the group work context, it also presents a developmental overview by recording longer term trends and patterns. The chapter aims to illustrate the increasing

demands placed on the staff, and identifies the introduction and sustainment of organisational control, client routinisation, and problem containment processes.

Chapter Ten moves the focus of the research away from community Probation work within the Community Probation Team's office, and onto two "problem" housing estates where two of the team's Probation Officers were actively engaged in community work, conducted on an Inter-agency basis. The chapter aims to illustrate that despite the contrast in setting for the Probation Officers involved, there were also important and striking similarities. These were primarily concerned with initial ideas of professional forms of helping becoming reduced to forms of self-help helping, once external and internal pressures mounted and additional resources were not forthcoming. Chapter Ten also aims to complement Chapter Four in its depiction of different "social problem" definitions and "social problem" stages which involved the Probation Service.

Chapter Eleven draws together some of the considerable operational, theoretical, and policy implications arising from the research. It provides a theoretical framework based on social justice, social control, and social welfare considerations for analysing existing and future community based Probation practices. It is argued that some aspects of community Probation work and, more emphatically, community work recorded in this thesis represent, or appear to represent the antithesis of recent government moves concerned with (more) Probation punishment in the community (Patten, 1987). In the light of the research findings Chapter Eleven then aims to develop some of the key points introduced in Chapter Two. These are concerned, on the one hand, with the apparently binding relationship between the government, the criminal justice system and the Probation Service which delineates the general direction of community based Probation practice and development, and, on the other hand, the complex ways in which, at the "grass roots" level, discretionary practices act to shape, in both intended and unintended ways, policy intentions where these can be clearly identified.

Having outlined the thesis' general aims, the specific aims of each chapter, and their overall contribution to an understanding of the thesis, let me now describe the fieldwork and establish the methods and scope of the research programme.

Fieldwork

This study has been conducted over a period of four years, and on part- time basis, from October 1984 to October 1988. It has consisted of three main stages:

Stage One lasting from October 1984 to March 1985 involved me undertaking a preliminary investigation into the literature concerning community based practice and development in the Probation Service.[2] It also involved me in negotiating, piloting and sending out the final version of a postal questionnaire on the subject matter. Two pilot questionnaires were sent out in December 1984 and January 1985 to two sets of Probation Officers, ten in all. After receiving the respondents comments a final version of the postal questionnaire was produced and sent out in February 1985 to all 47 fieldwork Probation teams (in other words excluding those working in Day centres, Community Service Order offices, Prisons, Hostels and Crown Courts) in the Inner London Probation Service area. Additionally this period involved me selecting, negotiating access to, and deciding upon the terms for the fieldwork to be conducted at the premises of one Probation team.

During **Stage Two** between March 1985 and March 1986 the bulk of the data was collected. This involved me in two tasks. The first and smaller task was concerned with collecting the data from the returned postal questionnaires and beginning to examine and analyse respondents' replies. After sending out three sets of reminder letters and making several telephone calls eventually, by May 1985, 24 postal questionnaires were returned which accounted for the work of 31 (or 66 per cent

of the total sample) fieldwork teams within the inner London Probation Service area.[3] As will be shown later, some of the respondents' replies, particularly those concerning practical difficulties (for example, lack of time), and potential benefits (such as gaining a fuller understanding of the area) of such work, provided most helpful indicators concerning the issues subsequently raised by the case study.

The bulk of time during stage two however was concerned with collecting data from the case study. The final selection of the Community Probation Team as the most suitable team for the purposes of the study was made on both practical and pragmatic grounds. The postal questionnaire had identified those teams operating, or claiming to operate some form of patchwork system. Patchwork,[4] a term more usually associated with social services than Probation work is regarded (by, for example, Hadley and McGrath, 1980) as central to the development of a more localised "community approach" concerning service delivery. It seemed important, critical even, therefore to choose a team which operated some form of patchwork system. According to the postal questionnaire just eight Probation teams within inner London had some form of patch system at the time. From these eight teams the team selected for the case study recorded (in the questionnaire) the highest number of hours engaged in "community initiatives". Furthermore since this team indicated it had been engaged in this type of work for a longer period than the other teams within the Inner London Probation Service the choice of this team meant that I would be researching existing practice into this subject and not undertaking work with a fieldwork team still at the "proposals and discussions stage". The final consideration concerning the selection of the team was a pragmatic one, namely that for some time the team selected had been seeking, without success, funding and authorisation from the Inner London Probation Service to find a researcher from a higher education establishment to research into its development and current practice. Once I had formally requested to undertake this research study using the Community Probation Team as the case study, permission was willingly given by the Deputy Chief Probation Officer

within inner London with responsibility for the work of that team. The study was regarded as being useful and timely, and in the words of my Assistant Chief Probation Office at the time "directly relevant to current Probation practice" and potentially "of great practical help to the service."

Having gained permission to undertake the fieldwork at the Community Team I then negotiated directly with that team about the nature of the research and the timescale involved. I drew up a draft research proposal in March 1985 and sent a copy to each team member for their consideration prior to my meeting with them towards the middle of March. That proposal suggested the fieldwork would examine the history, development and practice of the team as well as the policy implications of the Probation Service of engaging in such work. Additionally it was expected to contribute to a greater theoretical understanding of such developments in Probation Work. When I arrived at that meeting, I also tried to establish what team members wanted from the research. Staff were unclear about the details of the research but were clear in hoping that in some ways the research would serve to acknowledge, recognise, validate even, the work done by this relatively "new" community oriented fieldwork team. There was considerable interest shown in the research proposal and it was agreed at that meeting for the fieldwork to take place.

Subsequently during stage two I was given full access to all aspects of the unit's work including those relating to its history, clients, team meetings, administration and everyday work. There were only two areas of work not made accessible to me. The first concerned the individual supervision sessions between the Senior Probation Officer and his staff. Although I would have regarded this as a fascinating area meriting research in its own right, there was sense in which this work was private, particularly, as we shall see, for a team working in such a public pressurised and accessible Probation office. The second area not subject to observational fieldwork in any detail concerned a group for female clients held regularly at the office. Although I have

recorded some important information about this group any long term observational work, by a man, was regarded as not acceptable to the group. Loftland's comments (1971:97) applied not only to the women's group but generally to the observational research:

> "As a highly dispensible observer, one is in the setting only by grace of the participants' goodwill."

The only constraint I experienced was that experienced by all the staff working there namely cramped unsatisfactory working conditions. In particular this meant, for example, I never had a room to myself to take notes, and like the staff there was regularly required to move from one room to another depending on requirements at the time. The fact that after four years the team still occupies, in 1987, these unsatisfactory premises, a source of considerable frustration to staff, suggests that there still appears to be a lack of understanding or priority about the resources needed for this type of work. The collection of data took place on a three day a week basis between March 1985 and March 1986.

Stage Three from April 1986 to October 1988 was principally concerned with analysing and presenting the results. The period was also spent returning to the office from time to time in order to follow up certain ideas that had developed. This stage was also spent gathering further statistical data about caseload developments not available during stage two. Finally the period was spent ensuring that the literature review kept abreast of current developments.

Collection of Data The study's concerns with the development, everyday experiences and policy implications of the Probation Service being more involved with and accessible to it's locality suggested the use of specific research instruments. Data was required on specific contemporary developments in the field to indicate current interests attitudes and issues. Additionally and more importantly detailed fieldwork was required to examine the day to day realities which lay behind official statements about aims and

objectives. The case study approach used here enabled contemporaneous experiences to be analysed and set within the context of the unit's initial and developmental phases. This "evolutionary approach" to an understanding of the team's current practices also applied to the data collection process and to the presentation of data findings.

The Postal Questionnaire In order to explore current developments and issues concerning community involvement by the Probation Service information was sought, by means of a postal questionnaire (reproduced as Appendix A) from all the 47 fieldwork teams within the Inner London Probation Service. The Inner London Probation Service was chosen, in part, because I was working in the service at the time and access was relatively straightforward. The respondents' replies therefore reflect the concerns and interests of Probation staff working in a large organisation in a large urban area.

Two pilot questionnaires were conducted during October and November 1984 with ten different Probation Officers. The comments received back from the first pilot were extremely useful in guiding the final version. These comments concerned the use of ambiguous terms, the length of the questionnaire (too long), the lack of exclusive categories, and the difficulties of using a questionnaire to answer "too complicated" questions. The second pilot questionnaire revealed less problems to respondents, except that again, it was regarded as too long and likely to reduce the chances, in the final version, of respondents completing and returning it. One of the respondents commenting on the second pilot questionnaire raised an important point about the inter-dependence of Probation Service community initiatives and other existing practical issues and concerns. The respondent wrote:

> "I would suggest that most people would say that a high importance should be given to community development but to answer the question in isolation and without consideration of the practical issues involved in implementing the policy could be misleading and unthinking."

In view of this and other comments, the questionnaire was amended to offer respondents the opportunity to write about specific difficulties for as well as benefits to the Probation Service of greater community involvement within existing practice. The above respondent's comments highlight the inter-dependent nature of Probation "work units", suggesting that the creation of additional work demands in one area has implications for work concerning another work area. The comment also illustrates one of the general limitations of using postal questionnaires, (Mann, 1985: 169-170) that is the lack of opportunity to follow up important issues when identified by respondents. However the advantages of the postal questionnaire were that it permitted a wide coverage of responses across a large geographical area, reached people who were difficult to locate and interview, and provided a greater uniformity of responses. As a result of the comments received during the pilot stages, further alterations were made to the questionnaire and the number of questions reduced from 29 to 22.

I was not concerned with obtaining the views of specialist Probation Teams (working at, for example, Probation Hostels, Day Centres, Community Service offices) about community involvement but rather concerned with examining the issues and interests of those working in the majority main stream of the Probation Service, namely fieldwork teams. Ultimately, it is argued, if community initiatives are to become significant in the Probation Service, they will need to be incorporated within fieldwork teams. The postal questionnaire consisted of 22 questions, both closed and open-ended, and was sent out to the Senior Probation Officer in each of the inner London Probation Service's 47 fieldwork teams. I routed the questionnaires through the teams' Senior Probation Officers because they were likely to have access to more information about team members' involvement, than individual Probation Officers. Furthermore since I was essentially concerned with developments at the team practioner level the questionnaire was not sent out to those higher than Senior Probation Officer level. However area Assistant Chief Probation Officers were informed about the

questionnaire and requested by me in writing to inform their area Senior Probation Officers that the questionnaire was taking place, and asked for their co-operation. The final version of the questionnaire was sent to all the fieldwork teams in February 1985 and after sending several reminders and making a number of telephone calls eventually by May 1985 I received replies accounting for the work of 31 of the 47 teams to which the questionnaires were sent.[5]

Area Social Characteristics

Material concerning the area's social characteristics was mostly based on data from the 1981 census (small area statistics) and made available to me by the London Borough of Lambeth's Department of town planning and economic development. Additional information about the Borough's population was obtained from the reports Key Facts Comparative Statistics (Lambeth, 1984), and Key Facts Population (Lambeth, 1983). Whilst acknowledging that there is no universally accepted definition of the term "urban deprivation" the study demonstrates, by using generally accepted measures, that the Borough of Lambeth, and especially the inner area covered by the Community Probation Team is an area suffering multiple economic and social deprivation. In discussing urban deprivation in Lambeth, 1981 census material is used and also the document Urban Deprivation Information Note No. Two (Department of the Environment, 1983). Census material for the exact geographical area covered by the Community Probation Team was made available to me, upon request, from the London Borough of Lambeth's planning directorate above. The sources of less comprehensive data concerning the area's social characteristics are identified within the study itself.

Probation Data

Since the study was concerned with both the development of a Community Probation Team and its progress over time it was

vital to obtain statistical data beyond the period covered by the observational fieldwork. Thus a range of statistical data was collected, both from the Community Probation Team itself and from other sources.

Home Office Probation Statistical Returns (Form 20s)

These are primarily used by the Probation Service to inform the Home Office about new cases. They are called "notification of occurrence" forms and provide important information about Probation clients including their name, date of birth, current and previous offences, disposals, and so on. Once I had identified the names of all the team's clients, 185 as at May 1985, I then used these forms to provide me with additional information.[6] Where these forms had not been completed or where relevant information had not been entered, for example concerning the number of previous convictions of persons on Probation or Youth Custody licence, I returned to the individual case files to obtain the missing information. Official returns, in fact, tended to underestimate the team's total workload.

Home Office Probation Statistical Returns (Form 30s)

These are used by the Probation Service on a monthly basis to record "inquiry, matrimonial and miscellaneous work". In practice I used these forms to record the number of Social Inquiry Reports completed by the Community Probation Team betwen 1982 and 1985. Since these forms were not always fully completed by staff, they could not be guaranteed to be a 100 per cent reliable record of reports. Thus I cross checked this information with office files containing copies of all past and current Social Inquiry Reports filed on a month to month and year to year basis. Whilst useful for recording Social Inquiry Reports, form 30s are a most inadequate means of recording other forms of Probation work. It is significant to state here that these forms provide the only opportunity, in official terms, of recording work with

other agencies and groups in the locality. They contain no specific "community involvement" or liaison categories other than those concerning "hostels and hospital liaison", and "lectures/meetings". Officially, therefore, community involvement work in the Probation Service is difficult, if not impossible to identify. Indeed back in 1974, but without mentioning community involvement as such, one of Davies' concluding research findings (1974:102) was that the recording of "social worker intervention in the environment" was inadequate and traditionally anecdotal. He suggested a new pro-forma, a draft of which he duly provided (1974:Appendix H). Neverleless form 30s, and other official returns, continue to reflect the service's perceived primary official tasks, namely work done by individuals with individuals. Nevertheless for a service which, increasingly, relies so heavily on statistical returns for its manpower requirements and workload assessment, the implications of this continued administrative shortcoming, at least so far as community involvement work is concerned, are, potentially, substantial. As a researcher this official omission prompted the design, to be further detailed, of other research instruments.

Statistical Records from Inner London Probation Service's Statistical Department

The Department was fully co-operative in providing me with detailed statistical data concerning team caseloads, Social Inquiry Reports, Probation Orders made for the Community Probation Team (outside the stage two period of the fieldwork), for other areas of London, as well as for Inner London Probation Service as a whole for the period 1982 to 1986. This data provided an opportunity to compare caseloads and workloads, and other statistical patterns, over a substantial period of time including the one year period (from March 1985 to March 1986) during which the bulk of the fieldwork took place.

National Probation statistics were obtained from Probation

Statistics England and Wales 1984, 1985 (Home Office, 1986a, 1986b). These documents provided detailed information, in some cases going back as far as 1975, about area and national statistical trends within the Probation Service. The information was used to present further comparisons, particularly concerning Probation Orders and Social Inquiry Reports between the work of the Community Probation Team and work done nationally.

Internal Documents In order to gain a fuller understanding of the practices and ideology[7] in respect of its report writing for criminal courts, I examined two samples of the team's Social Inquiry Reports. First, the team's emergent but inconsistent "mini-policy" of recommending Probation Orders, "wherever possible", suggested that an analysis of a sample, of those reports resulting in Probation Orders being made, was essential for me to understand the nature of the staff's construction of "formal indicators" for Probation suitability. In these reports I examined the Probation Officers' understanding of offenders backgrounds as well as the explanations given for why offenders should, or in some cases should not, become Probation clients. The second sample of Social Inquiry Reports I examined, those concerning clients on Youth Custody or Detention Centre licences at the time, provided me with the opportunity to explore some of the dilemmas faced by the team, in certain cases, of having its non custodial recommendations accepted.

A content analysis was made of a number of documents outlining the initial plans for, and development of, the Community Probation Team. This was undertaken as a means of understanding the team's duties, objectives, and working methods. Additionally a variety of documentation concerning the team's work with community estate groups was also made available to me providing insights into the sorts of issues raised by this type of work for the Probation Service.

Office Diary

During the fieldwork period it became apparent early on that this was a very busy, hectic Probation Office. In order to examine if and to what extent this initial impression was correct the administrative staff agreed to keep a diary for a one month period (from 15 July 1985 to 9 August 1985) of all visits made to the Community Probation Team's premises. This enabled me to record not only the number of visits made but the type of persons who called at the office during that period. I was also able to obtain data about the number of visits made over the same period from two other Probation offices, in one case with the help of a Probation Officer, in another case by obtaining the information myself.

Self-Reporting Community Work Records

As already discussed, the absence of any official information about the amount of Community Work done by the Community Probation Team suggested that I needed to collect such data. I asked all the Community Probation Team members to complete self reporting forms, for a one month period listing the names of the projects involved, the type of contact (telephone contact, meetings, administration), and the length of time involved. A recording sheet was drawn up and provided by me for this purpose and each Probation Officer completed and returned these forms. Although each Probation Officer's recorded work was done over a four week period, for various reasons (absences, holidays, the amount of work involved), these were not completed for the same four week period. In all the period covered by these self reporting forms was from 17 June 1985 until 9 August 1985.

Interviews

A series of lengthy individual interviews, both structured and in depth semi-formal interviews were conducted with all staff members at the unit (Appendix B). Additionally shorter

informal interviews were conducted with clients who spent time at the project's group work activities. Semi-formal interviews were also conducted with the two employment workers who liaise closely with the Community Probation Team. Other occasional interviews, mostly of an exploratory nature, were held with a variety of personnel.[8]

The first set of interviews, each lasting three hours, were of a structured nature and conducted individually with each of the Community Probation Team's Probation Officers. These formal interviews provided information on each of the team's clients, their background, current social situation, employment and family situation. The interviews consisted of standard questions requiring short factual answers which were then entered onto a large sheet of paper with the 19 categories[9] across the top of the page and space on the left hand side to enter the names of the clients. The information received concerning the employment situation and ethnic origin of clients were particularly significant. So far as these interviews concerning clients were concerned (held in April 1985) there were minimal interruptions and postponements. A second set of interviews, this time in-depth and semi-formal and centering on the expectations and experiences of working in the team proved more difficult to conduct. By the time these interviews were conducted, in August/September 1985 I had developed much clearer ideas about the sorts of issues that were "swelling up" within the unit. I used a series of stimulus questions as a means of adding necessary structure to the interviews. One subject initially covered but not in any detail by my stimulus questions concerned work pressures and frustrations. However, staff were very anxious to share their concerns with me at every opportunity. It was as if, as Vass (1982) notes concerning his fieldwork as a participant observer of community service work, that my presence provided a reason for staff to displace onto me some of their problems. Here however these were not only about organisational deficiencies (Vass, 1982:170), but about the office's social work and the personal and professional consequences of working under continued pressure. One Probation Officer, for example, was

concerned that the surfacing of these issues should not be seen in terms of what he called "staff pathology", but rather in terms of working in a stressful environment. Another staff member stated her perceptions in different terms, comparing working in this "community" office and elsewhere. She said: "We have more people here with more problems wanting more help more often". These staff interviews can be described as semi-formal in the sense that, as Moser and Kalton (1971:270) comment: "... the interviewer is at liberty to vary the sequence of questions, to explain their meaning, to add additional ones and even to change the wording."

All of these individual interviews with each of the five Probation Officers in the team were intended to be conducted in the relative privacy of a Probation Officer's room. However a number of difficulties and interruptions during each of these interviews prevented me from being able to record verbatim replies. In contrast with the previous interviews where, simply, boxes could be ticked and short factual replies entered on a pre-planned sheet, and where the focus was client not staff difficulties, the recording of staff answers to the stimulus questions produced more practical difficulties. I recorded, for example, the following interruptions during these interviews; telephone calls, staff looking for a spare room to interview a client on two occasions within one interview, clients coming into the room not knowing it was engaged to use the telephone, and other Probation Officers looking for a room in which to write reports. The Senior Probation Officer twice postponed the initial interview with me. Finally it was agreed I could interview him on the first occasion at the same time as an observational student from a local college was visiting the team. One staff member finally agreed to be interviewed by me outside the office and another on another floor of the office at a time it was not being occupied. The administrative staff were given my stimulus questions in a written form since they said they could not spare the time, because they were so busy, for me to interview them. Thus a list of open ended questions for each of them was provided and returned, administratively correct, in a typed form. In

view of the difficulties outlined above during the interviews I wrote brief notes and full quotations in the large blank spaces under each stimulus question heading. Additionally I wrote further notes whilst my memory was still fresh immediately after the interview by retreating to the privacy of my car, parked in the car park just two minutes from the office. Whilst neither the interview setting or the interview recording techniques were ideal, nevertheless as a result of persistence and tact I managed to collect a considerable amount of data about staff's views about their work and experiences.[10]

Many other staff interviews were held through the fieldwork period and by far the majority of these can be located towards the informal end of an informal - formal interview continuum. These informal interviews were conducted in the corridors of activity on the third floor, the group room on the second floor, and the receptionists area, and also over sandwich lunches at the office. The interviews within the team's office tended to be both "information seeking" and "explanation searching". When clients came into the office I needed to know, if I did not already recognise them, who they were, what they were doing at the office, what happened in the client/Probation Officer interviews so far as the staff member was concerned. "Explanation searching" consisted of me asking questions about day to day Probation Officers' practices and decisions, for example, why the name of a particular hostel was given to a homeless client, or why there were only six people in the group room on a particular afternoon or why money left by the Senior Probation Officer in the poor box was never, or so it appeared, sufficient. Although tempted to continue with these informal interviews when staff were more relaxed and at ease, at the local café for example, I considered this would have been totally unacceptable. The only circumstances when this self- imposed "rule" of "no research questions at out-of-office social gatherings" might have been "broken" would have been if I had explained that I was still conducting professional work at such gatherings. I did not accept this view and respected staff confidences during a number of social gatherings to

which I was invited. Also the total absence of any social gatherings which included clients, Probation staff and myself together outside working hours not only indicated a certain "social distancing" between these parties but, more relevant here, made the need for any self-imposed "rules", at least those similar to the one above, redundant in respect of my office based client interviews.

The individual and informal interviews with clients took place in a large noisy room on the second floor of the Community Probation Team's premises (the Probation offices being on the third floor). This room was used for various activities including "open reporting" through informal contacts between Probation Officers and clients, but also for table tennis, pool, dominoes, employment work and generally client socialising. It was not necessary to obtain a sample of clients using this office facility since only a relatively small number, approximately 15 to 20 per session, actually attended these activities at any one time.[11] In addition to having informal conversations with clients, I held a series of exploratory semi-formal interviews with 10 clients (See Appendix C for an account of the issues raised). Admittedly not ideal methodologically, these 10 clients, rather than others, were interviewed as a result of mainly practical considerations. First, these clients were fairly regular attenders who, theoretically at least, could reflect on both past and present developments at the unit, second I had formed a working relationship with them, and third, an associated point, they were willing to be interviewed by me.

Observation

Observation was regarded as a relevant and necessary research instrument for the fieldwork to understand "first hand" the experiences and effects of, and implications for clients and the Probation Service arising from a Probation team being more accessible to its immediate locality. The use of observation emphasised the ways in which problems of individuals and social organisations were shaped and moulded

through face-to-face interaction and exchanges. Its assumptions, guided principally by the sociological perspectives of symbolic interactionism and ethnomethodology paid particular attention to the meanings individuals and organisations give to the definitions and interpretations of social situations. The concern in interactionism, for example, with a relationship between overt patterns of interaction and covert symbolic behaviour demands "concern for the unfolding meaning objects assume during an interactional sequence." (Denzin, 1969:95). Participant observation enabled me to understand the acts, actions and meanings of exchanges in a socially constructed environment. Observation was especially useful for identifying problem definition and decision making processes at the Inter-agency meetings, and exploring status issues at the Community Probation Team's premises.

In respect of the latter location I observed staff/client exchanges and interactions on 51 separate occasions, over an eight month period, between March 1985 and November 1985. The length of each observation period varied between one hour and four hours, making in total 138 hours observation (averaging approximately three hours per visit). The number of visits per month varied between, for example, 12 visits in June 1985 and five in November 1985. Overall I paid an average of six visits to the team's premises per month.[12] Observations took place on different days and over different periods of time including morning, afternoon and occasionally evening periods. This coverage enabled me to collect data about various aspects of the team's work. As a result of the cramped working conditions and volume of clients visiting the offices a considerable amount of observation of client supervision took place in public areas such as corridors, offices, the coffee/photocopying room, the reception area (all located on the third floor), and in the group room itself on the second floor.

Entry to the unit itself provided no problems as the study had received official endorsement from senior management officials and the team itself. Furthermore the team was

aware that I was using observational methods for the study since my original research proposal sent to each member of the unit in February 1985, stated explicitly that this would be one of the research instruments. That proposal stated that observational methods would be used to explore ways in which the team operated in practice in order to achieve its stated objectives and to identify the constituent elements of what I called at that time its office culture. Nevertheless there were certain difficulties of being in the role of an observer and these will be discussed in due course. The participant observation employed at the unit can be regarded as being along a continuum extending from active participant observation at one end to passive participant observation at the other. Since the term participant observation can mean many different things it is important at this stage to clarify the term. Taking active participant observation first, Schwartz and Schwartz (1955:349) offer the following definition, as an ideal type:

> "The 'active' participant observer. - As an ideal type, the 'active' participant observer maximises his participation with the observed in order to gather data and attempt to integrate his role with other roles in the social situation. .....His intention is to experience the life of the observed so that he can better observe and understand it."

This is not to claim that the study approaches the degree of participant observation that, for example, Vass (1982:157) writes about concerning his undertaking 200 hours of community service work for that research study. During this fieldwork my active participant observation involved me conversing informally with clients, Probation and employment staff asking staff about their actions and activities, having discussions with clients and staff whilst making tea and coffee, acting as guest prize giver at a highly competitive pool competition held for clients, acting as a receptionist on occasions, playing table tennis and pool with clients, and attending the Job Spot. All of these experiences enabled me, to varying degrees, to be an active participant observer. However a sense of balance had to be struck between on the one hand becoming too involved as a participant (and not

being a "true" observer) and on the other hand being a remote and detached observer removed from everyday experiences. I would have found it impossible to observe interactions "from a distance" over a long period of time and within such a confined setting. Indeed, my presence would have been challenged. On the other hand since the participants did not, of course, engage in continual activities themselves, but rested, reflected and talked, my doing so as well enabled me to be involved, not necessarily highly active but neither a passive participant observer. Of passive participant observation Schwartz and Schwartz (1955:348) offer the following definition:

> " - As an ideal type the 'passive' participant observer interacts with the observed as little as possible. He conceives his sole function to be observation and attempts to carry it on in the same mode as an observer behind a one-way viewing screen. Maintaining contact with the observed outside the role of observer is viewed as an interference rather than as an opportunity for gathering additional data. The investigator assumes that the more passive he is the less will he affect the situation and the greater will be his opportunity to observe events as they develop."

I did not take the view that such passive one-way observations would be useful, acceptable or even possible in this setting. Rather I took the view that as a researcher I could become involved "in their world" and enhance and enliven, rather than taint the data. This is not to claim, to use another useful classification of participant observation, that I became a total-participant (Gans, 1968:302), that is :

> "... the fieldworker who is completely involved emotionally in a social situation and who only after it becomes a researcher again and writes down what has happened".

Rather I was closer to being a "researcher-participant", that is (Gans, 1968:302) a person: "... who participates in a social situation but is personally only partially involved so that he can function as a researcher ..."

The main qualification I would want to make here concerns my

participant observation at the Inter-agency meetings outside the office held on two local estates in Brixton. On the first estate, the Stockwell park estate in Central Brixton I attended eight meetings, held on a monthly basis, from March to November 1985 and at the second estate, the Moorlands Estate I attended in total 12 meetings held between May 1985 and February 1986. I attended these meetings in order to gain a clearer understanding of the issues involved for the Probation Service of becoming involved in community work. At these meetings the extent of my active participant observation was limited to taking detailed field notes during the meetings, and conversing informally with agency representatives once the meetings had finished. As a result of my observations I was able to identify the contribution made by the Probation Service to this form of community work. Additionally it enabled me to provide "first-hand" accounts of the development of inter- agency work on two estates in Brixton.

In particular I explored the type of social problems discussed and the problem-solving approaches used as applied to the clients in question, namely the residents on two estates. The field work concentrated on these, rather than other types of community involvement by the Community Probation Team for several practical and pragmatic reasons. First since I was concerned with examining the response by a "new" Probation team to a social problem (1981 Brixton disturbances), I wanted to explore specifically elements of its work which addressed that problem and also which were accessible to research. Existing work done by the Probation Team, in common with other Probation Teams as revealed in the questionnaire, for example with after care hostels and voluntary organisations for single homeless men did not comply with the former criteria.Two community initiatives which are discussed in the study, were regarded as unsuitable for detailed research because they had been in existence for some years and were almost self-supporting (that is requiring minimal Probation intervention) at the time the research was conducted. By contrast the two Inter-agency groups examined were both of recent origin, involved regular participation by

Probation Officers during the research period, and offered opportunities to explore the nature of the social problems addressed, and the possibilities for their resolution. Additionally, it must be acknowledged, entry to the Inter-agency groups was relatively straightforward. Initially, I was introduced at meetings by each Probation Officer as a researcher examining the work of the Probation Service in the community. With certain exceptions, to be detailed, my limited forms of active participant observation at Inter-agency meetings did not produce any substantial role difficulties.

The recording process of observations made at Inter-agency meetings differed from that for the work done at the Probation premises. At the Inter-agency group meetings written notes, sometimes in full, sometimes in summary form were taken during each of the meetings. This took the form of recording the date and place of meeting, together with participants present. Additionally notes were made about techniques discussed to resolve problems, and exchanges made between different personnel. Approximately three pages of handwritten notes were made for each of the 19 meetings attended. In respect of the Probation work at the unit these notes were not usually contemporaneous ones but written immediately after the periods of observation, or occasionally later the same day. The pattern I developed in recording material from the office was to record the date and time of entry and exit at the top of the note book, and record the personnel present and the events as they had unfolded. Sometimes I made what Loftland (1971:101-103) refers to as "jotted" notes (i.e. writing specific phrases, key words and quotations). Then I added a "comments" heading for each period of observation. This was used to record the particular issues, for example staff concerns or client problems, that had arisen during the observations. These notes were usually written up outside the office in my car in the car park near to the office. On occasions I made additional notes at home afterwards, as I recalled them. Initial attempts to use sociogrammatic techniques, based on Moreno's (1934, 1960) and Mills (1967) work, and used in a

previous research study (Broad, 1982) to record small-group interaction were abandoned once their relevance here was questioned. Once the observational field work was completed I went back over the 70 pages of field work notes about the Probation office activities and coded them into broad subject areas. These included, in order of appearance, as it were; professional, organisational, client, and criminological issues. The observations could then be retrieved more readily from the notebooks.

The Role of Observer: Some Problems

There were, as I have already explained, no problems regarding entry to either the Community Team's premises or the Inter-agency meetings. The former was officially negotiated and endorsed, the latter informally arranged. The problems that I did encounter, apart from those practical ones essentially concerning note taking, centred on other people's perceptions of my role. At the Community Probation Team's office and on a number of occasions I was asked by the Senior Probation Officer to "keep an eye on things down stairs", by which he meant to be an informal supervisor for the activity groups on the second floor. On other occasions I was asked to act as receptionist and "run the psychiatric clinic for the night". The office had an "in-house" psychiatric clinic, held once a fortnight, for a period of time, which consisted of a visiting psychiatrist offering her services. On some occasions I did agree to be a "receptionist" and "group supervisor" and these experiences were interesting and illuminating. On other occasions when I had an interview or a meeting scheduled I politely refused such requests. Indeed even if I did not have other commitments I explained politely to the Senior that I did not consider it was my role to undertake these tasks. The Senior Probation Officer recognised, to some extent, the independent role of the researcher but he nevertheless continued to regard me as an extra office resource, as well as an independent researcher. When I did decline to act as a temporary supervisor for example this involved him trying to find other "volunteers" who were not always available.

Although in other circumstances I would have only been too willing to help out at the unit, in the short term I considered this would compromise my position as a researcher, and in the long term help to disguise and even amplify the workload difficulties. When beginning my observations at the Community Probation Team, and not for any particular reason, I would usually begin by entering the Probation Offices on the third floor to say "hello", have a cup of coffee and observe what was happening that day. That the Senior Probation Officer would often ask me, on arrival, "Who are you seeing today Bob" (to be interviewed I presumed he meant), led me to conclude that my research as an observer was never fully accepted by him. On occasions of course I had interviews arranged but it could be regarded that his questions represented a "gate keeping" role, here extending beyond his Probation work to the research work itself. On occasions of course I did have interviews arranged but my usual response, stating that I was seeing no- one in particular but wanting to record what was happening in the office today, proved to be acceptable to him. Since I didn't announce in advance when I was visiting the unit it was understandable, from his point of view, that the Senior wished to know what was happening at the unit, in the way that he tried to organise, manage, and control everyday activities. On only one occasion was I prevented from attending the office, in fact on a day when I was not planning to attend in any case. On this occasion I received a telephone call from the Senior Probation Officer's secretary saying "you had better not come today, it's a bloody mad house here" (this was a reference to a client who had refused to leave the office, was screaming and shouting behind the locked toilet door, and the police had been called).

Because the entire fieldwork, including the observational work was not only contractual, but based on relations of trust it seemed imperative to me that I followed this advice and did not, as a researcher, further exacerbate what was clearly a difficult situation for the staff on that day. It was also useful at the Inter-agency meetings on the Moorlands

Estate in particular to be helpful, in practical terms (by for example making tea/coffee, arranging the furniture for meetings, taking official minutes for one meeting,), without being so involved that I might influence the direction of those meetings (something that Reilly (1963), calls the "control effect"). So, for example, I refused to accede to certain requests at those meetings which might, possibly, have effected the long term direction of that group. Thus I declined to be permanent secretary for the group or become consultant to the group. At one of the meetings on the Stockwell Park Estate I was also invited to become an active group member at a small youth sub-group meeting. One of the group members said to me "we would really like to hear your views about this issue. It seems a bit strange you sitting there saying nothing and writing down what we say." In this particular case I replied by saying that although I would like to join in as a worker, as a researcher if I did I might affect the group's decisions and dynamics, secondly that I was not actually a group member. The reply expressed disappointment, "I see what you mean but I still think it's a pity". Of course it might have been that my involvement as a temporary group member might have had no effect on the group's decisions and dynamics, but I was not prepared to take that risk.

A second problem concerning the ambiguity of the role of a participant researcher, centred on the issues of confidentiality and loyalty. Specifically these issues surfaced when staff at the Community Probation Team knew that I had interviewed clients. Whilst some staff did not approach me for information after these interviews, others wanted to know what "their client" had said. When confronted by this issue, and despite pressure from staff on some occasions, I did not reveal the contents of my discussions other than providing generalised and non- revealing answers. A more frequent occurrence centred on those occasions when I was approached by the Senior Probation Officer, after I had been observing activities in the group room, and asked "How's it going down there?" whilst in any case I did not, with one or two exceptions, witness any extraordinary events meriting

any mention, but rather a created routine of activities, I felt uneasy about taking on the role of an "informer" about events, attendance, behaviour and so on. At the same time had someone been attempting, for example, to physically hurt somebody else, my actions would have been different. I tended to reply by focusing on what seemed to be the regular under-attendance of expected clients. The Senior appeared to have the expectation that something might be happening, or about to happen. The consequence of being a participant observer in the Probation setting where discussions with staff in the presence of clients might allude to organisational loyalties, and where discussions with clients in the presence of staff might imply a betrayal of trust, was that I became a marginal albeit ever present actor. This occurred of course in a setting where essentially roles were, generally speaking, defined and unambigous. As Vidich (1955:356) writes of the social role of the participant observer:

> "He is socially marginal to the extent that he measures his society as a non involved outsider and avoids committing his loyalties and allegiancies to segments of it."

During the latter part of the fieldwork at the team's premises on occasions I continued to explain my reason for being present at the office. Whilst this was probably unnecessary in many cases, in so far as the staff were concerned, it functioned as a means of re-asserting my identity as a researcher. When eventually a Probation Officer said to me, "You don't need to explain why you're here, we know why you're here. You're like a part of the office furniture now", it appeared that I had been accepted at least as a regular presence, if not always regarded as occupying the role of a researcher as observer.

Theoretical Perspectives

The study's analysis of the general development of community based Probation practice, and its social organisation by one

Probation team draws on a three-fold theoretical framework associated with some of the insights offered by interactionist and functionalist perspectives. The complex nature of these theoretical debates are identified, explored, and necessarily summarised here, beginning with the three-fold theoretical framework.

My preliminary theoretical thinking led me to suppose, prematurely and erroneously, that expanding forms of Probation intervention, symbolised by aspects of community based Probation practice, crudely and necessarily represented an extension to formal social control mechanisms, and very little else. At that stage I was particularly impressed by the contributions made by Cohen (1985), and to a lesser extent, Cohen and Scull (1985). In the former book his terminology of modulations of control, master patterns, and deposits of power conjured up strong images of penetrating and ubiquitous, contemporary and visionary social control mechanisms. Because the new Community Probation Team was created in Brixton as a response to the 1981 disturbances in that area it seemed theoretically most plausible, at that stage, to consider accomodating its practices solely within a social control framework. However once the research actually began and developed it became very apparent that once the term social control had been defined, itself a problematic task, it was necessary to observe and record its characteristics and application. Having acknowledged these points, theoretical ambiguities abounded once I began to examine official documents, engage in systematic observation, conduct interviews and, overall, recognise the complexities of the team's interactional totality. The latter consisted of necessarily separate but connected individual and team actions and negotiations. Nevertheless given the team's criminal justice location it was necessary to retain a social control theoretical perspective providing three main conditions were met. The first was that it was derived from empirical data and not driven by ideological considerations, the second was that its variants and parameters were defined, and the third was that it formed one element of a broader theoretical framework. In relation to the literature review

of the Probation Service's historical development in chapter two for example, it appears that social control considerations, not always informed by empirical knowledge, are dominant.

The second element of the threefold theoretical framework employed here, and similarly qualified, is based on social justice considerations (Harvey, 1973). This theoretical perspective arose from an acknowledgement, at least in terms of initially stated aspirations and possibilities, that the new Community Probation Team appeared committed to addressing some social inequality and injustice issues in its immediate inner city locality. These aspirations were both connected with and disconnected from the formal relationship between the courts and the Probation Service. Some insights taken from Harvey's book therefore provide the basis for a further theoretical departure point for analysing the Team's practice and organisation.

The third element of this theoretical framework arose from a recognition, made explicit in official documents and exemplified in practice, that the Community Probation Team also espoused to providing a more accessible and acceptable professional service. This professional servicing aspect is regarded here as a conscious expression of a social welfare theoretical perspective (Pinker, 1979). Whilst acknowledging that these different theoretical elements, according to Higgins (1980) in respect of social control and social welfare for example, are not necessarily mutally exclusive, it is argued here that with certain qualifications the characteristics of each can be clearly distinguished, if not always entirely separable. The authority for these qualifications is derived from the relationship between the data and the inferences drawn from the data. This brings me to consider the framework's theoretical derivatives, namely some of the insights drawn from interactionism and functionalism. The case study in particular contains a dialogue between, on the one hand, actions and meanings, and, on the other hand, their consequences, intended or unintended, for participants, the Probation Service, and to a

lesser extent other sub-systems.

Certain varieties of interactionism derive their claim for theoretical authority from the significance they attach to the distinctive character of interaction as it takes place between human beings. In Blumer's view (1966:537-538) the interaction process can be classified into those behaviours that are routinely organised and those that are actively constructed in a self-conscious fashion. It is argued here however that, for the group work settings, both sets of behaviours occured simultaneously, with the former resulting from the latter social construction. Overall there is an explicit acknowledgement here, systematically operationalised elsewhere in the field of juvenile justice by Cicourel (1968), for example, that day to day "realities" are not given, but socially organised and socially constructed (Berger and Luckman, 1967). Whilst acknowledging that theoretical and methodological issues are difficult to separate Cicourel (1968:2) expresses an appreciation of the theoretical influences of ethnomethodology in his description of the sorts of data and approaches he regards as necessary for understanding everyday activities. This study acknowledges the value he gives to documentary exploration and examining how sets of activities are bound by general procedural rules and arrangements.

Interactionists emphasise the significance of self, meaning and negotiation, as characteristic elements of social encounters. Thus the forms that social encounters take both contribute to and derive from their setting. More generally Denzin (1969) stresses the importance in interactionism of highlighting the realtionship between covert, symbolic behaviour and overt patterns of interaction. A basic characteristic of an interactionist understanding is that of sequential discovery and interpretation about relationships, meanings and actions. In analysing the "workings" of the Community Probation Team it is important, when examining encounters inside or outside the office, not only to identify those present (their status, their view of the issues and problems discussed), but also their "lines" (Goffman,

1955:213) whether expressing social distance, friendliness or other qualities. There is an emphasis here on recording the ways in which encounters between "professional staff" and "clients" were negotiated, as well as the forms of, and reasons for, staff/client engagement and disengagement.

Interactionism acknowledges that meanings are not fixed entities but are created, developed, modified, and changed as a result of interactional processes within a particular situational context. In the case study stages of Probation Service entry, negotiation, and withdrawal are identified as emergent states of development which arose from the relationship between the Community Probation Team's actions and intentions, mediated by negotiations. Here interactionism is applied to examining the ways in which individuals' actions were couched and problems defined. The case study's concerns with social organisation in terms of described territory, territory occupants, social relationships, activities and rules (Garfinkel,1967) also represents an ethnomethodolog- ical excursion starting from an interactionist departure point. Furthermore in the sense that the case study represents a reaction by one organisation, the Inner London Probation Service, to a "social problem," namely the 1981 public disturbances in Brixton, the study draws on some of the insights offered by social reaction and labelling theoretical perspectives. Drawing on the conceptual framework of "the natural history of a social problem" (Fuller and Myers, 1941) as a heuristic device, but not as a prescriptive model, specific attention is given to analysing **seriatim** the terms in which this reaction, or response, was defined, constructed, and implemented.

In drawing on a distinction between, on the one hand, stated aims and motivations, and on the other hand, intended and unintended consequences, the empirical work also draws on functionalist insights. However there are several varieties of functionalism and it should be noted here that the study does not support some functionists' assumptions about individuals having little or no control over their actions

and discounting actors' accounts (Wallis and Bruce, 1983:101). The study also rejects some of functionalism's more problematic assumptions held by, for example, Radcliffe-Brown (1952:180). These, as Merton argues (1968:79), centre on "the interconnected postulates of functional unity, universality and indispensibility." There is also an assumption held by some functionalists, particularly Parsons (1971), that a functionalist perspective must necessarily assume both systemic and social integration. Although conflict between societal sub-systems is recognised and indeed emphasised here, some kind of overall system within which behaviour has to be explained is acknowledged.

Mennel's view, for example, (1974:142) that "The consensual view of society is not logically inherent in a functional or systemic approach" rests on acknowledging Lockwood's distinction (1964) between normative and general functionalism. In the study there is an acknowledgement of system integration as links of interdependence between groups and institutions. These are concerned with groups within the criminal justice system (sentencers, offenders, and Probation staff), but also other groups outside that same system situated within the new Probation team's locality. The case study identifies the connections between the social organisation of the team's Probation practices, and other groups and sub-systems representing wider social reactions to the 1981 Brixton disturbances. In depicting the ways in which one Probation response, or set of team responses, was created and organised, the point is emphasised that these systemic connections were not necessarily consistent nor predetermined, but rather shaped by subsequent and identifiable interactional forces. It is claimed that the varied and often conflicting interests of the typical actors within one such system ultimately provides the necessary indicators and context for determining the form and nature of the ongoing systemic connections.

Finally it is intended that the study's emphasis on insights drawn from variants of interactionism and functionaliism, will counter the primary criticisms of each. These are that

functionalism, particularly normative functionalism, ignores the contribution made by individuals to the social structure, and that interactionists can ignore the wider relationship between action, function and structure. It is not argued here that the Community Probation Team's practices were, somehow structurally imposed and illustrative of a monolithic organisation. Rather it is argued that the creation of a new team was a "social construction" with its own past, characteristic features, and interactional patterns, functioning within an organisational location, systemic framework and societal context. It is strongly suggested here that the Community Probation Team's community based practices, as well as wider developments in this field, can most fully, if not most easily be understood by generally acknowledging the force of interactional encounters, and by analysing the relationship between objectives as conscious motivations, actions and interactions as consequences, and overall functions.

Scope

The research study about specific community based developments in the Probation Service contains data from two main sources; a postal questionnaire and an in-depth case study of one Probation team. The study does not claim to be representative of all community developments in the Probation Service but provides as accurate as possible a reflection of a recent development in this field, as observed during a particular period. It is difficult even to consider the issue of representativeness in such a potentially diverse subject area. In another sense however, that of examining the issues raised for the Probation Service of becoming more accessible to it's immediate locality, and attempting to embrace and integrate innovative "community" approaches to its work, this study's findings are in congruence with those of, for example, Celnick (1985), and more particularly, Henderson (1986). Unpublished material about the work of another urban Probation team[13] working in a post-disturbance setting, and which for reasons of confidentiality cannot be

included here, would if anything have served to reinforce, in particular, the workload and experiential sections of this study. This study's special contribution to this developing field has resulted from being able to record and reflect on the views of several Probation teams, as well as being direct access to the work load data about and every day experiences of one particular team. The study's findings therefore should be read within this framework of understanding.

CHAPTER TWO

Probation Service Community Developments: The Historical Legacy

This chapter explores the historical background of and subsequent changes to Probation Service community developments. The latter generic term is used to denote both statutory duties undertaken by the Probation Service concerned with the supervision of offenders outside penal institutions, and other non civil work. This chapter concentrates on the Probation Service's statutory supervisory duties. Sub categories of Probation Service community developments, community Probation work, crime prevention work and community work are introduced and explored in the next and subsequent chapters.

This chapter first identifies nineteenth century legal and philanthropic developments associated with the eventual merger of criminal justice and social work in 1907. It then explores the growth of the Probation Service's statutory responsibilities, concerning the supervision of offenders, up to the present time. It is argued that a broad understanding of the Probation Service's history and development, so far as its community developments are concerned, is essential to an understanding of its current status, development and practices. The adoption of such a potentially broad canvas will be limited to an exploration of certain key themes identified earlier within the thesis' aims section of Chapter One. Suffice it to state here that in so far as its community developments are concerned, it is argued that the Probation Service's changing statutory duties and practices appear to be associated with the dynamic relationship between at least four factors. The first two are external to the Probation Service, the third and fourth are broadly located within the service. The first, a political one, concerns the changing political, economic and social context; the second, a legislative one, takes the form of a legal statutory

framework; the third, a professional factor, can be characterised by the interactions between, and working assumptions made about Probation Officers and clients; the fourth factor, an administrative one, relates to the availability and utilisation of organisational resources. It is suggested here, contrary to some views expressed in the literature, that in practice terms these four factors are necessarily interwoven, dynamic, and, to some extent, negotiable so far as day-to-day practices and outcomes are concerned. The chapter illustrates overall the ways in which, subsequent to nineteenth century developments, the Probation Service has expanded and diversified to accommodate the demands of an increasingly centralised criminal justice system. The first task then is to examine the criminal justice and social work legacy bequeathed to the Probation Service by the separate development and expansion of law enforcement systems and philanthropic measures in the nineteenth century.

Background

The establishment in 1907 of a formal government agency to supervise offenders in the community marked a radical departure, according to one view, away from the predominant nineteenth century principles of deterrence and, later, rehabilitation of offenders in closed institutions towards principles based on the rehabilitation of offenders in the community. According to this "benign view" (expressed in Bochel, 1976; King, 1969) the establishment of the Probation Service symbolised both a more liberal approach towards offenders, a recognition that institutional confinement failed to produce rehabilitation, and an acknowledgement that prison was positively harmful for certain groups, particularly young people. Thus, and principally for philanthropic reasons, the Probation Service emerged. This benign view of the birth of the Probation Service generally regards the emergence of the Probation Service first in isolation from wider developments within the criminal justice system and second as an almost "natural" progression from

nineteenth century experiments concerned with the provision of alternatives to custodial sentences. In one sense, namely that the latter half of the nineteenth century witnessed a number of reforms concerned, in part, with establishing alternatives to prison for juveniles, the Probation Service can be regarded as one such "alternatives" experiment.

According to another "control view" however, the Probation Service arose not simply from philanthropic considerations but as an integral part of wider social control mechanisms. As such the emergence of a new organisation with statutory rights and sanctions, within the criminal justice and penal system, cannot be fully understood and analysed in isolation from other developments. These concern the growth of other offender controls and, generally, other enforcement systems that developed prior to and alongside the establishment of the Probation Service and some acknowledgement of wider social conditions and structures. This approach is one which authors such as Philips (1977), Hay (**et al** 1975, 1980), Ignatieff (1978 and 1985) amongst others have used to examine a variety of aspects relating, broadly, to penal developments in England. In relation to nineteenth century penal developments, for example, Bailey (1981:22) writes:

> "... until we fully appreciate the principles and practices of Victorian criminal justice, it is unlikely that we shall truly understand those of our own era. The past century bequeathed us a considerable legacy which continues to prevail upon contemporary policing and punishment."

The formalisation of law enforcement systems in the eighteenth and especially the nineteenth century provides the necessary historical backdrop to considerations about the practice of Probation in the twentieth century.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the removal of administrative and financial constraints on bringing prosecutions to court, and the absorption of local and largely extra-judicial Community Law by a more punitive State Law (Gattrell, 1980:23) heralded the beginning of formalised state funded law enforcement systems. State law was

primarily based on catching and punishing, according to Radzinowicz (1966:123) a sufficient proportion of offenders to deter others. He notes (1966:123):

> "The rigidity of the Classical School on the continent of Europe made it almost impossible to develop constructive and imaginative penal measures."

This major transformation from a localised to a centralised system took time as it required adaptations to the existing formal enforcement agencies of the eighteenth century, namely the parish constables, the military and the army. Together these agencies had been regarded as increasingly inadequate (Thompson, 1971:121-122; Taylor, 1969:15; Western, 1965:3; Cohen and Scull, 1985:196) in dealing with an increasingly mobile, industrialised and discontented urbanised society. The revisionism of the neo-classical school which emerged, broadly, in the nineteenth century urged that the criminal and not just the crime be punished and, therefore, that individual mitigating circumstances should be taken into account when sentences were passed. The end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century witnessed changes which were revolutionary in their impact and design. According to Philips (1985:50):

> "the whole apparatus of the state dealing with the criminal law, police and punishment underwent a revolution as substantial as the Industrial Revolution that Britain was experiencing at the same time"

The industrial revolution, gathering considerable pace by the beginning of the nineteenth century produced a transformation in social relationships with the rapid growth of cities, the mechanical demands of the factories, adjustments to traditional labour practices, and the problems of unsatisfactory and cramped living conditions. The early decades of the nineteenth century in particular were marked by a period of considerable economic upheaval, poverty and social unrest. (See, for example, Stevenson, 1979; Philips, 1985; Pahl, 1983.) According to Pahl (1983:31) urban poverty brought with it fears of social disorder:

> "The middle class response was one of fear of the threat of social disorder which poverty promised to bring. There grew up an ideology which saw ... the East End as the haunt of criminal and revolutionary classes who threatened to break out at any moment, and whose influence contaminated the whole of the working class in London."

The growth of large urban areas meant that the situation of the poor, and other groups, was more visible, desperate, and potentially more threatening. There is a continuing debate about whether the introduction and extension of formalised systems of state control represented a planned response to fears about rising crime and disorder (a view held by, amongst others, Thompson, 1963, (eighteenth century) 1975; Rothman, 1971; Jones, 1982) or whether the policies were more of a makeshift character (Bailey, 1981; of social policy generally, Pinker, 1973). Despite the uncertain nature of the relationship between social events and subsequent policies the beginning of the nineteenth century witnessed a dramatic series of changes concerning the police, the administration of the criminal law, and forms of punishment.

Following one abortive attempt in 1778 to establish a police force, the Metropolitan Police Force Act was passed by parliament in 1829. Criminal procedures were amended and a series of consolidatory statutes were introduced in the 1826 Criminal Law Act. As a result of this Act expenses could be paid to prosecutors, the powers of summary trial by one or two magistrates were extended enabling quicker prosecution than on indictment before a jury, and the range and number of offences punishable was greatly increased. Further Police Acts in 1835 (the Municipal Corporation Act) in 1839 (the County Police Act) and in 1856 (the County and Borough Police Act) were passed which eventually resulted in all counties and boroughs being compulsorily required to establish police forces.

The reclassification of the criminal code virtually eroding the difference between less serious misdemeanours and more serious felonies and the reallocation of legislative power

(Tobias, 1967:229) had the effect of increasing the range and number of offences brought to the attention of the criminal courts in the nineteenth century. The cumulative effect of these and other administrative changes was that throughout the nineteenth century there was a decided extension of state authority to investigate, to detain, prosecute, punish. As Bailey (1981:1) comments:

> "The alterations in the modes of policing and punishment were closely linked. They derived from the conviction that an effective system of criminal justice required both a mitigation in the severity of penalties and a reformed and efficient police. They were also mutually reinforcing. Enthusiasm for police reform was charged by the belief that amelioration of the criminal law would be more acceptable if fewer offenders were to avoid capture. More significantly, this massive reorganisation of criminal justice, affecting the spheres of detection, prosecution and punishment, led ultimately to a decided increase in the scale and scope of legal authority. No longer was the enforcement of the criminal law made to rely upon the private initiative of thief-takers, voluntary associations for self-protection and contractor-gaolers. Instead, the responsibility was progressively delegated to the agents of a professional police and prison system".

The intensification of law enforcement measures and the reclassification of the legal code was associated with a gradual transformation in the forms of punishment that also took place in the nineteenth century. Primarily this change was from capital (or primary) punishment towards custodial (or secondary) forms of punishment. In practice non capital punishment took the form of various types of detention, which up to the mid-nineteenth century could also be accompanied by some form of physical punishment. By the early nineteenth century prison was already used as a punishment in its own right, and not simply for the purposes of temporary detention (Ignatieff, 1985:80). Prisons also characterised a particular type of power, the power to punish as a general function of society, rather than a function of local groups, parishes and communities. It became a standardised measure that was exercised over all its members. According to Rossi (quoted in Foucoult, 1977:232) prison becomes:

> "... a justice that is supposed to be 'equal', a legal machinery that is supposed to be 'autonomous', but which contains all the asymmetries of disciplinary subjection, this subjection marked the birth of the prison, 'the penalty of civilised society'."

Broadly there were two types of prisons in the nineteenth century. National prisons, under the control of the Home Department contained those sentenced to death or transportation, and later in the century, to penal servitude. Local prisons, until 1878 under the control of local justices and quarter sessions, accommodated all the remainder of offenders placed in detention. The centralising of all prisons took place in 1878 when they were placed under the control of the then Home Department. Imprisonment, according to Radzinowicz (1948:160-161), was an extremely popular sentence for criminal courts in the nineteenth century. By 1860, imprisonment, especially for short terms of six months and under, accounted for 78 per cent of all sentences imposed at higher courts, and penal servitude (the substitute for transportation) for 18 per cent (Radzinowicz, 1948:160-161). By the 1870s, by which time the numbers of capital offences had been reduced to 11 (in 1861) and transportation was formally removed as a sentence (in 1867), 50 new prisons had been built.

According to Melossi and Pavarini (1981:35) it was often difficult to distinguish between the treatment of the poor and the punishment of the criminal although the 1865 Prison Act formally eliminated the difference between the gaol for those that had broken the law, and the bridewell for miscreants. The classification and segregation of groups such as paupers, lunatics, factory workers and petty criminals served the function, according to Ignatieff (1985:89-91), of increasing the social distances between, on the one hand, the rich and the poor and, on the other hand, the respectable working classes, and those other groups not deemed respectable. By the late nineteenth century the Secretary to the Council of the Charity Organisation Society, an organisation which "could never shake off an almost pathological fear that pauperism might get out of control"

(Owen, 1964:222), could list no less than fifteen specialist categories of groups suitable for charitable involvement. These included, fallen women, inebriates, children morally neglected or refractory (one category), idiots and imbeciles, street beggars and vagrants, and begging letter writers (Loch, 1895:v-viii).

The form of punishment for the criminal in prison and indeed the pauper in the workhouse, was not simply passive confinement within an institution, but one which focused on the virtues of personal discipline and industry. (In relation to labour in prisons, see Tomlinson, 1981:127.) The gradual shifts from generalised to specialised institutions, and from deterrence through exemplary punishment to widespread prosecutions, detentions, and later, rehabilitation, provided the opportunity and rationale for the professionalisation of those involved in administering the formal state control apparatus. As Scull (1977:22) observes:

> "Gaolers were transformed into prison wardens, madhouse keepers into alienists or psychiatrists; the local militia were replaced by a bureaucratically organised police force; the parish vestry men by paid Poor Law Guardians."

Philanthropy and Welfare

The nineteenth century also witnessed an increase in philanthropic concerns both for those already inside prisons and for other groups, usually from the poorer classes, outside prison. The work of penal reformers cannot be seen either in isolation from other reforming movements at the time or, it is argued, collectively, as representing the deliberate exertion of more state control by the middle classes upon the poor and the delinquent. It is not intended here to offer such a reductionist explanation of the impetus of bourgeois moral reforms; rather to illustrate that those more formal and coercive aspects of state social control apparatus, namely the courts, police and penal system generally, did and do not exist on their own as a means of

sustaining the existing social order. Prisons represent one particular type of formal controls, less formal controls existing within, for example, the family, the workplace and within neighbourhoods. These controls, whether formal or informal, and whether based on primary relationships (principally within the family) or secondary relationships (such as those found between youth clubs and church leaders and lay people) serve collectively to regulate and regularise society (amongst many see, for example, Bottomore, 1971:217). The view that the nineteenth century social order was maintained by legal systems as well as a wide range of less formal mechanisms, including, for example, leisure and recreational activities, education, charity and philanthropy, and poor relief, is one held and developed by, amongst others, Donajgrodzki (1977).

There developed the belief amongst prominent philanthropists including John Howard (in the eighteenth century) and Elizabeth Fry (in the nineteenth century), (Young and Ashton, 1956:153-156) that prisons were unfit places for young people and that adult guidance upon prison release for certain groups should be introduced.

Although there remained some disagreement in the nineteenth century about which groups (children, women, mentally infirm, inebriate) were entitled to receive help and assistance, children were regarded as particularly deserving. By the mid-nineteenth century a series of non-penal institutions had opened, the most significant associated with the Reformatory and Industrial Schools Movements, which emerged in the 1850s. Mary Carpenter (1851), the principal advocate of the Reformatory School Movement held the view that children of the perishing and dangerous classes (Carpenter, 1851:2-3) should receive the same treatment. The "perishing classes" were those who had not "fallen into actual crime", but might do so if not given help and the "dangerous classes" were those who "have already received the prison brand".

Individual and, ideally, compulsory rehabilitation (because "they will never adopt a different course of life

voluntarily", Carpenter, 1851:72), for the dangerous and perishing classes, tended to take place in the poorer areas within the larger cities such as Bristol, London and Glasgow. In their spiritual and disciplinary tone Reformatory Schools were similar to the earlier Free Day Schools and proposed ragged schools and industrial feeding schools (with compulsory attendance). In the 1847 House of Lords Committee Report, influenced by Mary Carpenter, the moral and religious case was put by Carpenter (1851:352) for the introduction of Reformatory Schools:

> "The duty of all rulers is both to prevent the necessity of punishing, and when inflicting punishment, to attempt reformation. The Committee, therefore, strongly recommends the adoption of effectual measures for diffusing generally and by permanent provisions, the inestimable benefits of good training, and of sound moral and religious instruction; whilst they also urge the duty of improving extensively the discipline of the gaols, and other places of confinement."

Of Reformatory Schools themselves Mary Carpenter, re-emphasising their spiritual base and firm discipline (1851:78-79), wrote:

> "The infusion of a moral tone in the school ... one of course based entirely on a sense of duty to God, must, of course, be the first great object, to which all others are subordinate. ... Discipline, order, obedience, must, then, pervade the school and must be maintained with firmness ..... and they will thus be prepared to submit to the laws of society, and to the still higher law of God ... "

The emergence of the 1854 Youthful Offenders Act enabled voluntary bodies to set up Reformatory Schools to which the courts could send convicted youths under 16 years of age for a period of two to five years (after a short period in prison). By 1861 there were 47 certified reformatory schools and in 1864 Archer (1865:149) observed that:

> " ... there were 3,677 boys and 1,000 girls under detention in reformatories and industrial schools ... of this number 227 boys and 36 girls were out on licence; 9 boys and 4 girls in prison; and 85 boys and 14 girls absconded and not yet recovered - leaving the number actually in schools, 3,356 boys and 946 respectively, of whom 618 boys and 263

girls were in Catholic reformatories."

The introduction of Reformatory Schools was followed, between 1851 and 1866, by Industrial Schools. These were used, amongst other things, for children who had committed vagrancy or begging offences. According to Young and Ashton (1956:165):

> "These schools were started to teach a trade and to instil a habit of work among classes of children where discipline, moral and industrial training were lacking, and were not primarily for convicted children."

The reformers' emphasis outside prison on moral repentance, personal discipline and industry as the means of achieving social well-being was very similar to that employed inside prisons, with the notable exception that adult guidance was largely absent inside prisons.

Storch (1977) and Ignatieff (1979) have examined the supposed 'real' motives of nineteenth century philanthropists, some arguing, as stated earlier, that they formed an integral part of social control systems introduced during that period, designed in these cases to resocialise neglected children. Ignatieff (1979:153), for example, has suggested that:

> "Philanthropy is not simply a vocation, a moral claim, it is also an act of authority that creates a linkage of dependency and obligation between rich and poor. Of necessity therefore, it is a political act, embarked upon not merely to fulfil personal needs, but also to address the needs of those who rule ..."

The Church of England Temperance Society has been described as "the cradle of probation work in this country" (Young and Ashton, 1956:173). It was one of several Victorian organisations which arose in response to concerns about the effects of excessive drinking and in particular its association with crime. In the boroughs of Southwark and Lambeth in London, for example, a special agent was appointed to the court to deal with individual drunkards, "with a view to their restoration and reclamation" (quoted in Young and Ashton, 1956:174). By 1899 nearly every police court in

London had temperance missionaries. The principal duty of the missionaries, according to the report of the Society in 1878, (quoted in Bochel, 1976:21) was:

> "to visit regularly the police courts for the purpose of dealing with individual drunkards, charged and convicted, with a view to their restoration and reclamation."

Although initially their work was to be concerned only with drunkards it soon extended its cover to an ever widening variety of cases. The Society strove to continue its temperance work and attending meetings in factories, on building sites and also addressing seamen, railway men and soldiers. Another voluntary organisation, the non-denominational Charity Organisation Society also influenced, to some extent, the individual casework style of social work engaged in by the Probation Service. This Society, founded in 1869, utilised principles of social casework which initially at least provided the base for social work in general and Probation work in particular. It expounded the sort of individualistic doctrines of self help earlier expressed by, amongst others, Herbert Spencer and Samuel Smiles. Self help alone is of little help if you are already poor, sick or disabled and Frazer (1973:96) recognises the limiting principles inherent in the self-help philosophy - identifying the interests such a philosophy can serve:

> "Self help was the middle class justification for the status quo which in the last resort was not static. Men could climb the social ladder. It required only a small logical extension to enlarge the proposition that universal opportunity existed in a social theory in which men found their true place in society in proportion to their talents."

The highly individualistic and even divisive nature of Spencer's general social philosophy, including the self-help dimension, has been summarised by Nisbet (1967:85) as follows:

> "Spencer's argument, reduced to its essentials stressed progressive ascendancy on this based on restitutive sanctions and divisive labour over those rooted in tradition and community."

The Charity Organisation Society (Owen, 1964:215-246) believed in the principles of a deterrent poor law and indeed opposed the extension of statutory welfare provisions elsewhere, for example a pension scheme. It represented a particular view of poverty, carried into the charitable field the philosophy of deterrence, expounded individualistic and moral solutions to collective problems, and developed a particular style of work, namely social casework. As Marshall wryly observes, in essence the Society tried to turn "paupers" into "citizens" (Marshall, 1975:157). The Charity Organisation Society supported the need for organisational procedures which emphasised the need for better training, the observation of causes, the value of the interview, the assessment of character, the structure of procedures and the full recording of information (Owen, 1964:215-246). By 1886 the Society's 'caseworkers', as they were called, were handling 25,000 cases per year in London with its district committees arranged according to the existing poor law divisions. According to Bosanquet (1895:26), a leading writer on the Society at the time, the Society resolved that the spirit of community could only be reasserted when "people in a district could band together ... in the personal administration of charitable relief". More critically, according to Cormack (1945:94) the Society's real problem should have been: "how to relieve poverty without pauperising, but the Society misconceived it as ... how to prevent dependence upon public funds and stop giving relief".

Although it is acknowledged that the Society helped some individuals and families with personal help and financial assistance, in the absence of a national welfare policy, the Society's solution to industrialisation and poverty was essentially a combination of personal influence by the volunteer visitors, charitable relief, and moral regeneration. Although it would be too crude an explanation to suggest that the Probation Service, when it emerged in 1907, was a direct descendant of the Charity Organisation Society, or indeed the Temperance Societies or the Reformatory School Agencies, nevertheless these three types

of organisations endorsed the sorts of individualistic concerns and casework practices and procedures that, initially at least, underpinned the work of the Probation Service. In particular, these focused on the rehabilitation of the individual through a social casework relationship, and a belief in individual solutions to the growing problems of poverty and crime at that time. Other voluntary philanthropic movements, for example, the Mutual Improvement Societies and Church Societies ultimately, according to Storch (1977:138-145), had the same general aim, namely to transform the character of the working classes, encourage temperance, promote self-help, and stress the importance of spiritual conversions. The same point is made by Price (1971:124-145) in respect of middle class involvement in the Working Men's Club Movement.

The significance of these expanding movements, in the mid to late nineteenth century, was that they took place at a time when there was a considerable social unrest and a "hysteria about national wreck and social anarchy" (Storch, 1977:152).

Other authors, including Stedman Jones (1985:39), Hayes (1975:20) and Rose (1977:185), do not subscribe to the general view that increases in social control during specific periods, such as the nineteenth century were part of an overall "control" plan. Rather, they argue, they constituted special and separate responses to particular localised situations. Rose (1977:185), for example, describes how - in the 1840's and the 1860's - a specific government response arose to contain a specific social problem. He describes how employment relief was controlled and extended, in a Lancashire cotton community experiencing high unemployment temporarily, to prevent demoralisation and the possible breakdown in public order. Aspects of the government's Urban Programme for unemployed black youngsters introduced in Brixton, and involving local Probation Officers (to be detailed later) after the 1981 disturbances, could also be regarded, at one level, as representing an additional form of social control introduced into an inner city area to contain local difficulties, but not remedy social problems.

Within the overall context of social control developments in the nineteenth century we can already observe two perspectives. First, that the introduction and extension of a centralised formal and permanent system of law enforcement, together with local temporary measures (for beggars, paupers, vagrants, and others) and reforming movements represented a rational state policy of social control in response to perceived increases in "urban dangerousness". The second "benign" perspective recognised the existence of the centralised and extended enforcement system but regarded it, as with other localised policies, as unplanned, ad hoc and fragmented. A similar debate applies to the case study later. It is argued there that whilst the Community Probation Team's initiative represents an illustration of a localised response to a particular social problem (the Brixton disturbances in 1981) it also took place within a wider national context about civil unrest and the need for increased "law and order".

There appears to be a largely unresolved debate, in part because of definitional ambiguities, and as intimated above, about whether, on the one hand, the above nineteenth century charitable voluntary organisations ultimately represented the informal features of wider formal social control policies, or, on the other hand, they represented reforming ideals aimed, 'ultimately', at introducing a measure of social justice or social welfare for the "victims of industrialisation". However it is clear that the work of these voluntary organisations based their authority more on the combination of workers' personal influence and spiritual beliefs than on statutory legal sanctions. The 'ticket of leave' system for prisoners, as we shall see, was administered by the police and not voluntary organisations. Nevertheless, a series of legislative changes introduced from the mid-nineteenth century onwards provided the foundation for casework, that is work with individuals, to be combined eventually with statutory requirements in the form of a Probation Order.

Legislative Roots

Amongst the most important strands in the legal ancestry of the Probation Order and the Probation Service was the recognisance. This legal device enabled courts in the nineteenth century to release minor offenders without punishment, providing they entered into a recognisance to be of good behaviour and to come up for judgement at a stated date or if called upon. As King (1969:2) described it:

> "The recognisance already contained in embryo formal elements of probation: release instead of punishment; a responsibility laid on the offender; a responsibility laid also upon others; and the possibility of a return to court and punishment if the undertaking was broken."

The same device could be used in felony cases, in addition to punishment, as an extra deterrent against further crime. We have already seen how the use of Reformatory Schools was sanctioned by Parliament in the Reformatory Schools (Youthful Offenders) Act 1854 and that some of these schools employed 'agents' to follow up, on voluntary basis, the youngsters once discharged. It also became clear, after the 1854 Act, that despite the growing number of Reformatory Schools being built children were still being sentenced to imprisonment. By 1856, for example, 1990 children under twelve were in prison (Young and Ashton, 1956:164).

In the late nineteenth century the search for non custodial sentences continued. Various acts of parliament were introduced, in piecemeal fashion, with a view to providing alternative sentences to the sentence of imprisonment (Bochel, 1976:1-32). The Summary Jurisdiction Act of 1879 provided for a person convicted of a trial offence to be discharged conditionally without any punishment, upon giving a pledge to the court either to appear later for sentence if necessary and/or to be of good behaviour. The Prevention of Crime Acts of 1871 and 1879 provided for police supervision of those convicts subject to what was known as a 'ticket-of-leave' system. The Probation of First Offenders

Act (1887) served to extend conditional discharges to more serious offences, provided that the "youth, character and antecedents of the offenders were taken into account" (Young and Ashton, 1956:175).

According to Bochel (1976:14-15) the courts paid very little attention to the provisions contained within the Probation of First Offenders Act (1887). Three reasons she suggests (1976:14-15) for this were; the reluctance of magistrates to dismiss offenders without an effective surety; a reluctance in some quarters to take a course which involved recording a conviction; and the apathy of a great many magistrates. It is also likely that debates about sentencing disparities, as well as "powerfully opposing pressures" on the magistracy, throughout the nineteenth century (McWilliams, 1983:131-35) contributed to this situation.

During the 1890's the movement for a system of supervising offenders merged with that for children's courts and one reform was rarely called for without the other. Finally in 1907 an amended version of the Probation of Offenders (2) Bill 1907 was presented to the House of Commons. The work and duties of the Probation Officer were included in an amendment clause. The officer was expected (Bochel, 1976:29-30):

> "to visit or receive reports from the person who is under supervision at such reasonable intervals as may be specified in the probation order, see that he observes the conditions of this recognisance, report to the court as to his behaviour, to advise, assist and befriend him, and when necessary, to endeavour to find him suitable employment".

A further important government amendment gave the Home Office, through the Home Secretary, powers to make rules for carrying the Act into effect, (Bochel, 1976:30) allowing the Home Office to influence the way in which the system was to develop.

The Probation of Offenders (2) Bill received the Royal Assent on the 21st August 1907. Through the introduction of

statutory supervision and controls, the Probation of Offenders Act then supplied the element previously missing in the nineteenth century supervision experiments, namely direct control by the court via state officials. Against an almost continual background of concern about levels of crime, dissatisfaction with the costs of existing penal measures, and their unsuitability for young people, the introduction of statutory supervision of offenders outside institutions marked a departure from previous practices. As we shall see, the missionary zeal and spiritual beliefs of the voluntary societies were initially introduced and sustained in Probation work, to be gradually replaced as the dawn of professional casework appeared.

The Merger of Criminal Justice and Social Work

It would be an exaggeration to suggest that the establishment of the Probation Order, through the Probation of Offenders Act in 1907 was anything other than a minor, albeit humane, attempt to affect penal policy in terms of a significant challenge to the primacy of the custodial sentence. This was not, however, the view held by some at the time. Prior to the 1907 Act, for example, Ruggles-Brise wrote (quoted in Bochel, 1976:34) to the Home Secretary:

> "Probation ... is a state scheme for furnishing an alternative to committal to prison, with all that implies and of that vast multitude of offenders who commit trivial and unimportant offences."

Although it was hoped that Probation would reduce the prison population it emerged during a period when four new custodial sanctions were made available to the criminal courts, between 1895 and 1914. These were borstal training, preventive detention, detention in an inebriate reformatory, and detention in an institution for the mentally defective (discussed in Garland, 1985).

Probation implemented the extension of judicial power to enter the lives and homes of offenders using home visits, exhortation and the exertion of personal influence as ways of

producing character development. The scope of Probation was described in the following way in 1912 (Blagg and Wilson, 1912:19):

> "The parents quite as much as the children are put on probation. Working through the family and the home, the system gives the unfortunate a strong friend from the outside who can provide education and training and employment,"

Whereas borstal was meant to be correctional, physically arduous and exacting (Home Office, 1945:34) Probation Officers were expected to reform people, according to Garland (1985:239):

> "By means of their personal influence ... they attempted to straighten out characters and reform the personality of their clients in accordance with the requirements of 'good citizenship'."

This personal style of intervention was based on beliefs which existed at that time which assumed that criminals were different from non-criminals and that some sort of investigation, classification and treatment would assist in their "normalisation" (see, for example, Boies, 1901; and Saleilles, 1911).

The somewhat confusing clustering of different procedures in the lower courts partly explained the initial under-utilisation of Probation by the courts (Bochel, 1976:62-64) and the early associations between Probation and leniency, and Probation and juveniles (Glover, 1949:262). Of Probation itself the 1907 Act (Jarvis, 1972:19) stated that a Probation Order could be made when the court was:

> "... of the opinion that having regard to the character, antecedents, age, health, or mental condition of the person charged, or to the trivial nature of the offence, or to the extenuating circumstances under which the offence was committed, it is inexpedient to inflict any punishment or other than nominal punishment, or that it is expedient to release the offender on probation."

The wording of this Act locates the practice of Probation in criminological terms. It combines a certain positivistic

logic (the assessment of the individual's character, mental health, and antecedents) with the concerns of neo Classicism (extenuating circumstances, trivial nature of the offence). Of early Probation work Garland (1985:219) comments:

> "It is absolutely clear from subsequent reports and commentaries that early probation practice did indeed follow this philanthropic social work logic, appointing persons from the various missionary societies and adapting their techniques of visiting, inspecting and exerting personal influence."

King (1969:25) also describes the belief systems held by these early Probation workers:

> "These men believed in the supreme importance of the individual to God, and the parables of the lost sheep and the prodigal son were their casework manuals."

The extent of, in particular, the evangelical influence on the early work of the Probation Service (see, for example, Glover, 1949) is reflected in the number and content of articles written in the journal Probation about the spiritual dimension to Probation work. The following quotation from the then Chairman of the National Association of Probation Officers (Donaldson, 1935:4) illustrates the spiritualist dimension of Probation work at that time:

> "It seems to me that long before Probation existed the secret of Probation was to be found. ..... The inspiration of your work, as of the work of every social worker, is the knowledge of the divine in every man. It may be almost covered, it may be almost lost, but it is there and if you can get the right contact, you can bring it out and so long as we realised the divine quality, so long as we keep out inspiration, this great movement shall go on and rise and be stronger and stronger. Let us sum it up in the words of one of the tablets of the Gospel just recently discovered on which is engraved as a teaching of Christ "when I see my brother I see God"."

Twenty articles in all, between 1935 up to as late as 1961, were written on the spiritualist dimension to Probation work. The same year (1961), which witnessed the last feature article in the Probation Journal about the spiritual

dimension to Probation work, also heralded the first of 39 articles about the secular psychological dimension to Probation work. A further quotation (Cook, 1939:99) on this subject from 1939 serves to reinforce the early spiritual dimension to Probation work:

> "Probation work is necessarily connected with the religious sphere. Both from the objective and subjective side the work is or should be supernatural ... the delinquent comes to the Probation Officer with a disorganisation on a higher and more subtle level - the spiritual level."

The early development of the Probation Service was slow and uneven and there were continual political conflicts about who should administer it, who should pay for it, who should work for it and ultimately who should control it. As the Probation Service grew so administrative control by the Home Office increased. A number of committees, sitting between 1907 and the Second World War (McWilliams, 1983, 1985), examined these matters in some considerable detail and there was concern expressed about the Home Office's clear intention to standardise its practices, procedures and policies. Several committees were concerned about the effect of transforming the individual Probation Officer from what was described, perhaps somewhat naively, as a personal friend, to a government official. For example, a 1922 Home Office committee (Home Office, 1922:7) observed:

> "The Probation Officer has hitherto owed much of his success to the relationship he has been able to establish with the probationer ... to turn Probation Officers into a new class of civil servant would, we believe, tend to destroy this invaluable influence."

By 1926 training for new entrants had been introduced by the Home Office and the 1926 Criminal Justice (Amendment) Act authorised local Probation Committees to appoint and supervise Probation Officers, enabled supervision to be transferred between areas, and introduced standard forms of record keeping. By 1927 a Probation Department was set up in the Home Office and the Probation Service gradually became under the direct public control of the Home Office and less

in the hands of local voluntary organisations and courts. In a 1927 Home Office report about the Probation Service (quoted in Jarvis, 1972:46), for example, it was stated that:

> "The Home Office should play a more positive part in the Service's development and surveillance and should be used as a clearing house for new ideas, policy and methods."

To all intents and purposes the voluntary agencies, particularly the Church of England Temperance Society, were excluded from Probation developments from the mid 1930's onwards. Resource problems still persisted. For example the Harris Report (Home Office, 1936:94) noted that:

> "One Probation Officer told us that his heavy caseload made it difficult for him to give full attention to his greengrocer's shop. We were told of another whose Probation work made so large a claim on his time that he found it necessary to take his son into partnership in his undertaker's business."

The report's comment (Home Office 1936:paragraph 64) that the "range of the Probation Officer's duties has widened and the technique of their work has become more scientific" gave an early hint of the shift from the spiritual to the casework basis of Probation work. The "dawn of diagnosis" had arrived, associated, according to McWilliams (1985:260), with professional aspirations.

The 1936 Committee made 56 recommendations about the future of the Probation Service but these could not be considered in the 1939 Criminal Justice Bill because of the outbreak of the Second World War. The next opportunity for incorporating some of these recommendations was the 1948 Criminal Justice Act.

Until as late as 1948 the Probation Service was, generally, still locally organised. Many officers worked part time and the only court sanction available to the Service was the Probation Order (Borstal after-care supervision was conducted by voluntary organisations at this time). The Probation sanction was characterised by its emphasis on the personal

relationship between the probationer and Probation Officer, the order's minimal conditions, and the personal authority, admittedly through the courts, of the largely untrained Probation Officer, and finally the judicial recourse to a local court in dealing with breaches of Probation. Although by 1911 the Central After Care Association had been set up to organise and regulate the supervision of all released offenders, this development had not directly affected the Probation Service. Social and penal concerns immediately after the Second World War, and subsequently, permanently changed the role of the Probation Service from a largely amateurish service (in the sense of absence of professional training) resembling previous independent voluntary organisations in terms of staffing, and organisation, to one where, eventually, it became a more integrated centralised and professional agency within the wider criminal justice system.

In the period after the Second World War there was wide concern about the rising crime rate (Land **et al**, 1975:322) and a perceived necessity to introduce more controls through the introduction of new penal institutions for young offenders and the availability of more controls for those placed on Probation. Of the 1948 Criminal Justice Act, generally, Bailey (1987:303) observes:

> "Unconstructive penal measures, like imprisonment, lost further ground to probation and residential training sentences."

The 1948 Act directly affected the Probation Service in several ways. First, it was required that a conviction had to be recorded before a Probation Order was made which had the effect, potentially, of making Probation more available as a sentencing option for the court. Second, the name of the individual Probation Officer was no longer to be recorded on the Probation Order. Instead the name of the relevant Petty Sessional Division was substituted making supervision, formally at least, less personal. Third, the nature of the Probation Service's 'inquiry work' regarding sentencing was extended (1948 Criminal Justice Act, Sections 3 and 5) to

enable courts to obtain more knowledge and information before sentencing individuals. Fourth, what had previously been called 'conditions' in Probation Orders were now renamed 'requirements'. Fifth, and most important, two additional requirements concerning Probation Orders were introduced; one, concerning a period of residence, the second a requirement for a probationer to undergo medical treatment either inside or outside an institution.

The extension of requirements in Probation and Supervision Orders

Residential Requirements

The new residential requirement contained in the 1948 Criminal Justice Act marked a departure from a Probation Service concerned with open supervision in the community towards supervision within a residential institution. Like Detention Centres, hostels were developed as an experiment. Hostels were intended for the more immature, inadequate and irresponsible young person who needed a "stable and supportive environment where they can adjust to living with.....those in authority and aquire basic ideas about social behaviour" (Home Office, 1972:paragraph 90). The second Morison Committee Report (Home Office, 1962a:paragraph 16) later described the training given in Approved Hostels as:

> "Training with mature adult support, and control in regular habits of work, in the useful employment of leisure, in personal hygiene, and above all, in living acceptably with contemporaries and older people."

The Home Secretary at the time (writing in Probation Journal, 1949:271) was convinced of the need for "residential training" for young offenders:

> "Hostels and homes are especially important in the case of young offenders who come from homes where there is little hope of the probation method being applied successfully without at least a preliminary period of residential training and supervision away

from home."

Probation Homes, like hostels, were also provided for under section 46 of the 1948 Criminal Justice Act and seemed to fulfill the function of the old Approved Schools in their emphasis, again on training and habit formation. The principal difference between Probation Hostels and Homes was that residents in hostels received all or most of their training on the premises. Nevertheless, trainees in homes were expected (Home Office, 1966:paragraph 190) to remain on the premises for most of the day in order:

> "... to instil the habit of regular work, a habit whose lack has commonly been one cause of delinquency ... as at hostels, an important part of the training is in the wise use of leisure time and in living acceptably with others."

Probation Homes were gradually phased out as Probation Hostels expanded. Once Section 7(2) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1969 removed the power of the courts to make Probation Orders in respect of children and young persons, the Probation Service became more associated with adult than juvenile offenders. Probation Hostels immediately lost their younger clientele and thus such hostels became "surplus to the needs of the probation hostels system" (Home Office, 1972:paragraph 91). It was decided "to extend the scope of probation hostels to cater for adult offenders and so to provide the courts with a further alternative to custody" (Home Office, 1976:paragraph 129). An experiment consisting of four adult Probation Hostels was begun in 1970 as "a response to representations from organisations concerned with the treatment of offenders" (Home Office, 1976:paragraph 129) to ascertain whether some men over 21 might also benefit from a period in an Approved Probation Hostel. Amidst government concerns about the mounting pressure in prisons throughout the mid 1960s the Wootton Committee (Advisory Council on the Penal System, 1970), set up in 1966, was given the brief of considering changes to non custodial penalties. The 1972 Criminal Justice Act made provisions for Probation, and after 1964 (and up to 1984), after-care committees to provide Probation Hostels as well as

introducing, as we shall see, other kinds of residential and non-residential sentences. As with other forms of Probation treatment, Probation Hostels were also intended to reform individuals, as Fisher and Wilson (1983:2) have pointed out:

> "They were intended to do more than merely contain or hold people; they were seen as being therapeutic, as changing people, as rehabilitating."

According to the Home Office (1976:34) there were also expectations beyond containment:

> "The hostel residents were expected to go out to work; they were also encouraged to make the best use of their leisure time and to acquire some basic ideas about acceptable social behaviour."

The 1972 Criminal Justice Act provided for Probation Committees, not voluntary organisations to control Probation Hostels and by 31st December 1972 there were 38 Probation hostels providing 528 places for young men and 222 places for young women. Despite the lack of research evidence, according to Walker (1985:277), that Probation Hostels had any significant impact on reconviction rates, they have continued to expand. By 1985 there were 70 approved hostels for men, providing 1,160 places, and five for women having 80 places, and 24 hostels for both men and women which provided about 460 places. Out of this total of 99 hostels 71 were Probation Hostels, 12 were combined Probation and Bail Hostels and 16 were Bail Hostels (Walker, 1985:276). Davies (1974:102) has pointed to difficulties inherent in pursuing rehabilitation in a residential institution. He argued that there was:

> "... a danger arising out of twin errors; first that of expecting the hostel system to achieve containment and rehabilitation when the evidence that it can do so is slight; and second, that of underestimating the independence of residents by requiring them to conform to previously determined and externally exposed residential systems."

Fisher and Wilson (1983:126-142) have argued that official rehabilitative ideals were less clearly translated into practice in some Probation Hostels. In particular, they

suggest that, within limits, the criteria for selection, and hostel efficacy, remained negotiable, between residents and staff, between staff and Probation Service management and, also, in their case study, the Home Office. Negotiated settlements, perhaps even more than official goals, appeared to shape actual outcomes.

The Criminal Justice Act of 1972 introduced a further hostels experiment, directly funded by the Home Office, this time for bailees. The main function of Bail Hostels is to provide secure accommodation, acceptable to a court, prior to a trial or summary hearing. By 1976 the Home Office noted that the bail hostels experiment had "not conclusively demonstrated the need for such hostels" (Home Office, 1976:38). From the beginning the National Association of Probation Officers opposed the involvement of Probation Officers in bail schemes as a matter of principle on the basis of there being "no professional social work task required" (National Association of Probation Officers, 1976:4). Haxby (1978:134) also questioned the social work content in the processing of bail applications but considered it would be an appropriate task for his proposed "community correctional service". Although Bail Hostels did not expand as much as was initially hoped, by 1985 there were twelve combined Probation and Bail hostels and sixteen hostels for bailees only (National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders, 1985a). Whilst there is a very strong argument, based on economic and humane principles for less people being remanded in custody unnecessarily, it is not clear that Bail Hostels have in fact fulfilled this function. White and Brody's (1980:420) study of 351 bailees in nine Bail Hostels, for example, suggests that of the 231 persons without a fixed address, lack of <u>any</u> accommodation plus shortage of voluntary hostels, rather than a lack of suitable accommodation, were the primary factors determining Bail Hostel decisions. Pratt and Bray's study (1985:2) published under the heading <u>Bail Hostels - Alternatives to Custody?</u> (<u>British Journal of Criminology</u>, 25, 2:2) argued that:

> "the hostel does not really appear as a viable alternative to a remand in custody until the police

> indicate that they have no further interest in the case and raise no objections to bail .."

In other words, Bail Hostels may not be actually fulfilling their original objectives, and Probation staff administering hostels are not the only nor the main decision makers concerning suitable residents. In these two instances areas of internal and external administrative discretion contributed to the emergence of some unintended outcomes, a important point that will be further addressed in the case study.

Psychiatric requirements

The second significant change then introduced in the 1948 Criminal Justice Act concerning Probation supervision in addition to hostels was that concerning the additional requirement of mental treatment. There were no comments by Probation Officers in the Probation Journals of the period relating to either this additional requirement or that relating to residence. However, the Home Secretary (quoted in Probation Journal, 1949:271) was in no doubt about the purpose and benefit of this additional psychiatric requirement.

> "I regard this provision of the Act as of special value, particularly in the case of young offenders. Where there is a mental condition predisposing an offender to anti-social behaviour, medical treatment at an early stage may well be the best means of remedying such tendencies ..."

On the issue of whether compulsory treatment is compatible with a Probation Order, the Morison Report (Home Office, 1962) made no comments, instead concentrating on the practice implications. It described how the government had received evidence from medical witnesses who had urged "the need for specialised hospital units for delinquents" (Home Office, 1962:paragraph 84) arguing that the expansion of treatment of facilities would mean that "Offenders would be less likely to be found unsusceptible to treatment after a short time" (Home Office, 1962:paragraph 84). The Morison Report "fortified by available research on the subject" (Home Office,

1962:paragraph 83) stated:

> "Our conclusion is that mental treatment requirements are a valuable part of the probation system and should be retained."

At a time when the belief in psychological and psychiatric treatment for offenders was running high it was not surprising that the availability of an additional requirement for psychiatric treatment represented a particular medical and treatment perspective on delinquency which gained considerable currency immediately after the War and also through the 1950s and 1960s. Immediately after the War, but also later, there developed a lobby for psychiatric treatment for certain offenders. In 1949, in the Probation Journal, for example, a Dr. Heyer (Heyer, 1940:249) put forward the argument that there should be specialised delinquency clinics using medical, social and psychoanalytical methods to

> "bring to light the emotional complexes which project themselves in the form of delinquency ... the delinquent ... must be housed in the centre where he can get psychotherapy".

English and Pearson (1947:267-268) considered that for some offenders removal from home would be necessary:

> "As a result of the relationship the child will change the character of his superego ... if his delinquency is the result of a delinquent superego he will be sent to an institution or a foster home ... if he does not improve he is transferred to the special custodial institution ... for the cases that so far have not responded to treatment."

It was a treatment measure which at the time, and subsequently, gained a certain popularity with the courts. Walker and McCabe's (1973:67) study of the use of the psychiatric requirement in the Probation Order found that:

> "... orders involving in-patient and out-patient treatment have been made in considerable numbers. Out-patient orders have always been somewhat commoner, especially for juvenile offenders; but higher courts are an exception, and make markedly more in-patient orders. In-patient orders increased, with fluctuations, during the nineteen-fifties; in the sixties they fell at first ... but quickly began to rise again. In contrast,

> out-patient orders remained at much the same level throughout the fifties, but since 1962 have risen steadily and sharply. The rise in both during the sixties has been sharper than the increase in convictions for indictable offences."

Since that study was completed the percentage of probationers subject to such requirements had risen from 3 per cent in the 1950s, to 6 per cent by 1973 (Home Office, 1977:table 6). According to Bailey (1987:306-307) the conjunction of both welfare and positivistic forces, encapsulated in the 1948 Criminal Justice Act (which first made available psychiatric and residential conditions in Probation Orders) also shaped the intentions of the 1969 Children and Young Persons Act.

Non- and Semi-residential Requirements

In 1968 the Government published a White Paper called Children in Trouble (Home Office, 1968a) which set out the Government proposals primarily concerning children and young persons. This document built on the concerns expressed in the earlier White Paper The Child, the Family and the Young Offender (Home Office, 1965) and emphasised "the prevention and treatment of juvenile delinquency and with other similar problems affecting children and their families" (Home Office, 1968a:3) by introducing new forms of semi- and non-residential supervision for offenders. The report gave a clear indication that casework supervision would be beneficial and appropriate. The document (Home Office, 1968a:3-4) acknowledged that:

> "Juvenile delinquency has no single cause, manifestation or cure ..... But sometimes it is a response to unsatisfactory family or social circumstances, a result of boredom in and out of school, an indication of maladjustment or immaturity, or a symptom of a deviant, damaged or abnormal personality. Early recognition and full assessment are particularly important .... Variety and flexibility in the measures that can be taken are equally important if society is to deal effectively and appropriately with the manifold aspects of delinquency. These measures include supervision and support of the child in the family: the further development of the services working in the community: and a variety of facilities for

> short-term and long-term care, treatment and control, including some which are highly specialised."

The 1969 Act superceded previous legislation of 1933 and 1963, and was concerned with both prevention and treatment strategies for juveniles up to 17 years of age. According to Muncie (1984:153) the retention of the juvenile courts and the extension of alternatives to custodial sentences represented a "major victory" for social work. He wrote (1984:153):

> "At almost every stage of the proposed new system, social work discretion was to play a central role in the definition of the delinquent. In particular, care proceedings were to replace criminal hearings for children and were recommended for young persons." (emphasis added)

In respect of treatment in addition to the previous introduction of residential and mental requirements in Probation Orders, this Act introduced two types of requirements described as Intermediate Treatment. The first required the supervised person to live at a specified place for a maximum of 90 days. The second required a supervised person to participate in activities or attend a place on a semi residential basis (1969 Children and Young Persons Act, Section 12, 1-5). Courts could require the supervisee to comply with both of these conditions, but the aggregate period was not to exceed three months or 90 days. This Act effectively marked the official beginning of the end of the Probation Service's involvement with those aged between 10 and 14 years and declining involvement with those in the 14 to 17 year age group. Thus, although in practice a Probation Officer might hold the Intermediate Treatment Supervision Order, the Intermediate Treatment Order component was usually supervised by social services.

In general terms, Intermediate Treatment and the 1969 Act itself, were welcomed by some as containing important innovations which might reduce the numbers of youngsters going either into care or into custody. For others, for example, Thorpe **et al** (1980:8) and Adams **et al** (1981:23), the

treatment dimension was regarded as theoretically reactionary. According to this view of Intermediate Treatment Adams **et al** (1981:23) comment that the legislation was:

> "essentially consistent with the positivist philosophy of control and treatment underlying all welfarist legislation. The consequence is that even in those authorities prepared to make a significant reallocation of resources to intermediate treatment, the liberal, therapeutic, individually focused ideology remained paramount, and this form of intervention still constituted a peripheral aspect of the total strategy for dealing with problem youth."

In addition to there being serious reservations by some about Intermediate Treatment's underlying ideology, it was also dogged from the beginning with problems concerning funding levels, differences in practice and whether it was, in fact, preventative (for pre-offenders) or rehabilitative, for existing offenders (Thorpe, 1980a:64-81). According to Thorpe (1980a:81) the criteria for receiving residential help under Intermediate Treatment is "more likely to revolve around pressure for punishment and control, rather than the social and psychological needs of offenders". Cohen (1985:60-1) argues that Intermediate Treatment provided a clear example of a failure to distinguish between delinquent and non-delinquent strategies so far as state screening, assessment and treatment programmes were concerned. He observes (Cohen, 1985:61):

> "By 1981, through a classic form of net widening, at least 45 per cent of participants on all I.T. programmes were not subject to any court order at all."

The mechanism for this access to treatment measures principally arose from the inclusion of "an act of offending" within the list of other conditions such as neglect, ill treatment, exposure to moral danger, being beyond control, and failure to attend school (contained in Section 1 (2) of the 1969 Children and Young Persons Act). This additional condition for a care order served further to blur the distinction between civil and criminal matters and in respect

of additional facilities for residential and non residential treatment. There is some research, albeit limited, which challenges Cohen's concerns about the scale if not the incidence of net-widening. Jones (1984:28), for example, discovered that only 29 children out of 450 admitted to care were subject to orders which related to offending. Nevertheless, through its combination of preventative and rehabilitative approaches the Intermediate Treatment provision of the 1969 Children and Young Persons Act served to make compulsory what had previously been available on a voluntary basis, that is activities and social skills as part of an additional court requirement.

The introduction of additional semi-residential conditions for juveniles was extended to adults on an experimental basis initially, by the establishment of Day Training Centres, through the Powers of Criminal Courts Act of 1973. As we will see, however, just as Probation Hostels were begun as an 'experiment' for juveniles and then extended, so was the case of day centres.

By providing a further non-custodial sentencing option Day Training Centres represented one part of a wider attempt to address the crisis in the penal system, regarded as particularly acute in the late 1960's. The Act had profound implications, generally, for the Probation Service, according to Davies (1973:27), in that it represented:

> "... a significant switch from office based casework towards correctional, educational and behaviourist activities."

The official purpose of the four initial experimental centres (Home Office, 1976:25) was to:

> "... provide intensive supervision and social education for offenders with a history of short custodial sentences and a likely prospect of more to follow because of general social incompetence. Probationers live at home for the training period, which lasts up to sixty days, and attend the centres for five days a week."

The 'training' component suggested in their name was similar

to the previous 'training objectives' encouraged in hostels (Home Office, 1976:34) but also invite comparison with rehabilitatory aims and 'training' approaches employed in the borstal training system.

The assumption by the Home Office, about associating personal inadequacies with offending, was commented on by Smith (1982:34) in respect of Day Training Centres as underpinning:

> "... the belief that recidivism and social inadequacy are so strongly congruent upon each other as to suggest the probability of a causal relationship."

The suggestion however that medical casework model was simply being transferred from individual supervision to Day Centres was repudiated at least by one centre's directors (Vanstone and Raynor, 1981:89) by:

> "emphasising the offender's own responsibility and choice in his own affairs, they reject unrealistic assumptions that offenders can be treated on a medical model, as if crime were an affliction outside their own control."

For Jones (1981:249), however, Day Training Centres employed a different sort of casework based on behaviourist approaches, rather than an abandonment of casework altogether. Although the comparatively high cost of the Day Training Centres is known to have been a particular dislike of the Home Office (Fairhead, 1981:7) financial considerations have to some extent been accommodated and circumnavigated by some Probation Services, converting largely voluntary day/drop-in centres into statutory day centres, introduced in the 1982 Criminal Justice Act (Schedule II).

The transition from an experiment to a permanent feature of the penal system was facilitated by a court judgement in 1982 which preceded the 1982 Criminal Justic Act. This judgement in the House of Lords, Cullen v Rogers (discussed in Wright, 1984:18) held that courts did not have powers under section 2(3) of the Powers of Criminal Courts Act 1973 to order

attendance at a day centre other than at an approved Day Training Centre. In the light of this judgement, legislation was introduced in the 1982 Criminal Justice Act (which amended the relevant sections of the 1973 Powers of Criminal Courts Act), amongst other things, to enable probationers to attend places, usually day centres, other than the previous four approved Day Training Centres. Thus, without there necessarily being additional costs, at least material ones, a larger tier of community based non-residential institutions was introduced into the criminal justice system. By 1987 according to one survey (Walker, 1987:12-13) covering 31 or 55 per cent of all 56 Probation areas, there were 60 Day Centres in existence, 50 of which were either exclusively set up under the 1982 Criminal Justice Act or which, pragmatically, combined voluntary/compulsory attendance. The important question of what actually happens to probationers in such settings in terms of day to day practices, policies and operational ideologies remains, at this stage, largely unanswered. Vanstone (1985:26-27), for example, raises but does not answer the question of whether such work represents a move away from helping offenders and a move towards containing offenders in the community.

The Kent Control Unit whilst perhaps representing a most publicised (Ely, Swift and Sutherland, 1987:163-177) and criticised (see, for example, National Association of Probation Officers, 1987) day centre introduced by the 1982 Criminal Justice Act, displayed the extent to which policies were shaped by individual local considerations and interests. Something akin to a 'community prison' was introduced with some offenders being directly supervised eleven hours a day and others being subject to curfew conditions (Ely, Swift and Sutherland, 1987:39-43) supervised by Probation staff. This day centre's operations illustrate the degree of scope for interpreting legislation, the correctional form it took, and the routine means that were created to induce conformity by clients (Ely, Swift and Sutherland, 1987:48-53).

Further measures introduced in the 1982 Criminal Justice Act required offenders to participate or refrain from

participating in specified activities up to a maximum period of 60 days (section 4A1(b)) as part of a Probation Order. Similar Day Centre and 'activity' requirements were also made available under Supervision Orders, extending, therefore, the relevant sections of the 1969 Children and Young Persons Act. In combination with the Day Centre amendment (1982 Criminal Justice Act section 4A(4)(a)) the 'activities requirement' represents a further increase in the range of constraints that can be imposed on offenders on Probation.

More broadly it also represents, together with other policy developments to be detailed, further opportunities for discretion to be exercised in Probation work. This discretion concerns opportunities for policies and practices to be defined, interpreted and acted upon and operationalised, by individuals working within an organisational setting. Hardiker and Barker (1985:614), for example, have pointed to both organisational and interpersonal factors when officers "had to negotiate a client status" in a newly created Probation team. Fielding (1984:23) has emphasised the interpersonal importance given by Probation Officers to the client/Probation relationship concerning the client's "active participation in reform". Tresler (1981:295) writing about Probation Officers accountability states that "they have somewhat of a free rein in defining the degree of supervision required". Irwin (1970:170-173) and Hussey and Duffee (1980:305) have written of the often conflicting demands of Probation workers, interaction with clients, and the employing organisation. Both Cicourel (1968) and Lerman (1970:33) have examined discretionary areas for Probation policy implementation at the delinquency screening and processing stages. In different ways then legislation concerning extended requirements or conditions in Probation, and, as we shall see, elsewhere, represents three associated developments. First they denote an increase in the state's formal capacity to exercise greater control over some offenders. Second they suggest that such developments were located within a welfare context (until approximately the mid 1970s) for Probation and social work intervention. These were concerned with

translating mitigating circumstances into welfarist interventions based on social training, education, insight, and social skills work, as a means to rehabilitation. Third these continued Probation Service community developments, in the form of changing legislation provided further opportunities for discretionary practices (dependent on a range of administrative, professional and organisational factors) to shape policy outcomes. With the benefit of hindsight it was always likely that in those cases such as Intermediate Treatment whose initial goals and guidelines were unclear, that the most diverse forms of social work practice (Thorpe, 1980:80) would have occurred. Before considering the ways in which additional and significant tiers of Probation Service community developments were introduced, in the form of various categories of statutory post-custodial supervision, it is to the above second welfare and casework element of such developments that we now turn.

Professional Casework: The rise and fall of "High Welfare"

Although the Probation Service itself did not directly undertake psychiatric treatment of offenders, immediately after the War and for approximately the following two decades it incorporated into its own work a set of psychological and psychotherapeutic theories in part drawn from medical knowledge which together formed what was known as casework or social casework. The term "high welfare" denotes an understanding of welfare as a particular way of delivering a personal service to people referred to here as Probation clients or clients. It is derived from a broader understanding of social welfare as a conglomoration of services (Marshall, 1965:114-132), and not with "welfare" as representing discretionary practices in social work (Parsloe, 1976:71-90). Social casework is, therefore, presented as an example of one such approach to delivering a personal service.

The term 'casework' received official recognition in respect of the Probation Service, probably for the first time, in the Morrison Report of 1962. The Report (Home Office, 1962:23)

described how developments in understanding personal relationships were not unique to the Probation Service:

> "It has taken place, as understanding of human behaviour has deepened, wherever social workers operate through personal relationships: and it has imported into the practice of social work a new and highly professional approach described by the term social casework ... today, the probation officer must be seen, essentially, as a professional caseworker employed in a specialist field with skills he holds in common with other social workers ... he is also the agent of a system concerned with the protection of society and must ... during the course of supervision, seek to regulate the probationers' behaviour."

This legitimation of casework in Probation practice, emphasised the dynamics of the personal relationship between therapist (Probation Officer) and client (probationers). Casework, according to Perlman (1957:4) has four components:

> "A person with a problem comes to a place where a professional representative helps him by a given process." (emphasis in original)

The tradition of casework within Probation has been subject to much comment and criticism.

Initially, casework was welcomed by some as a more "professional" way of working with offenders. Monger (1972) was a committed proponent of casework in Probation and wrote of its widespread application in Probation work. An earlier book by him (Monger, 1967) had explored and justified the contribution that casework made to statutory after-care work, particularly parole. However, it appears that casework's supporters were, at least, matched by its critics. Haxby (1978:213) wrote of casework's "tunnel vision" and made the comment that:

> "The rediscovery of poverty has forced social workers to consider whether the casework approach is relevant for dealing with persons who are seriously deprived or disadvantaged, or who suffer serious material hardship."

Casework by social workers, according to Holman (1973:199), has served to maintain individuals' situations, ignoring

wider issues:

> "Social workers have long been criticized for concentrating their efforts on relationships with clients and ignoring their potential for bringing about social reforms on a wide scale."

Walker (1985:102), noting casework's original application using psychoanalytical treatment of middle class neurotics questioned its application and relevance to Probation clients:

> "The task of applying it to offenders, of whom only a minority are middle class or neurotic ... is probably its supreme test."

For Bottoms and McWilliams (1979:161), the principal issue was that casework, as an integral component of treatment, was theoretically faulty. They wrote:

> "Essentially the fault lies in the persistent yet inappropriate analogy made with individual medical treatment ... in the understanding of ordinary language, most crime is voluntary and most disease is involuntary ... the assumption of the medical model is that crime is pathological ..."

At a time when casework was particularly popular, the Morison Report (Home Office, 1962, cmnd 1650), however, sought to resolve the possible contradiction between controlling the offender by reforming him and helping him by assistance and befriendment. It considered (Home Office, 1962:paragraph 54) that casework would provide an extra degree of control over probationers:

> "The probation officer's possession of authority is not necessarily an obstacle to casework; it may assist him to exert the firm, consistent and benevolent control which some probationers require and may never have experienced."

For other writers such as Leonard (1968) and Halmos (1970) the issue of casework as part of individual treatment for clients raised other social considerations. Leonard regarded the dominance of psychological theories on social work training courses as an important obstacle preventing social workers developing an interest in other "social factors".

Halmos (1970:22) noted how caseworkers were essentially one part of the wider personal service profession "concerned with bringing about changes in the body or personality of the client" and not concerned with wider social and political change.

Pearson (1975:130) has regarded social work essentially as avoiding the political context of its work, commenting that: "moral and political ambiguities and antagonisms are thus dissolved in a solution of psychologic explanation". Smalley in making the point about social reform matters being of secondary importance in social work to improving therapeutic techniques, further comments(Smalley,1967:X1-X11):

> "Social work is in danger.....of failing to make its proper, distinctive, and appropriate contribution to the alleviation and prevention of social ills through participating in the formulation of social policy, the development and modification of social welfare programs, and through the use of its distinctive methods conceived as ways of implementing social agency programs." (emphasis in original)

By undertaking a content analysis of all the 121 articles (not letters, or editorials) about social work methods written in issues of the Probation Journal between 1935 and 1986, it has been possible to assess the importance given to casework, and indeed other subjects of concern to the Probation Service. Of the 121 articles (ie not reviews or letters) 42 were written on social casework methods, 25 were on groupwork, 20 on spiritual work, 5 on diversification in methods, 12 on adventure and activity work, and the remaining 17 accounted for various methods including non-treatment, meditation, community involvement and behavioural modification.

The casework focused articles were spread across a thirty year period, the first article appearing in 1945 and the last, to date, in 1975. The majority, both critical and supportive, appeared between 1956 and 1960.

From the articles it seems that casework was regarded as

particularly applicable in times of financial prosperity when the comparative absence of material social problems through the establishment of the welfare state made personal relationship issues more accessible. For example, Jones in an article in Probation entitled "The Need for Self Awareness in the Caseworker" (1956:45) stated that:

> "Whereas at one time our clients' needs seemed to be the material necessity of living, now those are largely taken care of by the welfare state and much more complicated matters of relationships and adjustments are more obvious."

McWilliams has also discussed in some detail the significance of casework's diagnosistic ideal, as applied to Social Inquiry Reports in the early and mid 1960's when "common understandings of human motivation" were replaced by "professional appraisals based on particular conceptions" (McWilliams,1986:255). These appraisals remain, as we will see in Chapter Seven, the hallmark of the Community Probation Team's Social Inquiry Reports in the 1980's, signifying, apart from other things, the continuation of professional diagnoses. From the mid 1960's onwards the Probation articles reflected a much more critical stance towards casework. One article, for example, (Farrimond, 1965:10) amongst many at the time, argued that:

> "Caseworkers hold an exaggerated view of the consequences of their theory ... they make excessive claims and label actions as examples of casework which are only the acts of a reasonably educated person who has been brought up by sensible and kindly parents."

By 1975, the last time, to date, that casework has been specifically been the topic of an article, in the Probation Journal, the criticisms of casework were sharper. For example, (Wood and Shember, 1975:19):

> "If psychologism attains the status of theology then casework becomes a ritual, partaken, not for the recipients, but for the satisfaction of its practitioners. By the more utilitarian criterion of rising crime, increased alienation, undiminished poverty, impersonalised bureaucracy, rampant injustice, racialism and inequality, the showing of casework as social work's contribution is non too

good."

It is probably significant that casework, as a social work method and as a conceptual framework for understanding solutions to delinquency has not been the subject of public discussions in the organisation's professional magazine, the Probation Journal, since 1975. This date approximates a further period of diversification and rationalisation and uncertainty in Probation work. It also approximates the beginning of a period when the social context for Probation work has changed, in terms of rising unemployment (Sinfield, 1981), public expenditure cutbacks (see, for example, Hadley and Hatch, 1981) and the introduction, or reintroduction of the state as a largely economic, not regulated social market place. There is a certain logic to the demise of casework if Haxby's (1978:213) and Jones' (1956) views that casework is more applicable at times of economic prosperity and commitment to welfare politics are "correct". However in 1963 when the Probation Service's duties were extended to over all statutory after-care casework, as we have seen, (Monger, 1967) was still regarded as a suitable and appropriate Probation method.

More significantly, so far as the Probation Service's community based developments are concerned, this additional category of compulsory supervision had two important effects. The first concerns changing the nature and authority of the supervisory contract between licenced offenders and Probation Officers. The second as we shall see later concerns the changing composition of the Probation Service's workload.

Developments in Post-custodial supervision

As with the supervision of offenders prior to the 1907 Act being passed after-care, an important contemporary example of community based supervision, was, prior to 1963, undertaken by voluntary organisations. According to the Advisory Council for the Treatment of Offenders (1963:71):

> "After-care in the country originated, as did so many other forms of social service, in voluntary

> work by individuals who were moved by a spirit of charity to relieve distress among their fellows and to seek their reformation. The private philanthropy of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, often inspired by strong religious convictions, found expression in this field in the formation of Discharged Prisoners' Aid Societies, attached to the local city and county gaols. Without initiation, and planning from the centre, these early societies grew up spontaneously and independently."

In 1963 the Advisory Council's recommendations (1963:61-62) for the Probation Service to be the one organisation carrying all voluntary and compulsory after-care were accepted, and also extended by the Government. The extension was to include provisions for Probation Officers to move into welfare work in a range of penal institutions. Combined with later penal policy statements, the most recent perhaps being those in two government documents Criminal Justice. A Working Paper (Home Office, 1984a, 1986) the involvement by the Probation Service in all forms of after-care work despite recent qualifying statements about its priority (Home Office, 1984:3-4) has brought it inextricably and permanently into the central arena of government penal policy.

The added post-custodial statutory responsibility has had at least three important effects. First, it extended the principles of treatment and rehabilitation (Davies, 1974:5) as previously applied to individual probationers, to certain categories of prisoners, and young persons. It introduced considerations (Weston, 1987:103) about the public's protection against offenders through supervision by the Probation Service. Second, rather than on the basis of individual need and local negotiations (between the offender, the local court and Probation Officers), individuals received compulsory supervision on the basis of their administrative classification undertaken by agencies other than the Probation Service and usually the local judiciary. This has served to extend the executive framework of control over Probation Officers' work. Third, during a period when, co-incidentally the use of the Probation Order was on the decline, (Willis, 1986:162-164) it has accounted for an

increasingly large proportion of total cases supervised by the Probation Service. Let us first examine after-care's historical antecedents.

Following concerns in the 1950s about rising crime and "problem youth" (Cohen, 1980:178-179), and the increased use of borstal and other young offender institutions (Home Office, 1957) the Government published a White Paper entitled Penal Practice in a Changing Society: Aspects of Future Development (Home Office, 1959) and in the same year a report entitled The Treatment of Young Offenders (Advisory Council on the Treatment of Offenders, 1959) was also published. One of the outcomes of discussions arising from the latter report was the extension of Detention Centres and a greater provision of places for Senior Detention Centres. Detention Centres were to change from an experimental form of custodial treatment for which only a small proportion of young offenders would be eligible, to a standard short term custodial sentence. By November 1960 a new Criminal Justice Bill (House of Commons Debate 1960, Vol. 629:Column 183) was introduced with the aim of making:

> "... wider provisons for the use of borstal training, to discontinue short sentences of imprisonment as more detention centres become available and to extend the provision of compulsory after-care." (emphasis added)

The 1961 Criminal Justice Act (whose implementation concerning Detention Centres did not happen until January 1964), provided for compulsory supervision on release.

The Morison Committee (Home Office, 1962,) had, in some ways, anticipated the inclusion of compulsory after-care into the existing duties of the Probation Service and the 1963 Report of the Advisory Council on the Treatment of Offenders confirmed it. The purpose of after-care was stated (Advisory Council on the Treatment of Offenders, 1963:paras 98 and 99) in the Report in the following terms:

> "The prime purpose of after-care in the community is to offer the discharged prisoner the friendship, guidance and moral support that he needs if he is

> to surmount the difficulties that face him in the outside world. Those difficulties are often of a personal or domestic nature; they have sometimes contributed to his former delinquency and may impede his full and lasting social relationships ... may require skilled rehabilitative help for a long time if a return to prison is to be prevented."

The centralisation of all after-care, after the Prison Commission came under the direct control of the Home Office provided for executive not judicial decision procedures concerning the recall of offenders. These bureaucratic processes, concerning recall for borstal and detention centres' licences and young prisoners, rested with the Home Office (initially P4 Division of the Prison Department). Haxby (1978:38) has written about the consequences of increased administrative procedures for Probation Officers involved in supervising statutory after-care cases. The change in location for the responsibility of issuing breach proceedings essentially meant that the offender was no longer a Probation client, by merit of a bargain struck between court, offender and Probation Officer, but a client of the wider criminal justice system with responsibility being diffused, diversified and detached. Statutory after-care supervision can also be regarded by offenders, as an additional sentence, argues King (1969:46). In this sense it represents help being offered but also help against which the offender cannot appeal and from which he withdraws at his peril. The determinate and involuntary nature of statutory post-custodial supervision has implications for the Probation Officer-client relationship, and therefore, the role of the Probation Service. Bean, for example (1976:139) in respect of the former, and commenting on a Home Office report about after-care (Home Office, 1971) considered that:

> "caseworkers saw the provision of material aid as a minor part of the casework relationship; the client saw material aid as an end in itself. ... the after-care authorities are then placed in the rather curious position of trying to enforce their own consensus model and continuing a treatment programme based on an earlier mode ..."

Whilst the Probation Service was trying to absorb some of the

practical problems (Haxby, 1978:38) of implementing statutory after-care for young offenders, further statutory after-care for adult offenders was introduced in the 1967 Criminal Justice Act in the form of parole. Thus, what had initially been voluntary after-care for young people by voluntary organisations had become compulsory as part of the Detention Centre experiment (Hall et al, 1975:311-370), then standardised under the 1961 Criminal Justice Act. The licencing of certain offender categories was extended to categories of adults in the Criminal Justice Act of 1967 (Section 60 (11)) and, later, the Criminal Justice Act of 1982 (section 33). According to the Home Office (1968:paragraph 5):

> "The introduction of parole is an important change in the penal system and significantly extends the role of the Probation and After-Care Service in the rehabilitation of offenders sentenced to imprisonment."

The parole system allows release under specific conditions for selected prisoners enabling one part of a prison sentence to be served "in the community" under the supervision of a Probation Officer. With the advent of parole the Probation Service, for the first time, was supervising offenders in the community as a component of a custodial sentence. After the recommendations of the Wootton Report (Advisory Council on the Penal System, 1970:paragraph 187) the 1972 Criminal Justice Act enjoined Probation Supervision with a prison sentence (suspended) through the introduction of the suspended sentence supervision order (consolidated in the 1973 Powers of Criminal Courts Act (S.26 (1)). The new order together with parole made Probation Supervision an integral part of a prison sentence.

The inclusion of parole as part of a prison sentence served in the community moved the Probation Service towards Haxby's (1978) vision of a more community correctional service in terms of available sanctions and powers to recommend individuals' return to custody. The introduction of various forms of compulsory after-care has also brought about substantial changes to Probation Officers caseloads. These

changes appear to have coincided with a period when the proportion of offenders receiving Probation Orders has declined (Home Office, 1976: tables 5 and 11; 1979: tables 1, 2 and 3.2).

In 1965, for example, the Probation Service held 48,718 Probation Orders on those convicted either of indictable or non indictable offences (Home Office, 1966:21-22). By the 31st of December 1982 this number had only increased to 51,830 (representing a proportionate decrease in the use of probation) whilst the number of all after-care cases in the same year had exceeded the number of Probation Orders with 59,270 cases in total including 34,180 statutory after-care cases (Home Office, 1984d:9). By the 30th June 1983 Probation Orders only accounted for 33 per cent and after-care 32 per cent (Home Office, 1984d:10). Despite increases in the numbers being granted parole per year from 1969 to 1976 for example (Home Office, 1980:paragraph 23), prisoners recommended for parole appears to have remained steady, at 2 per cent between 1976 and 1982, reflecting about 5 per cent of the total prison population.

Haxby (1978:100-101) had serious reservations about parole supervision's capacity to include social work:

> "Parole with its strong emphasis on the regulatory and controlling aspects of supervision ... worried some probation officers who have asked whether the coercive elements and strong sanctions in the parole system are prejudicial to the establishment of a positive casework relationship ... clearly there are situations in which social work becomes impossible. In parole for example the supervisor has a clear responsibility to the public as well as to the parolee, and has to balance these two elements."

Morris (1971:7) also commented on the tensions that could be inherent in parole supervision:

> "Whereas the probationer may perceive the control element in the relationship as the price of this let-off, the parolee may resent this intrusion into his newly acquired freedom."

The statutory after-care system, more so than the Probation Order, has the potential capacity, in terms of available sanctions, to produce greater conflict between the role of the Probation Officer as an authority figure and the role as a social worker to the courts. The capacity for a more control oriented Probation Service with its emphasis on regularity of reporting, disclosures about employment, and home situation, and compliance with more restrictive requirements is one which Bean (1981:168) believes will continue:

> "While the Probation Service is seen as a resource to help reduce the numbers sent to prison, and incidentally as a means of providing a publically acceptable fact to that resource, it will I think be drawn further into the world of surveillance. Statutory after-care introduced that dimension; Parole increased it. It is now a matter of time, given present trends, to see how far the Probation Service will go in that direction".

In practice the supervision of parolees, both for the more usual forms of parole (Morris and Beverly, 1975:124) and for life licences (Coker and Martin, 1985) depends, at least to some extent, on individual Probation Officers' interpretations of local rules and procedures. As Coker and Martin (1985:233) state, in respect of their research on life licences:

> "The notion of, or belief in, 'strict' supervision is nonsense. In the absence of any definition of what this term is intended to imply, the Probation Officer largely imposes his own definition."

Whilst for various governments and benefiting offenders, the system of parole has been a relatively cheap measure for securing early release from prison, some critics (for example, Fitzgerald, 1977) maintain that it has not significantly helped to reduce the numbers of people being incarcerated.

Recent developments in parole relate to those provisions contained in Section 33 of the 1982 Criminal Justice Act which extend the eligibility for parole for those prisoners serving a minimum six months sentence and maximum of eighteen

months. These changes have resulted in a further group of offenders being supervised in the community with less time for reform and minimal involvement (Weston, 1987:131) by Probation Officers, prior to release. Additionally, failure to comply with supervisory requirements, even for a nominal period, unlike previously, can result in the person being found guilty of an offence liable either "to a fine not exceeding £200 or an appropriate sentence for a period not exceeding 30 days" (Section 15 (1) 1982 Criminal Justice Act). Sections 1 to 14 of the 1982 Criminal Justice Act replaced borstals and imprisonment for young offenders by one institution called Youth Custody Centres. Detention centres were retained and lower courts were empowered to pass short Youth Custody Orders whereas previously custodial sentences for young prisoners, apart from Detention Centre Orders, could only be made in the higher courts.

The effect of the 1982 Criminal Justice Act according to Burney (1985:1) has been to introduce:

> "... the most important changes in the way that courts treat young offenders since the landmark of the Children and Young Persons Act 1969."

In particular, Burney regards the provisions concerning the supervision and sentencing of young people under the 1982 Act as representing a shift away from 'welfare' considerations, contained in the 1969 Act, towards 'tariff' considerations. In other words the criteria for sentencing has shifted away from meeting individual needs in social work terms, towards one where, instead, tariff based sentencing demands of the wider criminal justice system are being required. It is significant so far as Probation interests are concerned, that there are increasing numbers receiving parole mostly "attributable to the extension of parole to shorter sentence prisoners by reducing the minimum qualifying period from 1 July 1984" (Home Office, 1986b:9). Thus whereas 4,460 persons commenced parole supervision in 1979, 4,740 in 1980, 4,680 in 1981 and 4,510 in 1982, this jumped to 11,800 persons commencing parole in 1985 for reasons given earlier (Home Office, 1986b:13).

Both Burney (1985) and, more recently, Parker **et al** (1987:21-43) have expressed serious concern about whether, in particular, the additional supervisory conditions as well as the availability of Community Service for juveniles will effect the high use of incarceration for juveniles, or fulfil a different "net-widening" purpose (Cohen, 1979:347). However, of critical importance here, in relation to the fieldwork, is Burney's (1985:90) observation about the various ways in which policies become translated into practice:

> "The symbiotic relationship of local courts, local prosecution practices and local probation and social service departments is the core factor which transmutes any statutory change in the criminal justice system into a variegated pattern taking its colour scheme from local systems."

The case study on 'community' Probation practices lends considerable support to Burney's observation by illustrating the partial contribution Probation Officers make, so far as the making of Probation Orders and supervision practices are concerned. Nevertheless, so far as the Probation Service is concerned, the 1982 Criminal Justice Act formally represents a prima facia case, according to Parker **et al** (1987:22-25), for arguing that social work with young offenders, especially in terms of more intensive forms of supervision and sanctions available, is being redefined by the state. Although, as we have seen, this is not a new situation it is a more recent and significant illustration of the ways in which social and political considerations continue to shape the nature and direction of Probation Service community developments. The final illustration of such developments accommodated by the Probation Service is the pragmatic measure of Community Service. Its pragmatism reflects a much longer-term trend associated with other penal measures, namely its contested status as a sentence and, concommitantly the accompanying ambiguity about if and whether in practice it is used as a direct alternative to custody or as an alternative sentence to other disposals.

Community Service: the Pragmatic Measure

The Powers of Criminal Court Act 1973 consolidated earlier measures, including Community Service Orders, introduced in the 1972 Criminal Justice Act. According to Davies (1973:27) the provisions in the 1972 Criminal Justice Act were highly significant for the Probation Service in that, generally, they represented:

> "... a significant shift from office-based casework towards correctional, educational and behaviourist activities of a kind which will call for a far-reaching review of probation training needs."

Here he is referring to the introduction of Community Service Orders, as well as, to a lesser extent, to the establishment of experimental Day Training Centres. Community Service represented a more pragmatic approach to working with offenders than ones which, like Probation Orders, carried expectations of offenders' rehabilitation. The Wootton Committee (Advisory Council on the Penal System, 1970: paragraph 33), summarised this approach as follows:

> "In general the proposition that some offenders should be required to undertake community service should appeal to adherents of different varieties of penal philosophy. To some, it would be simply a more constructive and cheaper alternative to short sentences of imprisonment; by others it would be seen as introducing into the penal system a new dimension with an emphasis on reparation to the community; others again would regard it as a means of giving effect to the old adage that the punishment should fit the crime; whilst still others would stress the value of bringing offenders into close touch with those members of the community who are most in need of help and support."

Essentially Community Service made compulsory types of community service such as gardening, clearing and decorating, helping in hospitals and clubs for the handicapped, that had previously been done on a voluntary basis. A benign and consensual interpretation of the term "community" masks the seriousness of the sanctions available to the courts for those who fail, under court order to do their "service" for the "community". The same prefix, community, can also be

used to rename and reclassify existing institutions without necessarily changing their functions. For example, the White Paper Children in Trouble (Home Office, 1968a:12) described 'community homes' in the following terms:

> "The public system of community homes for children in the care of the local authority will be an integral system; community homes will be the common legal description for a wide range of establishments meeting the needs which are now served by local authorities' children's homes and hostels, and some voluntary children's homes which regularly accommodate children in care."

The same potential confusion about "community homes" which housed both a voluntary and statutory clientele, can also apply to community service volunteers (non-offenders) and people on community service orders (offenders). Indeed, as Vass (1984:7) has argued, a broad range of tastes, services, sentences and dispositions have broadened, since 1959, the scope of care and control in our society by introducing an added community-based (i.e. non-custodial) dimension. Community Service Orders represent one such disposition.

Community Service is based on a range of ideologies including the discipline of work as punishment, reparation to the community and the rehabilitation of the individual. The issue of whether Community Service is a direct alternative sanction to imprisonment, or, less clearly, another sentence of unquantifiable equivalence was not resolved in the report of the Wootton Committee (Advisory Council on Penal Affairs, 1970) or, according to, for example, Pease (1980:27-42) by subsequent practice and political pronouncements. Young (1979:124-140) suggested there were wide variations in the administration of Community Service, and had serious reservations about it only or primarily being used by courts as an alternative to custody. "Using indirect methods of estimating the use of Community Service in place of custody", Pease and McWilliams, (1980:33) considered that "only between 45% and 50% of Community Service Orders were given to those who would otherwise have been sent to prison". Vass (1984:177) also considered that Community Service did not appear "to be a true alternative to custodial penalties".

The Probation Service was given the responsibility of administering this new and 'tariff-ambiguous' scheme because of its "extensive network of local offices" and "its tradition of working through the use of general community resources" (Advisory Council on the Penal System, 1970:paragraph 49). The former justification coupled with its place in the criminal justice system are, perhaps, more relevant reasons. However, Haxby (1978:172), questioned the social work content of this measure:

> "Community service thus provides a very good example of the way in which the Service may begin to administer penal provisions which are not simply the vehicle for providing social work help to offenders, though they may have a social-work component."

Before Community Service was introduced in 1973 social work in the Probation Service generally took the form of offering direct supervision to offenders, on their own, or within office-based groups, and within residential institutions. Adopting this "individualist/rehabilitative" perspective of Probation work, the Probation Officer, as social worker, might appear redundant in Community Service. From another perspective the Probation Officer in Community Service represents more of an agent, or broker of services rather than a direct provider. This absence of any direct substantial counselling role for Probation Officers in Community Service has not been accompanied by any reluctance by courts at least to make recommendations for Community Service.

The growth of Community Service, in comparison with other types of Probation supervision (see, for example, Willis, 1986:162-163), has been quite spectacular with increases of 43, 25 and 10 per cent between the years of 1979 and 1982 (Home Office, 1984d). By the 30th June 1983 a total of 20,840 people were on Community Service Orders representing 13 per cent of all persons on Probation supervision (Home Office, 1984d:10-14). Furthermore, provisions for Community Service for juveniles, contained in the 1982 Criminal Justice Act (section 68 (1) a and b) have extended the scope of

Community Service as a sentencing option.

Together with the growth and extension of statutory post custodial supervision, the introduction and growth of Community Service represents, perhaps, the most fundamental change to traditional Probation practice in recent years. Its pragmatic base, centring on ideas of integration and reparative justice offers, according to Cohen (1985:82) "further opportunities for the normalised presence of the offender". It does, however, more than this. Unlike supervision within a Probation Order it both provides opportunities for offenders to undertake supervised work. There is then, or should be, some observable indication that some members of, and groups within, the community other than offenders receive help. However, concerns have been expressed (Walker and Beaumont, 1981:74) that the use of this ambiguous sentencing option for largely unemployed people, unable to pay more than nominal fines, encourages sentencing displacement.

Like Intermediate Treatment, the rapid growth of Community Service appears in some ways to have already produced a multiplicity and diversity of practices. In relation to Community Service these concern its application on the sentencing tariff (Pease, 1980a), work placements, criteria for successful work placements, acceptable absences from work (Read, 1980:75-91) use of sanctions (Vass, 1984:151-175) and, more broadly, whether Community Service is a punishment, another form of treatment, or as Moghughi (1983:228) suggests, a preventive sentencing option. On the issue of the satisfactory completion of a Community Service session, and serving the function of encouraging wide-ranging practices, Vass' (1984:114) observation that "the success or failure of a session can often be a function of the supervisor's personality and his actions" supports the view that, in part, Probation outcomes rest on negotiated face-to-face events.

In the sense that Community Service is a relatively new responsibility for the Probation Service the "practical

muddles" might to some, appear "acceptable". One scenario is that these muddles could easily (if they haven't already) bring the sentence (and the Probation Service) into such a state of disrepute that a system of enforced standardisation will occur (Pease and McWilliams, 1980:140-141) accompanied by difficulties for Probation Officers as law enforcement officers, (Vass, 1984:59-84) marginalising any social work contribution they might want to make. The ambiguous sentencing status, combined with diverse practices present a real danger that it might come to resemble another punishment like Attendance Centre Orders, requiring an emphasis on forms of administrative policing, not on social work intervention. Already however the impact of Community Service, as well as various forms of post-custodial supervision, on the overall composition of Probation responsibilities, as can be seen from Table 1, has been considerable.

Table 1

Offenders Supervised by the Probation Service (England and Wales) for Selected Years by Type of Supervision

Type of supervision	Percentage of offenders (a)			
	1951	1961	1971	1981
Probation (b)	82.4	75.5	56.5	31.9
C & YP Acts 1933-1969	5.8	7.1	11.4	10.9
Money payment supervision	2.0	3.8	5.7	5.0
After-care (c)	9.9	13.5	26.4	37.6
Suspended sentence supervision (d)	-	-	-	1.9
Community service (e)	-	-	-	12.8
Total (f)	100.1	99.9	100.0	100.1
Number (g)	55,425	90,459	120,613	157,350

Notes

(a) As at 31 December for each year

(b) Includes all probation orders whether or not containing additional requirements such as attendance at a day training centre, hostel residence, mental treatment, etc

(c) Includes all forms of statutory and voluntary after-care, approved school, borstal, parole, etc

(d) Introduced in 1973

(e) Made available, nationally, in 1975

(f) Totals do not always equal 100 because of rounding

(g) Probation and after-care statistics are not very reliable; in a Foreword to the Probation and After-Care Statistics for 1974 the Home Office Director of Statistics said that 'the accuracy of some of the figures is open to doubt'

Sources: Probation and Probation and After-Care Statistics (Home Office, annually); Bar and O'Leary (1966); Reports on the Work of the Probation and After-Care Department (Home Office 1966, 1972, 1976)

Reproduced in McWilliams (1987:100)

As McWilliams (1987:101) states:

> "... in 1951 the court-based work of the service accounted for 90.2% of the criminal supervisory work; by 1961 this had dropped to 86.4%; by 1971 it had declined further to 73.6% and, finally, in 1981 it accounted for 62.5%, a decrease overall of 27.7 percentage points."

Table 1 vividly illustrates the Probation Service's changing functions and the extent to which Probation Service community developments have expanded and diversified between 1951 and 1981.

Finally, any chapter about Probation Service community developments cannot, and should not, ignore recent Home Office initiatives (particularly Home Office, 1984) designed, amongst other things, to encourage Probation Services to specify and prioritise their objectives more clearly, and more publically. These developments appear directly associated with wider government calls for greater efficiencies and effectiveness in the public services generally, sustained public expenditure cutbacks, and possibly, a response to longstanding critiques about Probation work, in particular concerning the efficacy of Probation Orders (see, for example, Folkard **et al**, 1976). Much more will be said about this "rise of policy" in Probation work (McWilliams, 1987:103), as it applies to Probation Service community developments, in the next chapter. Suffice it to note at this point that although these initiatives are of relatively recent origin, they appear highly significant. Complementing legislative requirements and administrative circulars, they illustrate, possibly more bluntly than before, the external influences on the general direction and form of Probation policies, including, of course, those concerned with community based practice. At this stage it would appear that in addition to readjusting existing duties, and taking on additional ones, once again the Probation Service is being asked to provide supervision for more of those offenders who might otherwise receive a custodial sentence. These Home Office initiatives then appear much less concerned with elevating, or reinforcing one of the

Probation Service's traditional roles, namely to provide a social work service for offenders, based on perceptions of individual need. The local Probation Services responses to these national statements, consisting of sets of local objectives, are presumably expected to have an impact on practice. However as we have already seen in this chapter, policy aims do not always necessarily concur with practice outcomes. Whilst the thesis's data derives from a period some months, and not some years, after the publication of one service's statement of local objectives (Inner London Probation Service, 1984), nevertheless some preliminary conclusions are drawn here in relation to both specific Probation "policy response" issues, and more general Probation policy implementation issues. Both via the analysis of the exploratory questionnaire and other evidence produced in Chapter Four, and more substantially, and perhaps more surprisingly, in the case study itself, it appears that first, some community based Probation policies require much greater clarity and precision, second, they do not appear directly associated with "local objectives" statements, and, third, their implementation and consequences have yet to be fully realized. At this stage the longer term consequences of these recent community based Probation policy initiatives and objectives have not been comprehensively analysed, although Lloyd's work (1986), as we shall see later, has been a most useful contribution to this field.

Summary

This chapter has explored the antecedents of and framework for the legislative changes governing Probation Service community developments, and explored their purpose and consequences for a Service concerned with applying social work within a judicial setting. It is suggested here that the Probation Service occupies a precarious and ambivalent position within the criminal justice system attempting to meet the conflicting demands of governments, sentencers, clients, staff, as well as organisational imperatives. Most

recently and in respect of, for example, interpreting the demands of the 1982 Criminal Justice Act, it was observed by Jarvis **et al** (1987:104), that: "The picture that emerges is of an ambivalent Service that has been both selective and conservative in its adaption of measures required by the new directives". It was argued here that there is a growing body of empirical evidence to suggest that Probation policy intentions, where these can be clearly identified, were not necessarily in concordance with policy outcomes. It was suggested that the latter depend, amongst other factors, on the ways in which policies are defined, interpreted and acted upon within existing organisational constraints and professional understandings of the tasks in hand. Overall it became apparent that the extensions to Probation Service community developments have not been regarded formally as an area which involves citizens in the locality (in the form of community work). Rather these have required professionally trained Probation Officers, internally accountable and working within a centralised criminal justice system which "processes" and sentences individual offenders. The following chapter explores the ambiguous terms in which the "community", broadly equating with locality, has emerged as an additional dimension, beyond that of working with individual offenders, for Probation Service community developments.

CHAPTER THREE

The Emergence of Probation Community Developments as an additional focus for Probation Intervention

The last chapter charted the development of community based Probation practices and analysed the consequences for a service which has developed from being a small localised organisation with the specific task of supervising Probation offenders to becoming a more centralised correctional agency within the wider criminal justice system. The significance of these developments here are twofold. First they emphasised the increasingly diverse and extending statutory framework within which the Probation Service operates. Second they emphasised the Probation Services' primary rationale of supervising individual offenders. Into this statutory centralised and individualised context voluntary forms of Probation community involvement, beyond forms of community Probation work with it's statutory clientele, would appear to fit uneasily.

According to one view the trend of increased centralised direction and integration of the work of the Probation Service within the criminal justice system has further increased as a result of the Statement of National Objectives and Priorities (Home Office, 1984). As indicated in the last chapter, this statement sought to prioritise Probation tasks at a national level and required local Probation areas to do the same taking account local conditions within the national "objectives framework". It remains to be seen whether the national statement represents another mile-stone in the history of the Probation Service or a major turning point. It also remains to be seen whether the existing financial, legislative, and administrative controls over the Probation Service, in the light of this statement, and the expectations contained within it, represent another tier of control, that is control by purpose and priorities. This view has already been challenged, at least to some extent, by Lloyd's analysis

of local statements of objectives and priorities (Lloyd, 1986:59). According to this analysis, 28 of the 51 Probation areas examined over half failed to include any sort of work prioritisation and only six areas agreed with the national objectives and priorities for the Probation Service. It is then, in response, in part to those sections of the national statement's document concerned with "wider work in the community" (Home Office, 1984:Priority (d), Objective D(V111), Objective D(1X)), as well as the wider Probation context of individualised offender supervision, that "the community", as possibly a surprise candidate has recently emerged as a focus and priority for future Probation work.

This chapter records and analyses the emergence of "community" in Probation work in policy terms in respect of both pre and post 1979 Probation Service community developments. It is claimed that the definitional problems surrounding the general term "community", and Probation Service community developments in particular, serve confusingly to under record, amplify, distort and legitimise a diverse range of unco-ordinated activities. Second it is argued that the recent, post 1984 policy interests in crime prevention work (and to a much lesser extent community work) have primarily originated from the Home Office as part of wider government concerns about crime and crime prevention.

Definitional Difficulties and Conceptual Constructs

There are major definitional problems which effect any exploration of Probation developments relating to the term community. These problems stem from sociological and practical difficulties about the term community. Suffice it here to simply highlight some of these difficulties before providing a necessary conceptual construct concerning Probation Service community developments. What follows initially then is not an attempt to review the sociological literature concerning "community" but rather a schematised account of some of the prominent themes which feature in the largely unresolved debate about the term.

Tonnies' classic distinction between the gemeinschaft and gesellschaft as ideal types, provides a useful starting point. Based primarily upon notions of national and rational will he made the following comments (Tonnies, 1957:34) about these two terms:

> "All intimate, private, and exclusive living together.... is understood as life in gemeinschaft (community). Gesellschaft (society) is public life - it is the world itself. In gemeinschaft with one's family one lives from birth on, bound to it in weal and woe. One goes into gesellschaft as one goes into a strange country."

Essentially Tonnies regards community in an organic sense, as being defined ultimately by the nature of personal relationships. Gesellschaft relationships are those circumscribed by codes and duties, with interaction and exchanges leaving each party distant from one another, almost anonymous. By contrast gemeinschaft relationships are defined by individual and social customs, practices and habits involving the entire organism, as it were, as opposed to one part of it. As such the latter type is more likely to be found in rural and pre-industrial villages, the former being more characteristic of large scale industrialised societies.

Notions of locality and geographical area have also been important and perhaps central community components. Plant (1974), noting the highly problematic and contested associations given to the term community, regarded the linking of community to locality as theoretically suspect, regarding suggesting that locality is just one component of community but not a necessary conditions for it (Plant, 1974:38-48). He also rejected the notion of race as necessary and sufficient criteria for a "liberal theory" of community. He finally suggested, somewhat intangibly, that it was more helpful in identifying and understanding a community to establish the nature and quality of relationships, in terms of participation, membership and authority. In relation to the last component Plant (1974:57) wrote:

> "If we concentrate upon the rule-governed nature of community life we shall avoid this tendency which may have and certainly has in the past wholly unfortunate consequences in theorising about community."

In an earlier well known article another writer, Hillery (1955), after assembling some 94 definitions of the term "community," concluded (1955:117): "There is an element however which can be found in all of the concepts.....all the definitions deal with people. Beyond this common basis there is no agreement." According to Hillery 69 of the 94 definitions of community included social interactions, and area ties or bonds as common themes. Stacey (1969:140-45), in recognition of the definitional problems concerning community, proposed the solution of abandoning the term community altogether and instead concentrating on locality in terms of "local social systems". Bell and Newby (1971:48-53) referred to the term "social networks" concluding that a class and family structure analysis of such networks provided the best indicator of community. For Bender (1978:6) the term "community" suggests an expectation of "a special quality of relationship" with this experiential dimension crucial to its definition. Thus "Community, then, can be defined better as an experience than as a place." (Bender, 1978:6) This emphasis on social experiences, that is beyond "occupance", is, according to Nisbet (1967:47-48) one which parallels and reflects familial duties and traditions. Thus:

> "Community is a fusion of feeling and thought, of tradition and commitment, of membership and volition ... Its archetype, both historically and symbolically, is the family, and in almost every type of genuine community the nomenclature of the family is prominent."

More recently, in social policy terms, the community has been optimistically regarded as an area for localised social policy initiatives (Willmott, 1984), and as a potential support location for various "client" groups (Walker, 1982; Barclay, 1982; Hadley et al, 1987). Conversely authors including Rex and Moore (1967), Rex and Tomlinson (1979) and in the wake of urban disturbances, Benyon (1984, 1987), have highlighted the increasing relevance of, and conflicts and

social deprivation in, urban communities. More will be said about this sociological area of inquiry later because it specifically relates to the inner city case study of a new Probation Community Team. Suffice it here to conclude in this schematic review of the term "community" that despite its popular usage, it seems beset with inherent definitional problems. Like freedom the word community is warmly persuasive, usually has positive and romantic connotations, but also remains essentially seductive but elusive.

Already some of the ambiguities about the term community have slipped, unnoticed perhaps, into the literature concerning Probation practices. Thus it is critical at this stage to offer some working definitions of the terms used in this and subsequent chapters relating to community based practices and developments in the Probation Service. Only by using such a conceptual construct can a fuller and clearer understanding of such practices be achieved.

Notwithstanding the diverse usage of the term "community" generally, and in connection with Probation practices, as a necessary first step to understanding the nature of, to use the generic term that will be employed, Probation Service community developments, it is vital to characterise the key terms used in this thesis. These terms are community Probation work, crime prevention work and community work. These three terms may be regarded as both representing different categories of Probation Service community developments, and together signifying a continuum of Probation Service interests from those which are predominantly offender based, to those which are focused on offending, and finally those based on community with no specific reference either to offending or offenders. The term Probation Service community developments is used as a generic term to denote the supervision of Probation offenders, and other localised non-supervisory Probation practices outside penal institutions.

Community Probation work can be regarded as similar to general supervisory Probation work, in that its focus is on

providing a service to individual offenders who have come to the attention of the Probation Service. However it can be distinguished from general supervisory Probation work in several important ways. First it has a stated emphasis, at team and/or organisational levels, on enhanced service delivery systems; second it has an emphasis on greater access by offenders to the Probation Service; third it has an emphasis, again as a stated team and organisational strategy on the use of local resources (both material and/or manpower resources) and information for Probation clients. Team, and to a lesser extent, inter-team co-operation, provide the necessary organisational framework for community Probation work. It can be regarded as a client centred and directive (Batten, 1967:11) approach to Probation work in which enhanced or improved service delivery, is regarded as a primary concern. In the sense that it aims to draw on the assistance of specific offender focused organisations, rather than wider social networks, for offenders it can be distinguished from the "networking" types of community social work as described in the majority Barclay Report (1982:13-43). In another sense however, namely that of having a directive service delivery orientation, with an emphasis on individual, not collective responsibilities for behaviour, rather than structural deficiencies, community Probation work can be regarded as extending the debate, about community social work as contained in the Barclay Report (1982:198-218). Community Probation work, then rather like community social work, is not a homogenous or unitary phenomenon but rather a construct of planned service delivery systems for offenders.

By contrast Probation Service crime prevention work, the second category or group of Probation Service community developments, focuses on crime and offending and not on specific offenders. The Probation Service's existing emphasis on preventing re-offending by existing individual offenders, although severely criticised in terms of its efficacy (among many criticisms see, for example, Bottoms and McWilliams, 1979:187), suggests that the principle of prevention only applies at certain levels. In the public

health field, for example, Geismar (1969:13) provides an explanation of three levels of prevention. Whilst not equating offending with illness here, Geismar's and also Caplan's (1964) conceptual frameworks are useful, not only as heuristic devices, but as a means of distinguishing between the different levels of prevention in their application to the Probation Service. A similar "framework of prevention" has also been developed in respect of Intermediate Treatment for juveniles "at risk" (see, for example, Adams et al, 1981). Geismar describes secondary prevention as intervention initiated because of emerging malfunctioning or treatment dispensed before the disease has run it's full course. Tertiary prevention pertains to treatment that is given to overcome or ameliorate the effects of the disease that is given at a later stage. Both these levels can be regarded as "rehabilititive" in the sense that symptoms have already been displayed. In Probation work with offenders indicators for contact, rather than symptoms of illness, derive from the individual client having been found guilty of an offence and becoming a Probation client. Secondary and tertiary prevention then are concerned with the prevention of re-offending, not offending. By contrast primary prevention, according to Geismar, is synonymous with intervention before the occurance of pathology or malfunctioning. According to Caplan (1964:26):

> "Primary prevention is a community concept. It involves lowering the rate of new cases of mental disorder in a population over a certain period by counteracting harmful circumstances before they have had the chance to produce illness. It does not seek to prevent a specific person from being sick. Instead it seeks to reduce the risk of a whole population, so that although some may be ill, their numbers would be reduced."

A similar emphasis on primary prevention, at least as an official statement if not as an indicator of resource provisions (Parton, 1985: 190-199), has been ascribed to the problem of child abuse (D.H.S.S., 1986:3), as one of several strategies for reducing the likelihood of that problem occurring.

It is argued here, as Haxby (1978:192) and, more recently, Laycock and Pease (1985:43-7) have observed, that the Probation Service has tended to focus on prevention only in so far as it applies to the prevention of offending by existing Probation clients, (i.e. the secondary and tertiary levels) They argue that the Probation Service's work has not been directed, at whatever level, towards the prevention or reduction of crime. Crime prevention work then, as a second catagory of Probation Service community developments can be characterised by purposeful interventions, either on it's own, or more likely, in conjuction with other agencies, designed to reduce if not actually prevent crime in a locality. It is a term which, at its broadest, denotes any activity intended to reduce the frequency of offences defined as crimes by the criminal law. However the sheer diversity of measures described as crime prevention measures makes the presentation of a unifying crime prevention framework most elusive. This difficulty has arisen primarily because of the multi-faceted nature of and explanations for crime itself, as well as the frequent muddling of the terms prevention with other terms including diversion, decriminalisation and even non-intervention. (Hoghugi, 1983:213) Whilst fully acknowledging these definitional difficulties it is necessary here to provide a working conceptual framework for crime prevention work as it relates to the work of the Probation Service. The essential elements are that the focus is on offending and not offenders, on the social situation not the motivation of the individual offender, and on reducing opportunities for crimes to be committed rather than reforming or punishing individual offenders. The task here is to identify, in so far as this is possible, crime prevention work done by the Probation Service which constitutes a coherent social control strategy with identifiable structure and aims, and not a rag bag of individual actions.

In relation to crime prevention work generally, and in its formal sense, it is the most recent government response to crime with its emphasis on inter-agency work, and community co-operation through, for example, Neighbourhood Watch

schemes (Home Office, 1984a; Home Office 1986). In 1988 (the Guardian, 10th March 1988) another Government crime prevention campaign was launched with considerable emphasis on public participation, and advertising with a budget of eleven million pounds. Home Office researchers Clarke and Mayhew, (1980), and earlier Mayhew (1976), have argued that the opportunities for crimes to be committed might be reduced by either physical (situational) or social (non-situational) means. Physical crime prevention attempts to "design out" crime out through physical and environmental changes through what are called "target hardening", "target removal" and "removing the means to crime" approaches. By contrast the more relevant term here in connection with the Probation Service, social crime prevention comprises those social measures which might also help reduce the incidents of crime. Six potential areas have been identified; family background and parental responsibility, the educational system, youth unemployment, recreational and leisure facilities for young people, services for homeless young people, and finally, the abuse of alcohol and drugs by teenagers (Parliamentary All Party Penal Affairs Group, 1983:40). As the case study will reveal later the application of "social crime prevention measures" by the Community Probation Team became a very complex issue at the practitioner, organisational, and policy levels. Furthermore as the case study will reveal later the limited attempts to implement crime prevention work not only became blurred with certain types of community work but also revealed considerable Inter-agency, organisational, and local conflicts about the nature of the problems and as well as their resolution or amelioration.

Conceptually the third category of Probation Service community developments referred to in this thesis, community work is distinguishable from crime prevention work. The generic term community work has been described in many different ways sometimes using similar terms to denote different activities, processes and approaches, and sometimes using different terms to denote similar approaches. One well known formulation of community work (Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 1968:28-36) described community work as having

three strands; community field work, community liaison work and community planning. These aspects are often interwoven and can be more directely expressed as direct work with local people, agency or interagency work and forcasting and planning. Five years later the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (1973) produced a fourth category of community work namely community action. In a more recent formulation of community work Thomas (1983:110) has argued that an additional approach called "service extension" should be added to the above strands. However it is a matter of some debate (see, for example, Butcher, 1984), whether "service extension" constitutes a community work, or social work approach, or indeed both. It will be argued here that "service extension", in so far as it effects Probation work, is more properly located within the first community Probation work category than within the community work approaches described here. This distinction has been drawn in respect of Probation work because it was considered distorting and misleading to describe "service extension" work with individual offenders as community work.

The three types of community work referred to here accommodate the possibilites for community groups, organisations or the Probation Service as potential sponsors in any community activity involving the Probation Service. The term sponsor (Taylor and Roberts, 1985:12-15), primarily denotes the group or groups which "determine practice decisions". At any one time in community work it is important to acknowledge that there is a likelihood of there being more than one sponsor and different levels of participation at the same or different times. Amidst the confusingly large array of community work formulations Rothman's (1979) three model formulation appears to be one of the clearer, most detailed and relevant to this thesis.

Rothman's community work model (1979:22-39) consists of locality development, social planning and social action. The main goals of <u>locality development,</u> according to Rothman (1979:26) are self help, and enlarging the capacity of the community to engage in co-operative problem-solving

processes. In this model there is a strong emphasis on process goals rather than task goals. The "process goal" according to Ross's (1958:10-11) classic formulation is one by which a community seeks to identify and take action with respect to its own problems. The emphasis in the process goal is on encouraging the community itself to identify what it considers to be its problems and to work systematically on them. Rothman's second social planning model emphasises problem solving with regard to substantive community problems with organisations mandated specifically to deal with concrete social problems. Task rather than process goals are regarded as the essential component in respect of problem solving. The third component of the model, social action, emphasises a shifting of power relationships and resources, addresses itself to questions of basic institutional change and can involve task and/or process goals. All three models of community work discussed here, together with the community Probation work and crime prevention work models raise theoretical questions about social control, social welfare and social justice. These are critical matters which will be discussed later in relation to the case study and in the thesis' concluding chapter.

Each model carries assumptions regarding the community, community interests and conceptions of client and sponsors role. Locality development, according to Rothman (1979:26) assumes a "community of consensus" with common interests or reconcilable differences regarding members of the power structure as collaborators in a common venture with the client (i.e. members of the locality) as participants in interactional problem-solving processes. Critics of this approach (see, for example, Jones and Mayo, 1975; Cheetham and Hill, 1973), have criticised this approach for its exploitative, paternalistic nature and its assumptions about the consensual nature of society. The second social or community planning model can regard local interests as either reconcilable or in conflict, manifests it's power structure in the form of employers or sponsors, regards the community as either passive consumers or recipients, and places great emphasis on task or service delivery and better co-ordination

of services. As Thomas (1983;109) notes of this model:

> "Social planning methods emphasise both rational and technical procedures as well as political ones. For example, needs, problems and resources may be explored through surveys using social science-based questionnaire or interview techniques, and through consultation with people likely to be affected, their representatives or organisations which speak on their behalf. It is intended that such enquiries and consultations will illicit priorities among problems and suggest preferred solutions; it tends to be assumed that such knowledge will then be rationally considered into enlightened political decision-making"

Whilst recognising that local interests may be reconciled or in conflict this model is firmly based on pluralist assumptions about the rational nature and access to decision making and not based on structural/conflict assumptions about the nature of locality. The third community or social action model regards the community essentially as victims, insists that members become involved in decision making processes, recognises there are conflicting interests not easily reconcilable and assumes a scarcity of resources. Social action is often characterised in "underdog" terms based on structural/conflict theoretical assumptions. In this "action" model the client can be conceived of as employers, organisations or members, depending on the situation. The emphasis on a shifting of power relationships and resources invokes both the use of specific tasks and education processes as primary goals.

These three broad approaches to Probation Service community developments namely community Probation work, crime prevention work and community work are presented as the distinctive categories. Additionally and as a means of understanding the nature of the relationship between the sponsors and the clients, and also in this case the role of the Probation Service, it is useful at this stage to regard these different models in terms of a sponsor based (directive) and client based (non-directive) continuum. On this point Batten (1967:11), for example, regarded the directive approach as the agency deciding, more or less

specifically what it thinks it's clients need, what they ought to value or ought to do for their own good, and even sometimes how they ought to behave. This approach, meeting short-term, particularly material needs, is usually task and problem based rather than process and knowledge based. By contrast the non-directive approach, according to Batten, (1967:11-12) is quite different. The worker tries to help people to decide for themselves what their needs are, what, if anything, they are willing to do to meet them, and how they can best organise, plan, act and carry through their projects. Thus we have, the following formulation (Figure One) of Probation Service community developments:

FIGURE ONE

Three Models of Probation Service Community Developments

Probation Service Community Developments

ponsor-led directive)		client-led (non-directive)
Community Probation Work	Crime Prevention Work	Community Work
	Locality Devel'mt / social planning	Community Action

Whilst theoretically it is possible that Probation Service community developments might extend beyond this three model formulation, it is argued that all the Probation developments discussed here, and subsequently, fall within these broad parameters. Having produced a definition of terms used in this thesis and a conceptual framework for analysis, it is now possible and necessary to examine Probation Service community developments beginning first with an analysis of

the place of "community" in discussions about Probation policy between 1963-1979. 1963 is given as a starting date because prior to that time considerations about the place of "community" in Probation work were, essentually, non-existent except generally, in the sense that the context for the supervision of offenders was the community, and not penal establishments.

Probation Service Community Developments: The 1963-1979 Policy Dimension

There is very little written about Probation Service community developments prior to 1979 except, and then in limited ways, as it relates to the after-care dimension of Community Probation work. This became regarded as a suitable area, generally, for Probation Service involvement once responsibility for after-care was transferred from voluntary organisations to the Probation Service in 1963. Thus in its report on after care the Advisory Committee for the Treatment of Offenders (1963:71) pronounced that one of the essentials for future development was: "A greatly increased understanding of the part to be played by members of the community in the rehabilitation of offenders." Essentially this increased understanding would, it was anticipated, involve the use of volunteers. The important Morison report (Home Office, 1962 cmnd 1650: paragraph 154), noted that it was not a function of the Probation Service to do work being done by other agencies and made no explicit or other reference to community work or crime prevention work involving the Probation Service. It was noted however that liaison work with other organisations, though not actually referred to as community work, often involved Probation Officers working in their own time (Home Office, 1962 cmnd 1650: paragraph 154). The directive role of the Probation Service at that time was reflected in the comment made in that report, and as observed by Haxby (1978:187), that the Probation Service acted <u>for</u> the community without acting <u>with</u> it. In other words it was officially regarded as the state's role to "manage conflict" (Christie, 1977), here by the Probation Service, and not with the "community". By 1972 the

term "community involvement" had emerged in official publications, but this related to the use of volunteers in after- care work (see, for example, Home Office 1966, cmnd. 3107; Home Office 1972, cmnd. 5158). Possibly the first official and significant recognition that Probation work should take note of offenders' social environment was made by Davies (1974:101). Noting that casework was becoming increasingly challenged by its emphasis on the offenders personality he commented (Davies, 1974:101):

> "... if, as is now generally agreed, much deviant behaviour and social need are associated not only with personality factors but also with environmental conditions, then part of the task of social work must be to see the client and to treat him within the context of his environment.....attempts that have been, and are now, made to enter into the client's environment within the present context of probation supervision are not only themselves fraught with difficulty but are not noticeably any more successful than office-based casework".

Davies' reservations about the suitability of the Probation context for "entering the client's environment" are, as we will see later in respect of the case study, particularly significant. Nevertheless whatever the practical difficulties concerning this work might be, important as they are, the emphasis in Davies' argument was still on treatment, namely the treatment of individual personalities to cope with "environmental stresses", rather than, as previously perhaps, with intra-psychic conflicts. He later extended this idea later to suggest the establishment of experimental treatment programmes aimed at tackling these environmental problems (in Mays, 1985:88-89). Although Davies' ideas amounted to no more than a shift in the purpose of individual treatment, they raised important questions for the Probation Service about how, clients could be treated by Probation Officers within the environmental context. The "situational treatment" idea in the community was also one developed by the European Committee on Crime Problems (1974) but this was narrowly defined as treatment within the confines of a correctional community using the "therapeutic community" model. Their reference, for example, to Grendon Underwood

Psychiatric prison under the heading "community work" illustrates a limited, and arguably distorting, view of community work, being the equivalent of a "therapeutic community".

Later both King (1969) and Haxby (1978) regarded community involvement, the broad equivalent to community Probation work, as improving community relations with offender-focused agencies and encouraging the use of volunteers. But they both went further than this in their visions. King (1969:218) makes a tentative suggestion reintroduced more recently (Home Office 1986:25) about the community taking on responsibility for helping and controlling offenders. Thus:

> "In casework there has been a movement from doing things for the client to doing things with him or encouraging him to do them for himself. Perhaps the time is coming for a similar movement in relation with the community, a movement away from a situation in which a social worker (or the institution) takes charge of misfits on behalf of society towards a situation in whcih he helps society to take charge of them for itself."

This was, perhaps, no more than a suggestion at that time, but, importantly, it indicated notions about responsibility for "misfits" somehow being given or returned to society with the Probation Officer or social worker acting as an agent rather than direct service provider. Nevertheless the bulk of the literature between 1963 and 1979 concerning Probation community developments is quite specific in that it is concerned with using Probation volunteers, as community resources to assist the Probation Service with its after care work. Haxby's (1968) work is perhaps a notable exception in that his forthright discussion of community work alongside crime prevention work formed part of his vision of the Probation Service as a community correctional service. Thus Haxby stated (1968:199): "It is impossible to talk about primary prevention for long without becoming involved in a discussion about community work."

In reviewing all the editions of the Probation Journal from 1948 to the present day, as well as other literature, it

became readily apparent that up until the publication of the Bottoms and McWilliams "non-treatment paradigm" paper (1979), and more recently the publications of various Home Office documents (for example; 1984, 1984a, 1984c), there has been a paucity of writings about Probation Service community developments except as they related to community Probation work (i.e. other ways of working with existing clients). The first reference in the Probation Journal in 1972 can be regarded as reflecting wider interests in community work at that time. In that article the author, (Mason, 1972) sought legitimacy for Probation Service involvement in community work by quoting Davies' "situational treatment" approach (Home Office, 1974:101). However the author went much further than Davies. His community action proposal (Mason, 1972:45) suggested that the Probation Service should attempt to: "modify the structures of society which mould behaviour within the community, rather than seek to modify the behaviour produced within those structures."

Another article about community work appearing in the following edition of the Probation Journal urged the Service to become more involved in the community but raised questions about the nature of community work and Probation Service involvement. The author (Goff, 1972) wrote about various community initiatives approximating community Probation work at his Probation office, and concluded (Goff, 1972:71) that:

> "Valid criticism of the Probation Service is not it's reluctance to look outside the one to one relationship, but in it's failure to draw together any kind of cohesive picture and to harness the host of additional techniques being used."

Throughout the 1970's, particularly the early 1970's the Probation Journal contained a series of articles questioning the theory, application, and efficacy of casework with Probation clients. It is perhaps not surprising then that an article appearing in Probation Journal at that time (Davies, 1978:134-136) promoted the application of non-pathological criminological approaches in Probation work. The author, a Probation Officer, (Davies, 1978:134) wrote:

> "Each of these theories, in it's different way, states that criminal behaviour results not from individual aberrations, greed or weakness, but from wider social forces beyond the individual's control. The case-worker's attempts to help or change individual law-breakers are foolish and misguided on this view because they are in opposition to the wider social pressures.....Community action and community social work, of course, are themselves highly fashionable today in sociology and social work theory and have been so for the past ten years but to be in fashion is not, I hope, necessarily to be wrong. Community spirit, translated into action, clearly plays a large part in improving the quality of life in many ways both locally and nationally.....it also provides informal social control. Helping to mobilise community values into community action (in actively discouraging crime and in providing interesting and constructive alternative activities for the young) seem a surer and better way of crime control than the strengthening of police, courts and prisons."

The article invoked the importance of "community spirit" in tackling offending, through crime prevention measures. Despite the recognition and reservations, particularly in the 1960's and 1970's about the effectiveness and/or appropriateness of casework as as method, (See, for example, Bean, 1976) it would be an exaggeration to suggest that wider community work developments during that same period had any substantial influence, so far as one can tell, on the Probation Service. As has already been argued, this earlier period signified the introduction of a considerable number of additional statutory duties for the Probation Service based on individualised supervision within additional residential, semi-residential and non-residential settings. More permissive suggestions of voluntary community involvement were simply not on the statutory agenda. However as a result mainly of external pressures, the post 1979 period, particularly from 1984 onwards, denoted further interest in "the community" as an additional dimension to Probation Service work, less concerned with community Probation work (principally work with volunteers, offender organisations and after-care work), than with crime prevention work, and to a much lesser extent, community work.

Probation Service Community Developments: The Post-1979 Policy Dimension

In their important article "A Non-Treatment Paradigm for Probation Practice" Bottoms and McWilliams (1979) argued that crime reduction should be one of four primary objectives for the Probation Service. They argued that its three traditional objectives namely; the provision of help for offenders, statutory supervision of offenders, and the provision of alternatives to custody, were not by themselves sufficient grounds for the Probation Service to retain it's credibility and justify it's existence (Bottoms and McWilliams 1979:189). They described Probation Service crime prevention work within the following context (Bottoms and McWilliams 1979:188):

> "If treatment or help are not to reduce crime, what will? There is only one realistic answer: crime prevention. ....we shall argue here that crime is predominantly social, so that any serious crime reduction strategy must be of a socially (rather than an individually) based character; that "treatment" strategies as applied to communities are as inappropriate for crime prevention as they are for individual "help" for offenders; that nevertheless there are some plausible clues which might be followed in a crime reduction strategy by the Probation Service ...."

The authors suggested two possible models for crime prevention, the first, which they reject, is a "community treatment model" in which "the social work team in effect diagnoses the ills of the community and tries to put them right" (Bottoms and McWilliams, 1979:189). The second "social integration model" was described as being based on the proposition that "other things being equal, societies with strong cohesive social bonds tend to produce less crime." (Bottoms and McWilliams, 1979:191). In developing this point they argued that it "ought to be possible" to develop notions of reciprocal exchange and structural change to promote "better social cohesion and better community care, in a given area". (Bottoms and McWilliams, 1979:192). The problem here is the nature of the relationship between, on the one hand, the reciprocal exchanges and community care

networks and, on the other hand, the notion of social cohesion. Specifically it is unclear whether the authors are arguing that the existence of reciprocal exchanges and community care networks produce social cohesion or result from social cohesion. Earlier Maccoby et al (1958:51) had argued that high crime rates were a cause of lack of social organisation and integration, whereas it can also be argued that high crime rates represent, an indicator not a cause of lack of social organisation. Bottom and McWilliams' paper (1979) was a welcome contribution (at least in some places) to discussions about crime prevention work involving the Probation Service. Nevertheless their proposition that fairly high crime rates in an area, combined with residents' concerns should motivate and trigger wider "integrative possibilities" (Bottoms and McWilliams, 1979:194), under-estimates, according to the empirical evidence provided here, structural, resource and motivational issues. Importantly the authors recognised, the practical and organisation re-orientation difficulties for the Probation Service of becoming involved in such crime prevention work without there being any "guarantees of success".

In Lord Scarman's report on the Brixton disorders (H.M.S.O. 1981) there was very little mention of the Probation Service either generally or in relation to any work in the community. However Lord Scarman's did acknowledge the support given by the West Midlands Probation Service to a cultural centre in Handsworth, another area which had experienced public disturbances in 1981. The crucial sentence in the Scarman report (H.M.S.O. 1981:147) was the following:

> "The aim was to prevent young people at risk from offending rather than to deal with those who had already offended. Whilst it was recognised that, as a long term aim, there were dangers in the service undertaking such non-court work, such projects brought the service nearer to the community and enabled the community to see the Probation Officer in a more positive light, and not simply as an agent of the courts." (emphasis added).

Thus in a sentence the idea of Probation Service community work and crime prevention was both blurred and captured. A further and more oblique reference to the Probation Service and the community, generally, was contained in the response from the Association of Chief Officers of the Probation to the Barclay Report (1982). The majority Barclay Report recommended, amongst other things, that the social services should engage their communities and identify community care networks as a means of securing more involvment by the community as consumers, but also as unpaid carers. In response to this report the Association of Chief Officers of Probation (1983:3) commented:

> "Over recent years the Probation Service has adapted it's approach to client need from one based largely on individual counselling by the officer himself, to one which incorporates, often with a "contract" of supervision offered to the courts, various educational and occupational experiences, the use of a wide range of community facilities and other social work methods including group activities."

This appears to be a direct reference to a form of community Probation work which involves a change of setting for existing offender-focused work. Community work as such received no separate mention. Ironically perhaps, in the same year this statement was made, and serving to underscore the localised and diverse nature of Probation work a large supported work project in London for offenders incorporating "educational and occupational experiences" was closed down when Home Office funding was withdrawn. Diverse approaches to Probation for Probation clients, as recommended above, meant perhaps, drawing on existing resources, with the Probation Service as an agent or sub-contractor, not ones which the Probation Service or Home Office would fund. Before the work project, called Bulldog, could tackle the issues raised in the research project (Pointing, 1982), it had already been regarded as too expensive by the Home Office and was effectively closed down in 1983. As at 1987 it operated on a very small budget and on a self-sufficiency, self supporting economic framework reflecting wider political values. By contrast, and to emphasise the political context

within which the Probation Service operates, additional funding was subsequently found in the same year, 1983, from the Home Office in Inner London for the conversion of a voluntary day centre to a statutory day centre under schedule 11 of th 1982 Criminal Justice Act. The same year that the voluntary work project closed, additional funding was made available for the Community Probation Team to become established. Additionally the following year, 1984, also saw extra funding being made available within Inner London for so-called "hard end" statutory work, also within the terms of the 1982 Criminal Justice Act a project called Lifeline (Inner London Probation Service, 1984b). This experimental project involved Probation clients being engaged in a range of supervised activities, mostly at sea, over a three month period under a "partnership agreement" with the seafaring Operation Drake organisation. In Inner London then extra funding for Probation work seemed to mean, increasingly at that time, "reactive funding", for additional, more coercive forms of statutory work, suggesting again a binding relationship between the Probation Service and the Home Office.

At a less localised level a more important statement from the Association of Chief Officers of Probation emerged from a joint workshop with the Home Office in 1982 following the inner city disturbances of the previous years. The workshop included representatives from the police, voluntary organisations, the Probation Service and the Home Office. The principal purpose of the workshop was to examine and re-evaluate the role of these various organisations in relation to crime prevention work. Several critical points emerged about the future role of the Probation Service in the community and the following excerpt (Association of Chief Officers of Probation/Home Office, December 1982: appendix 4) sets out some of the dilemmas and possible strategies:

> "There is a need for a holistic approach with Probation, police, social service departments and other statutory and voluntary organisations in our attempt to provide satisfying ways of people recognising and working with crime in the community. Some progress has recently been made

> but Probation still needs to be prised out of its professional corner to work more effectively with other organisations. ....Probation needs to look hard at its role."

The paper covered an extraordinarily wide range of material including the ideas of social theorists such as Tonnies, Hegel, and Rousseau. It also considered dilemmas of accountability for the Probation Service of working in genuine partnership with the community and raised problems about working in areas, particularly where there is racial conflict, where there was an absence of consensus. Nevertheless the paper noted a lack of evidence to suggest that the service could tackle what was called "this primary community harnassing role" (Association of Chief Officers of Probation/Home Office, 1982: appendix 1) suggested by work with the local community.

In the following year, 1983, the first of a series of documents about the establishment of national objectives and priorities for the Probation Service was produced by the Home Office and these papers are perhaps, in policy terms at least, the most significant ones concerning the role of the Probation Service in the wider community. The Draft Statement of Objectives and Priorities (Home Office, 1983) proposed a number of suggested priorities and objectives and the paper was circulated for comments. Although pre-draft papers were prepared in June 1983 the final draft, dated August 1983 urged that responses be sent to the Home Office by 30 September 1983. (National Association of Probation Officers, 1983). This short deadline suggests a lack of full consultation between the Home Office and interest parties. Additionally this draft paper and subsequent papers suggested a further change in the relationship between local Probation areas and the Home Office in that, theoretically at least, a centralised set of national objectives and priorities were eventually to be provided. Indeed this "new relationship" was acknowledged by Inner London Probation Service's Chief Probation Officer in his memorandum to staff about this draft document. He wrote (Inner London Probation Service, September 1983) that this closer relationship indicated:

> "A new pattern of planning and consultation between ourselves and the Home Office. The Home Office are concerned to achieve a co-ordination of policy and its effective application across the whole Criminal Justice System."

The Probation Service's wider objectives, as perceived by the Home Office (Home Office, 1983:1) were indicated in the first page of that draft document:

> "The service must also contribute to the wider objectives of the Criminal Justice System in preserving respect for the law and in reducing the incidents of crime."

Whilst the bulk of the draft priorities concerned a re-emphasis and prioritisation of existing Probation duties a new Probation responsibility entitled "crime reduction" was introduced in that paper. This would consist of (Home Office, 1983:6):

> "Encouraging the community to accept the greater responsibility for offending and it's offenders, taking account of the influences of the family, schools and other institutions and of any implications for other agencies for work might be able to contribute; ....developing a service to the wider public by contributing to the prevention of crime and the support of victims, and playing a part in the activities of local voluntary organisations related to the reduction of crime....."

Subsequently and according to the National Association of Probation Officers (National Association of Probation Officers, June 1984:1) without full consultation about the draft paper, the Home Office issued the document Statement of National Objectives and Priorities (Home Office, 1984). In this document the heading "Other work in the Community" (Home Office, 1984:4) replaced the heading "Crime Reduction" contained in the earlier draft paper (Home Office, 1983:6) but contains, almost word for word, the same phrases included under the earlier heading. In respect of resources, the final paper (Home Office, 1984:5) stated:

> "The Service should allocate sufficient management effort and other resources if necessary to ensure that each area of Probation Service is making an

> appropriate and effective contribution to the Community (Objective D). The scale and pace of developments will depend on local needs and the opportunities available."

Importantly the paper ended with the comment that it was likely that two particular priorities would take up an increasing amount of Probation time; first the supervision of more "high risk" offenders who might otherwise receive a custodial sentence and secondly the area of work referred to above namely "other work in the community" (Home Office, 1984:4-5). In so far as the National Association of Probation Officers were concerned, the Home Office's final objectives document was a "lost opportunity" which underestimated the workload increases experienced by the Probation Service in recent years. Whilst welcoming the extension of the Probation Service's role into the community (National Association of Probation Officers, 1984:2) it commented:

> "We find the suggestion that such work will engage only "an increasing amount of energy or management effort but necessarily of total manpower" both naive and unnacceptable. We have warned the Home Office that such work will lose staff support if it is seen to be diverting scarce resources from existing work with offenders. Such work will involve substantial effort and a development of greater community involvement must be properly funded as a new departure for the Probation Service

By 1984 then an interest in wider work in the community, as part of a wider debate about service objectives and priorities, had gathered a certain, albeit uneven momentum. What became increasingly clear, at least in policy terms, were the different perceptions held by different groups about what specifically wider work in the community for the Probation Service meant in practice. Importantly, as we shall see in the following chapter, a majority of those Probation Service community developments were based not on centralised objectives and priorities but arose from specific local and team interests which pre-dated the Home Office's 1984 statements.

At a national level and following the Home Office's statement

of national objectives and priorities (1984) the National Association of Probation Officers produced three revised papers (National Association of Probation Officer's, 1984a, 1985, 1986) all entitled "Community Based Practice".

The first paper criticised the lack of Home Office clarity about what it referred to as community-based initiatives, and argued that a coherent policy should be developed (National Association of Probation Officers, 1984a:13). The second paper recognised the principal role of the Probation Service as a court based service (1985:1) stating:

> "In the past it has made use of the rhetoric of community, if not actually actively engaged with the reality and consequences of such an orientation".

The paper concluded, again, that "a coherent policy should be developed" (National Association of Probation Officers, 1985:13). The last of these three papers (1986) produced a policy statement under the heading "National Association of Probation Officers Policy Statement. Community Based Practice - The Way Forward" The policy statement began by stating (National Association of Probation Officers, 1986:17):

> "N.A.P.O. believes that the Probation Service should adopt a community orientated approach, and should move in that direction in a more determined manner."

The paper then lists seven principles. In order to fully understand this organisation's comprehension of what it refers to as "community based practice", these principles are produced in full (National Association of Probation Officers, 1986:17):

1. N.A.P.O. maintains that the central justification for community based work is that it seeks to develop a more relevant and effective service to clients based on a better understanding of their needs and the social context of their offending.

2. It is crucially important that the service ensures that it's work and projects are crime related. Community based initiatives should take account of structural, economic and political problems.

3. It also represents a different approach, whereby Probation Staff attempt to mobilise and harness resources within the community, on behalf of their clients, which would not normally be available through orthodox work.

4. For some projects it will also represent an attempt to locate the service's work closer to the level at which crime is committed and experienced.

5. It provides an opportunity for the service to open up it's work and accountability for that work - to people outside the service. In inter-agency projects, the service's work is scrutinised and influenced by other workers. In neighbourhood projects, the service's objectives and methods of intervention are subject to critical evaluation and comment from residents, whether clients or non-offending residents.

6. It represents a recognition that problems - and specifically problems which relate to offending behaviour - are primarily structural and not simply due to individual personality or pathology. Further, it recognises that individualised styles of work are inadequate, and generalised practices need to be developed.

7. Community based work should represent attempts to enable people to resolve their problems more successfully for themselves. It should not increase people's dependancy on the Probation Service or be an attempt to impose workers' values on specific communities. It should be characterised by a transfer of power, skills and knowledge from workers to clients and/or residents."

Whilst it is difficult to understand in detail the implications of each principle, it is nevertheless important to recognise the general approaches proposed in terms of the models outlined earlier. The principles, numbers 1, 3 and 4, and possibly 7 appear to support different ways of working with existing clients (i.e. community Probation work), principle 2 suggests that offending be the prime concern of community based practice (suggesting crime prevention work) and, principles 6 and 7 appear to support and endorse approaches based on community work (especially community action) emphasising the collective possibilities for problem resolutions. Overall the document urges that "community based practice should represent a democratisation of the service" (National Association of Probation Officers, 1986:19). This support for a more participatory approach is in direct contrast both with the Home Office's more directive

and objectives related view of Probation Service community developments (where these are unambiguous), and also in contrast, at that time, with the Central Council of Probation Committee's perception of community involvement which centred exclusively on crime prevention (Central Council of Probation Committees, 1987).

The wider role for the Probation Service incorporating crime prevention and inter-agency co-operation was repeated in a further Home Office document entitled Criminal Justice. A Working Paper (Home Office, 1984a). This broader role was subsequently confirmed in the form of changes to the existing Probation rules which made it part of the duties of Probation Officers, in addition to work with victims, to participate, subject to approval, in crime prevention arrangements. (Home Office, 1984b). At the 1984 annual conference of Chief Officers of Probation entitled The Offender, the Community and the Probation Service, the Home Secretary indicated that the Government's national statement of objectives was regarded as an important means of guiding local Probation Committees about the deployment of existing levels of resources. Another government document concerning crime prevention emerged from a Home Office circular entitled Crime Prevention (Home Office, 1984c). Consideration was given to both the situational and social aspects of crime prevention and the document suggested that inter-agency documentation was necessary to engage in effective work. Specific attention, (Home Office, 1984c:4) similar to the Parliamentary All Parties Penal Affairs Group (1983) was paid to the issue of leisure and young people:

> "Provision of leisure facilities and local plans, for example, is desirable in terms of planning policy generally but may also be helpful in diverting young people from crime."

To illustrate the growing political interest in crime prevention both then and currently a circular (Home Office, 1984c) was produced by the Home Office jointly with the Department of Health and Social Security, the Department of the Environment, the Welsh Office and the Department of

Education and Science. The Government's inter-departmental approach can be regarded as viewing the Probation Service as just another actor requiring direction on the crime prevention stage. As we shall see later, however, it appears that there were several different "community scripts" in existence, none of which appear to acknowledge that the main actors have been trained for different parts and already consider that they have a full list of pressing engagements. Additionally in respect of the Probation Service there is a strong case for arguing that the Home Office's directions regarding Probation Service community developments, even in connection with crime prevention, appear ambiguous and confusing. The Chief Probation Officer of Manchester, amongst others, was, for example, highly critical of those sections of the Home Office's "Criminal Justice. A Working Paper" document (Home Office, 1984a) which were concerned with Probation work in the community. He wrote (Fullwood, 1985:9):

> "If we turn to the Home Office working paper on criminal justice we have similar difficulty in pinpointing exactly what government policies actually mean in relation to the community. Heralded as a strategy, it is quite clear from any cursory reading of this working paper that it is absolutely nothing of the sort but the juxtoposition of an accretion of Civil Service memos from the different departments of the Home Office cemented with liberal pastings of "public confidence", "efficiency and effectiveness", and "balance". "

In a recent Home Office document (Home Office,1986) the revised edition of Criminal Justice. A Working Paper (Home Office, 1984a) the work of the Probation Service, significantly perhaps, does not receive a separate chapter as it did in the original draft (Home Office, 1984a). Instead the Probation Service's work is subsumed under more general provisions concerned with offenders in the community, whether concerning fines, cautions or other practices. In relation to Probation Service community developments however the main reference (Home Office, 1986:25) is as follows:

> "The Probation Service has access to, and the confidence of, a wide range of agencies and

> individuals in the community. This accessibility enables the Service to make an increasing contribution to the local solution of the problems and situations which are all too often associated with the incidents of crime."

The Probation Service is also discussed within the context of the community probation work model in terms of establishing a closer relationship and partnership with voluntary agencies, through what the Home Office calls "vigorous local collaboration".

More recent statements about Probation Service community involvement are contained in a document called "Probation - The Next Five Years. A Joint Statement by A.C.O.P., C.C.P.C., and N.A.P.O. (Association of Chief Officers of Probation, the Central Council of Probation Committees and the National Association of Probation Officers, 1986). This is a briefing paper presenting the views of the three organisation representing the employers, managers and employees of the Probation Service. The document puts the case for the Probation Service in terms of cost effectiveness in comparison with custodial sentences and emphasises the "major role" of the Probation Service in the criminal justice system. Under the heading "Probation - Priorities for Progress" the document's first priority, indicating a possible "growth area" for Probation is that concerned with increased community involvement. This is described (Association of Chief Probation Officers, the Central Council of Probation Committees and the National Association of Probation Officers, 1986:3) as follows:

> "Both the statement of national objectives and priorities and the Probation rules have encouraged the Probation Service to extend it's involvement with relevant community interests. This appropriately includes assisting and supporting local voluntary initiatives in work with victims of crime, and liaison with other agencies on crime prevention work. Experience already shows that such work is time consuming if tackled properly and such community involvement needs to be properly resourced. The government has recognised the important role that Probation workers have sometimes been able to play in inner city areas. Experimental work has shown that they can play a part in helping communities with a high incidence

> of offenders and offending to identify and tackle problems and to press for relevant environmental crime prevention improvements. Although this work is at an early stage of development it clearly has promising potential and deserves support."

Thus possibly for the first time, or so it would appear, three vital organisations central to the work of the Probation Service have produced an agreed statement about what, in their view, should happen in the next five years so far as "increased community involvement" is concerned. The paper urges support to be made available for work which within the context of this thesis centres on crime prevention work and, possible forms of community Probation work. Again, as with the earlier National Association of Probation documents (1984, 1984a, 1985, 1986) the document loses no opportunity to emphasise its case that additional resources should be made available for additional tasks. Possibly the most surprising element of this document is the distillation of the National Association of Probation Officers' views about community action models of community work as emphasised in their earlier paper (National Association of Probation Officers, 1986). Indeed the more recent paper is more in accord with the crime prevention emphasis contained in the document Crime Prevention. A Role for Probation Committees (The Central Council of Probation Committees, 1987). The most recent government statements, to date, about the role of the Probation Service "in the community", even more explicitly than before, are again concerned with crime prevention. According to a government minister (Patten, 1988) the Probation Service will be expected to contribute to the government's "new" 20 Safer Cities Projects, located within the government's 57 Urban Programme areas. As will be detailed the Community Probation Team operates in one such area. According to the minister (Patten, 1988:3):

> "Local knowledge, local involvement and the reduction of locally identified crime problems are vital features of the Safer Cities Programme. The Probation Service will have a full part to play. Each project will be guided by a Steering Committee drawing together the police, the Probation Service, local authority departments, and commercial and community interests ... The aims of the Safer Cities Programme - reducing crime and the fear of

> crime, encouraging enterprise, energy and personal responsibility - call for partnership between all sectors of the community. Safer Cities provides a framework within which such a partnership can flourish."

The notion of "sector partnership", one in which members of the Community Probation Team engaged, reveals as will be shown, the complexities behind the consensual partnership illusion when lack of funding, inter-agency conflicts and intra-agency pressure dominate.

Overall then there has then been a fragmented often indirect debate between dominant interest groups about the priority, nature and resourcing of Probation Service community developments as a relevant, and potentially at least, a growth area in terms of expectations if not financial resources. In contrast with the earlier literature the post 1979 and more particularly 1984 policy literature about such work suggests a consolidation of existing community Probation work approaches with offenders, an extension of tasks for the Probation Service into crime prevention work and finally and much less significantly into community work. This general concern about Probation Service community developments has not, however, been restricted to policy interest groups. It is to those other policy views that attention is now directed.

Shaw (1983) in a similar way to Bottoms and McWilliams (1979) suggests that it is no longer plausible for the Probation Service to claim that it reforms individuals. He considered that the Service might now become in danger of replacing "the myth of rehabilitation" with the "myth of crime prevention", observing that there had been to date, very little direct involvement by Probation staff in crime prevention work. Jordan (1983:88) however supports the case for Probation Officers to become more engaged in direct and indirect forms of community work, arguing that Probation Officers need to:

> "leave their offices and become directly involved in deprived areas, in communities and community work, in the lives of young unemployed people in their streets, and clubs and pubs, not in training

centres or sinbins"

Laycock and Pease (1985:47) argue that the Probation Service should be involved in work directly concerned with offending, namely crime prevention work to compliment other Probation approaches:

> "A balanced approach is called for in which, to date, prevention has lagged behind.....it is now time to begin to redress the balance and in this the skills, experience and knowledge of Probation Staff must be put to best use - either taking the lead as co-ordinators of crime prevention initiatives or in contributing to the establishment of crime prevention schemes in collaboration with others."

Raynor speaking at the 1985 National Association of Probation Officers professional conference entitled Probation - from Court to Community revealed a more pragmatic approach to this area of work. He considered that decisions about resources and local priorities should determine if and whether the Probation Service became involved in crime prevention work. He appeared very doubtful (Raynor, 1985:4) as to whether community work practice and theory would be of much assistance to the Probation Service:

> "The literature and practice of community work is riddled with disputes about aims, methods and ideologies because community work is perhaps the easiest area of social welfare practice in which to get completely lost and to see your efforts diffused and dissipated in a variety of conflicting directions, achieving very little."

By contrast Henderson, a lecturer in community work at the National Institute of Social Work (commissioned by the Home Office to undertake a national survey into community work and the Probation Service) considered that the Probation Service should and could "move into" community work subject to it's closer association with crime prevention work. He wrote (1986a:53):

> "While some Probation Officers are dubious about linking community work to crime prevention, because it places untested expectations onto community work, this may turn out (to) be a strong argument for community work in the Probation setting .....

> in political terms, geting community work on the map may also be crucial for the Probation Service as part of its survival as an agency committed to social work principles."

Henderson seems to be saying, on the one hand that Probation Service involvement with community work would consolidate the Service's social work principles, but on the other hand that community work should be more closely associated with crime prevention. Whether or not crime prevention work can, therefore, be equated with a "new" form of social work remains unclear. Inevitably the answer depends on what these terms mean in practice, illustrating again the need for detailed empirical knowledge about this area of work. Harding (1987:12) acknowledges the pioneering and experiental nature and history of community involvement by Probation Officers and lends his support to work "whose guiding principle" is that it is "relevant". Although it is not exactly clear what he means by relevance, his illustrations of such work embrace elements of all three of the Community Probation work, community work and crime prevention models discussed earlier. Significantly however in terms of actual recorded practices by the Probation Service, all but one of the contributions to Harding's book are firmly centred on different ways of meeting the needs of Probation Service clients, in other words, in the broadest sense, forms of Community Probation Work, not community work nor crime prevention work. Significantly perhaps the one article about crime prevention work in that book is not about work done by the Probation Service but work done by the National Association for the Care and Re-settlement of Offenders and the author (Stern, 1987:223) makes the following point about inter-agency co- operation in this area:

> "Regrettably, and with a few notable exceptions, the social services and the Probation Service have as yet to consider how to consult with local communities and how to involve them in their work with offenders."

The findings of the postal questionnaire to Inner London Probation Service fieldwork teams presented in the following chapter and, later, the detailed case study itself, support

Stern's view. The findings also suggest that any analysis of consultation issues between professional agencies and others must take into consideration a combination of perceptual and pragmatic factors as well as organisational and theoretical factors about the role of the Probation Service within the criminal justice system.

The literature about Probation Service community developments then appears to be of recent origin, largely limited to normative accounts, and embraces a range of viewpoints, ideas and ideologies. The following chapter examines what has actually happened to date about greater Probation Service involvement in communities, and specifically in the wake of recent rhetoric.

CHAPTER FOUR

An Examination of the Practice Dimension in Probation Community Developments

Very little has been written about what has actually taken place in the Probation Service either prior to or since the "community debate" began, and gathered pace throughout the early part of the 1980's. Even when all the Probation Service areas local statements of objectives and priorities, as a response to the Statement of National Objectives and Priorities (Home Office, 1984) were analysed by Lloyd (1986), he revealed unclear and inconsistent findings about "wider work in the community". He wrote (Lloyd, 1986:71):

> "Local statements provided very nebulous information in this section. Many areas failed to describe explicit strategies for carrying out proposals and in this field of work more than any other, it was very difficult to separate objectives for the future from those that had already been implemented. The scarcity of precise information was no doubt partly due to many areas having little accurate information available on the nature of work being done or the extent of resources it takes up." (emphasis added)

This chapter aims to analyse existing Probation Service community developments paying particular attention to its recorded community and crime prevention work, rather than stated intentions in these areas. It begins with an examination of overall developments within one large Probation Service, the Inner London Probation Service. This is followed by a review of practical developments elsewhere, including specific developments in certain inner city areas.

Findings of the Inner London Probation Service Questionnaire Survey

Classification of community developments

As indicated in Chapter one (see note 2), after writing in April 1985 to all the Probation areas in England and Wales, as well as the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders, it became clear that there was very little information about current practices in this area. Whilst this finding in itself reinforced the need for practical developments to be explored, it also meant there was no available information which could be used, in any depth to compare with the questionnaire findings. It is acknowledged, that within such a diverse area detailed comparisons in any case might have proved difficult.

There were two broad purposes of conducting a postal questionnaire survey about Probation Service community developments within Inner London. First it was necessary to obtain information, within the limitations of a questionnaire format, about one Probation Service's existing work in order to clarify and classify the level and types of Probation Service community developments. Second the questionnaire (Appendix A) sought to obtain the views of Probation staff about organisational and professional issues for fieldwork teams and the Probation Service arising from greater involvement in this type of work. A postal questionnaire was piloted, amended and finally distributed to all 47 fieldwork Probation teams within the Inner London Probation Service area. Twenty four questionnaires accounting for the work of 31, or 66 per cent of the total sample (n=47) were returned by April 1985. The Inner London Probation Service's own Statement of Objectives and Priorities (Inner London Probation Service, 1984:25-29) which gave encouragement, within the wider context (Home Office, 1984, 1984a, 1984b), to Probation Service community developments had been published earlier in November 1984. Whilst there was not a large gap, five months, between the issuing of the local objectives and the respondents completion of the

questionnaires, nevertheless respondent's comments provided some indications of the issues raised by this official encouragement and endorsement of this area of work. For example the Inner London's statement of objectives and priorities (Inner London Probation Service, 1984:27) referred to the Community Probation Team as one example of this type of "new initiative", and offered resource inducements for teams becoming "community oriented":

> "... Teams who have set up or are in the process of establishing an increased but essentially community-oriented range of facilities for their clients and others at risk will be helped with some extra resources."

Since, as it has already been acknowledged, Probation terms with the "community" prefix attached to them can be somewhat ambiguous, I tried to reduce the opportunities for such ambiguities, as well as under or over recording to emerge in the postal questionnaire and, of course, respondents replies. This was done in two ways; first by providing definitions in the questionnaire of key terms including "patchwork" and "community profiles", second by asking both pre-coded and open ended questions about the general area of Probation Service community developments. It was hoped that the latter would enable, indeed encourage the widest range of replies. On the basis of the answers given it was then possible at the data analysis stage to classify these various Probation Service community developments initially in terms of issues (such as housing, employment), and later locate them within the overall conceptual framework introduced at the beginning of the last chapter (i.e. Community Probation Work, Community Work and Crime Prevention Work).

The literature on the identification and utilisation of local networks and localised social work delivery systems (see, for example, Hadley and Hatch, 1980; Davies, 1985; Allen, 1983), suggests that it is necessary for workers to have up to date knowledge about an area's social characteristics, resources and informal networks. Davies (1985:123) writing specifically on patchwork states:

> "In it's most simple form this might mean only that a team of social workers (or even a single social worker) is attached to a clearly defined geographical district, but in it's most advance forms it means that the office buildings are decentralised, that the social worker co-ordinates teams of colleagues on the patch, that maximum use is made of volunteers, of informal caring networks and of internal-agency liaison, and that the social workers are therefore both more visible and more accessible to the community."

For Hadley and Hatch (1980:96) they proposed the following "essential features" of a "community-centred model of organisation" which involved:

> "a) locally based teams focusing on small areas or patches;
> b) the capacity to obtain detailed information about the patch;
> c) accessibility and acceptability to the patch population;
> d) close liaison with other local agencies and groups;
> e) the integration of all field and domiciliary workers within patch teams;
> f) participative forms of management in patch and area teams;
> g) the exercise of a substantial degree of autonomy by patch and area teams."

Whilst there must remain some serious doubt about the capacity of a largely centrally funded agency within the criminal justice system to embrace all of Hadley and McGrath's essential features, nevertheless there remain opportunities, at least in principle, to embrace some of these elements, particularly concerning the allocation of individual Probation Officers to specific geographical areas. For the Probation Service it would also be necessary, according to Hadley and Hatch's general suggestion (1980), for there to be a shift in emphasis towards knowledge of the locality and away from an exclusive concern with "the client in interview" if work in the locality or with the residents in the locality is to have any substantial meaning. Two preliminary measures which would offer potential famililiarisation opportunities would be moving towards an area <u>patchwork</u> style of organisation and making available and using <u>community profiles</u>, that is profiles concerning

existing local resources and other information.

In the postal questionnaire patchwork was defined as involving Probation Officers taking work from a concentrated and clearly defined "patch" area which formed part of the wider geographical area covered by the Probation Team itself. Two types of patchwork were identified; one (type A) involving staff working outside the team office, at a sub office; the second (type B) involving staff working from within the team office. Community profiles were described in the questionnaire as "a comprehensive listing of local agencies/resoures useful to the Probation Service". Again two types were identified; the first (type A) prepared by the Probation Service; the second (type B) prepared by other agencies. Table 2 provides information about the existence, or otherwise, of patchwork for the 31 fieldwork Probation Teams covered by the survey.

Table 2

Probation Fieldwork Teams within the Inner London Probation Service (N = 31) involved in Patchwork, by Number and Type, as at April 1985.

No of Teams Covered in Survey	No. of Teams Involved in Patchwork	No. of Teams Not Involved in Patchwork	Nos. Involved in Patchwork Type A (ie Outside the Office	Nos. Involved in Patchwork Type B (ie Inside the Office	Av. Period of Time in Existence
31 (100%)	8 (26%)	23 (24%)	0 (0%)	8 (26%)	1.6 years

None of the eight teams operating some sort of patch system had introduced them since the areas objectives were introduced in November 1984. Indeed on average the patches

had already been in existence for 18 months. Of the eight Probation teams stating they operated a patch system (or 26% of the sample), all of them consisted of staff operating from their office base, and not within the locality in a sub-office. Of those eight teams four indicated that patchwork, as defined earlier in relation to the questionnaire, only applied to one or two team members and then at their, and not senior management's instigation. This point can be illustrated by the comments of one respondent: "One officer has tended to concentrate on a single estate and adjacent streets and has revealed startling, hitherto unknown, networks of client relationships."

Another Probation Officer in a team which repeatedly refused to return the questionnaire, used the questionnaire survey as an opportunity to present her own view on of that team's patch developments. She wrote:

> "While four members of our team are currently experimenting working a patch system in our area ..... it is already evident that because of the size of our caseloads and other committments together with the distance of the patch from our office we will not be able to develop a significantly new approach nor make any real impact on the area."

The existing cutbacks in public expenditure together with the centralised, not localised nature of the majority of Probation funding regarding resources, buildings and manpower levels combine to put severe constraints on the Probation Services authority to decide for itself the location and type of offices it uses. Within Inner London in particular, and as we shall see later in respect of the case study, the administration of Probation requests for additional or alternative premises is conducted through the Metropolitan Police's Receivers Department. The relevance of this point for the Inner London Service will become clearer in the case study. At this stage it is suffice to note that Probation patchwork initiatives recorded in the questionnaire as a means, to repeat Davies' (1985:13) words of becoming "both more visible and more accessible to the community" appeared limited in their scope, location and application.

A second measure for obtaining local knowledge, if not actually having wider direct access to the locality, concerns the availability of up to date information about an area's resources and agencies. Here Table 3 reveals that 12 (or 38% of the sample) Probation teams had, (but it should not be assumed, used) such community profiles.

Table 3

Probation Fieldwork Teams (N=31) with Community Profiles, by Number and Type, as at April 1985.

TYPE A	TYPE B	
Teams Using Community Profiles Prepared by the Probation Service	Teams Using Community Profiles Prepared by the Other Agencies	Teams Without Community Profiles
7 (22%)	5 (16%)	19 (62%)

Of those seven teams using community profiles prepared by the Probation Service (type A profiles), three stated that they were prepared "some years ago" and that they were in the process of being updated, (by Probation Service Ancillaries) or were being examined by working parties. Again as with the interest in patchwork, the preparation of community profiles appeared to reflect individual and team interests rather than organisational priorities. Overall there appeared to be a lack of consistency about the type and application of community profiles to Probation work. The finding that just three of the eight teams operating some sort of patch system also had access to community profiles again supports the suggestion that both measures stemmed from local interests rather than from organisational priorities.

The next sections in the postal questionnaire provided scope for respondents to indicate their team's involvement in the community. Questions seven and eight asked respondents to list all the community initiatives engaged in by their team members. They were asked specifically to give the name and level of the staff member involved, the name/type of project/group with which involved, the position held by Probation staff (if there was "formal" Probation involvement), the nature of their duties, and the approximate time spent per month engaged in these duties. As Table 4 indicates, of the potential 259 Probation Officers available in the 31 teams covered by the survey, 114 (or 44% of the sample) were involved in a total of 124 local projects and groups. In other words on average each of the 31 teams were involved with four projects. In order to establish more clearly the role and significance in terms of time committment of the Probation Service in respect of it's community developments, it was necessary to identify, as far as was possible from a postal questionnaire, the types of work engaged in as well as the amount of time spent on such work. Table 4 then provides a break down of all the respondents' replies concerning community developments within the Inner London Probation Service,as at April 1985.

4

le illustrating Community Developments within Inner London Probation
:e Fieldwork Teams(n=31) by issue (note 1), number of projects,estimated
ly involvement and staff numbers (note 2), as at April 1985.

of Project/Issue	Number of Projects Involved	Estimated Monthly Involvement (in Hours)	Estimated Monthly Involvement (expressed as a % of the Total Hours Involved	Estimated Numbersof Staff Involved
ıder-orientated				
nunity Probation Work) (note 4)				
ing/Hostels	52	440	50	34
s	10	92	10	8
: Projects	4	90	10	8
ation Volunteers	7	32	4.5	10
ıiatrists	4	14	1.5	4
:mediate Treatment	2	13	1.5	3
ı Custody	2	10	1	3
Totals	81	691	78.5	70
offender orientated				
munity Work) (note 4)				
ims	13	54	6	13
Probation Day Centres	3	46	6	5
oyment Groups	9	42	5	10
ı Groups	8	17	2	8
:e/Tenants	5	14	1.5	5
:iation Groups				
ects for Children	1	12	1	3
Totals	39	185	21.5	44
;	120	876	100	114
l Staff				
ıtially Available				259
l Hours Potentially				
lable during a one				
ı period (note 3)		34,177.5		

Note 1

Only those projects/issues which involved an estimated minimum of ten hours per month for all teams is included here. In terms of time committment these less significant initiatives included liasion with the following groups; the police, education services, ethnic groups, neighbourhood associations, welfare benefit groups, the careers service, the Family Welfare Association, and Juvenile Courts. (Totalling 31 hours per month for all these groups combined together). Another set of issues including "adventure activities", Guardian ad Litem work, and family planning were also listed but without full answers being given about the number of hours spent per month involved in such work. Apart from adventure activities work with Probation clients where at least ten staff were involved on a regular basis, these other issues only involved a total of two staff and are therefore not included in Table 4.

Note 2

The term staff refers to Probation, not administrative staff.

Note 3

This refers to the total number of potential working hours available during a one month period for the 31 fieldwork teams. The figure of 34,177.5 hours was calculated on the basis of a 7.5 hour basic working day for Probation staff, as at 1985. This figure was then multiplied by 21 (the average number of working days in a calendar month), then by seven (the average number of Probation Officers in each of the fieldwork teams at the time), and, finally, by 31 (the number of teams covered by the postal questionnaire).

Note 4

The postal questionnaire format does not readily accommodate the precise classification of Probation Service community developments. However, whilst it was possible to distinguish

between offender and non-offender oriented work, the synonymity of these terms respectively, with community probation work and community work, whilst useful as general guidance, should be regarded with a degree of caution.

Possibly the two most important findings concern the amount of time devoted to this type of work, and the nature of the work itself. Of the total working hours potentially available to all 31 fieldwork teams over a one month period, calculated at 34,177.5 hours the team's total estimated time spent on a monthly basis for Probation Service community developments amounted to only 876 hours. Whilst fully acknowledging the statutory functions of the Probation Service and its numerous responsibilities, nevertheless this figure of 876 hours, representing just 2.5 per cent of the potential working time available, is minimal. Explanations for this low level of involvement, based on further respondents' comments will be discussed shortly, and, in considerably more depth in relation to the case study. At this point it is necessary to examine the second point, namely the nature of this work, contained in Table 4.

By far the majority of total time (78.5 per cent) involved Probation Officers, so far as one could tell, in Community Probation work, as defined earlier, with forms of community work accounting for just 21.5 per cent of Probation Service community developments. Whilst it is perhaps not surprising that such a majority of time is spent on offender orientated work, the statutory nature of the majority of this work raises crucial questions, as we shall see, about the limits of Probation Service community developments.

As Table 4 indicates an estimated 440 hours, representing 50 per cent of total community developments involved work with "hostels" and "housing", as issues. Out of the total of 52 housing projects listed in the questionnaires 46 were voluntary hostels, five were voluntary agencies (such as housing associations) and one a resettlement centre. Furthermore of these 46 hostels 36 were directly concerned

with offenders or ex-offenders. Five were statutory Probation Hostels, one a Bail Hostel and the majority (30) voluntary aftercare hostels (for parolees, ex-Youth Custody/Detention Centre cases, or ex-offenders in general). Of the remainder, seven hostels were for drug abusers of various sorts and three hostels could not be classified because of insufficient information. In other words of the liaison type of community Probation work covering the 31 Probation teams, in respect of housing, itself constituting 50 per cent of all involvement, the majority (69 per cent) centred directly on offender-orientated hostels. This work cannot be described as voluntary community work (York, 1984; Butcher, 1984), but rather represents a statutory duty by the Probation Service (powers of the Criminal Courts Act 1973, schedule three, paragraph 11) to manage and staff a variety of residential establishments "for use in connection with the rehabilitation of offenders" (Jarvis, 1974: 41-42). Twenty two of the 30 so-called "voluntary after-care" hostels also had bed spaces for quotas of non-offenders. In other words these hostels were not only concerned, at least in the formal sense, with the rehabilitation of offenders but with meeting wider societal accommodation needs. Significantly there have been indications from the Home Office (Home Office, 1984g) that whilst, on the one hand, the Probation Service is being encouraged and authorised to engage in wider work in the community (Home Office 1984, 1984a, 1984b,), on the other hand, at least in respect of hostels' work, and according to the Home Office itself (Home Office, 1984g), this is to be focussed on ongoing statutory work, and not voluntary after-care work. Indeed, "after-care" has been removed from the formal name of Probation areas, indicating a lower priority. Thus in the Home Office's Statement of National Objectives and Priorities (Home Office 1984:5) and in respect of after-care it states:

> "Sufficient resources should be allocated to through-care to enable the Service's statutory obligations to be discharged...Beyond that, social work for offenders released from custody, though important in itself, can only command the priority which is consistent with the main objective of implementing non-custodial measures for offenders..."

Additionally in 1984 the Home Office (Home Office, 1984g), was pursuing a review of aftercare accommodation which was:

> "...concerned to identify how the (after-care) scheme helps to meet requirements of the Criminal Justice System (e.g. by contributing to alternatives to custody, reducing the-offending rates), rather than to wider social needs such as homelessnes, though we realise that this distinction may be difficult to draw..." (emphasis added)

The Inner London Probation Service response (Inner London Probation Service, 1985f) to these review proposals emphasised particular concerns about "the restricted nature" of the Home Office Review, its background of no provision for additional resources for 1985/1986 and the Home Office's insistence of financing schemes which "meet the requirements of the criminal justice system rather than to wider social needs such as homelessness." Subsequent to this Review as correspondence from the Home Office's Probation Division (Home Office 1985e, 1985f) makes clear the Home Office was attempting to implement its "offender only policy" through enforcing financial control over hostels not only, as seems reasonable by requiring regular audited accounts, for direct grants but by requiring Home Office financed hostels to focus on the "rehabilitation of ex offenders" and introduce "economic efficiency and effectiveness".

In other words the opportunities for the Probation Service to engage in wider work in the community, so far as housing issues are concerned, were being limited. First, in practice these were already limited to the fulfilment of statutory duties, and second they focussed on the management of offender hostels, not about community work concerning local housing as an issue. Additionally, opportunities to meet wider social needs relating to homelessness appeared to be becoming increasingly constrained by formal administrative procedures and policies whose function was to limit the Probation Service community involvement to meet the requirements of the Criminal Justice System. Furthermore, from respondents' replies there was no evidence to suggest

that Probation staff were engaged in a community work approach to housing, making direct links with small non-offender focussed voluntary groups. Rather a pattern emerged from the questionnaire which suggested that staff were acceding to formal liaison and management requirements and constraints.

Following housing, the next two issues which attracted most staff commitment in terms of time were drugs and motor projects involving 92 and 90 hours staff time per month respectively. Involvement by Probation staff with drugs as a issue, it is acknowledged, could have been included with housing and hostels since much of the drug work centred on liaison work with drug hostels. Nevertheless it seemed preferable to separate drugs from that category for the following reasons. First, from the questionnaire returns it was not possible in every case to identify whether Probation involvement was with a hostel or a non-residential project (such as a day centre or a drop-in centre). Second, it could have been misleading to have analysed the issue of involvement with drugs with the issue of accommodation for ex-offenders.

In respect of drugs then the questionnaire data revealed that out of the eight staff, (across 31 fieldwork teams) involved in the issue of drugs, five staff were located in just three teams. These accounted for 140 hours per month, or 77 per cent of all the teams total involvement in this area. Additionally, and critically, all of the staff, four main grade Probation Officers and one Senior Probation Officer, were involved as formal liaison officers with five hostels for offenders dealing with the specific problem of drug (particularly heroin) abuse. This concentration of Probation interest in "specialist" ex-offender hostels again is explained by the Probation Service's statutory requirement (Powers of the Criminal Court Act, 1973, Schedule 3, paragraph 11) to act as a formal agent, on behalf of the hostels' funding body, in total or in part, the Home Office. So far as Probation work with motor projects was concerned all eight staff involving an estimated 90 per month (or ten

per cent of the total community involvement) were involved with motor projects or young offenders or young people "at risk" (of offending). All four projects were either directly funded by the Inner London Probation Service, or in partnership with Social Services and other organisations. Apart from individual work with psychiatrists concerning specific clients, and liaison work with Youth Custody Centres and intermediate training projects, the remaining form of community probation work concerned the use of Probation volunteers. The low number of staff, ten in total, working with Probation volunteers represented a very small percentage (4.5 per cent) of the overall time spent by Probation staff involved in work in the wider community. Arguably it also represents what has been regarded by several writers (Darvill, and Munday 1985; Barr, 1977) as a low interest generally by the Probation Service in the use of volunteers. Indeed, "the decline in the use of volunteers" was something which the Inner London Probation Service (Inner London Probation Service, 1984:23) wanted to reverse according to its objectives document.

Examining the second half of Table 4, concerned, broadly speaking, with community work, it is significant that this work area only constitutes an estimated 21.5 per cent of all the work described by respondents. Arguably the growth of interest in recent years in victim support schemes is reflected in the number of schemes, 13, with which respondents were formally involved. According to one of the Assistant Directors of the National Association of Victim Support Schemes[14] there were 26 such schemes within the Inner London Probation Service area in 1985, when the questionnaire was conducted. Work with victim support schemes is an example of a specific form of community involvement which both the Home Office (see, for example Home Office, 1984; 1986) and (Inner London Probation Service, 1984) has encouraged. It was apparent from replies that the main form of service involvement was mainly at Senior Probationer Officer grade (in 82 per cent of cases) as a member of local victim support scheme's management committee. Again this type of Probation Service community involvement, like the

work with hostels and drug projects represents a long standing tradition in Probation, endorsed through legislation and, in this case, authorised through changes in the Probation rules (Home Office, 1984b) of junior management representation at projects which have a direct connection with the wider Criminal Justice System. It also represents an extension of the Probation Services social work function, in this case supporting and advising project staff and, training victim support volunteers. This combined management/social work function also applied to those five members of staff involved in non-Probation day centres (involving the single homeless in two projects and the mentally ill in one other project). Community work with "employment groups", as it is described in Table 4, centred on involvement by ten Probation staff, eight of whom worked with local youth unemployment projects and two of whom worked directly with schemes promoting the Government's Youth Training Scheme programmes. Because of lack of sufficient information it was not possible to estimate if and to what extent these two categories overlapped. In respect of levels of representation, work with employment groups, youth groups and estate/tenants association groups all involved main grade, not Senior Probation Officers, and involved very small numbers in terms of staff involved and monthly involvement in terms of hours. Finally the one project involving three staff members for children centred, again on court work but here regarding contested access cases. In other words, overall, the majority of the Probation Service's community developments centred on fulfilling statutory requirements, with minimal non-criminal community work.

The questionnaire also provided an opportunity to enable respondents to provide information about the nature and frequency of formal contacts (i.e. agency not individual representation) made between the Probation Service and other agencies to discuss matters <u>other</u> than those concerned with enhancing client service delivery systems. Specifically respondents were asked to list those organisations/groups, additional to those discussed above with which the Probation Service met to discuss matters of "mutual interest". This

question was designed to complement previous questions providing an opportunity for staff to list, in effect, any remaining involvement not covered in previous questions.

The survey revealed two main findings; first that there was minimal contact on a regular basis (on average less than four times a year) between Probation teams/Officers and other organisations, second that the organisations (with just four exceptions) were either large personal social services organisations (for example Department of Health and Social Security, the National Health Service, the Education Service), or organisations directly concerned with the criminal justice system (for example Magistrates). Of the 34 different agencies with which the 37 teams met over a one year period, the majority of meetings (77 per cent) were only held between "one and four times a year" or "as and when necessary". The majority (an estimated 80 per cent) of these meetings were with large statutory and voluntary agencies including the Social Services, the Department of Health and Social Security, the Magistrates Courts, the Police, the Manpower Services Commission, hospitals, the Youth Service, and Education Services. Representation was with just three exceptions, at Senior Probation Officer level. This finding is consistent with Henderson's (1985:45) questionnaire study which recorded that the groups with which the Probation teams he surveyed met most frequently were the social services departments, the police, the voluntary sector, education and housing services. There was a noticeable absence of Probation involvement with smaller local organisations. Together with the other information provided, the answers concerning "mutual interest" meetings suggested that the Probation Services' interest in the community centred on liaison with organisations whose primary functions, like the Probation Service itself represented elements of society's formal social control and social welfare mechanisms. They did not appear to represent contacts with organisations not concerned with the administration of existing public services. Overall then when combining all the diverse types of community involvement engaged in by these 37 fieldwork Probation teams a pattern emerged of consistently low levels

of involvement principally concerned with fulfilling statutory responsibilities, and inter-agency liaison work with the larger personal social service or criminal justice agencies.

Respondents Views about Community Developments

The second part of the questionnaire sought respondents' views about the level of interest in, benefits and disadvantages of Probation Service community developments. These provided some answers to questions about some of the outstanding questions raised above about why this areas of work received such little priority by practitioners. Question 14 asked respondents to assess how much importance they considered Probation community development should be given by the Probation Service. Of the answers given (N = 25) all of them on a five point scale ranging from "very high" through to "very low" considered it should be given either "high" or "very high" importance. However, when asked (question 13) how much importance is given to this work a dysjunction emerged between normative expectations and actual experiences. Of the answers given (N = 25) 21 (or 84 per cent of the sample) considered that this work was, in fact, regarded by the Probation Service as being of either "low" or "very low" importance. (A further three answers stated that it was regarded as being of "high" importance by the Probation Service, and one answer considered it was regarded as being of as both "high" and "low" importance to the Probation Service). A further question (question 11a) asked how such work was regarded by team members. Of the answers given (N = 22) 17 (or 70 per cent of the sample) considered that this was regarded as being "high" or "very high" in terms of importance. The stark contrast between, on the one hand, stated organisations priorities and expectations, and on the other hand, respondents experiences were supported by the perceived lack of organisational structures designed to support such work, together with lack of knowledge about such structures as existed at that time within the Inner London Probation Service. A brief account of such structures as they relate to Probation Service community developments is

necessary before discussing this aspect of the questionnaire's findings.

The Inner London Probation Service, contained 86 fieldwork teams as at April 1985. It can be described as having all the necessary characteristics of an organisational culture which emphasises the importances of fixed roles. As Handy (1978:180) observes, organisational cultures have rules and procedures which govern communications, roles and the settlement of disputes. Within the Inner London Probation Services, as in similar organisations elsewhere, these procedures govern staff appointments, finances, and manpower types and levels, amongst other functions. These administrative rules and procedures are contained in a comprehensive handbook called "The Inner London Probation Service Handbook" (Inner London Probation Service, 1985g, annually updated). Within Inner London Probation Service the Chief Probation Officer, four Deputy Chief Probation Officers and 17 Assistant Chief Probation Officers represent the broad band of senior management which, to use Handy's analogy of a Greek temple, straddle the pediment of each separate vertical pillar. Administratively in respect of community developments one Deputy Chief Probation Officer had, as at 1984/1986, overall responsibilty for at least 10 different areas of Probation work including the work done by one small (one Senior Probation Office, one Probation Officer, one ancillary worker) "community resources" team based at headquarters. The coordination for "community resources" work at field team and headquarters level was coordinated through an advisory committee called the Community Resources Advisory Committee. This committee met monthly with the Community Resources team based at headquarters and with two Senior Probation Officer representatives from each of the four Inner London Probation Divisions. Beyond headquarters, then, apart from two specific community liaison Probation Officer posts, there were no specialist administrative structures regarding community developments, only the existing organisational framework of 17 Regional Assistant Chief Probation Officers and 86 Probation Teams. The centralised Community Resources

Advisory Committee was the only formal coordinating and advisory group for Probation Service Community Developments. As at 1985, when the questionnaire was distributed, the Community Resources Advisory Committee has been in existence four years, the Community Resources Department, three years.

In the questionnaire, respondents were asked to identify any structures within Inner London Probation Service designed either totally or in part to discuss and support community initiatives and developments. Of the answers (N = 22) given 10 (or 45 per cent of the sample) identified either the Community Resources Department or the Community Resources Advisory Committee. The remainder listed the names of individual Assistant Chief Probation Officers (two replies), one stated "Community Team", one stated "none" and two said "don't know". Six teams gave no answer at all. Furthermore from the minutes of the meetings of the Community Resources Advisory Committee for the period 1985/1986 it proved possible to identify that eight of those ten teams that were aware of "community resources" structures were the same teams which regularly sent representatives to the meetings of the Community Resources Advisory Committee. It appeared then that knowledge about such relevant structures as did exist did not extend beyond those who had already indicated a personal or team interest in such issues and were formally represented at the single forum designed to discuss such work. It also indicated, of course, that the other teams were unaware of such structures. The lack of knowledge about organisational structures by some teams did not prevent respondents from listing the benefits and disadvantages for the Probation Service of becoming more involved in community developments.

Question 15 asked respondents to identify such benefits and a content analysis produced a total of 32 different answers. 22 (or 81 per cent of the sample) focussed on the benefits of improving the service delivery for clients (for example "increasing the avalability of specialised knowledge"). The remaining eight answers focussed on the needs of the Probation Service (for example "to be better understood by

other agencies"). It was noticeable that in answer to the "benefits question" the answers were short and clipped, in contrast to the question (16) which asked about difficulties. Examples of the former, in relation to client benefits were:

" - wider based provisions
- access to specialists
- wider range of services
- expert knowledge to meet client needs
- more agencies willing to help our clients
- we can ensure our clients are getting the best possible service
- provide a better service"

However it was in response to question 16 about difficulties for the Probation Service of being involved in such work, and question 17 which asked for further general comments, that attracted the most strongly worded replies. The 28 answers provided by 21 respondents were categorised into difficulties concerned with practical matters (19 answers), and those concerning the role of the Probation Service (nine answers). Of those answers concerning practical matters the most frequently listed difficulty (13 answers) was the lack of time and/or resources available to engaged in work in the wider community. The following replies illustrate how this problem was experienced:

> "This work requires a lot of time and energy. My problem, as a Senior Probation Officer, is getting officers to think beyond the immediate demands of their statutory tasks and giving them the necessary time and space."
>
> "If individual officers are to be identified to act as coordinators this smacks of "management" and puts people off, without any obvious reduction in other work pressures. Comparing this (Community Development) work with adventure activities it is defined as a primary task but there is little evidence in practice, efforts are not valued. It's an "extra" to be undertaken in free time or done "just for expenses". (emphasis in original)
>
> "Although management gives lip service to the importance of community contacts no credit or relief is allowed in respect of statutory duties or case load."
>
> "We don't have the time. Most areas of our statutory work are expanding or have the potential to expand"

> "The team has found it very difficult to move forward towards a more community orientated approach and at the same time coping with the demands of being an ordinary field team."
>
> "There's a lack of space and time available because of pressures of court work. A switch of resources, or more resources, is necessary".

Respondents were also concerned with existing workloads and had a certain caution about, as they perceived it, taking on more work without other workload allowances being made. Six answers concerning practical difficulties centred around the reluctance by Probation Officers to work in other ways than on an individual basis with their clients (four answers) and lack of sufficient training (two answers). The remaining nine answers about organisational difficulties centred around role ambiguities for the Probation Service of being engaged inwider community developments. The following examples illustrate the nature of the problem as expressed by five respondents:

> "We could lose our distinct identity as a criminal justice social controller. We may become yet another nebulous welfare organisation and lose that necessary role of working with offenders."
>
> "An enormous amount of time and energy seems to go into explaining our role and understanding the role of others, often for very little return."
>
> "The probation service could be forced into taking a political stance if it began to expand its work in the community. This would be unacceptable so far as the organisation was concerned."
>
> "We have to keep to professional boundaries. It is not at all clear what we are expected to do when engaging the rapidly expanding networks of community developments."
>
> "More effort (daunting) and greater clarity of role (frightening) are required. What happens if we define ourselves out of a job?"

In answering the question about both benefits and disadvantages, respondents replied in terms of benefits to clients whereas in respect of difficulties (with just two exceptions) staff focussed on difficulties for the Probation

Service. There were some indications then that greater community involvment with voluntary agencies, though beneficial for clients, raised awkward questions about the role and capacity (in workload terms) of the Probation Service in this work.

Summary of questionnaire findings

Whilst acknowledging the inevitable limitations of using a postal questionnaire in general, (see, for example, Mann, 1985:155-170) and particularly concerning such a dynamic and fluid subject such as community developments, nevertheless the survey revealed a breadth of preliminary findings. The main issues raised by the 31 fieldwork teams were concerned with the low levels and limited nature of Probation Service community involvement, the very limited use of patchwork approaches and availability of community profiles, an absence of organisational guidelines, and the identification of practitioner reservations about such work. Local developments, beyond statutory involvement with offender orientated organisations, appeared uncoordinated. Whilst existing workload levels appeared as a major constraint on present and future developments a significant number of respondents identified actual not potential benefits for clients, in terms of the accessibility of additional services. Involvement with hostels for offenders formed the overwhelming majority of all Probation Officers' work in the community. There were very minimal indications that the Inner London Probation Service had shifted its practice, in any significant way, towards community work approaches or crime prevention work. Additionally there was no indication from respondents' replies that the statement of local objectives and priorities (Inner London Probation Service, 1984) had encouraged any particular developments, other than perhaps raising the awareness of Probation Teams about this potential area for future development. As we shall see this latter finding and others are in accord with Henderson's survey (1985).

Other practical Probation developments: 1982-1987

In 1985 at the specific request of the Home Office's Research and Planning Unit the National Institute of Social Work began undertaking, in three parts, a national survey of community developments in the Probation Service. The first part consisted of a postal questionaire being sent out to two Probation teams in each of the Probation Services of England, Northern Ireland and Wales. One team considered by the relevant Chief Probation Officer to be the most involved in what Henderson calls "community work" was selected, the other being selected at random. The final report based on this questionnaire has not yet been published although I was given a copy of the second and final draft (Henderson, 1985). The second part of the survey which has been published (Henderson, 1986) involved the author visiting, interviewing and observing, for short periods, eight teams that had previously indicated on the questionnaire returns a degree of involvement in their communities. Each part of the study was essentially descriptive rather than analytical and considerable emphasis was given to training issues, reflecting in part the training interests and concerns of the National Institute of Social Work. Of the postal questionnaire study (Henderson, 1985) made the following comments: "There was very little difference between the randomly selected and the Chief Probation Officer selected teams in terms of community involvement", (Henderson, 1985:6). Most (85 per cent) of Probation Service community involvement was concerned with offender and not community oriented initiatives. The majority of inter-agency work, as noted earlier, was with the large statutory agencies such as the police, social services and so on (Henderson 1985:45).

His questionnaire study was also concerned with examining the relationship between the local Probation Service objectives concerning wider work in community, and actual practices. The study concluded, (Henderson, 1985: concluding comments 1-2):

> "There was a wide range of criteria about definitions of community involvement. ... There was very little evidence of work done on the Objectives

> and Priorities paper "filtering through in policy terms to the teams." ... There appeared to be a policy, training and planning vacuum regarding general community initiatives. ...Only one of the eight teams was already highly involved with community initiatives, and this involvement predated the 1984 Home Office Paper." (emphasis added)

Throughout the study Henderson and in contrast to this thesis used a very broad definition of "community work" to include offender orientated work, Probation run groups, Probation Officers using community resources, as well as generalist community work. In his report of the eight selected teams Henderson concluded(1986:12) starkly:

> "The research indicates that, despite the vulnerability and non-recognition of a lot of community work, it is being undertaken in sufficient quantity to be given more serious attention by services. If this does not happen, it is likely that the development of community work practices in the Probation Service will stagnate."

However his conclusion that there currently exists a sufficient quantity of community work for further discussion should be regarded with some caution, given the author's broad definitional framework. In the final part of the study, Henderson (1987:72-74) concluded that the Probation Service needed more training in this work (which could be provided by the National Institute of Social Work!), a clearer policy, and a greater availability of information about local resources and crime figures. The report's attempt to integrate community work, Probation work, and crime prevention work was emphasised at its launch, with representatives form Senior Probation management and the Home Office at the National Institute of Social Work (London) on March 15th 1988. It remains to be seen, at this early stage, the extent to which the debate will be taken forward at the local and national level.

Another source of information about actual Probation Service community developments can be found in "Going Local in Probation?" (Scott **et al**, 1985). This document consists of eight "raw and barely edited" accounts of different community

developments in the early 1980s, unconnected with post 1984 Home Office developments. It includes examples of "pioneering" Probation work, some of which can be described as community Probation work, others incorporating all three types of community developments as described earlier. In essence the publication is an unfolding story of individual Probation Officer's struggles representing a testament more to personal endeavour than service initiatives. In the publication's last chapter Falkingham (1985:127) concludes that the work involves "a tiny minority of Probation Service staff" and that "there is evidence that the closer associations of such work with the Service's mainstream and essential tasks is not going to be achieved easily and without some contradictions emerging".

The last main source of information about contemporary practices emerges from a research study conducted in the South Yorkshire Probation Service. This experimental project called the Hallam Project involved one special Probation team of Probation Officers attempting, between January 1980 and December 1982, ideas underpinning the paper produced by Bottoms and McWilliams (1979). The Project's final comprehensive report (Celnick, 1985) indicated that the special projects team spent most of their time implementing the first three of Bottoms and McWilliam's objectives, namely the provision of appropriate help for offenders, the statutory supervision of offenders, and diverting appropriate offenders from custodial sentences (Bottoms and McWilliams, 1979). Although the fourth identified objective, "the reduction of crime" appeared to be given lowest priority by the team, nevertheless attempts were made to engage the locality for this objective. Thus the team aimed (Celnick, 1985:225):

> ... with local residents to identify and stimulate those features of neighbourhood life which are seen by local residents as likely to be significant in initiating crime.

The project attempted to develop community networks as a means of returning "responsibility to the community" for

offending. The author notes that at a public meeting called by the special Probation team residents wanted improvements to the estate and alternative leisure activities provided for youngsters rather than anything the Probation team might have wanted. She commented (Celnick, 1985:334):

> "The assumption that the team appear to have made is that once the residents were taking crime prevention measures which they themselves had formulated, the original problem would disappear."

The residents insistence on problems other than crime being addressed in the first instance made it difficult for the team to have any impact in the area at least according to the residents' definitions of the problems. A similar difficulty relating to differences of perception, also recorded later in the case study, about "the nature of the problem(s)" has previously been documented about the Bristol social project (Spencer, 1964). In attempting then to introduce greater measures of social integration, the special Probation team underestimated, according to the author, the long term and conflictual nature of such work. The frustration of trying to implement directive crime prevention strategies are well documented in the final report in which the author observed (Celnick, 1985:334):

> "Bottoms and McWilliams' idea of micro structural ameliorations was not taken up and the only visible method the team had for reducing crime was through improving officers personal relationships and helping them in traditional Probation fashion." (emphasis added).

In terms of crime prevention the special project team wanted to draw on the four criteria suggested by Bottoms and MacWilliams (1979) for area intervention. These were; a fairly high crime rate, evidence of residents discontent, lack of a cohesive criminal sub-cultural and finally, the ready identification of responsible individuals and community organisations. In addition to the not inconsiderable problems of quantifying all of these criteria the eventual location for the team was based more on internal organisational considerations, rather than the external criteria suggested above. (Celnick, 1985:274).

Organisational priorites and negotiations, rather than theoretical guidelines influenced, critically, the choice of the area, and therefore, subsequent practices.

Overall then neither the literature on policy nor practice developments has produced a coherent conceptual pattern of development but rather a mixture of predominately Probation led (community Probation work) initiatives. These have varied in terms of size, commitment, content and scope. Nevertheless there is some emerging evidence to suggest that one important area of social policy has attracted a particular interest by different Probation Areas in becoming involved in specific localities. This concerns a number of those inner city areas which were involved in public disorders in 1980, 1981 and 1985.

Probation Service Community Developments in Inner City Areas

In 1980, 1981 and 1985 there were a number of serious public disorders in different parts of England. The first was in the St Pauls area of Bristol in 1980, followed by Toxteth in Liverpool, Handsworth in Birmingham and Brixton in London, amongst many other areas, in 1981. There was subsequently more disturbances in Brixton, Handsworth, and also Tottenham (Broadwater Farm Estate), in 1985. The limited evidence to date about Probation Service community developments in such areas suggests that some Probation Services are extending their role with a view to providing a "more relevant" service to ethnic groups, particularly Afro-Caribbean groups. Two broad categories of clients emerge; Afro-Caribbean youngsters on probation, and at risk of receiving a custodial sentence, and youngsters not on probation, but "at risk" of offending. In London in response to the 1981 disturbances in the area a new Probation team was created in Brixton and the work of this Community Probation Team will be dealt with in detail in subsequent chapters. Suffice it to note here that the team was established that the broad brief of "adopting a higher community profile". This was intended to encourage first higher usage of the project by local Probationees and none-Probationees, and second engage in community work and/or

preventative work in the locality.

Prior to the disturbances in St Paul's, Bristol there is no community involvement by the local Probation team which, according to the Senior Probation Officer (Lawson, 1984:93-94) worked "in a fairly traditional way from a community based office." In the weeks prior to the disturbances in the St Paul's area of Bristol the local assistant chief Probation Officer had been disapproving of forms of "community involvement" by that team. Immediately after the disturbances he wanted to know why the St Paul's team wasn't more involved in the community urging it to do so "right away" as a priority.[16] A Probation Officer in the St Paul's team working with ethnic groups, particularly Afro-Caribbean youngsters, was already involved in providing a "more relevant" service for these clients and this has been described in the following terms (Lawson 1984:94-95):

> "Two aspects of this style of work need particular emphasis. Firstly, the use of sport and especially football, as a medium through which to engage many of the young black clients...secondly the importance of working in and with the community on a variety of levels; from involvement with...CRE and Police Crime Prevention Panels, through membership of management committees for local hostels, youth workers and community centres to informal contacts with cafes and "important" individuals."

This threefold approach based on activities, community work, and crime prevention work with ethnic groups and others also emerges in respect of the Community Probation Team's work. The North West London Probation Service responded to the 1985 Tottenham disturbances (Broadwater Farm) by arranging a visit to meet the Assistant Chief Probation Officer responsible for the work of the Brixton Community Probation Team, and some of its members. As a researcher I was invited to that meeting where concern was expressed that the Probation Service should, must, be "seen to be doing something for the community otherwise it would lose the credibility of its clients." Although nothing has been published at this stage, the team local to the Broadwater Farm estate was considering how to change its geographical boundaries and

become more involved in the Broadwater Farm community. One of the Probation staff was involved as a member of the Broadwater Farm Defence Committee, that is a group representing the interests of those arrested during the 1985 disturbances. The Middlesex Probation Service gave evidence to the Independent Inquiry into the Broadwater Farm disturbances (Gifford, 1986:146-147,210) in which it reported criticisms given to the Probation Service by clients about the conduct of the police on the estate.

In Handsworth the Probation Service is directly involved in running the Handworth Cultural Centre established prior to the 1981 disturbances but nevertheless concerned with preventative outreach work in the community. According to the submission of the West Midlands Probation Service to the Scarman Report (HMSO, 1981:147), the emphasis in the area is on preventive work:

> "The aim was to prevent young people at risk from offending rather than deal with those who had already offended. Whilst it was recognised that, as a long term aim, there were dangers in this service undertaking such non-court work such projects bring the Probation Service nearer to the community and enable the community to see the Probation Officer in a more positive light and not simply as an agent of the courts." (emphasis added)

The submission also suggested that the Probation Service should be trying to shift the "cultural bias" of the Magistates Court by getting more youngsters of Afro-Caribbean ethnic origin on Probation (HMSO, 1981:147). The cultural centre runs a variety of leisure, vocational and cultural activities. According to the official literature (West Midlands Probation Service, 1985:1):

> "The cultural centre attempts to stimulate a sense of personal dignity and achievement through securing the interest of offenders in more worthwhile pursuits which demand a measure of self-discipline and sustained practical application."

A further publication (West Midland Probation Service, 1985a:56) emphasised the relevance, not of self discipline,

but of informal activities in working with Afro-Caribbean youngsters:

> "What did seem to matter to many West Indian and other ethnic groups was music and dance. Any response which valued that was likely to be seen as much more relevant and worthy of respect than office based counselling."

As a result of legislative changes (1982 Criminal Justice Act, Schedule 11) however the Handsworth Cultural Centre now operates as a statutory day centre for Probation offenders, not as a voluntary drop-in dropping facility. According to the official literature sent out to courts (West Midlands Probation Service 1985:1) the requirements for Probationers attending the day centre are as follows:

> "The Probationer shall present himself at the cultural centre...for a period of ... days during the duration of the Probation Order and whilst there...shall comply with instructions given by or under the authority of, the manager of the centre.... It is intended that sentences will use a Probation Order containing this requirement as an alternative to imposing a custodial sentence. Failure to comply with the requirement of attendance will result in the initiation of breach proceedings."

In addition to extending statutory day centre provisions in the central Birmingham area (West Midlands Probation Service, 1985a;56) this service has become indirectly involved with another "alternative to custody" scheme called the City and Handsworth Alternative Scheme. The aim of this Scheme, an extension city wide of the former Handsworth Alternative Scheme is (City and Handsworth Alternative Scheme, 1987) :

> "to assist Birmingham Law Courts in providing community-based alternatives to young black offenders aged between 16 - 25 who are at risk of attracting custodial sentences."

A most recent published example of Probation Service community developments in inner city areas, involving crime prevention work, concerns the Toxteth Area of Liverpool. Amidst fears that social problems had worsened and not improved since the riots of 1981 (Central Council of

Probation Committees, 1986:7), the Chief Probation Officer agreed that:

> "the Probation Service would step up its efforts to assist the police in containing problems for preventing serious trouble. Within a week a special Probation Service initiative had been worked out. Four temporary Probation Service assistants were appointed for the period July to October. These were local black people known both to the Service and to the local community and their task was to work on behalf of the Service in close cooperation with the police in preventative work. Together with some members of the permanent staff the temporary assistants involved young people at risk in a wide range of sporting and recreational activities." (Emphasis added).

Crime prevention work for the Probation Service in Merseyside took the form of improving information networks with the police and providing recreational activities primarily, or so it would seem, for "at risk" local black people. However this practice has produced conflicts between Merseyside Probation Management and the local branch of the capital's National Association of Probation Officers. According to Probation Officers involved (Bowe, Crawley and Morris, 1987:11-12) the closer relationship with the police whose "behaviour and racism have been two constant themes throughout this period" raised serious questions about if and whether that Probation Service should continue with such police liaison work. The Chief Probation Office (Mathieson, 1985:18) has, meanwhile argued publicly for a closer working relationship between the Probation Service and the police in inner city areas. It appears that in the Merseyside Probation Service experiment the main role of the temporarily employment community assistants was to act as mediators at times of tension between the police and local groups. (Cooper, 1987). Formally at least the Merseyside Probation Service is committed not only to crime prevention work but also to various forms of community work (Merseyside Probation Service, 1985:4-5). Whilst the same generally can also be made of Greater Manchester's statement of aims and objectives (Greater Manchester Probation Service, 1984: 3-4), there is also a recognition (Walton, 1987a:2):

> "...that community developments are being pursued in the light of the area statement of objectives and are primarily being justified on the grounds of Probation's role in relation to crime prevention."

The material presented to date about actual practices concerning Probation Service community developments in Brixton, Toxteth, Bristol and Handsworth suggests that those services responsible have begun to use a combination of models of Probation Service Community developments in order to try to tackle at least three sets of associated problems; social problems of high levels of unemployment particularly amongst ethnic groups, public disorder problems of perceived increases in delinquency and patterns of conflict, Probation problems; of making the Probation Service "more relevant and accessible" to deprived multi-racial areas, and, individual criminal problems of existing probationers but also "at risk" youngsters. Another set of possible problems, which might centre on the perceived unfair treatment of ethnic groups by the courts, whilst not common to all inner city work outlined above, nevertheless remains an additional and important consideration. The question of what precisely Probation Services are doing in this area of inner city work on a day to day basis has so far remained unanswered. The case study of the Community Probation Team provides a comprehensive analysis of the experiences, objectives and assumptions about such work in one inner city area.

Summary

The exploratory postal questionnaire survey suggested that despite the recent rhetoric about Probation Service engagement and involvement with local communities, there remained serious practical and organisational constraints on such developments. Additionally whilst both Henderson (1986, 1987) and Celnick (1985) have produced written accounts of certain community developments by the Probation Service, a detailed understanding of day to day experiences and developments has to date, proved elusive. It would appear then, with one or two possible exceptions, that Probation Service Community Developments, in so far as actual practices

are concerned, have primarily centred on the community being regarded as an additional resource to assist the Service supervising existing offenders (ie Community Probation Work). The recent specific inner city community developments suggest a wider role for the Probation Service beyond community Probation work with clients, towards crime prevention work, and to a much lesser extent community work. It remains to unravel this and other emerging issues by offering a detailed case study of one specific Probation Service community initiative. This centres around the work of a newly created Probation Team, called the Community Probation Team, established in Brixton in Inner London as a direct response by the Inner London Probation Service to the 1981 disorders in that area. It is first necessary to provide an account of the national social context at the time of the 1981 public disturbances.

CHAPTER FIVE

Probation Community Developments in the 1980's -The National Social Context

The analysis of the Community Probation Team is presented here within the wider national social context in the first instance because the team's rationale, funding and practices were guided by national and local, as well as Probation policy considerations. The external developments were concerned with the 1981 urban disturbances as a social problem, inner cities generally and, subsequently, the Community Probation Team's immediate inner city location. The internal elements were concerned with the possibilities for and constraints on innovative work in an organisation operating within the criminal justice system. The local context, to be detailed later, of the area's problems, peoples and struggles was also significant, not only because these prompted the creation of a new Probation team, but because they provided its impetus, guided it's practices, and helped to shape its policies. It is argued that by establishing the national social context at this point it is possible, subsequently, to understand the blurring of, and interplay between, the area's social characteristics, the clients' social characteristics, and the Community Probation Team's emergent practices.

Public Disturbances and Inner Cities

First in the St. Pauls area of Bristol in 1980, and then in 1981 in Handsworth Birmingham, Brixton, Toxteth (Liverpool) and Moss Side (Manchester,) and elsewhere, there were a series of outbreaks of public disorders in England. During that summer the mass media, particularly the television and the newspapers, selected an array of provocative and powerful pictures to portray the inner city disturbances. As Kettle and Hodges, for example, (1982:9) observe:

> " Unprecedented images of police in familiar helmets crouching behind unfamiliar riot shields, illuminated by the glare of burning buildings, were beamed daily into homes around the globe. Hitherto obscure inner-city districts ..... became familiar overnight to millions who would never visit them."

It is argued that the context for these disturbances was a country with rising levels of unemployment, particularly amongst ethnic groups, increasing levels of poverty and crime in inner city areas and, associated, problems of policing such areas.

Taking unemployment first, between 1960 and 1980 for example,"official" levels of unemployment had risen by .54 million in 1960, to 1.1 million in 1975 up to 2.1 million in 1980. (Sinfield, 1981:11). These "official" unemployment figures are an underestimate of the total number unemployed because they fail to include several groups including those unregistered looking for work, students over the age of eighteen only registered for work in their vacations, and those on short time working. By the end of 1980, the number of jobs available according to the Department of Employment (1980) was the lowest since the end of the war. The figure seasonally adjusted was below 100,000 in total. The single group most significantly affected by rising unemployment is school leavers, particularly ethnic minority school leavers. Of the first group and in 1981 for example, the Department of Employment acknowledged that an increase of one per cent in general male unemployment meant for teenagers, an increase of 1.7 percent (reported in Sinfield, 1981:69). In relation to ethnic groups, particularly Afro-Caribbean groups, a group which formed 50 per cent of the Brixton Community Probation Team's caseload at the time, a Home Office Research Study entitled Ethnic Minorities in Britain (Home Office, 1982), amongst many other publications, presented a gloomy portrayal of ethnic employment patterns in Britain. In one chapter concentrating on ethnic groups in the labour market, the study stated, whilst noting the paradox of beginning a chapter on employment with a discussion of unemployment amongst such groups (Home Office, 1982:22):

> "It would appear, then, that West Indian men and Asian women are more vulnerable to unemployment than West Indian women and Asian men, who are in turn more vulnerable than whites."

The report (Home Office, 1982:33), concluded:

> "Owing to a combination of low earnings, a high proportion of dependents and higher housing costs, it is likely that minority households experience a greater degree of poverty than do white households."

There was mention of the existence of institutionalised racism as Bridges (1983: 34-35) has also observed acknowledge of the Scarman Report, as a contributory factor to minority poverty. Lord Scarman did note the extent not just of ethnic minority employment generally, but of ethnic minority youth unemployment. He commented (H.M.S.O., 1981:2:20), that:

> "Over the year to February 1981, total unemployment in Great Britain increased by nearly 66%, compared with 82% for the ethnic minorities alone. ..... blacks are without doubt over-represented among the registered and unregistered young unemployed ....." (emphasis added)

Lord Scarman (HMSO, 1981: 2.35) commented that the lives of ethnic minorities were, generally, led "in the poorer and more deprived areas of our great cities".

By the late 1970's and early 1980's "inner city areas" had become more than a descriptive term but one generally denoting a range of social and ecomomic difficulties, including a decline in population, a contraction of economic opportunities, public housing and employment opportunities. These areas experienced the continued effects of the economic recession of the late 1970's and early 1980's. Hall **et al** (1981:2), summarised the extent of inner city poverty and social problems:

> "With seven per cent of the British population in the 1970's, the inner cities contain 14 per cent of the unskilled workers, 20 per cent of the households in housing stress, 33 per cent of the commonwealth immigrants, twice the national rate of unemployment, up to ten times the national

> proportion of people living below the supplementary benefit poverty line, up to four times the degree of domestic overcrowding found elsewhere in cities, over twice the national average of single-parent families and less than half the national rate of car ownership."

Various "inner city initiatives", focusing on urban aid and renewal programmes, attempted albeit in a piecemeal fashion, (Edwards and Batley, 1978: 67-68) to redress some of the multi-layered and deep rooted inner city problems. Among early initiatives perhaps the most significant was the setting up of the Urban Programme in 1969 by the Labour government. As the Urban Programme developed, one of the more important documents was the White Paper (Department of the Environment, 1977: Cmnd. 6845). This Paper like other inner city initiatives combined attempts to strengthen the economies of the inner cities, with environmental improvements, the alleviation of social problems through self help schemes, in order to secure a "new balance" between the inner and other city areas. Since the Conservative party was elected into office in 1979 the emphasis has been more on "partnership schemes" with the private sector playing a more central part, and with a particular emphasis being given in 1980 to the creation of economic Enterprise Zones. However several authors including Batley and Edwards (1978), Higgins et al (1983), and Hall **et al** (1981), Benyon and Solomos (1987) have all challenged the effectiveness of inner city initiatives broadly arguing that they have lacked the necessary financial resources and political will and failed to meet citizens expectations. As Hall **et al**(1981:110) conclude:

> " By and large, therefore, most of the specific inner city policy initiatives were little more than minor and peripheral experiments. They did not attempt much and they did not achieve much, however much they may have been oversold by politicians, anxious to prove their bona fides to the electorate. Ironically the main gain was in understanding that the problem has much deeper roots than we imagined before - but armed with the understanding we can see just how much more difficult it is to do anything about it."

Lord Scarman (HMSO, 1981: para 2.38) also commented on the

failure of inner-city policies of successive governments:

> "The failure of the many attempts over the last three decades to tackle the problem of inner-city decline successfully is striking ... it is noticeable that large sums have been spent to little apparent effect ... The lack of an effective co-ordinated approach ... conflicting policies and priorities ... appear to have been a frequent source of confusion and reduced drive".

By the mid 1980's the concentration of poverty in material and social terms that exist in some inner city areas, was further exacerbated by rising unemployment to an estimated three million plus by 1986. Central government restrictions on local authorities spending through reductions in the rate support grant and "rate capping" has further reduced opportunities for local authority employment, housing and servicing initiatives.

A further problem generally particularly effecting the inner city areas concerns the apparent upward trend in the levels of recorded crime. Whilst it is acknowledged that definitions of "crime" vary and that official crime statistics are open to considerable misinterpretation, nevertheless some relevant material is presented here in recogniton of governments' reliance on such "official statistics" as formal, albeit partial, indicators of need, in social policy terms. Whilst 1981 was not an exceptional year in itself in terms of the numbers of notifiable crimes known to the police, it represented up to that point in time, the continuation of an upward trend which had begun in the mid 1950's. According to Kinsey, Lea and Young (1986:10-11), for example, in 1981 the numbers of notifiable crimes known to the police, per 100,000 of the population, were approximately six times those for the mid 1950's and double those of 1970. Other "conventional measures" of assessing crime, such as the number of male offenders found guilty of, or cautioned for, indictable offences, per 100,000 of the population, also confirmed the upward trend. Expressed as a percentage of the 1969 total for example, the 1980 figure of 2211 for such groups represented an increase of 28 per cent. (Home Office, 1980:99). In 1984 the number of notifiable offences in

England and Wales was 3,499,100 (Home Office, 1985g Cmnd. 9621) compared with the figure of 2,536,700 for the same category for 1979, a rise of 962,400 in just five years. Furthermore a major victimisation study, The British Crime Survey: First Report (Hough and Mayhew, 1983) indicated high levels of unrecorded crime in certain categories (such as vandalism, theft from the person, burglary and robbery), and also the propensity for inner city areas to experience higher levels of crime than elsewhere. Although the document Saving the Inner City Broadwater Farm - A Strategy for Survival (Lea, Jones and Young, 1986:25), reported that the crime rate on that estate, one which experienced serious public disturbances in 1985, had in fact been falling and not increasing prior to the disturbances, nevertheless it concluded that crime together with fear of crime were major problems. The report concluded (Lea, Jones and Young, 1986:29):

> "Broadwater Farm suffers high levels of crime and fear of crime. The level of concern about crime is second only to unemployment. These levels, however, are not exceptional by comparison with other inner city estates that we have surveyed ....."

This report, like the Islington Crime Survey (Jones et al, 1986) suport the view that crime, and indeed fear of crime are highly localised phenomena, meriting localised solutions "from within" areas, rather than by "external policing agencies" (Young, 1975:89).

The situation regarding juvenile offending, at least up until 1979, appeared to indicate both upward and downward trends, according to age group and types of offences (D.H.S.S., 1981a:22-25). Whilst for example it was recorded that the numbers of known juvenile offenders has increased overall between 1965 and 1979 from 91,800 to 164,200 (D.H.S.S., 1981a:25), upon closer analysis certain key factors emerge. In relation to changes in juvenile offending, (DHSS, 1981a: 25) for example:

> "About a quarter of the increase in offending can be attributed to changes in numbers of juveniles in the population. Over two fifths is attributable to

> the higher offending rate for 14-16 year old boys and almost a quarter of the total increase is attributable to the higher offending rates for girls. Almost all the increases in known offenders were in numbers cautioned rather than in numbers sentenced".

Even excluding the distorting effect of including numbers cautioned with numbers sentenced, the total number of offenders found guilty of both indictable and summary offences continued, generally speaking, to rise in the 1970's. The figure in 1974 then was 1934,000; in 1975 1989,000; 1976 2073,000; 1977 2002,000; 1978 1934,000; 1979 1898,000; 1980 2212,00 and 1981 2105,000 (Home Office, 1985g:19). The same source for this statistical information also suggested (in a supplementary note) that the slight decrease for the year 1981, and indeed figures up to 1984, can largely be explained by changes made by new counting procedures introduced at the beginning of 1980. In other words despite some variations there appears to be a strong case for arguing that overall, despite some fluctuations levels of offending, in the majority of age groups, between the early 1970's and the early 1980's were increasing and not decreasing. Furthermore whilst 1981 was not an atypical year in terms of offending, nevertheless it represented a period, when crime levels in certain inner city areas were increasingly and perceived of as becoming even more problematic. Indeed it was even suggested by one government minister prior to the 1987 election campaign that the crime rates for certain inner city areas should be separated from national figures because of their "distorting effect" on national trends.

As the 1970's merged into the 1980's official social indicators other than levels of crime, such as unemployment and homelessness suggested a general decline in the quality of life for those who rely on the public, not private provision of basic services. (See, for example, Hall, 1987:46-7). For several decades inner city areas in particular have experienced industrial and population decline and increasing levels of poverty, disadvantage and particularly for black people (amongst many see, for example,

Prashar, 1987: 116-117). Since the war, apart from sporadic outbursts (Notting Hill Gate in 1958), inner city tensions were, muted, contained, perhaps even accepted at least up to 1980/1981. There can however be little doubt that when the 1980 and 1981 disturbances occured, the events served to focus the attention of the mass media, the government, the public and various agencies onto what can be regarded as one of the most serious social problems and challenges, in domestic social policy terms, faced since the war.

The significance of a social problem is its social not simply personal dimension and society's definition, images of, and reactions to the perceived "social evil" in question. The term "social problem" is a general term which, according to Downes (1978:65): ".....refers to any phenomenon which is defined as impeding or threatening harmonious social relations, and which in principle is soluble by social means." Vass (1986) writing about A.I.D.S. as a social problem regards social problems generally (1986:125-126) as:

> ".....problems in relationships which appear to be seriously threatening to society and which challenge existing expectations or aspirations of many people and become an affront to 'civilisation'."

Before beginning to examine the reaction of the Inner London Probation Service to the social problem of the Brixton disturbances of 1981 it is necessary to unfold and examine two further elements which constituted a major part of the wider social context. These concern first a summarised account of how public awareness of "the problem" was created and the terms in which it was defined, drawing on Fuller and Myers framework (1941). The second element examines the nature of the immediate and longer term developments concentrating on subsequent criminal legislation and policing issues. It has already been argued, in Chapters Two and Three, that the general direction and development of community based Probation practices also requires an understanding of their social and political context. In this instance however, the political and social events were more visible and accessible, and, possibly, more alarming than

previous "new" Probation developments generally introduced in response to perceptions about rising crime rates and the provision of alternatives to custody.

Societal Response to the 1981 Public Disturbances - The Mass Media and the Creation of Popular Awareness.

Several sociologists have examined the role of the media in it's reporting not only of crime but of forms of deviance or problems seen as new, challenging, or in some way as threatening. These have concerned variously marijuana smoking in America during the 1930's (Becker, 1963); the teddy boy phenomenon in England in the 1950's (Rock and Cohen, 1970); the mods and rockers in Britain during the 1960's (Cohen, 1980); drug taking in the Notting Hill area of London during the 1960's (Young, 1971); and more recently, in respect of A.I.D.S. in England, (Vass, 1986). Society's reactions to these various phenomena, it was claimed, are all associated with some form of "moral panic", which itself formed only one of several facets of a societal response. This is not, in any way, to understate the serious effects on victims of personal and social problems, whether concerning public disorders, drugs, crime or health. Rather my purpose in outlining the media response to the 1981 disturbances is to present the ways in which the style and images of the reporting shaped events and transmitted moral and political messages in order to re-inforce popular unity against the "common enemy" - in this case public disorders. Cohen discusses at some length the term "moral panic" in his book Folk Devils and Moral Panics - The Creation of the Mods and Rockers (1980). His description of the constituent elements of and processes involved in a "moral panic" are sufficiently important to be reproduced at length here. He wrotes (1980:9):

> "Societies appear to be subject, every now and again to periods of moral panic. A condition, episode, person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests; it's nature is presented in a stylised and stereotypical fashion by the mass media; the

> moral barricades are manned by editors, bishops, politicians and other right-thinking people; socially accredited experts pronounce their diagnosis and solutions; ways of coping are evolved or (more often) resorted to; a condition then disappears, submerges or deteriorates and it becomes more visible. Sometimes the object of the panic is quite novel and at other times it is something that has been in existence long enough, but suddenly appears in the limelight. Sometimes the panic passes over and is forgotten, except in folk-lore and collective memory; at other times it has more serious and long-lasting repercussions and might produce such changes as those in legal and social policy or even in the way society conceives itself."

As with the social reaction deviance studies outlined above, Cohen's (1980) emphasis was on the way society defines and then reacts to certain forms of behaviour regarded as problematic and threatening. It is argued here that whilst no singular incident of public disorder produced long lasting changes in social policy terms, nevertheless collectively and in association with other events concerning public demonstrations and disorder, important and significant social policy changes were introduced. The key point here is to identify the ways in which events selected and presented as news by the mass media contained language and images in ways which reinforced a sense of moral outrage and which transmitted political messages.

Fuller and Myers (1941:321) employ a conceptual framework of a "natural history" of social problems, and reject notions of social problems arising full-blown commanding attention, and evoking policies and machinery for their solution. Rather:

> "On the contrary, we believe that social problems exhibit a temporal course of development in which different faces or stages may be distinguished. Each stage anticipates it's successor in time and each succeeding stage contains new elements which mark it off from it's predecessor. A social problem thus conceived as always being in a dynamic state of "becoming" passes through the natural stages of awareness, policy determination, and reform."

If their thesis is correct then the media response, outlined here, might seem to represent the first "awareness stage" of

a social problem. However although the media reporting of public disorders was responsible for creating public awareness, this is not to exclude the media's contribution, at the same time, to the policy determination and policy reform stages of "the social problem". Indeed these stages in Fuller's terms, are often intertwined and, therefore, indistinguishable as separate stages. Lemert (1951) questioned the validity of Fuller and Myer's concept of three separate stages of the natural history of a social problem, noting the ways in which as the visibility of the behaviour increased, definitions of the "problem" are disputed and conflicts over policies are developed. A significant point here developed in relation to the Inner London Probation Service's response and developed later, concerns Lemert's comments (1951:59) about reaction to the "problem" tending to shift from the policy making to lower levels for discussion and formulation. More recently, and in respect of A.I.D.S., Vass (1986:146), whilst recognising the advantages of Fuller and Myer's thesis (1941) as a heuristic device has questioned it's validy in terms of practical analysis. He argues, amongst other things, that the three stages are ambigous in terms of definition, and are not mutually exclusive. The critical point here concerns the complex nature of the social problem being discussed - public disturbances. Such a phenomenon is not a single problem but a series of complex, dynamic, interelated and recurring social problems. The so-called "public face" of this particular social problem requires an examination of three principle interelated areas; definitions of observed behaviour, aetiologital explorations, and proposed "solutions".

The social problem of public disturbances can be located within a web-like representational structure. The multifaceted phenomenon, public disturbances, can be located at the centre, with capitalism as the enclosing boundary and a range of constantly shifting characters including the economy, government, police, media, as well as other organisations in various states of tension, formalism and oblivion attempting, in the wake of high unemployment and rising crime, to support and sustain a sagging structure of

social consensus. Given the wide range of characters caught up in the web, it becomes important in the first instance to examine who has the authority to define what is the nature and causes of this problem, and perhaps even it's solutions.

In contemporary society, whilst events are still communicated informally at a local level, the dominant means of communicating events to the public is mass communication, principally the press and the television. Of course a great deal more was said about the disturbances and their causes than appeared in the major news media. They were extensively discussed in current affairs programmes and in the weekly and monthly magazines. Nevertheless, most people gained a great deal of their information and impressions about the events from the national press and television news. The images they offered shaped both the political debate and public opinion. In the previously cited case of the mods and rockers, Cohen (1980: 27-48) argued that the societal reaction in general and the inventory in particular included the reinforcement and magnification of a pre-disposition to expect trouble; provision of content for rumours, the facilitation of deviance by solidifying the crowd; and the creation of a set of culturally identifiable symbols which legitimised action. He argues, that the mass media, in general, operate to publicise the events which create a "triggering off" effect whereby hostile belief is spread providing a content for deviant role playing by transmitting stereotypical expectations, and prescriptions for how persons in their particular deviant roles should act. (Cohen, 1980: 175-176). This presentation of characteristics of the societal response, together with Fuller and Myer's (1941: 321) phases of societal reaction to a social problem provide a useful and relevant conceptual framework for an analysis of the mass media's response to the 1981 public disturbances, as one part of an ongoing "societal reaction process".

The public disturbances of 1981, and the Brixton one in particular, contained for the mass media a set of particularly appealing characteristics which helped to

sensationalise and distance acts of deviance. These characteristics included public physical violence; the destruction of private property; young people including ethnic minorities; the location of the phenomena in an area politically opposed and immediately adjacent to the government of the day; and, finally, public, visible and readily transmitted behaviour and images. The subsequent reporting of the disturbances in the mass media conformed to and was located within the media's dominant ideological consensus framework as well as driven by commercial considerations and the day-to-day pressures to produce points news sometimes overlooked by media sociologists. Hall, for example, analysing urban rioting as one form of political deviant activity (1974:268) suggests that it's consensus framework does not occur spontaneously but is created by three main agencies. These are: professional politicians (or Trade Union leaders); agencies or representatives of face to face control; and the mass media. The latter acts as a form of policitical "gate keeper". "Deviant" political acts thus provide a counter to the custom of consensus political representations.

In Humber's study of the major television evening news coverage on the two main channels of the events of the 14-16th July 1981, he found that government ministers received 373 seconds of air time, senior police offiers 367, community leaders received only 147, and the rioters themselves just 22 seconds (Tumber, 1982). The same pattern emerges from Anders Hansen's (1982) analysis of reports in the Daily Mail, Mirror and the Guardian from the 6th-12th July 1981. In all three newspapers the statements of senior police officers received more space than the views of any other groups (more than twice as much in the case of the populous) whilst the views of the participants were afforded very little space (Hansen, 1982 quoted in Murdoch, 1984: 78). Whilst both these analyses provide results which are, perhaps, hardly surprising the point here is that the mass media's reaction creates it's own "particular reality" and consequences.

The language used in reports is as important as the sources of such reports in shaping and framing subsequent political questions raised. Knopf, in respect of American reportage of "rioting" argues that he media uses a "shotgun" approach to such subjects in the language it uses. Commenting on the way that the term "riot" was used to cover different incidents resulting in 43 deaths, 7,000 arrests and $45,000,000 worth of property damage, and also one in which 3 people broke a shop window, Knopf (1970:17-18) remarks:

> "The continued media use of the term contributes to an emotionally charged climate in which the public tends to view every event as an "incident", every incident as a "disturbance" and every disturbance as a "riot"."

Murdoch (1984) presents an extensive analysis of the reporting of the 1981 riots in England suggesting that the emphasis given to the police point of view in the media created a resiliant but limited perspective of the necessity and acceptability of greater police militarisation methods through the description of exceptional police responses appearing as a normal and necessary part of policing the inner cities (Murdoch, 1984:93). He also comments on the emphasis given by some newspapers to the involvement of black rather than white youngsters in the riots and includes quotations from the Daily Mail at the time with the caption "black war on police" appearing directly above the photograph together with a quotation from the Chief Constable of Merseyside, Kenneth Oxford, claiming that "for a hundred years we have not had a problem - now they are hell bent on confrontation" (Murdoch 1984:74). Newspaper photographs of the "thin blue line" fighting against the predominantly black lines of youths produced and reinforced stereotypical images of, on the one hand, law and order, and, on the order, chaos and disorder only being held by an inequipped police force holding ineffective burning police riot shields. Commenting on the importance of imagery to an understanding of the meaning of events and actions. Cohen writes (1980:74):

> "The imagery in an integral part of the identification process: the labels are not invented after deviation. Once the initial identification has taken place, the labels are further elaborated....The primary label, in other words, evokes secondary images, some of which are purely descriptive, some of which contain explicit moral judgements and some of which contain descriptions about how to handle the behaviour."

The societal reaction to deviants can be framed within what Lemert refers to as the "societal control culture". He writes (1951:68) that:

> "Another set of impacts upon the pathological social variant springs from the various agencies, both private and public, which society or the community has organised to aid, press, rehabilitate or otherwise it's "problems"."

The control culture exhibited in the media following Brixton disturbances of 1981 was again repeated in 1985 when disturbances broke out after the shooting, by accident, by a police officer of a black woman Mrs. Cherry Groce. One newspaper reported " Hooded mobs of black teenagers beseiged Brixton Police Station, built burning barricades of overturned cars, threw petrol bombs, and indiscriminantly beat up whites." (The Mail on Sunday, 29th September, 1985). In the Observer of the same day above a large picture of blazing cars alight was the caption, "freewheeling violence: a black youth on roller skates crosses Brixton road at the height of the rioting, illuminated by the wrecks of blazing cars". The paper's main headline in fact read, "the rioters set Brixton ablaze", and wrote of an "orgy of violence and looting". (The Observer, 29th September 1985) The style and content of the mass media's reporting of the 1980 (St. Paul's area, Bristol), 1981, and later 1985 disturbances suggests that whilst the longer terms problems of economic decline and deprivation of Brixton and elsewhere might or might not be associated with riotous behaviour (on this point see Kettle and Hodges, 1984:121-153), the immediate task of the government was first to restore law and order. Second, it sought to reduce in the longer term the possibilities of such disorders re-occurring or escalating through 'tougher' legislation and changes in policing. However as we will see

the affect of the disturbances on policing, as Unsworth (1982:79) has noted, has been "complex and contradictory". It is claimed here that it is more accurate to describe subsequent legislative and policing charges as representing both as an immediate response but also part of broader developments in law and order. Associated with this point are qualifications about the applicability of Fuller and Myer's (1941) "natural history of a social problem" thesis suggesting that distinctive phases of policy determination and reform are clearly distinguishable.

Criminal Legislation and Policing Methods: Immediate Responses and broader developments

In a party political broadcast on 8th July 1981 (the Wednesday after the Toxteth disturbances) the Prime Minister emphasised her priority to the nation saying "nothing can justify, nothing can excuse and no-one can condone the appalling violence" and told the Commons "until law and order and public confidence have been restored we cannot set about improving the economic or social conditions of this country." (quoted in Kettle and Hodges, 1984:182-183). According to Benyon (1985:411) law and order rather than economic and social responses appear to have been the dominant responses despite marginal and largely unsuccessful attempts including that of one cabinet minister Mr. Heseltine to embrace the private sector in the economic regeneration of inner city areas such as Merseyside through the Government Task Forces (Clare, 1987:63). Once the pressing task of restoring immediate law and order to the disturbance areas had been implemented, the government initiated a judicial inquiry into the 1981 Brixton disturbances to be chaired by Lord Scarman. Whilst the report itself was acknowledged by politicians as being a significant one, it nevertheless should be recognised that public and political debates about the disturbances continued for months, indeed years, after it's publication. Nevertheless the report represented an official attempt to examine the Brixton disturbances and make recommendations, albeit not legally binding.

The Scarman report concentrated on policing issues. It devoted 82 pages to matters concerning the disorders and policing and twelve pages to the disorders and social policy matters. Importantly and in respect of the latter, Lord Scarman (HMSO, 1981: 6.2) wrote:

> "An unavoidable limitation lies in the fact that, as a judge conducting a quasi-judicial enquiry it would be inappropriate for me to make specific suggestions or proposals in the field of government financial or economic policy.....one consequence of the limitation is that I refrain from discussing that part of the written evidence, submitted to me by the Lambeth Borough Council and others, which was intensely critical of the restrictions imposed by the government on Local Authority expenditure and of the effect of recent changes in the Rate Support Grant system."

According to Benyon (1984: 409-415) the establishment of a judicial inquiry represented a governmental device to set the polical agenda ("going through the motions").

Taylor (1984:30), in his analysis of Lord Scarman's report comments that:

> ".....he enjoined media caution in publicing riots and advocated new tactics and equipment for the Police.....he suggested reforming institutions.....and tilting the balance of resources towards deprived groups.....".

Taylor develops an argument which suggests that the above recommendations were typical of the tone of the report in that they represent a combined conservative and liberal approach to resolving the problems rather than one which emphasised structural oppression and class exploitation. The thread of "traditional English liberalism" with it's emphasis on organisational and institutional reforms is apparent throughout the report. Additionally the limits on judicial enquiries imposed by section 32 of the Police Act 1964 resulted here in all but two of Lord Scarman's seventeen recommendations related to policing matters. Whilst being critical in the most general terms, about inner city policies, the only two recommendations regarding social

policy issues emphasised better co-ordination and consultation procedures for local services (H.M.S.O., 1981:8.44) and not for example, increased levels of funding for them. There are in fact no specific recommendations, merely suggestions, made about problems he identified such as ethnic minorities and housing, ethnic minorities and education, ethnic minorities and employment. Given the enforced omission of any macro political and economic recommendations, the Scarman report concentrated on micro notions of normalization through community self help and rehabilitation (H.M.S.O., 1981:6.26-6.29). Significantly perhaps, notions concerning the use of leisure and community self help also became the leitmotif of the Brixton Community Probation Team. Much earlier in the United States the Chicago Area Project (reviewed by Kobrin, 1959) had introduced community delinquency prevention programmes based in poor transient areas and based on notions of area social disorganisation. The gaps and reservations covering social policy recommendations in this official judicial enquiry contrasted sharply with the 22 pages of recommendations, not suggestions, concerning social policy matters in the "independent" Report of the Independent Enquiry into Disturbances of 1985 at The Broadwater Farm Estate, Tottenham (1986). In that document (Gifford, 1986:221-43), views were expressed concerning the role of central government, the police, the creation of jobs, the estate, education, and media reporting. Furthermore the nature of the policing recommendations by Lord Scarman are also markedly different from those concerning the 1985 Broadwater Farm disturbances, (Lea, Jones and Young, 1986). The latter report calls for greater police/public accountability whereas the Scarman report emphasises greater police/public consultation through the establishment of consultative mechanisms (HMSO, 1981: 8.39-8.40).

It is not argued here that subsequent legislation regarding policing powers were derived solely from the 1981 Brixton, or indeed other, urban disturbances or directly from the Scarman Report. Rather it is argued that a series of events over time, including the Brixton disturbances, provided the

government with an additional rationalisation for introducing restrictive legislation and increased police powers. This rationalisation most clearly emerges in the conclusion to the government White Paper Review of Public Order Law (Home Office, 1985a: cmnd., 9510). Eventually this lead to the Public Order Bill (published on 6th December 1985) and the Public Order Act which received Royal Assent in November 1986. The Paper's conclusions (Home Office, 1985a:1.6, quoted in Policing London, 1986:5) take account of Lord Scarman's report but also of the "lessons learnt":

> ".....in connection with Grunwick's 1976-77, Southall April 1979, the 1981 disturbances, the 1984-5 miners strike and demonstrations by animal rights protestors, the Stop the Capital City Campaign, the anti-nuclear movement, the capital's National Front and football violence."

Events then which are dissimilar in origin were regarded as similar, namely criminal, in nature and posing of public order threat. As Spitzer (1979) writing about the rationalisation generally, of crime control in capitalist society puts it (1979:199): "In contrast to the pre-capitalist era, where collective disorder had served as a form of communication between the classes, the new order required that social relationships remain pacific....."

The 1986 Public Order Act introduced new public order offences of riot (contrary to Lord Scarman's recommendations), violent disorder, and increased sentencing powers for these offences ranging from 3 years imprisonment to life imprisonment (for the new offence of riot). In respect of public protest and demonstrations, march organisers are now required to give seven days advance notice to the police who can specify the conditions of assembly concerning their location, duration and numbers. The term "assembly" was also more widely defined as an assembly of three or more persons. The Guardian (7th December, 1985) commenting on the divisions whilst still going through parliament wrote:

> "These powers will mean that police will be able to decide whether crowds of every kind can

> gather.....they will make protesting citizens into licensed visitors to their own streets."

These proposals then created new public order offences with the new offence of threatening behaviour replacing Section 5 of the Public Order Act 1936, an act introduced to restrict fascist marches in the 1930s.

The 1982 Criminal Justice Act, whilst not specifically addressing public order issues arising from the disturbances, has also contributed to the increased "control culture" by creating additional penalties for adults and juveniles alike. The Home Office itself recognises that the new and longer youth custody sentences introduced in that legislation, have to some extent replaced previous shorter detention centre orders (Home Office, 1985b). Other supervisory restrictions contained in the Act for offenders included wider compulsory attendance at Probation day centres (Section 65), fines or imprisonment for failing to comply satisfactorily with the requirement of a youth custody order (Section 1), the introduction of Community Service Orders for juveniles (Section 68), and the introduction of curfew powers between 6pm and 6am for juveniles on supervision orders (Section 20). This act represents just one part of the Government's commitment to increasing spending on law and order. Betwen 1979 and 1986, for example, the rise in expenditure on law and order has more than doubled from £2 billion to £4.25 billion and an additional £425 million has been allocated up until 1997 to provide an additional nineteen new prisons and 13,000 new places (Harding, 1987:2). The 1982 Criminal Justice Act, according to the then Chief Probation Officer of the West Midlands Probations Service (Day, 1987:23-27) represents a more judicial less welfare-oriented, and less liberal approach to crime control. Furthermore, according to the understanding of the main location of crime by the Parliamentary All-Party Penal Affairs Group in the 1981 document Young Offenders - A Strategy for the future (quoted in Policing London, 1986:59), the 1982 Criminal Justice Act (and other criminal legislation concerning juveniles) will automatically, adversely and disproportionately, affect those

living in poor areas with a variety of social problems. A further piece of criminal legislation, the Police and Criminal Evidence Act of of 1984 is concerned broadly with areas of police complaints, police/community consultation but also with increasing police powers. In respect of the latter, these cover the areas of police "stop and search", arrest, entry to households, detention at police stations, search and seizure, and road checks. In respect of police complaints a new Police Complaints Authority was introduced. It is a piece of legislation whose balancing of the rights of individuals against the rights of the state (as represented by the police) to maintain law and order, have been fiercely debated. For example, according to the Chief Constable for Merseyside at the time (Oxford, 1984:66) the Act: "is the most controversial and I believe the most misunderstood piece of legislation ever to be considered during my professional career". According to Oxford (1984:68) the balance has "been tipped too far in favour of the wrongdoers". By contrast the now banned Greater London Council (Policing London, 1986:25) considered the then Bill as meaning: "A massive extension in police powers without adequate safeguards for the liberty of the subject or any increase in the powers of police authorities to ensure accountability." The section of the Act concerning police/community consultation (Section 106 (i)) but not accountability (to local authorities) has been largely attributed to Lord Scarman's "proposed consultation" recommendation. (H.M.S.O, 1981:8.39). In the 1984 Police and Criminal Evidence Act police/community consultation is described (Section 106 (i)) in the following terms:

> "Arrangements shall be made in each police force area to obtaining the view of people in that area about matters concerning the policing of the area and for obtaining their co-operation with the police in preventing crime in the area."

It has already been claimed by some writers, such as Lea and Young (1984:246-261) that these arrangements can be criticised on two grounds. Their first criticism is that they amount to police/community consultation but not greater police/community accountability and second that with the move towards coercive policing and away from consensus policing,

these proposals together with those concerning "community policing" are made all the more unworkable.

It also needs to be acknowledged, that methods of policing have changed as a result of the 1981 disturbances and other "mass events". It is not possible, nor indeed necessary, to detail them here but important to state that the introduction of military style protective riot gear and the availability of C S gas and, more recently, in 1986, the issuing of plastic bullets (Clare, 1987:62) by the Home Office directly to various urban police forces (in the case of Merseyside against the wishes of the local policing authority), together with events in Brixton again in 1985 and the Broadwater Farm Estate in Tottenham in 1985 have further combined to produce an increase in tensions in Britain's poorer inner city and multi racial areas. Furthermore the British Nationality Act of 1981 which came into effect on 1st January 1983 and following earlier acts (the Commonwealth Immigrants Act 1968, the Immigration Appeal Act 1969, the 1971 Immigration Act) introduced further controls and restrictions over Britain's black population. In the midst of moves towards more coercive forms of policing than notions of community policing whilst themselves remaining ambiguous, appear less likely to flourish. A Home Office study (Brown and Iles, 1985:1) noted that the trend towards the introduction of community policing schemes since the mid 1970's:

> "... has been accelerated as police forces, acting on the conclusions of the Scarman Report (1981), have introduced community policing in areas with racial unrest. However, the rapidity with which many forces have embraced aspects of community policing in general, has largely been at the expense of practical considerations of what is meant by community policing and how it might be best implemented."

A final related policy issue detailed earlier, concerns the government's interest in inter-agency crime prevention work and the encouragement given by the government (Home Office, 1984, 1984(a), and 1984 (b)) for the Probation Service to become more widely involved in this work. However it is less clear whether these initiatives represented wider concerns

about and "fresh approaches" to dealing with rising crime or were directly related to urban disturbances. Nevertheless there has been both an increased intensity and diversification in crime control measures since the early 1980's.

Policy developments subsequent to the 1981 public disturbances cannot all be seen simply either to focus on Lord Scarman's report or be seen in isolation from other events and social developments in society. These include rising levels of unemployment, particularly in inner city areas, industrial unrest, a renewed government interest in the problems of crime and public protest, and conjointly what appears to be a decreasing political tolerance towards public dissent and assembly in it's various forms. It is then within this wider social context and as a Probation Service's response to the 1981 Brixton disturbances, that the Inner London Probation Service set out to create and sustain a new Community Probation Team in the Brixton area of south London.

CHAPTER SIX

The Creation of a new Community Probation Team: Rationale, Location and Structure

The creation of an additional Probation Team in the Brixton area of London was, a direct outcome of the area's disturbances in 1981. However this specific development in Probation community involvement was not restricted to the creation of one additional team in London. Rather, as we have seen, it symbolised a gradual, tentative and uneven shift in Probation Service policy from client centred to community oriented work, in part generally, and in part locally in inner city areas which experienced public disturbances. There are currently documented "new" community initiatives in the St Pauls area of Bristol (Lawson, 1984), Handsworth, Birmingham (H.M.S.O., 1981:147), Toxteth, Merseyside (Central Council of Probation Committees, 1986), and Manchester (Greater Manchester Probation Service, 1984, 1987). There has also been, undocumented, a recent community initiative by the Middlesex Probation Service following the Broadwater Farm Estate disturbances of 1985. Additionally there are other developing community initiatives, described variously as crime prevention work, community work, and inter-agency work, in West Yorkshire, Essex, and Swansea Probation Services. (Central Council of Probation Committees, 1987). The urban disturbances of 1981 did not, in themselves, produce an interest in Probation Service community involvement. Rather a series of events, interests (in crime prevention work) and activities (in inner city areas) including, as one element, the disturbances, have combined to encourage and legitimise, to use the Home Office's phrase, "work in the wider community" (Home Office, 1984, 1984a), by the Probation Service.

In it's submission to the Scarman Report (H.M.S.O., 1981), the (then) Inner London Probation and After-Care Service

suggested that the Probation Service could make a contribution to inner city problems. It stated (Inner London Probation Service, 1981:3):

> "In looking to the future, we would want to emphasise the importance of social policy initiatives to relieve stress in this area, most notably in the field of housing and unemployment, but also recognising the contribution that could be made by agencies as ourselves in individual and social support" (emphasis added).

Also there appeared to be a case, put to me by all the members of the Community Probation Team and other Probation Officers, for arguing that the Inner London Probation and After Care Service's Senior management and its Probation Committee were concerned both by the very peripheral role envisaged generally for the Probation Service by Lord Scarman in his report, and the absence of any specific Brixton Probation initiative at the time of the 1981 disturbances. Indeed the only Probation Service work mentioned in the Scarman report described Probation work being done in the Handsworth area of Birmingham, not in Brixton. The description of the work of the West Midlands Probation and After Care Service in Handsworth is particularly relevant here in respect of the Brixton Community Probation Team's emergent preventive work. i.e. engaging in voluntary and not statutory work with people not formally identified as offenders. In respect of the Cultural Centre at Handsworth then: "The aim was to prevent young people at risk from offending rather than deal with those who had already offended." (HMSO, 1981:147).

It was also noted (HMSO, 1981:147), importantly, that:

> "While it was recognised that, as a long term aim, there were dangers in the Service undertaking such long term work, such projects brought the Service nearer to the community and enabled the community to see the Probation Officer in a more positive light, and not simply as an agent of the Courts". (emphasis added)

These twin notions of greater accessibility to the "community", and the encouragement of a more "positive" attitude by the "community" to the Probation Service were also, as we will see,

central to the Brixton Community Probation Team's objectives. Additionally these objectives suggested that up to this point Probation Officers were not as accessible as the Service wished them to be and that the "community", however defined, was insufficiently positive towards the Service.

As a result of the 1981 Brixton disturbances, the Chief Probation Officer of Inner London sought advice from senior and local management teams about new initiatives in the Brixton area. The Assistant Chief Probation Officer for Lambeth at the time wrote in a preliminary discussion paper (Williams, undated:1):

> "The events of April and July 1981 and the subsequent publication of the Scarman report posed a challenge to all the agencies working in Lambeth, including the Probation Service. All needed to look critically at the service they were providing and its relevance to the needs of the local community both in general and in the immediate task of reconstruction and normalisation. There appeared to be an obligation on everyone and not just the police to put their respective houses in order. When the Chief Probation Officer asked what specific initiatives should be taken in Brixton, we were certain that what was not required was any radical departure from the central task of the Probation Service. We should not try to take all the problems of Brixton upon ourselves nor attempt what is more appropriately done by other social or political bodies; equally the established role of the Probation Service (our particular understanding of authority, our committment to deal as far as possible with problems of offending within the community, etc.) seemed one that could appropriately be developed and enhanced." (emphasis added).

But what did the term putting the Probation Service's "house in order" actually mean? How did the Service propose to do this? In what ways did it propose to offer a service more relevant to "local needs"? From various discussion documents freely made available to me about the nature of the new initiative in Brixton it is clear that whilst there was a general agreement about a new team of Probation Officers being introduced in Brixton there were uncertainties about what form it should take and what purposes it should serve. One of the central arguments centred on the critical issue of whether the new team

would be a generic fieldwork team or some sort of specialist team. For approximately one year following the disturbances, the Inner London Probation and After Care Service held regular meetings involving senior management centrally and locally in Lambeth to discuss the issue of the new initiative in Brixton. One Inner London Probation Officer, who had worked in Brixton for ten years, made the following submission to the management group (Inner London Probation Service, 1982a):

> "It is my idea .....that the Receivers Department should buy a shop in Acre Lane, Acre Lane is likely to be the new front line when the current front line is finally demolished. A downstairs part which is normally the shop or cafe would have the normal pool table and space invader machine offering facilities for group work, basically to hold formal or informal groups. Upstairs would be straightforward offices where individual one to one counselling could be done. The idea would be that the centre would not open until midday since many of the people who frequent the disreptable clubs and cafes do not get up to midday, work on various levels would continue until about 6pm.....it will be envisaged that the kind of clientele that would frequent this would be mostly male, mostly black, probably be either young first and perhaps gradually more middle aged as officers won the confidence and respect of one of the most alienated sections of the community.....I also feel that another centre should be set up on the Stockwell Park Estate in the Buckmaster House Doctor's Surgery. There should be a reporting centre like they do in Northern Ireland at Buckmaster House one or two days a week."

As we shall see, the new team did attempt to combine recreational activities with counselling provision, directly through the Probation Service and indirectly by contributing to similar approaches in the locality. The team's practice did not, however, operationalise, implicitly or explicitly, the racist suggestion above about local (i.e. black) people being late risers. At one Inner London Probation Service meeting in June 1982, one of the series of discussion meetings, the debate about the generic/specialist nature of the team emerged. The Assistant Chief Probation Officer at the time and the subsequent Senior Probation Officer of the team were both clearly in favour of a unit which offered "a range of working methods" (Williams, 1982:1), and that it was this that would

make "the unit special rather than in concentrating on particular activities". (Williams, 1982:1). The debate essentially focused on whether the unit should have a specialised client group, such as "young offenders", or specialised activities for a generic client group. In respect of this argument there were serious concerns expressed about whether a so called specialist project, whatever it's intrinsic qualities, would generate sufficient referrals from Probation colleagues. There were, one meeting's minutes recorded, "dangers in it being totally dependent on referrals from other teams" (Williams, 1982:1), and reference was made to the difficulties of some special units in attracting referalls. This important issue about the nature and flow of referrals from Probation Officers to specialist units is one I have highlighted elsewhere (Broad, 1982) and one which also emerged as highly significant here.

The critical point concerned the decision made by local and senior management for the Community Probation Team to carry a traditional client caseload. In other words the decision was made to engage in the normal range of duties done by generic fieldwork teams, but with some sort of special "community emphasis". As will be shown later, this factor, combined with the unit's emergent "open door" policy, substantially reduced opportunities for the team to redefine the Probation role, and to be innovatory and take risks, particularly in the area of non-statutory Probation work.

Eventually by the Autumn of 1982, agreement had been given by the Chief Probation Officer for the additional Probation Team. Having made this decision, new premises needed to be found. "Temporary " premises were eventually found and these consisted of offices at that time belonging to two small voluntary organisations, the Prisoner's Wives Service and the Newbridge Agency which assists offenders to find employment. Subsequently as will be shown, the location and design of these quickly found premises were additional significant factors so far as the type of Probation work possible on these premises was concerned.

Having secured these "temporary " premises in 1982, which the team occupied up till December 1987 (by which time the research had been completed), the organisation produced statements about the unit's objectives and working methods. Based on discussion with team members as well as these internal discussion documents, it was possible to identify these objectives. Two general objective types, intrinsic and instrumental, were identified. In this Probation unit the latter specified those immediate and predominantly task-centred objectives (such as setting up an activity group) whereas instrumental ones related directly to a range of longer term and predominantly value-centred objectives (for example socialising or rehabilitating offenders). The answers to the questions about the Probation Service "getting it's house in order" and, to use the Assistant Chief Probation Officer's phrase of engaging in the immediate task of area "reconstruction and normalisation" (Williams, undated:1) were not provided in the initial discussion documents about the unit's objectives. These isues are identified later through an examination and analysis of the team's subsequent practices and experiences. At this stage however, all the relevant passages which outline the team's initial aims and objectives, as presented by the then Assistant Chief Probation Officer have been extracted and reproduced below. These statements emphasise three points; the agency's perception of the desirability and need for greater community involvement, greater flexibility of working methods, and inter-team cooperation. (Williams, undated: Central Brixton Unit). The statement's revelant passages then are as follows:

> "The focus of our thinking was upon a service undertaking a broad range of tasks in relation to a particular local community. The notion of a special (i.e. specialist workers such as youth workers or units dealing with a highly selected group) was rejected.
>
> The need to adopt a higher community profile.
>
> ... that the relevance of the Service related to the range of services provided.
>
> A unit to be committed to community involvement, committed to flexibility and diversity in it's working methods but acting in the framework of a conventional understanding of the tasks of the Probation Office.

> ... support given to staff in developing their professional practice in flexible and diverse ways.
>
> ... a body of experience of more general references to be built up.
>
> ... an obligation to share more widely the experience of working there.
>
> The desirability of employing sessional staff as a way of using local people with special skills.
>
> ... establish close community links.
>
> The community liaison work unit should also help to identify local resources of benefit to our clients."

In another relevant document entitled The Patch System - its relevance to Lambeth (Perry, undated), this time from the incoming team's Senior Probation Officer, the emphasis was again on the "community" and not only on individuals as a focus for Probation intervention, support and conflict:

> "The scale and nature of social and economic problems in many parts of Lambeth suggests that offending should be viewed as a product of structural factors as well as a symptom of individual pathology. Indeed, it seems that in some localities the balance has shifted away from a basically healthy community into which the offender needs to be re-integrated into one which has a destructive effect on it's members with the result that many become "casualties" of one kind or another. Given this trend, it follows that the offender should be seen as very much part of a local community subject to forces such as unemployment, bad housing, racial discrimination and peer group pressure. .....Thus while identification of individual client needs may well take place within the framework of one to one counselling, an appropriate response may involve a range of working methods, including the use of neighbourhood groups and projects. .....A patch system would necessitate field teams identifying natural communities wherever possible. Also a more flexible use of existing buildings and the establishment of satellite offices on local housing estates could be desirable. Levels of involvement in "patches" would clearly depend on staff resources and the needs of a particular neighbourhood" .

In analysing these statements, the only written ones that were

concerned even in a general sense with team objectives as well the nature of the local "community", one is struck by the lack of clarity of precise goals. General goals however related first to becoming more accessible to the local community and second organising flexible practices. But in each case to what end? How was the "community" to be identified? The project's constant reference to community appears to denote community as a geographical area seasoned with expectations about both community neighbourliness, and pathology. In the above statements there was no explicit mention of, for example, reducing offending or rehabilitating offenders and the stated were are mostly instrumental, rather than intrinsic ones. Intrinsic objectives are identified through an analysis of the team's subsequent practices within the wider context of policy statements. Specifically they are examined and finally analysed within a three-fold conceptual framework concerning social justice, social welfare and social control perspectives in Probation community work. At this stage it is sufficient to acknowledge that the approach concerning the reduction of inequalities and the redistribution of resources and, ultimately, power, is defined as a "social justice approach" to working with offenders and communities. The "social control approach" is typified by its emphasis on the actual not anticipated imposition of client and area normalisation mechanisms. The "social welfare approach" rejects notions of formal controls being implemented and supports propositions about individual and community help and self-help.

It is argued that the imprecise nature of the initital objectives together with the subsequent re-definition and re-formulation of them through negotiated practices serves to challenge Fuller and Myers' (1941) thesis that there can be separate and distinctive awareness policy formulation, and policy implementation stages of a "natural history" of a social problem. Here the term "social problem" refers to the role of the Probation Service in an area which had experienced public disorders. Having identified the unit's background, rationale and formally stated objectives, and begun to address some of the key issues raised by the establishment of the unit, the team's structure, organisation and location, once it actually

opened " in 1982, will be described.

The Structure, Organisation, and Location of the Brixton Community Probation Team

Staffing and Functions

Prior to the 1981 disturbances there were six generic Probation Team's responsible for all Probation field work in the London Borough of Lambeth. Before the new team was created each of the existing Lambeth teams had individual catchment areas, whose wedge shaped points converged on Brixton in central Lambeth. Once authorisation for the additional team had been given, the area teams in consultation with senior management set about re-organising their geographical boundaries is order to leave central Brixton "clear" for the new team to enter (Appendix D). The re-organisation of these boundaries took some time, with, according to the new team's Senior Probation Officer in interview with me, "some considerable arguments about exactly who should have what". Apparently the existing teams, all of which previously had responsibility for part of Brixton, had different levels of interest about continuing their work in Brixton. Several Probation Officers wanted to retain their clients who lived in the Brixton area once the new team had begun, whilst others were apparently quite pleased to transfer them to the new office. Decisions about the new geographical boundaries were made as far as possible, on the basis of each of the teams having equitable caseload levels, or, following the reorganisation, anticipated equitable case load levels.

Initially the new Probation Team's staff group consisted of one white Senior Probation Officer (referred to henceforth as V), two white female Probation Officers (X and U), one male Probation Officer (Z), and one black ancillary worker (T) and two secretaries. (L) and (R). Estimated staff costs, at 1987 levels, amounted to about £95,000 and £100,000 per annum. In the light of recent general equal opportunities discussions it might, or might not, seem unusual that a new team working in an

area such as Brixton did not have a single black Probation Officer. Apart from there only being very few black Probation Officers in the Inner London Probation and After Care Service at that time (figures are unavailable for that period but there were an estimated ten black Probation Officers), V's emphasis on employing experienced workers effectively excluded consideration being given to the growing number of newly qualified black Probation Officers starting to emerge from the training institutions at that time. When however one of the original staff groups subsequently left in 1985, the question of whether or not there should be a black replacement, as will be illustrated, became an issue.

As already indicated there was some emphasis primarily on recruiting Probation Staff with experience and knowledge of the area. Two of the staff, V and U had previously worked in one office in Lambeth and another, X, at another local Lambeth Probation Office. Shortly after the unit eventually opened in 1982 another Probation Officer (Y) was recruited, from outside the Inner London Probation Service. V the Senior Probation Officer, later told me that an additional criteria for selecting staff was that they were not "too political". When pressed on this point in interview he explained:

> "Well, we didn't want anybody who was racist, too radical, someone who would for example get the Probation Service a bad name but getting involved in community politics. It's very sensitive in Lambeth at the moment you know."

In interview each staff member separately informed me that they had been recruited only in part, and in some cases not at all, on the basis of local knowledge of the area, but more particularly because of specific professional skills and/or areas of interest possessed by staff members. For staff member X this meant an interest in Women's groups, for staff member U and interest both in Women's groups and group work in general, for staff member Y, an interest in group work (which he recalled seemed to arouse more interest when he was being interviewed for the job rather than his community work experience), and for staff member Z a chance to move away from a traditional field work team into what he regarded as "the

exciting opportunities" of working in a new team in an area he knew well. None of the staff had any direct experience of comnunity work, but had a range of expriences in offender focused group work. For the black ancillary worker, T, the appointment had meant a transfer from being an administrative secretarial worker to what was anticipated as a more interesting and challenging occupation. For V the most immediate benefit was of working in a new team, "not hidebound by tradition." He told me that it was very difficult to change things in a long established team: "It was marvellous being able to handpick one's own team for the first time. But whilst they said we'll leave you to choose the staff this meant I would be blamed if it all went wrong". The staff group remained intact as a group from 1982 to September 1985. By December 1985 three of the original staff members had resigned from the team (two from the Probation Service including the Senior Probation Officer who had had 20 years experience in probation work). By June 1988 none of the original professional staff group remained. Staffing issues will be explored later but it is important at this point to record that staff frustrations about not being able to do what they saw as "real social work", combined with disappointment about unfulfilled expectations related to innovatory objectives, as well as workload pressure, to their decisions to leave.

Having staffed the unit and made the decision that the new generic team would work within a distinct geographical area, the team's statutory duties, if not ways of carrying out these duties or other work, were clear. They were to supervise, just like traditional field work offices, all clients subject to statutory court orders within the new catchment area. This involved the supervision of those on Supervision Orders, Probation Orders, post release Detention Centre Licences, Youth Custody Licences (which replaced both Borstal and Young Persons Licences as a result of the 1982 Criminal Justice Act), adult Parole Licences and Matrimonial Supervision Orders. Other statutory duties included the preparation of Social Inquiry Reports for the criminal courts and undertaking office duties. i.e. staff members were to be responsible for interviewing and dealing with callers to the Probation Office. The usual number

of court duties and civil access and custody reports expected was partially reduced to take account of the team's group work initiatives inside the office and community initiatives outside the office. As will be shown later, policies at management level become re-defined and re- negotiated at practitioner level largely as a result of administrative procedures, professional practices and unanticipated consequences. In practice a range of "mini policies" were instigated and developed "upwards" from the lower stratas of the organisational hierarchy and not in response to clearly stated "downward" policy objectives.

The team's catchment area was divided into five sub-areas or "patches", within which each Probation Officer was expected, in some way, to become involved. This "patch approach", it was anticipated, would enable each Probation Officer to take work from within one small geographical area, rather than across the entire catchment area, which amounted to approximatley 6 square miles (Appendix E). According to the Senior Probation Officer (V) the "patch system" (Perry, undated: 1-2) offered the following opportunites:

"1. It enables each Probation Officer to develop a more intimate knowledge of a particular neighbourhood and to respond appropriately.

2. As a result of (1) a Probation Officer is better able to mobilise local projects and resources (which abound in Lambeth) on behalf of the client.

3. A greater awareness of the involvement of other statutory and voluntary agencies with clients, promotes a broader and more co-ordianted approach and the possibility of a "pro-active" stance.

4. A clearer understanding of community pressures and influences leads to a clearer understanding of the client and his behaviour, which can benefit individual counselling.

5. The "neighbourhood" P.O. approach mirrors a trend in other agencies towards decentralisation, for example, estate based housing management and permanent beat police officers.

6. Having a "patch" enhances a Probation Officer's autonomy and status by affording a

more potentially diverse role, e.g. mediator, co-ordinator, catalyst.

7. Linked with (6) a Probation Officer's local identification with a local neighbourhood can create an emotional attachment which has a positive effect on his or her morale".

The Senior told me that patchwork gave a Probation Office "more status and greater autonomy" and that staff had to develop new skills, based on "experimental learning" acting as mediators and negotiators between different agencies. Formal responsibility for the day to day management and organisation of the team rested with the Senior Probation Officer, with overall area responsibility being held by the area's assistant Chief Probation Officer. In broad terms a culture of consensus had initially developed within the office in the sense that team members all broadly supported the emergent range of practitioner programmes. This initially made the use of formal authority by the Senior Probation Officer largely unneccessary except in the case of the Probation Officer newly arrived to Inner London and, unlike the others, previously unknown to the Senior Probation Officer. The emergent pressures on the team's consensus culture, and the strategies used to deal with these pressures will be detailed later. It is sufficient here to note that the cramped premises and its use made by the staff and clients and made a significant contribution to these pressures.

The Probation Premises

The team's office bore little resemblance to the traditional generic Probation offices whether the larger type based in court buildings, or the smaller ones in London located in converted properties. The building itself was situated in an alleyway opposite (but not visible to) Brixton police station and occupies the top two floors of a delapidated building. The first two floors were rented by a commercial retailer. For the first three years the building was occupied by the Probation Service there were no notices, other than the handwritten one stuffed behind a door handle on the second floor, to indicate this was a Probation office. The alleyway leading to the

exterior flight of stone steps was continually full of rubbish and despite its proximity to the police station, appeared to be a place for fly-tipping. Additionally parked cars and lorries in the alleyway make access extremely difficult. Numerous complaints by the Probation Service, local councillors, a National Association of Local Government Officer's Health and Safety representative about the state of the building appear to have had no effect. Quite often it was almost impossible to walk down the alleyway without climbing over cardboard boxes - hardly a welcoming entrance. The unsuitability of the building had been recognised prior to it opening and as the assistant Chief Probation Officer responsible (Williams, undated: 4) commented:

> "It is, however, not ideal because of its poor access and the very close proximity of Brixton police station and a request has been made to investigate alternative premises. It is not intended that this should delay the opening of the new unit....."

With some foresight however he added:

"... even if we start at Brixton Road, it is likely that larger premises will become necessary before long" (Williams, undated: 4). The team occupied the same premises until December 1987 as they did in 1982 although a temporary sub-office, five minutes walk away, was made available to administrative staff but hardly used, from 1984. This did not ease the pressure from caseload levels but relieved the pressure on administrative space. The first attempt in 1985 to secure permanent alternative offices in the borough was thwarted by the Borough's Planning Committee. This was because the application was in the name not of the Inner London Probation Service, but in the name of the Metropolitan Police's Receivers Department, and the local authority did not want what it regarded, mistakingly, as an additional police building in the Borough. According to one local perspective the Local Authority and the police were in a constant state of conflict as the former sought fuller police accountability whereas the police themselves supported consultation, through liaison committees with the public, not direct accountability to the

local authority. A second attempt in 1986 to secure more suitable premises was more successful once the Probation Service explained to the local authority, the Probation, not police, nature of the application. This new building finally became available for occupancy in December 1987. During the field work however the team still occupied the same overcrowded premises as at 1982, indicating not just practical difficulties but, perhaps, the low organisational priority given to this type of work, compared with other "new" statutory intiatives.

Once clients negotiated the alleyway to these premises they had some choice, depending on their situation, of Probation setting within the building. The second floor consisted of one activity room equipped with an old table tennis table, a small snooker table and a children's playing frame. The room was furnished with soft chairs, a settee and basic kitchen facilities and contrasts with the normal stark Home Office issue furniture and fittings. It is here that activities and the "open informal" supervision of clients were expected to occur.

The third floor is the hub of the office because it contains the workers who, in turn, attracted the clients. The external door leading to the third floor offices was, theoretically, open all day. In practice it was kept locked by the administrative staff unless there were Probation staff in the building. This modification to the planned original opening hours ("open access") was significant in the sense that it represented a change of policy introduced, in the wake of pressures, by the group of staff most exposed to clients all day, namely the female receptionists. These pressures arose from so-called "difficult clients" who had variously been violent towards staff, threatened staff and, exceptionally, engaged in acts of self mutilation on the premises. This change of policy from open to limited access not always openly acknowledged by the Senior Probation Officer, was greeted with some reluctance by staff. It appeared that their office had previously intended not to represent a "front line" (of authority), but a "front door" (to hospitality). "Their" office, staff insisted, was to be, had to be, different from

other offices (like local housing offices, social service offices, and social security offices),which had introduced variously locked doors, telephone appointment systems only, strengthened reception windows, security guards and so on. In view of the difficulties and stresses the office experienced, it was regularly closed between 1pm and 2pm, closed on Fridays at 3pm and not 5pm, and closed unofficially on other occasions and without notice. Other arrangements, to be specified, also limited opportunities for client access to Probation staff.

As with the team's densely populated catchment area, there was also pressure on space inside the building. With the exception of the Senior Probation Officer, all the staff shared a room with another member of staff. The only exception to this was the ancillary worker who shared her room with the tea/coffee making facilities, and a noisy old photocopying machine. Having negotiated the alleyway, three flights of stairs and the external door, if unlocked, clients enter the cramped reception area. The receptionist's office with standard sliding window was directly opposite the door leading to the staircase. The receptionist's window represented the Probation Teams's "front line" in a "front line" area in the sense that it provided the first opportunity for authority to be negotiated. A door directly adjacent to the receptionist's window, once left open allowing clients direct entry to the workers, was more usually locked than not. The Senior Probation Officer, acting as gatekeeper for the team, has an office directly behind the all important semi-panelled door which separated the clients from the the Probation offices. A toilet in the reception area, once for staff and clients alike, had a notice on it "staff use only" adding that clients should use the toilet on the second floor instead. Since the office first opened in January 1983 and as a result of incidents and pressures whose mechanisms and causes will be identified later, the team had reacted by introducing a clearer separation of what was public (i.e. clients) and what was private (i.e. Probation Officers) space. The effect of these new internal arrangements on the type and nature of client/Probation Officer exchanges were illustrative of the way in which social and organisational policies become modified, transformed and renegotiated in the wake of

practitioner experiences and local problems.

These newly created internal arrangements were a direct result of three factors. The first concerned the pressures brought to bear on the office from outside, that is from an area containing high levels of deprivation. In other words some of the social problems in the area became transferred, by individuals, to individual problems brought to the office. Second, the "new" arrangements arose from the lack of organisational and professional support for a team originally concerned with introducing innovatory practices. Third, the changing practices emerged as a result of the role of the Probation Service in the criminal justice system. This concerned its role as a court- based agency with it's largely non-negotiable statutory duties and functions, and additionally in this case, its escalating "open access" demands. The first of these factors will now be examined by consideration of the area's social characteristics and an account of a typical day in the life of the Community Probation Team. The other two factors will be examined later as the fieldwork unfolds.

The locality of Lambeth: Area Social Characteristics

One of the most authoratitive attempts to quantify inner city areas, including the Borough of Lambeth of course, in terms of specific indicators of deprivation was that based on the 1971 census and undertaken by Holterman (1975) at the Department of the Environment. This analysis was repeated, updated and amended after the 1981 census had been taken and it is information from the 1981 census produced in a preliminary form, (Government Statistical Office, 1982), and a final report in 1985, (Office of Population Censuses and Surveys, 1985) that forms the principal basis of the analysis here. Using this data and information from other, mostly local sources, it is possible to present comparative information about the area's social characteristics at four levels. These are Inner London (i.e. the Inner London Boroughs of Camden, Hackney, Hammersmith and Fulham, Haringey, Islington, Kensington and Chelsea, Lambeth, Lewisham, Newham, Southwark, Tower Hamlets, Wandsworth, City of Westminster), the Borough of Lambeth,

Brixton and fourthly the Community Probation Team's exact geographical catchment area.

The information about deprivation indicators, for all Local Authorities in England and Wales, was produced under the heading 1981 Census, Information Note No. 2: Urban Deprivation (Department of the Environment, 1983), as well as in other similar information papers. In addition to identifying deprivation indicators, the policy was, according to the Department of the Environment (1983) to be used as a means of determining central funding towards Local Authorities. Arguably, in respect of Lambeth the very reverse has happened. This paper ranked all Local Authorities on 8 measures or indicators of deprivation. The 8 indicators used in this analysis (Department of the Environment 1983: Annex A) are defined below:

"1. Unemployment - the percentage of economically active residents who are unemployed.

2. Overcrowding - the percentage of private households in permanent buildings living at more than 1 person per room.

3. Single parent households - the percentage of private households which contain at least one single-parent family with dependant child (ren) aged 0-15.

4. Pensioners living alone - the percentage of private households containing only one pensioner (males over 65, females over 60) living alone.

5. Lacking basic amenities - the percentage of private households in permanent buildings which lack the exclusive use of a bath and inside w.c.

6. Ethnic origin - the percentage of residents in households where the head of the household was born in the New Commonwealth or Pakistan. Referred to as "non-whites".

7. Population change - the percentage change in population between 1971 and 1981.

8. Standardised mortality rate 1980 - the ratio of the locally adjusted death rate to the national rate."

By examining this source, and of the 8 "deprivation

indicators", Lambeth falls within the worst of the 365 local authorities in England and Wales on 5 of them. These concern single parent families (second worst), population change 1971-81 (5th highest loss), black population (6th highest proportion), overcrowding (9th worst), and lack of basic amenities (11th worst). This recognition that the Borough of Lambeth is an area of multiple deprivation is not a recent discovery. In the early 1970's the six cities "total approach studies", arising out out of the Wilson Government's Urban Programme announced in 1968 (Loney, 1983:17) focused on Lambeth, Liverpool 8 and Birmingham Small Heath (Benyon, 1984:170). This study provided the basis for the White Paper Policy on the Inner Cities (Department of the Environment, 1977). The Final Report of the Lambeth Inner Area Study (Department of the Environment, 1977a), strongly advocated that inner city policies should be directed towards trying to raise incomes, improve housing stock and above all create new job and retraining opportunities to overcome the lack of necessary skills in the local labour force. It also argued that such policies by themselves were not sufficient to solve the mismatch between available skills and job vacancies. It recommended, controversially according to Rex (1984:198) because of its racist assumptions, that families should be encouraged to leave central London to go to the outer suburbs and the new towns. Since 1978 Lambeth has been an area in receipt of central government Urban Progamme finances and is referred to as a "Partnership Area" in keeping with the current government's interest in developing partnerships between central and local government and the voluntary and private sectors.

The borough's deprivation indicators, and other information included in Table Five, give some indication of the continuing relative poverty in the Borough overall but particularly in the Inner Area covered by the Community Probation Team. One of the reasons why Lambeth is not even higher on the Department of Environment's deprivation indicators ranking is that Lambeth is a diverse borough in terms of population distribution, types of housing and political make up. It has three distinct areas. To the North there is a concentration of industrial and office

developments (particularly in the Waterloo area), with small pockets of local deprivation. To the South stretching down to Norwood, adjoining Croydon, there is a largely Conservative (in political terms) home owning and employed group. However it is the third and central "Inner Core" area, referred to popularly as Brixton and which consists of the wards of Angel, Ferndale, Herne Hill, Town Hall and Tulse Hill where relative poverty and deprivation are most concentrated. It should be noted here that whilst the Brixton Community Probation Team's catchment area is similar to the area covered by these five wards, it is no more than an approximation. However by drawing a map depicting the Probation Team's boundaries it was possible to obtain information from the 1981 census which exactly matched the team's catchment area. In a few instances (for example concerning employment patterns in Lambeth), it was necessary to draw on information produced by the local authority since it was not available elsewhere. Also it should, of course, be noted that there is no definitive and unchallengable method of measuring absolute deprivation. Table 5 is produced in order to highlight the relative differences in specific areas in terms of relative measures of deprivation.

TABLE FIVE

A Comparative Table of "Deprivation Indicators" in 1981 for the Brixton Community Probation Team's catchment area, Brixton's five wards, the London Borough of Lambeth and Inner London

CATEGORY	AREA			
	Brixton Probation Area	Brixton	Lambeth	Inner London
	Expressed as percentage			
Unemployment (male and female)	19	16	13	12
Overcrowding	12	9	7	7
Single Parent Households	7	6	5	4
Pensioners living alone	14	14	15	16
Lacking basic amenities	8	9	9	9
Ethnic Origin (other than white European)	31	33	14	12
Population change	(note 1)	-12	-20	-18

[figures rounded]

Sources:

The majority of material in this table was extracted from the 1981 census (Government Statistical Office, 1982 and O.P.C.S.,1985). Other material principally concerned with the five Brixton wards was obtained from the document Key Facts Comparative Statistics (Lambeth, 1984). Additional material from the 1981 census was obtained from the documents County Monitor Inner London (Government Statistical Office, 1982) and the Greater London County Report No. 2 (Department of the Environment, 1983a). The latter documents are drawn on in the Lambeth (1984) document above. The definitions for the first seven catagories of social characteristics in the above table are the same as those used by the Department of Environment (1983), and included earlier.

Note 1

The category of population change for the Brixton Probation Area was not available from the census data.

It is noticeable, almost without exception, that in these deprivation categories their intensity increases as one moves inwards from a generalised indication of Inner London's situation, into the Borough of Lambeth itself, through the central area of Brixton and finally into the Brixton Probation Team's area. The greater distances, in terms of deprivation indices, are between the latter area and Inner London itself, with more marginal differences emerging between the two. In comparing these key indicators of deprivation, the Department of the Environment noted, in relation to Lambeth, that the following are what it described as the "main issues" (Department of the Environment, 1983:Table 3), namely; population loss, non-whites, lacking amenities, single parents, overcrowding, unemployment. Although it is not explicitly stated why "non-whites" are one of the main issues, it would appear that this is associated with the assumption that non-white groups need special resources/help in respect, for example, of education and general services. This would appear to deny the British, not immigrant, status of a large proportion of non-white residents residing in Lambeth.

From a social policy perspective, it is difficult to gauge whether this "symptom centred", approach to poverty, is the most effective way of identifying and tackling the problem of inequality, of which poverty can be regarded as simply one facet (on this point, see Abel-Smith and Townsend, 1965:65). By focusing, in a piecemeal fashion, on categories of persons and official perceptions of need alone prompting localised Urban Partnership Programmes wider structural inequalities can be ignored, if not forgotten. According to the Department of Environment, (Department of Environment 1983:1), the purpose of collating deprivation indicaters was: "to provide information about deprivation at a local level to help guide expenditure under the urban programme." Subsequently the government's policies towards local authorities, including Lambeth, have had the effect of draining considerable sums of money away from Local Authority budgets (in the form of reductions in the Rate Support Grant, and the government's "rate capping" policies.) These centralised initiatives, particularly the 1984 Rates Act have at best minimised, and at worse nullified any substantial

effects arising from the Lambeth's Urban Partnership Scheme. For the year 1981/82, for example, the Association of Metropolitan Authorites estimated that Inner City areas lost about £660,000,000 in rate support and other grants - more than three times the entire value of the Urban Programme. (quoted in The Guardian, 12 April 1982:3). According to the Borough of Lambeth's Budget Consultation Paper for 1986 (Lambeth, 1986), the withdrawal by central government in grants added up to approximately £113,000,000 for the years 1979-85. The amount allocated by the Department of Environment, through the Inner City Partnership fund to Lambeth for the same period amounted to £57,000,000. (Lambeth, 1983a:5-6). The allocated amounts were £10,000,000 for the years 1979-80 and 1980-81, decreasing to £9,000,000 for the year 1981-82 and then following the year of the disturbances, increased for the years 1982-83 to £12.5m. Subsequently the Partnership Fund has remained constant at £13.5m for each of the years up until 1985-86. (Lambeth, 1983a:5-6). However only between a third and a half of each of these budgets have actually been spent, (Lambeth, 1985a) illustrating the difficulties of translating policies into action.

The role played by the government in authorising such schemes also provides a mechanism for centralised control over local projects. The Community Probation Team's involvement outside the office not only centred on the sorts of "self help" notions encouraged by the Urban Programme, but specifically centred on organisations in Lambeth funded by the government's Lambeth Inner City Partnership. These organisations were the Afro-Caribbean Community Association, the First Generation Organisation, the Stockwell Park Estate Youth and Community Centre and the Brixton Young Family Housing Aid Association. The Probation team's liaison work with these organisations lends support to the argument that the team's community initiatives were guided to a large extent by existing political and social arrangements filtering down from central to local government level within the context of the government's understanding of the area's particular social characteristics and "problems". Juxtaposed against the backcloth of a decade and a half of Urban Programme work, The Guardian (3rd January

1985) commented "it is hardly reassuraing that Whitehall is still tinkering with the repair manual rather than getting the job itself done." The government's inner city policies were also criticised in the document Faith in the City: The Report of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission on Urban Priority Areas (1986). This report, itself condemned as "Marxist theology" by a Government spokesperson noted that the decline of the quality of life was continuing in those areas designated as "Urban Priority Areas".

An examination of further area characteristics further illustrates underlying economic and social trends within the area.

TABLE SIX

A Comparative Table of Selected Social Characteristics for 1981 Covering the Brixton Community Probation Team's Catchment Area, Brixton's Five Wards, The Borough of Lambeth and Inner London

CATEGORY	AREA			
	Brixton Probation Area	Brixton	Lambeth	Inner London
Population	12,875	59,737	244,143	2425,630
Density (Persons per hectare)	(Note 1)	92.00	9.37	77.9
	Expressed as a percentage			
Population living in rented (Local Authority Accom.)	62	45	43	43
Population aged 16-24 (male and female)	19	19	18	17
Population aged 5-15 (male and female)	19	15	14	13
Private households with 3 or more dependent children	10	8	7	6
Economically active in the 16-24 age group (male and female)	69	68	73	75
Households with no car	71	64	59	58
Social Class Groupings (Notes)				
Class I	1	2	5	4
Class II	13	(Note 2)	20	10
Class III (non manual)	14	(Note 2)	17	11
Class III (manual)	29	(Note 2)	27	20
Class IV	17	16	17	13
Class V	16	9	9	6

[figures rounded]

Sources - As in Table 5.

Note 1 The category of population density is not included for the Brixton Probation area because it was not available.

Note 2 Percentage figures for classes 2,3 (non-manual), and 3 (manual) were not available since the small area statistical information about Brixton's five wards contained a summary, not a detailed breakdown, of social class categories in the area.

Note 3 The information regarding classes is based on the Registrar- Generals standard social classifications. i.e. Class 1 - professional, Class 2 - managerial and technical, Class 3 - (non-manual), clerical and minor supervisory, Class 3 - (manual) skilled manual, Class 4 - semi-skilled manual, Class 5 - unskilled manual.

There are two central features of Table Six. First the pattern of "convergent" deprivation into the Community Probation Team's area as identified from Table 5 is reinforced. In particular it is most marked in terms of social class, family size and purchasing power. Second and in relation to the Community Probation Team's area, the high percentage of households without private cars (71 percent), living in local authority accommodation (62 percent), combined with the concentration of households with 3 or more dependent children, lends weight to the claim that a substantial proportion of the area's residents are likely to be dependent on the public rather than private provision of services. Lord Scarman (H.M.S.O., 1981:2.14) wrote in general terms of the concentration of poverty in the Brixton five wards area in the following terms:

> "The features of Lambeth's population I have mentioned are to be found accentuated in the Inner Area of the Borough, which includes Brixton. There

> is a generally higher rate of population decline than in the Borough as a whole; a higher proportion of clerical, semi-skilled and unskilled workers; a larger proportion of low income households; greater proportions of young and elderly; more one-parent families; and a higher incidence of mental illness and mental and physical handicap."

Additionally Table 6 indicates the high proportion of people in both the 0-15 and 16-24 age groups in the Community Probation Team's area. Taken together, these groups whose situation in terms of housing repairs, employment opportunities and levels of benefit has probably worsened since 1981, accounted for 38.2 percent of the area's population compared with 29.8 percent for Inner London as a whole. In relation to employment trends, and according to the Land Use Survey 1982/83 (quoted in Lambeth, 1986a:7), between 1971 and 1983 the borough has "lost" approximately 10,000 manufacturing jobs (60 percent of the 1971 fugure), and approximately 5,000 jobs in the construction sector (62 percent) of the 1971 figure). The public sector is the principle source of employment locally and accounted for about half of all local (i.e. borough) employment, Land Use Survey 1982/3, quoted in Lambeth, 1986a:7) Of course census material does not tell the whole story. Apart from other things, it does not include information about the transient groups in central Lambeth with drug and other alcohol problems who walk the streets during the day. It also does not include information about mental illness. According to official sources (D.H.S.S., 1984) in 1981 Lambeth had the 4th highest admission rate and the highest re-admission rate per 1,000 of the population within Inner and Outer London. Further information, this time about children in care for the year 1982/3 reveals that of all the London boroughs, Lambeth has the third highest number of children in care (1178) expressed as a percentage of the population under 18 years of age. (Personal Social Service Statistics, 1982/3 Actuals, quoted in Lambeth, 1984:60.)

All this information supports the view that the new Community Probation Team in Brixton was, is operating in an area, relative to other areas, of acute economic and social deprivation. Furthermore, as will be shown, the pressures

arising from these problems, particularly the economic ones slowly and relentlessly began to have an impact on it's office culture, it's mode of service delivery and on the Probation Team's capacity to implement it's objectives. As a means of identifying some of these issues a typical day in the life of the Community Probation Team will be outlined before examining, in subsequent chapters the characteristics of the team's clients, the team's programme for the clients, the clients' response, and the nature of the interactions between staff and clients.

A Typical Day in the Life of the Community Probation Team

What follows is a descriptive account of one day's observations at the Community Probation Team's office. On this particular day in September 1985 the research work had been in existence for five months and staff, and some clients were well aware of my identity research concerns and about the work and experiences of the Community Probation Team. On this particular day, like one other in the week, the office was open until 10pm.

9am

I walk down the rubbish strewn alleyway leading to the offices of the Community Probation Team. Although its two and a half years since the team moved into these "temporary premises", an old notice displaying the name of the previous occupants is still pinned to the outside wall. Opposite the alleyway at Brixton Police Station I can see a lot of building work going on to extend the police cell facilities. The investment required for these additional facilities contrasts sharply with the minimal outlay for the newly acquired, old and cramped Probation premises. An overfull crate of old empty milk bottles stands outside the third floor Probation Offices. A small stairway cupboard used for rubbish storage shows signs of human occupation. Nobody has arrived in the office yet.

9.30am

The two full time administrative staff (referred to henceforth as L and R) arrive, having walked from the bus stop, walk up to the third floor, unlock the door, collect the post, and lock the door behind them. I enter. There is no sign yet of the recently appointed temporary part time secretary. I am told by L that the authorisation for this temporary secretary had taken many months. Further that it was not unusual in any case to take such a long time to fill a vacancy and that there were currently 37 secretarial vacancies within the Inner London Probation Service at the moment. I am told by R that it's simply a question of money: "they can earn much more in the private sector and don't have all the hassles we have." (The friendly administrative staff at the office always appear to speak more openly to me before the Senior Probation Officer (V) arrives, usually about 10am). I ask R "what's it like working here?" she replies "do you really want to know? fucking awful". When pressed further on this I am told that, in her view, Probation headquarters is not interested in the unit and that it's treated "a bit like an outpost." Prompted by L seeing the box file I'm carrying, I'm asked if I can manage to get some for them because they have been trying, unsuccessfully, to get some for months. A conversation ensues about why the administrative staff are having these problems in securing administrative resources and they explain to me that V either forgets to take up these issues, and others, or "just doesn't get anywhere" if he does take them up. There are no clients as yet.

10am

The maligned Senior Probation Officer (V) arrives, greets me, and goes straight into his room to answer the phone. When I go into his office to talk about arranging a further interview with him, our meeting is constantly interrupted. I note that the phone rings eight times in just twenty minutes. There appears to be no sense in which V regards the number of telephone calls as unusual or that this make uninterrupted conversations impossible. One of the calls is from Social

Services about a client's child being taken into care the previous day, another concerns the financial and management problems of a local voluntary organisation, of which V is the chairperson. A third concerns the housing implications of a client being 'sent down' by the Crown Court last week. V listens attentively to each caller and undertakes to "get back" to them as soon as he can, an indication that immediate "solutions" aren't possible, or instant answers helpful. After arranging a further interview date with him (which he subsequently postpones because he is too busy), I move to talk to another Probation Oficer (U) who has just arrived. One of the secretaries, a heavy smoker, makes everybody a cup of coffee confirming her perception of her administrative "support role" to the professionals.

10.30 am

Over coffee, I explain to U that I would like to talk about her caseload levels i.e. the number of voluntary and statutory clients held by her. Officially individual case loads were to be limited to 25 (and not approximately 40 as is the case in other offices) in order to "protect" staff from their other duties in this community orientated team. I am told by U:

> "We're not protected here, we never have been. I've got as big a caseload as I had in my last office, about 42, including voluntary cases. And we're expected to be involved in community organisations. It's ridiculous."

By this time the team's social work student has arrived on placement and takes her place in a small office which she shares with the team's ancillary worker (T), the photocopier and the coffee making facilities. Another Probation Officer (Z) arrives to share his room with U. A young white client arrives and complains about both being unemployed and not having any money. His Probation Officer (U) speaks with him in the corridor and says "well you know you've got to sign on to get your money. We can't give you any money. You should know that by now." The client insists that he's "got to" have some money. The Probation Officer is friendly but firm. The client is given a D.H.S.S. unemployment leaflet about claiming

benefits by U and stays no longer than 5 minutes.

11 am

Staff member V steps into the reception area from his "gatekeeping" office and says to a client he already obviously knows, "hello, what can we do for you today?". The "client" is a man probably in his late 50's who asks for some milk. V gives him a third of a bottle of milk and twenty pence to buy some more. The negotiation takes no more than a minute and V returns to his office to take another phone call. Before getting back to his office however, a matter of a few feet, V is approached by U to ask if he has heard anything about her enquiry regarding a job-share policy for Senior Probation Officers within the Inner London Probation Service. He says that he will check up on this again and U says "you do know that unless I can get a quick decision on this important issue, then I will leave the Service" (one year later she resigns to take up a job share post outside the Probation Service - having worked in the Probation Service for approximately 10 years). I am approached by a hopeful Probation Officer (Z) who unsolicited, asks me: "how can you measure clients' alienation? if you could do that we might really be getting somewhere. It's a problem with a lot of our clients." Unhelpfully but honestly I reply that I don't know the answer to this question but acknowledge the importance the officer attached to the question.

The temporary secretary arrives late. The phone rings again and it is the Inner London Crown Court asking about a Social Inquiry Report that has not arrived and which is for a case listed today. R says to L: "Is it any wonder that this report hasn't arrived. What do they expect with phones going all the time and people coming in and out all the time". She lights up another cigarette. One of the secretaries discovers a copy of the report in the files and arrangements are made to take copies over to the Crown Court if one of the absent Probation Officers has not already taken in the report himself the previous evening. The Senior Probation Officer (V) comes into the office and says that as a result of his calls earlier he

has tried to make four return telephone calls to local services: "Either there is no answer, the switchboards have closed down, been stolen or there are answering machines". I ask him how many cases he has got at the moment and he tells me that that's the problem. He explains that he has got at least thirty cases but that he is expected, and the Home Office expects him not to carry a caseload at all. Seniors are to become managers not senior case workers. He tells me "I can't see how this is possible. we've all got too many case already. Whose going to take all my cases?" Two more people come in, one with spikey black hair, carrying a can of beer, the other a female acquaintance with pink hair and a friendly dog called vicious. They ask for Probation Officer (U) and have come in to give her part of their fine for possession of heroin. The youngster pays the money in, is given a receipt, and is then allowed to use the phone to speak to his apparently wealthy father. Once they leave the Probation Office involved tells me that the client has been a heroin addict since he was fourteen, that he now also enjoys drinking and that his "veins are in a really bad state, particularly those in his neck and legs." The Probation Officer continues talking about other drug cases on her caseload and says:

> "there just are not enough resources to deal with the heroin problem. I haven't got the time to deal properly with all these cases. One of these days, someone will die and they will all be saying "well, he was on Probation you know - what were they doing about the problem?"

The Probation Officer looks angry and upset. I find a spare room and make some notes.

<u>11.30am</u>

An agitated man arrives probably in his fifties and of large build at the office . He asks for "his" Probation Officer (X) and is asked courteously to take a seat since his Probation Officer is out of the office on a visit at the moment. The man shouts very loudly: "Don't you fucking keep me waiting. What do you think I am? Do you think I'm stupid?" Although the administrative staff are familiar with this man (who I later

discover is receiving psychiatric treatment), they still appear frightened, they ask him to take a seat again and then close and lock the receptionist's hatch. R says "we must keep clients out of this building unless their Probation Officers are present". After ten minutes or so the man stops shouting and sags into his chair staring at the floor. The client's Probation Officer X returns to the office after about another half an hour and he begins shouting again as he follows into her room for more private exchanges. The door is closed and the shouting continues behind the Probation Officer's closed door. Two of the other Probation staff are in the general office deciding if and whether they should intervene and help their colleage. Y says that he does not think that she needs "rescuing" and that he is well known at the office and that she will be alright. Eventually the shouting does stop. Next several (six in fact) people come in, in two separate groups, asking to see Probation Officers U and Z, both of whom are in their rooms trying to write Social Inquiry Reports and make phone calls. U leaves her room, sees her client and his friends for a few minutes, but the second group are asked to come back in the afternoon. One of the clients says to the receptionist "He's not in one of those meetings again is he?" andleaves. The client doesn't return in the afternoon.

12.30pm

With some extra relief today, the outside door is locked for the "lunchhour" (officially 12.30 - 1.30pm). The "shouting man" leaves the office, in silence, at about 1pm. I ask the Probation Officer (X) concerned "Are you alright?" and subsequently "what did he actually want?" I'm told:

> "I'm OK but we're simply not paid to have someone behaving like that, I don't think we should accept this behaviour. Sometimes I think he just likes talking to a woman. It's the same every time. He shouts and shouts and then suddenly stops, apparently for no reason."

In answer to further questions I am told that she had written a Social Inquiry Report some time ago on this man but not recommended a Probation Order. (The offence was breaking a

window at the local Social Security Office). The Magistrates Court placed him on Probation. She told me that technically he's on Probation but he should really be in a psychiatric hospital but they just won't take him. The remaining half or so of the "lunchbreak" is quiet. Someone knocks at the outside door but walks away whenno-one answers it. The Probation Officers go out and most bring in Marks and Spencers sandwiches into the office, in contrast to hamburgers eaten by administrative staff (who only have half an hour for lunch). One of the female administrative staff rushes out to do some shopping for the family.

1.30pm

Just before the formal end of the lunch hour four black youngsters (so-called "regulars") come in and ask for the activity room downstairs to be unlocked by the probation staff. One of these youngsters, in a friendly manner, puts his arm around the female Probation Officer who has the key to the door. She gently brushes his arm aside and goes downstairs to unlock the room. She immediately returns upstairs in order to "make some telephone calls before my clients come in". It is noticeable that several, three in fact of the Probation Officers have made appointments this afternoon for a number of clients to be interviewed in their own rooms (subject to space). This has the effect, if not the intention, of these staff not being available for the so-called "open reporting" sessions in the activity room downstairs which is supposed to require their presence.

2pm

The ancillary worker (T) returns to the office from her morning court duties, quickly eats her fish and chips and then goes downstairs to the activity room. I move down to the activity room. A white male Probation volunteer arrives in the activity room, makes a cup of coffee and sits on his own in a corner of the room making no contact with the client group. By this time the client group consists of ten youngsters, all black, and either playing pool or dominoes. The pool and dominoes group

interchange throughout the afternoon. The Senior Probation Officer (V) appears in the activity room for a matter of minutes, observes the situation, acknowledges one of the black youngsters, has a brief word with the volunteer and returns upstairs. (As will be discussed later, this particular afternoon is typical of the majority in terms of the presence of a very high proportion of non-statutory clients, particularly black youngsters, a lack of any substantial personal contact between this or any other group and the probation staff, the almost total absence of Probation Officers from the room itself, and the minimal intervention by volunteers). During a period of three hours, on only two occasions on this particular afternoon did statutory clients arrive and on both occasions the team's ancillary worker informed the Probation Officers upstairs. In turn they came downstairs, had an "informal chat" with their client and then went upstairs again for a longer private interview in one of the offices. This supervisory aspect of the team's work, i.e. the use of open reporting/informal activities as a means to providing more formal individual supervision upstairs in the probation offices is not an accidental but a socially created process about which staff freely spoke, and whose purpose one of the original documents, written by the Senior Probation Officer, (Perry, undated: 2) was made explicit.

3.15pm

A paid worker from a voluntary organisation, concentrating on finding employment for offenders, arrives to do his work for the afternoon. Only two out of the ten clients present respond to his approaches to look in the local newspaper for employment and/or write directly to potential employers. Both of these clients are recent arrivals at the office. One of the more established youngsters in the group says to the employment worker: "You know there's just no point in doing all this, I've heard nothing from the last three jobs I applied for. It's just a game, it's all a waste of time."

Throughout the rest of the afternoon there is a similar pattern namely, of pool playing, light hearted exchanges between the

clients and a minimal presence from Probation Officers. I ask the voluntary worker who largely sits on his own in the corner of the room what he sees as his role at the group. He tells me that it's never been made clear, apart from chatting with and "getting to know" clients. He says: "My interest is in doing voluntary social work with people who are motivated because I am thinking about going on a social work course in the future." (He continued to attend these sessions for a number of months after which he resigned and has not been since). I move upstairs to the Probation offices again where two interviews are being conducted in the corridor since all the other rooms are occupied, and the downstairs activity room is too noisy. An Italian man in his thirties, is using a local newspaper and one of the telephones to try and find employment. He is a "regular" visitor to the office and, apparently, was once on Probation at the office.

5pm

The administrative staff and employment staff leave the office. Two Probation Officers (X and U) are still interviewing clients in their offices. The Senior Probation Officer is busy on the phone again. Since this is a day when the activity room is open till 9 or 10pm I decide to go out for an hour and have something to eat. I return at 6pm.

6pm

Two new white volunteers have arrived to "supervise" the evening session. One of the volunteers, an ex-client tells me enthusiastically that there is a lot more going on at this office for clients than where he used to work, in the East End of London. There are eight black "clients" in the room. It appears that these 2 new volunteers are here simply to play pool with each other and again there is minimal interaction between the volunteers and the clients. One of the volunteers, the more experienced one, explains to me that his job is to make sure that there are no drugs or drinks taken onto the premises in the evenings and also his task is to exclude anyone who is, in his terms, undesirable. It becomes clear from

further discussion with him that in practice this largely means people who he or the group do not know or like. This perspective of his "gate keeping" duties makes it extremely difficult to encourage, as was initially hoped and expected, a turnover of "new" clients and youngsters. Throughout the evening, apart from occasional wrangles about the order of play on the pool table there are no "incidents" as such, and the atmosphere is very much akin to a youth club but for older adolescents. I don't know all these so-called "clients", although some were present in the afternoon. Once I try to start a conversation about who they are and what they're doing here and explain who I am, answers are short ("I'm just here to play pool", "to meet someone" etc.) or challenging ("What's it to you?"). To some extent this problem in obtaining the client's perspective on the activities is reduced when later, I get to know some of 'the regulars' who attend the day-time, not evening, activities.

10pm

By this time there are only 4 youngsters left, the volunteers announce that the building is to close, the youngsters leave, and the building is locked by the volunteers.

This account of a typical day provides some impressionistic insights into the offices culture, staff roles, and pressures and problems regularly faced by staff. The "typical day" account, and later analytical material, indicates the extent to which the team's Probation work was generated at least as much by the channelling of local problems through its "open access" policy, as by the Probation Services statutory duties. The detail which follows in the next and subsequent chapters provides a comprehensive analysis of the team's members perceptions of their roles, criteria for client eligibility, attempts to tackle unemployment, and consequences arising from the team's ever-increasing workload.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Construction Of The Community Probation Team's Caseload

This chapter is concerned with identifying the ways in which the team's caseload was constructed by the Community Probation Team and the criminal courts. It is argued that the team's "mini-policy", reflected in Social Inquiry Report recommendations, to secure wherever possible, a high proportion of Probation Orders on the team's caseload, was limited in its application to those people with minimal previous court disposals and assessed by Probation Officers as requiring professional welfare help. It is further suggested that the custodial sentences given to the team's Youth Custody and Detention Centre cases demonstrate the nature and extent of the external constraints on the team's capacity to divert "medium" or "high risk" offenders from custody.

The chapter begins with an outline of Inner London Probation Service's managements' expectations, and staff views about the unit's working methods. Specific attention is then given to examining the ways in which, through the medium of Social Inquiry Reports and group supervision, team members perceptions of their function, the agency's function and client needs, were revealed. The Community Probation Team was, as we have seen, established with the general brief of carrying out the normal range of Probation duties as well as becoming involved in the community. In the words of the team's initial Assistant Chief Probation Officer, (Williams, undated:2) the team would be:

> "... committed to flexibility and diversity in it's working methods, but acting in the framework of a conventional understanding of the task of the Probation Service."

It was also initially intended to be a broad-based (ie for black and white clients) project and not one exclusively

geared for black clients. The Assistant Chief Probation Officer made this point clear in one of the final discussion documents also suggesting that it would be desirable to encourage greater participation by black clients (a point previously raised in the document ILPAS in a Multi-racial Society, (Inner London Probation and After-care Society, 1982)). He wrote (Williams, undated:4):

> "Everyone knows that Brixton is a multi-racial area and that Probation Officers working in Brixton will clearly have to address their minds to this. It would, however, be wrong to set up an apparently "black" project and while we would want to make it easier for young black offenders in particular to relate positively to the Probation Service, that should not be the limit of our aim. A Probation Service that is more accessible should result in an improved service to all members of a multi-racial community". (emphasis added).

The rationale for flexible working methods was also expounded in this paper. It stated (Williams, undated:1):

> "The more restrictive our working methods, the harder it will be for many clients to engage with us, while a service at ease in range of working methods and offering a range of ways of relating to individuals in the community should be capable of responding with greater sensitivity to their needs."

Diversity would then, it was anticipated, increase the amount of contact between clients and Probation Officers in the form of supervision. In the Community Probation Team's Senior's account of the unit's aims, given in interview, he went beyond outlining the instrumental and task based objectives (such as using flexible working methods), to revealing, some of the intrinsic and value based objectives (for example the rehabilitation of offenders), of the unit. He told me:

> "We want to reach alienated people who are so against the system. Whilst there is inevitably a sense of experimentation at first, we still question whether casework is right for the problems in this area. We believe in flexible working methods. The hidden agenda, of course, following Scarman, is to prevent further riots."

It is argued here that this "hidden agenda" was never made

explicit, and appeared to be masked by a range of "flexible" provisions and approaches. It was also anticipated at the beginning that these flexible working practices would not operate in isolation from other teams in the locality. Reference was made to both these points in another discussion document produced immediately prior to the unit opening, again by the Assistant Chief Probation Officer. He wrote (Williams, 1982:1):

> "... also if, as we intended, the new unit became widely known, then one would expect clients to refer themselves and not be turned away ... The unit should have an open relationship with other teams in the Borough so that, for instance, officers working in the unit and officers in other teams might work together when in groups, etc." (emphasis added)

As a means of countering what was perceived as the dominating individual casework element in Probation generally, and despite the primacy specifically given in Social Inquiry Reports to individual interventions the team also endorsed flexible ways of working in an area of tension. One of the team's main grade officers (u) told me:

> "We're here to help to give stability to the area - but you have to stay around for a long time. We're trying to target the younger groups to stop them becoming like the older ones."

According to another of the team's main grade officers (x) :

> "We're here to develop a wider range of working methods to make the Probation Service more accessible and relevant to its clients. I'm expected to do useful work, run groups in the community. We're acting as a model for other teams so that our work can be incorporated into local teams."

Another of the team's Probation Officers (z) said:

> "We're here to be doing something in an area of tension so if something happens they can say they've done something. We're all expected to be more flexible with working with individuals and groups. In some ways we're expected to be innovative."

Contrary to what I was told about staff participation in decision making the administrative staff considered they were excluded from decision making generally and were unclear about the aims and purpose of the unit. Thus one of the secretaries (r) stated about its aims and objectives: "This is not discussed with us. However from written reports I assume that we aim to give a service to the community in addition to normal Probation work." According to a second secretary (l) "I haven't got a clue". Despite these uncertainties expressed by the administrative staff, the professional staff had devised specific plans, as we will see in Chapter Eight, for the supervision of clients.

Both flexibility and greater accessibility for clients were provided within a two-fold practice framework. First the team offered "open supervision" to clients. This form of group supervision, combined, as we will see, awkwardly with the team's Jobspot, was held on the second floor of the Probation building two afternoons a week to allow clients to "drop in" without an appointment to see a Probation Officer. This constituted one form of supervision. Second, the team offered "open access" to individual clients by opening the team's premises during the day for anyone to attend with, or without a set appointment. "Open access" individual supervison took place on the third floor where the Probation offices were located. Together these elements represented the team's commitment to diversity and flexibility. Forms of community involvement, to be discussed later complemented the team's commitent to diversity of working methods. The team also continued it's appointment based and one-to-one forms of supervision with clients which, as we will see, proved highly significant as a formidable counter to innovation. (ie diversification and flexibility).

It is necessary first, however, to provide information about the team's caseload in order to identify those who became clients and who would participate, potentially at least, in the client programme devised for clients by the staff. Two types of statistical data, short term and longer term, were drawn on to provide two different levels of analysis. The

first consisted of team caseload data collected by me directly from each Community Probation Team member during May 1985. The second type of caseload data, covering the period 1984 to 1986, allowed longer term comparisons with other teams and areas to be made. Table 7 then provides information about the team's caseload as at May 1985.

TABLE 7

The Community Probation Team's Caseload as at May 1985, By Type of Case, Gender and Ethnic Origin

	Total No. of Cases	No. of Fems	No. of M/s	Type of Cases	No.	%	Ethnic Origin	No.	%
				Probation Orders	85	46			
				Superv'n Orders	9	5			
				Guardian-ship of M	1	.5	North and South	64	34.5
				Suspended Sentence SO	2	1	Euro'n		
				Money Payment SO	3	1.5	Afro-Carib'n	68	36.5
Statutory Cases	137	36	101						
				Life	2	1			
				Licences	2	1	Other	5	3
				Detention Centre	5	2.5			
				Youth Custody	20	11			
				Parole	10	5.5			
Sub-Totals	137 (74%)	36 (19%)	101 (55%)		137	74%		137	74%
				After Care	7	4			
							North and	19	11
				Through	25	13	South		
Voluntary Cases	48	5	43	Care			Europ'n		
				Voluntary	16	9	Afro-Carib'n	27	14
							Other	2	1
Sub-Totals	48 (26%)	5 (3%)	43 (23%)		48	26%		48	26%
Totals	185	41	144		185			185	
Totals as %	100%	22%	78%		100%	100%			100%

Source: This information was gathered by me from the Community Probation Team's Officers between 18 April and 24 May 1985. Current caseload information was not available from any other source at the time. The information was obtained from a number of local sources: Home Office Statistical Returns (Form 20s), examination of individual client files, and three hour interviews with each of the team's Probation Officers.

Note: Since information concerning the ethnic origin of clients was, generally not available at that time this information was obtained by interviewing Probation Officers and drawing on Social Inquiry Reports. Since the time this information was collected, the Home Office, in 1987, has begun to introduce "ethnic monitoring" of Probation cases. The term Afro Caribbean is used to indicate those who originate from the West Indies and having African descent. The term North and South European is used to indicate all those who originated from England or any other European Country. In fact by far the majority of all the clients who were born in England (eighty three percent), the remainder originating from Scotland (five percent), Eire (three percent), the West Indies (four percent) and the remaining five percent from a range of other countries.

The majority of the team's work consisted of statutory (seventy three and a half percent of the total) and voluntary (twenty six percent) criminal work. Civil work, in the form of the Guardianship of Minors constituted just half a percent of the team's caseload. Within the statutory criminal work, two elements are distinguished. First there were those on Probation and Supervision Orders, constituting respectively eighty five (forty six percent) and nine (five percent) of the team's total caseload. Second, there were those on statutory after-care licences of which the largest groups were younger clients, namely twenty Youth Custody clients

(eleven percent of the total team caseload) and five Detention Centre clients (two and a half percent of the caseload). Parole cases, usually, though not necessarily, older clients (and which constituted just five and a half percent of the team's caseload) were not regarded by the team as a target group for the group open reporting and activity setting. Table 8 which compares the size and composition of the Community Probation Team's workload with other areas allows for further patterns to be identified.

TABLE 8

The Size and Composition of the Community Probation Team's Caseload as at 31st December 1984, In Comparison With Other Districts and Levels (Note 1)

Category	Levels			
	Community Probation Team	Lambeth	Inner London	National
Probation Orders				
Number	78	678	4036	52980
Expressed as a % of Total Caseload	53	47	44	47
Suspended Sentence Supervision Orders				
Number	3	54	290	2710
Percentage	2	4	3	2
1969 C.Y.P. Act				
Number	7	50	291	12410
Percentage	5	3	3	11
Youth Custody				
Number	19	179	948	11870
Percentage	13	12	10.5	10
Detention Centre				
Number	6	31	201	3060
Percentage	4	2	2	3
Parole				
Number	3	88	688	5490
Percentage	2	6	7.5	5
Life Licence				
Number	4	45	276	2010
Percentage	3	3	3	2
Voluntary After Care				
Number	28	329	2474	23340
Percentage	18	23	27	20
Totals (Numbers)	148	1,454	9,204	113,870
Totals (Percentages)	100	100	100	100

Sources: Probation Statistics England and Wales 1984 (Home Office, 1986a:13) provided the basis for the national figures. All other information was obtained, upon request, from the Inner London Probation Service's Statistical Department.

Note 1: In order to provide comparable information the category of Community Service Orders, was extracted from the Lambeth, Inner London, and national levels. This table excludes the categories of domestic supervision (i.e. matrimonial proceedings, wardship supervision, guardianship supervision and Childrens Act 1975 supervision), also Detention under Section Fifty Three (two) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933, and psychiatric hospital discharge cases. All of these categories, in any case, only totalled ten (or 1.4 per cent) of the Community Probation Team's total caseload as at 31st December 1984. Table 8 provides information for the period ending 31st December 1984, rather than May 1985 because, simply, comparative information was not available locally or nationally for the May period.

The first observation arising from Table 8 is the remarkable similarity of, and not differences between, the four levels in terms of caseload composition, with the notable exception of the higher percentage of those on Probation at the Community Probation Team. Apart from the voluntary after-care category, other differences were slight and insignificant. As we shall see later the much more significant changes, overall, between the different levels concerned the growth rate of the Community Probation Team's caseload. Seventy two percent of the team's Probation Orders, as at May 1985, were made in Magistrates Courts (see Appendix F), and 76.5 per cent of the offences for which all persons were placed on Probation at the Community Probation Team (see Appendix G) were offences connected with property. (Namely theft, criminal damage, burglary and fraud and forgery). This figure of 76.5 per cent is consistent with

national figures (76 per cent) concerning those placed on Probation for the aforementioned property offences in 1985, and other years (Home Office, 1986b: Table 2.3). These findings suggest that the proportion of offenders likely to receive Probation Orders, once Social Inquiry Reports recommending Probation were submitted, was in part a function of other variables, such as levels of such offences within localities, policing practices, and demographic differences.

Although as at 31st December 1984 the Community Probation Team had a lower overall caseload (148 cases) than recorded for May 1985 (185 cases, 46 percent consisting of Probation Orders), it had an even higher proportion (53 per cent) of clients on Probation. Compared with other areas, the higher number and proportion of Probation Orders held at the unit, in combination with other workload increases, are important points initially addressed here. It is first important to recognise here that by 31st December 1984 just two years after the team began, the caseload average for each Probation Officer at the Community Probation Team was already 30 cases and not 25, the team's originally proposed "protected figure". This was due, in part, to the majority of the team's "mini-policy" wherever possible, of recommending Probation supervision in Social Inquiry Reports. By examining first the previous convictions and prior disposals of those on Probation (85) at the unit we can start to understand in more detail these "Probation profiles" and the team's commitment to recommending Probation supervision whenever possible.

TABLE 9

Persons on Probation Supervision at the Community Probation Team by Ethnic Origin, Previous Convictions and Prior Disposals as at May 1985

Category	Persons on Probation					
	North /South European		Afro-Caribbean		Other (Note 1)	
*	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Persons on Probation	49	58	35	41	1	1
Previous Convictions						
Persons with 1 prev. conviction	26	30	25	29	1	1
Persons with no prev. convictions	8	10	9	11		
Persons with more than one prev. conviction	15	18	1	1		
Totals	49	58	35	41	1	1
Prior Disposals						
Persons with previous experience of supervision	17	20	5	6		
Persons with previous custodial experience	14	16	5	6		
Total no. of disosals prior to Probation Order being made	95	N/A	48	N/A		
Average number of disposals prior to Probation Order being made	1.93	N/A	1.37	N/A		

* % = expressed as a percentage of Probation Caseload

Note 1: The ethnic origin of the one "other" category was Chilean.

Note 2: Persons in this table have been classified according to the most serious previous disposals at the time Probation Supervision commenced using the following descending order of seriousness, where applicable: custodial; Community Service Order; supervision; fine; other. This format is one adopted in Probation Statistics England and Wales, 1985 (Home Office, 1986b), and allows comparisons with other tables to be made.

By far the most significant observation concerns the very high number 68 (or 80%) of those on Probation at the unit having either no previous convictions or only one previous conviction. Overall in fact the average number of disposals prior to Probation Orders being made was 1.65, with those of Afro-Caribbean ethnic origin having a lower average (1.37) than for those of North or South European ethnic origin (1.93). Although not directly comparable because of insufficient data, national patterns for 1985 indicate higher proportions of previous custodial sentences and, generally, prior disposals for those commencing Probation (Home Office, 1986b:22) than was the case at the Community Probation Team. The comparatively low number of prior disposals at the Community Probation team also imposed definite limits on the efficacy of Probation Orders as providing alternatives to custody. It also suggested, as we will see, that team members had considerations other than those concerned with viewing Probation as a "tariff sentence". The term "tariff sentence" is a shorthand expression for a court disposal which acknowledges the existence of a sentencing order. Custodial sentences are placed at the top of this tariff, Absolute Discharges at the bottom, with a range of other disposals including Fines and forms of Probation supervision somewhere, and this is the important point, in the middle. At the time the research was conducted both the Home Office (1984) and the Inner London Probation Service (1984) had recommended that Probation Orders should increasingly be used

for offenders who might otherwise receive a custodial sentence (ie tariff sentencing). Thus according to the Inner London Probation Services Statement of Aims and Objectives there would be a strategy to "ensure that whenever possible, appropriate offenders are supervised in the community, particularly where a custodial sentence would otherwise be imposed" (1984:8 emphasis added). Recommending Probation as a tariff sentence has arisen generally, from criticisms, about the failure of so-called "alternatives to custody" (Pointing, 1986) but it also represents moves identified by McWilliams (1987) towards a policy phase in the recent, development of the Probation Service. Tariff sentencing then, in Probation work, represents the antithesis of welfare sentencing where the perceived needs of the individual offender, and not the Probation Service or criminal justice system are regarded as paramount. It is argued here that the Community Probation Team's comparatively high Probation caseload arose to a large extent from team members commitment to welfare, and not tariff considerations.

In examining the current offences for which people were placed on Probation, as has been already been noted, there appeared little difference between the Community Probation Team's experiences and national patterns. Table 10 provides a detailed breakdown of all the offences for which the team's probationees were placed on Probation and compares them with national figures for a similar period.

TABLE 10

Persons Commencing Probation Supervision, by Type of Offence, at the Community Probation Team for May 1985, and at a National Level for the periods ending 31st December 1984 and 1985. (Note 1)

Offence for which placed on probation	Levels					
	National (31/12/84)		National (31/12/85)		Community Probation Team (May 1985) (Note 1)	
*	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Theft and handling stolen goods	20160	50	20440	50	38	45
Fraud and Forgery	2080	5	2680	6	9	10.5
Burglary	7210	18	6440	16	16	1.9
Robbery	0	0	260	1	1	2
Criminal Damage	730	2	2120	5	2	2
Violence against the person	2920	7	2960	7	3	3.5
Sexual Offences	870	2	1240	3	1	1
Other indictable offences	2000	5	3640	9	2	2
Summary offences (Note 2)	4000	10	110	3	13	15
Totals	39970	100	40890	100	85	100

* % = Expressed as a percentage of Probation Caseload

Source: Probation Statistics England and Wales 1984, 1985. (Home Office, 1986a:24;1986b:27)

Note 1: National figures for 1984 and 1985 are provided since comparable figures for May 1985, were not available at a national level.

Note 2: There was no explanation given in the Home Office publications, in respect of summary offences, for the sharp decline, from 10 per cent to 3 per cent, of Probation caseloads between 1984 and 1985. However another set of figures for 1985 (Home Office, 1986b:27) concerning Probation supervision by type of offence, based on court and not Probation returns indicated that the percentage of persons placed on Probation for summary offences was, in fact, ten per cent, as it was for the years 1983-1985, and not 3 per cent as recorded in the above table. Apart from this significant difference, the percentage differences between the two sets of recorded figures are marginal and only vary on average 1.5 per cent overall.

Thus in respect of current offences, but not previous convictions, Table 10 indicates that the Community Probation Team was not departing from established national trends and breaking new ground. This finding suggests that the Community Probation Team was subject to certain judicial limits, so far as its "mini-policy" of recommending Probation Orders wherever this was possible. However, the team did have a significantly higher percentage (35 per cent) of females and persons aged between 17 and 21 (47 per cent) on Probation Orders (Appendix H) than national figures, 28 per cent, and 31 per cent respectively, indicated (Home Office, 1986b:25-27). These findings, as well as that concerning the Community Probation Team's Probation cases having a comparatively low number of prior disposals do not, however, account for Probation Officers' perceptions of and criteria for Probation suitability or unsuitability.

It is recognised that there are, of course, contributory factors, other than a team's intent, which can account for higher or lower proportions of Probation Orders on team

caseloads, (for example, differential area offending rates, arrest practices, and court sentencing practices). Nevertheless there appeared to be more than reasonable grounds for arguing here that the team's "practitioner policies" affected the overall balance of the team's caseload, in favour of Probation Orders. Similar findings, namely that Probation Officers' recommendations can effect the number of people being placed on Probation were made by Stanley and Murphy (1984:35-37) in their extensive survey of Social Inquiry Reports. By first examining a sample of 43 Social Inquiry Reports, or 50.5 per cent of those Social Inquiry reports which ultimately led to Probation Orders being made, as at May 1985 (n=85), with illustrations from eight, it is possible to explore issues of staff perceptions, and criteria for Probation suitability, or unsuitability. The analysis reveals an overriding concern by Probation Officers with potential clients' individual/emotional needs combined, in part, with expectations of attendance at the team's Job Spot and open supervision sessions. In those exceptional circumstances where tariff arguments and recommendations were made, they appeared secondary in importance to accommodating the perceived social work needs of the clients and the unit's group programme.

Social Inquiry Reports: Establishing the Case for Welfare

As an introduction to the more detailed analysis Table 11 provides a summary of selected information contained in the sample of forty-three Social Inquiry Reports examined where Probation Orders were made.

Table 11

Selected Information contained in a sample of Forty-Three Social Inquiry Reports (n=43) prepared by the Community Probation Team where Probation Orders were made, as at May 1985

Selected Information contained in Social Inquiry Reports (SIRs)	Numbers	Percentages
Reports reommending Probation Orders	38	88%
Reports not recommending Probation Orders	5	12%
Total number of Probation Orders made	43	100%
Court making Probation Order		
Magistrates Court	29	67%
Crown Court	14	33%
Juvenile Court	0	
Types of Probation Intervention suggested in SER's		
Individual support/counselling (for example: "offering advice and guidance", "he recognises the need for assistance")	22	51%
Office groups (for example: "If a Probation Order was made ... could make use of this office's social and employment facilities")	10	23%
Both individual support/counselling and office groups	3	7%
non-specified intervention	3	7%
Probation intervention not included	5	12%
Need Indicators		
Indicators of early and disturbed relationships leading to	40	93%
Indicators of present situation leading to	43	100%
Indicators of need for/against Probation supervision	43	100%

The most significant findings were that in 22 cases (or 51 per cent of the sample) forms of individual, not group based, supervision were suggested in the reports. By contrast in ten cases (or 23 per cent of the sample), the team's office facilities were included in the reports and suggested that they could or would be used by the potential probationer. As we will see in the next chapter the team's office group activities proved to be marginal, so far as a forum for the supervision of statutory offenders was concerned, but fulfilled other functions. Overall the Social Inquiry Reports represented the professional documentation of individuals' social and offending circumstances, with an act of offending as the formal mechanism for inculcating social work help, in the form of a Probation Order.

The format of the 43 Social Inquiry reports guided the reader in logical steps; starting with an account of the individual's emotional/family background, to an analysis of the current situation and, then producing a recommendation about Probation based on both these social factors and the offence in question. Each of these reports reproduced, in almost all cases emotionally painful personal histories and memoirs of misfortune as mitigating circumstances. This personal information provided approximately 70 per cent of each report with the remainder consisting of a brief account of the offence, the recommendation, and the reason for recommending, or not, Probation. Additionally, and importantly, on 12 occasions in the 43 reports explicit reference was made to the office activities for clients (Table 11) as an additional reason for recommending Probation, but also, in some cases, for not recommending Probation. Case number 1 (below), for example, was not recommended for Probation (but was given Probation) in part because the open supervision programme for clients demanded people who conformed with Probation Officer's notions of who was suitable, in terms of their behaviour and attitudes. The analysis of these reports focuses on the items which appeared to support or indicate a "need" for or againsts a recommendation for a Probation Order. The elements finally selected drew on Stanley's and Murphy's format (1984) and

fell in to three groups:

1. Indicators of clients' early and disturbed relationships leading to

2. Indicators of present situation leading to

3. Indicators of needs for/against Probation supervision.

The eight cases presented here are typical of the majority of the 43 Social Inquiry Reports in terms of the reports' overall structure and in the ways Probation Officers constructed client's past and current situation largely in psychological and emotional terms. The platform for Probation intervention was created with it's emphasis, variously, on support for, control over, guidance about existing social relationships by Probation Officers under a court order. Where these reports differed, as will be seen (Cases eight, thirty-four, forty-two), the different emphasis concerned the precise form the potential Probation Order was anticipated to take. Nevertheless the case for the wefare argument was still firmly stated.

Case No. One: (Male aged 43, described in the earlier "Day in the Life" Section as the Man who Shouted).

Court: Magistrates Offence: Criminal Damage

Early Relationships: "His father died when he was very young and he has no memories of him. His mother remarried but died apparently of breast cancer. His stepfather....died two years ago leaving a substantial sum of money, which he has now spent".

Current Situation: "He has been seeing a Doctor at the Hospital on a regular weekly basis ..... and up to a year ago was attending the day hospital. He also has some contact from a detached worker from the project and attends the evening club there."

Indication against supervision: "Although I have offered voluntary contact with myself (sic), I feel that because of his erratic behaviour, swings of mood and sometime violent behaviour, the drop in facilities at this office would not be appropriate. I also feel that a Probation Order would simply reinforce the attention seeking aspect of the offence. Under these circumstances .....I do not feel that a Probation Order would be appropriate."

Result: One year Probation Order.

Case No. Eight: (Female aged 22)

Court: Magistrates Offence: Handling Stolen Goods

Early Relationships: "..... was devastated when her parents separated in 1973 .....continued to live with her father until 1977, when her parents divorced"

Current Situation: "separated from her boyfriend towards the end of January 1984..... their relationship broke down at a time when she was emotionally and psychologically distressed as a result of her sister's suicide, and the onset of motherhood which she was not psychologically prepared for .....currently living with her 14 month old son in a two bedroomed council flat.....often quite depressed.....has experienced a series of emotional traumas over the years without receiving any report."

Indication of present need for supervision: "I feel that , as well as receiving counselling, she would benefit from further supervision to help her resolve her problems.....a six month Probation Order to enable her to obtain additional support and guidance would seem appropriate."

Result: 6 Months Probation Order

Case No. Eleven: (Female aged 21)

Court: Magistrates Offence: Theft

Early Relationships: "Miss was born in Spain and came to London at the age of five years..... approximately a year later her parents separated.....describes herself as being "highly strung" and at one point was referred to a child psychologist."

Current Situation: "Approximately a year ago Miss relationship with her steady boyfriend terminated, which distressed her considerably. Her emotional turmoil has manifested itself in terms of minor physical ailments and she has felt generally unwell."

Indicator of present need for supervision: "She is clearly a very sensitive and emotionally volatile person and feels trapped by her present circumstances. I consider that she would benefit from a short Probation Order which would offer her support and encouragement and an opportunity to clarify and sort out her confused feelings."

Result: One year Probation Order

Case No. Twenty-three: (Male aged 24)

Court: Magistrates Offence: Theft

Early relationships: "Mr ... found it difficult to discuss his background and confessed to the fact that his upbringing was fraught with painful and rejecting experiences. It appears that his parents were never married and that Mr ... was ..... perpetually being transferred from the care of one parent to the other. At the age of 13, Mr ... was taken to Jamaica with his father but some two or three years later was abandoned and was returned to this country by the Jamaican Authorities."

Current Situation: "Mr says that he has had several casual jobs in recent years but appears to have been mainly

unemployed. His main ambition is to become an electrician but given the current employment situation and his lack of skills, his chances are slim. He tells me that he has had problems regarding his D.H.S.S. benefit but this may be due to his apparent disorganisation and lack of permanent accommodation."

Indication of present need for supervision: Throughout the interview Mr. appeared to be under considerable stress..... he showed little concern for his future and I gained the impression that he has lost interest in life.....Mr. appears to be a young man who has experienced a great deal of insecurity in his life. His current situation and circumstances are clearly unsettled. The fact that he made the effort to return to this office to explain his whereabouts is encouraging and leads one to believe that he recognises the need for assistance."

Result: One year Probation Order.

Case No. Twenty-five: (Male aged 21)

Court: Crown

Offence: Theft. Posession of illegal drugs (cannabis)

Early relationships: "Mr parents separated earlier this year. Financial problems appear to have added to the relationship difficulties which clearly exist in the family group."

Current Situation: "The affect of all these family pressures on Mr. is difficult to ascertain exactly but he gives the impression of being extremely anxious, emotional and unhappy. Mr. presents as a shy individual who seemed on the point of tears during the interview. He clearly finds difficulty in expressing the emotions that he feels towards his family."

Indicators of present need for supervision: "In conclusion, given the very real problems that Mr. faces at home I had hoped to be able to positively recommend a Probation Order

but Mr remains ambivalent about such a possibility. He may in fact still feel too insecure to make such a commitment and is still feeling very much at risk of further offending. Nevertheless I do feel that he does require professional assistance and therefore recommend the court consider making a short Probation Order should Mr. agreed to this in court."

Result: One year Probation Order.

Both Case five and the following Case six indicate that where doubts by clients are expressed about being placed on probation, and the Probation Officer considers probation appropriate, the decision is left to the court. Also in the following case, an association is made between the person being unemployed and his capacity to use the office facilities on a voluntary basis.

Case No. Thirty-four: (Male aged 43)

Court: Magistrates Offence: Theft

Early Relationships: "He did not do well at school and says that his achievements were a source of disappointment to himself and his family. In 1960 Mr. came to England. He tells me that his father contributed to the move hoping he would settle and secure regular employment.....the frequency of Mr. .... periods of unemployment had been increasing towards this date (1981)"

Current Situation: "Since July 1981 he has been unemployed and in receipt of benefit.....socially he tells me that he visits local Public Houses and occasionally clubs.....he admits to finding it difficult to establish contact with other persons."

Indicator of present need for supervision: "Mr was exceptionally polite and co-operative in interview. He impressed as a rather isolated and perhaps unhappy man who in many has never felt at home in England. In view of his unemployment, isolation and apparent uncertainty about how to

improve his situation, I have discussed at length the possibility of supervision. He however intimates that he would feel stigmatised by supervision and that he believes that any improvement in his circumstances must be by his own effort. Should the court on this basis not make a Probation Order, Mr. .... would remain able to use the facilities of the office in a voluntary capacity."

Result: One year Probation Order.

Case No. Forty: (Female aged 21)

Court: Magistrates Offence: Theft

Early relationships: "When she was 13 she was greatly disturbed by the death of her mother by cancer.....she became unsettled at school and was excluded at one point for bad behaviour."

Current Situation: "Approximately five years ago ....moved to her present accommodation. She lived briefly with the father of her second child but she is now only in occasional contact both with him and the father of her eldest child. Neither of them support the children financially. However both children will be in full time school from January at which point would like to apply for a course in tailoring and dress design."

Indication of present need for supervision: " was fully co-operative during our interviews. She is intelligent and personable and should be able to find suitable employment in due course. However I consider that she would benefit from the measure of guidance and control which a Probation Order would provide. In particular she could be referred for employment counselling at this office and participate in a support group for women clients."

Result: One year Probation Order.

The last case in this section, forty-two, concerns a young

man with three previous disposals, namely Community Service, Detention Centre, and Fines. It illustrates that it was possible to obtain a Probation Order (with additional requirements) for offenders with more than two prior disposals or convictions. In terms of the team's overall Probation caseload, and numbers of previous disposals, this case was atypical. The report's conclusion emphasised "structure" and "control", rather than, as with the majority of reports, with "support" and "counselling".

Case No. Forty-two: (Male aged 22)

Court: Magistrates Offence: Theft

Early Relationships: "He is the only son of four children.....that shared the tragic loss of their mother after death from cancer in 1977.....following prolonged truancy he was placed in disruptive unit."

Current Situation: "The relationship with his girlfriend ended in January 1984 and it would appear again he found it difficult to cope with the responsibility of his own flat.....several months ago he formed a relationship with a woman some years his senior."

Indication of present need for supervision: "The court will be considering a custodial sentence. In my view this course of action is unlikely to help to understand and control his offending.....the court may consider that the programme at Day Centre, as a condition of a Probation Order would be more beneficial in the long term in offering the opportunity to examine his offending more closely with a view to avoiding this in future while at the same time providing a structured framework of daily attendance of a specified period."

Result: Following a period of deferment a two year Probation Order was made.

Those examples of Social Inquiry Reports where

recommendations were accepted, lend support to the argument that the main purpose of people being placed on Probation, as presented by staff was, for them to gain individual support, advice, guidance and control about their personal problems. Furthermore it was stated implicitly that Probation intervention would implicitly help to reduce offending, through inter-personal emotional support and guidance. The report's essentially confirmed one of the Probation Service's primary aims of helping offenders by offering them statutory supervision (Curran, 1983:55; Bottoms and McWilliams, 1979:159-202). The reports strongly suggested that clients' problems, both social and offending, could be addressed in individual terms by adjusting social relationships, and being helped to restructure and re-examine their emotional states through a statutory professional relationship. Importantly, and with a minority of exceptions, (four out of the forty-three reports examined) the framing of problems in Social Inquiry Reports in individual and psychological terms suggested an emphasis on personal/professional relationships between consenting and motivated individuals (one staff member and one client).

They did not appear to suggest that "open supervision" would be a suitable forum for interpersonal exchanges, nor did they suggest that problems of unemployment, mental illness, or inadequate housing would or could be addressed other than in individual terms. This latter point might seem an obvious one. Nevertheless, it is regarded as necessary, indeed critical, to consider each aspect and stage of the team's working practices in order to identify, explore and, ultimately, locate and explain the team's theoretical framework and operational ideologies. It was, for example, theoretically possible that Probation Officers community involvement, and not individual supervision, offered the more likely framework for issues, not individualised problems to be addressed. Of the four Social Inquiry Reports where notions of client consent and motivation between clients and workers were absent the reports' emphases were on short (usually one year, in one case unspecified) Probation Orders. In these instances three emphasised the "control" and

"support" offered by "regular supervision", the fourth "help with employment" in the team's "group work activities". In other words beyond notions of offering, variously, support, control, and help, the location for subsequent Probation intervention varied.

Related to the team's Probation Officers framing their individual Social Inquiry Reports in terms of personal deficiencies and misfortunes requiring professional intervention, overall, team members had a team commitment to a "mini-policy", albeit an inconsistent one, of recommending Probation Orders whenever possible. This "mini-policy" was summed up by the Senior Probation Officer (V) who told me:

> "One of our goals is to get more people, particularly black clients on Probation and Supervision Orders. The reasons for this are straightforward. Traditionally black clients have had a bad deal in the Criminal Justice System and been sent "up tariff" to custody much more quickly than white clients. Also with the changes in after-care, Youth Custody supervision tends to be for very short periods. There is not much you can do with somebody on supervision for a month. I think you will find this team has succeeded with this objective."

To one of the other staff members (Y) this position was theoretically supported but not without difficulties. She commented:

> "We're supposed to be recommending Probation Orders in most Social Inquiry Reports and I attempt to do this. But what can you do when on the one hand you're told to do this, and on the other hand the Home Secretary says that robbery and burglary offences should be imprisonable ones. The Probation Service cannot simply dictate <u>its</u> policies to the courts."

Another of the team's Probation Officers (M) supported the recommending of Probation Orders:

> "In as many cases as possible I recommend Probation Orders because, to be honest, they are more likely to come in than the older ones, particularly those on Youth Custody Licence. What else can you do? You can't recommend fines because they can't usually pay them. It's a positive response and there's a flexible reporting system to avoid

failure".

The latter referred to the anticipated failure of clients not reporting on supervision if offenders are only given strict appointments on a one to one basis - hence "open supervision". A third Probation Officer (X) in the team also regarded the team's policies of recommending Probation Orders as desirable but difficult to implement using a patch system. She observed:

> "Essentially this is a holding operation. I wouldn't say there is a policy as such. There can't be. We don't have that sort of control over our caseload. My patch, for example, seems to "throw up" a lot of Youth Custody cases for me. But I do try to get women on Probation Orders wherever possible for the Womens Group".

In fact in relation to (X), 16 (or 48 per cent) of her 33 cases were on Probation, with nine (27 per cent) on Youth Custody Licences.

The team's Social Inquiry Reports, in so far as Probation clients were concerned, contained assumptions about emotional malfunctioning as a mitigating factor for offending, and as a justification for statutory social work intervention between client and worker. The primacy given to individual interventions was, however, complemented as we have seen by conflicting policy expectations based on supervisory diversity and not exclusivity. Additionally, the ambiguity by senior management (Williams, undated:2) about whether, as the team's Senior Probation Officer had claimed, the team should "target black clients" for Probation facilitated and legitimated the introduction of fragmented individual, "mini-policies" and not an overall <u>service</u> policy.

The framing of Probation Order recommendations, and offenders' social situations in individual welfare terms for "low risk" offenders (here for those with less than two previous convictions) was consistent with the expert/positivist approach to understanding offending which has now become institutionalised, according to Taylor, Walton and Young (1975:36). It also represented the antithesis of

the approach employed in an experimental Probation team (Cellnick, 1985a) where some members of the locality helped the Probation Service prepare its Social Inquiry Reports, one aspect of attempting to provide "networks of help" to offenders. Here problems were depicted as personal conflicts which required professional help and direction, rather than ones requiring either self-help, or indeed resolutions from helping networks within the locality. The ways in which Probation Order recommendations were framed facilitated the opportunity for statutory social work help, fulfilling staff expectations of their perceived primary role. The reports also functioned as a means of ascribing "client status" to selected offenders (Hardiker and Barker, 1985:601). In contrast to the preparation of Social Inquiry Reports on "low risk" offenders, where Probation Officers appeared to have some impact so far as court outcomes were concerned, other significant work areas involving contact between clients and Probation Officers proved more problematic, in the sense that influences external to the Probation Service appeared to prevail. These centred around three associated areas; the provision and acceptance of recommendations for alternatives to custody, and, as we shall see later, discussions of client unemployment in Social Inquiry Reports, and, more significantly, the ways in which client unemployment could be addressed within the unit.

On the first point and by examining the recommendations made in those Social Inquiry Reports for all the team's 24 Youth Custody and Detention Centre cases, as at May 1985, it was possible to begin to understand some of the difficulties about making and having accepted, non-custodial recommendations for medium or high risk offenders (here this meant more than two previous convictions). The comparative caseload data concerning Youth Custody/Detention Centre cases between different areas (see Table 8), when combined with the Community Probation Team's client data for May 1985 (Table 7) indicated severe limitations, in contrast with the team's Probation cases, on the team's capacity to shape and construct "its" caseload, and its destiny. Rather it appears that the percentage of offenders in these two categories (17

per cent as at 31st December 1984) were significant in two ways. First they were higher for the Community Probation Team than for any other area and second, and associated, they were determined by a combination of influences and sentencing processes largely beyond the control of the Probation Service. The "low risk" offenders, who became Probation clients, as we have seen, had on average 1.65 previous court disposals, with just 19 per cent having more than one previous conviction (see Table 9). Appendix I provides detailed information about the Community Probation Team's Youth Custody/Detention Centre cases as at May 1985, in terms of current offences, previous convictions, and prior disposals. There were significant differences between these and the Probation profiles. These differences concerned multiple (an average of 2.5 current offences) and not single offences, and a higher proportion of higher disposals (on average 3.5 previous disposals) compared with the team's Probation cases (on average 1.65 prior disposals). Apart from the "robbery" category (accounting for 29 per cent of all offences in this group), the majority of other offences were not dissimilar, in terms of type, from the Probation cases. The only exceptions to this concerned breaches of a Probation Order and breaches of Community Service Orders which, in any case, together accounted for only seven per cent of current offences (and carried concurrent, rather than consecutive sentences for those sentenced to Youth Custody). Probation clients tended only to be breached as a result of further offending coming to light, and not as a result of independent Probation Officers actions. The principal additional difference between Youth Custody/Detention Centre clients and the Probation clients, apart from average ages, (19 years of age for Youth Custody/Detention Centre cases as compared with 26 years of age for Probation cases) was that, all this group (100 per cent) were black compared with 41 per cent on Probation Orders.

This analysis is based on one point in time (May 1985) and since comparative date from elsewhere was simply not available it cannot be claimed that over a longer period of time this pattern of 100 per cent black Youth Custody and

Detention Centre clients would have continued. I was, for example, notified after this survey was conducted that two people had finished their Detention Centre and Youth Custody licences but also that three further male clients (two black, one white) had been added to the group and begun Youth Custody licences. Nevertheless, there continued to be a considerable and disproportionate representation of black clients on the team's Youth Custody/Detention Centre caseload. The limited evidence does not support what can amount to over simplistic claims that the criminal justice system is prejudicial in its sentencing of black persons. Neither does it support the reverse proposition. The position regarding sentencing is much more complicated and sentencing practices not only vary considerably between areas (Walker, 1972) but are generally based on a combination of factors including current offences, number and type of previous disposals, availability of what are often termed alternatives to custody, and the type and nature of policing in an area. These factors, in addition to the race factor, are extremely difficult, arguably impossible, to distinguish as clear causal factors.

Despite these qualifications and reservations the findings about the disproportionate number of black people in custody, or having been in custody, albeit based on a small sample, are supported by a growing body of evidence (for example, Guest, 1984; National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders, 1985; Home Office, 1986c; Green, 1987). Each of these papers argue that people of Afro-caribbean origin, in particular, as a proportion of the population as a whole, are over represented in custodial institutions within the Criminal Justice System. Black People in the Criminal Justice System, for example, (National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders, 1985:11-12), summarises some of the existing reports on the subject concluding:

> "The cumulative picture from the above is disturbing and would justify an official inquiry into ethnic minorities and the Criminal Justice System.....until we know what the position really is and how the Criminal Justice agencies are

> responding to racial problems, we cannot be sure whether or not the system is operating fairly. What little evidence we have at present indicates a lack of fairness, which must be remedied."

The Home Office also appears to accept that those of Afro-Caribbean origin constitute a higher proportion, than the white population, in custodial institutions, and in their publication, Statistical Bulletin (Home Office, 1986c:2-3), it was stated:

> "About 8 per cent of the prison population and 12 per cent of the female prison population were of West Indian or African origin, where as they comprised between 1 and 2 per cent of the general population of England and Wales.....The proportions of male prisoners from the ethnic minorities held in closed training prisons and closed Youth Custody Centres were higher than in open establishments. But a higher proportion of ethnic minority prisoners received longer sentences and therefore more likely to be sent to closed training prisons or closed Youth Custody Centres."

The statistical publication also makes reference to differences in sentencing in terms of age groups and in respect of males aged under twenty one (Home Office, 1986c:3-4):

> "Substantial differences were found between the ethnic groups in terms of the average sentence length of persons received under sentence; for males aged 21, the average sentence length for whites was about nine months, for those of West Indian/African origin it was nearly 12 months and for those from the Indian sub-continent it was over 11 months.....Although no information is available about the seriousness of the offences involved, many of these differences are explicable in terms of the factors for which data is available.....When account was also taken of previous convictions, age and differences between the three geographical areas into which the data was divided, most of the differences in average sentence lengths were found not to be statistically significant."

There appears then to be some agreement that ethnic minorities are, proportionately, over represented in custodial establishments but little evidence to support firm conclusions about why this appears to be the case. After Guest (1984) conducted a study of young offenders drawn from

trainees in custody at a number of establishments in London and the South East of England area over a 30 month period he concluded that "social disadvantage" should be the more central focus for policy development than "racial disadvantage". Thus, Guest, (1984:160-161) wrote:

> "The most striking feature to arise from this research is the disproportionately large population of the black Afro-Caribbean in the Youth Custody System.....the evidence, therefore, suggests that black youths of Afro-Caribbean origin are more likely than others to be raised in those conditions of disadvantage which exacerbate the risk of the establishment of careers of crime and custody."

Taylor's research (1981) offered a number of possible but not definitive explanations for the higher population of ethnic minorities in custodial institutions.

There is some evidence to support Guest's conclusions in that the majority of these 24 clients experienced severe disadvantages of one sort or another. Twenty two clients (or 92 per cent) of Youth Custody/Detention Centre cases were unemployed prior to being sentenced to custody, 7 (29 per cent) had previously been in care, 3 (17 per cent) were homeless prior to custody, and 16 (67 per cent) were living at home where there were no income earners. Additionally, it could <u>not</u> be argued here that Probation Officers failed to make non-custodial recommendations, rather that these were not accepted by the courts.

By examining the recommendations made in the Social Inquiry Reports that were available for these 24 Youth Custody/Detention Centre cases (Table 12) we find that of those eighteen cases where defendants pleaded guilty, eighteen Social Inquiry Reports were available and firm recommendations for non- custodial sentences were made in seventeen cases. In other words, only one report made no recommendation at all.

TABLE 12

Pleas, Availability of Social Inquiry Reports, Recommendations, and Sentencing Courts for the Community Probation Team's 24 Youth Custody/Detention Centre Cases as at May 1985

Total no. of YC/DC Cases on which information available	Nos. pleading not Guilty (note 1)	Nos. pleading Guilty and SIR available	Nos. pleading Guilty who committed offence(s) with others
24	6	18	15

Probation Officers Recommendations in Social Inquiry Reports	No. of Occasions Recommend-ation Made	No. of SIRS Recomm-ending Custody	Sentenc-ing Courts M J C	Average Sentence Length
Supervision Orders	1			
SO & Attend Crt Orders	1			
Comm. Service Orders	4			
Further Remand for CSO	2			(4 months
Probation Order	4			minimum
None	1			4 years
Sherborne House	1			maximum)
Further remand for Sherborne House	2			
Sherborne House or CSO	1			
Further Remand	1			
	18	0	3 2 19	13.5 months

Note (1) Of the six cases where 'not guilty' pleas were entered, all were subsequently convicted, and three were immediately sentenced and three were further remanded for Social Inquiry Reports (1 on bail, and two in custody).

As can be seen from Table 12 the most popular non-custodial recommendation was Community Service, including further remands for Community Service. Probation Orders with a condition of attendance, including remands for such, accounted for four non-custodial recommendations, and Probation Orders without conditions were recommended in four cases. The Sherbourne House Day Centre which constituted the recommendations concerning a Probation Order with additional requirements (Schedule 11 of the 1982 Criminal Justice Act) covered the entire Inner London catchment area and could only supervise approximately 15-20 cases at any one time thus limiting opportunities for referrals. Each of the four recommendations for Community Service Orders suggested that the status of this sentence was as an alternative to custody and, not "just" an alternative sentence. For example:

Case One: "I recommend, as an alternative to custody he is made the subject of a Community Service Order, which would prevent the loss of his current employment"

Case Two: "The court will see that work is available should it wish to impose this alternative to custody."

Case Three: "Given.....I firmly recommend that the court give consideration to making a Community Service Order, as a constructive alternative to a custodial sentence."

Case Four: "As an alternative to receiving a custodial sentence the court will see that Mr -- has been assessed as suitable by the local Community Service Office."

In cases other than these Youth Custody/Detention Centre cases Probation Officers extended their "options" for clients

regarding Community Service in Social Inquiry Reports as equivalent to a fine or a suspended prison sentence. For example, one report concluded:

"The court might consider that Mr. .... employment situation is now such that a suspended period of imprisonment would prove a sufficient sanction and deterrent to further offending. Alternatively a financial penalty or Community Service Order might be considered appropriate."

Another report portrayed a particularly unusual set of circumstances which, it was forcibly argued would make Community Service unsuitable:

"I have referred .....for a Community Service assessment as requested by the court and was advised that given her disclosure concerning the killing of her co-habitee and her worry that she continues to behave in a violent manner towards men who try to assert unreasonable authority over her, they do not find her suitable for Community Service."

As a result of examining these and other Social Inquiry Reports recommending Community Service, and as a result of interviewing staff it also becomes apparent that throughout periods of 1984 and 1985 Community Service was not available as a sentencing option for the Community Probation Team because of workload pressures at the local Community Service Office.

A detailed report, Community Service Review in Inner London (Inner London Probation Service, 1984a) reported that there had been a 33 per cent increase in referrals between 1983 and 1984 without a similar match in resources. In particular and of the Community Service Unit covering the Community Probation Team's area, the report stated that eighteen per cent of active clients were unplaced (i.e. awaiting work placements). It added (Inner London Probation Service, 1984a:40-44) that:

> "... Work is said to be easier to find in the more deprived areas, where voluntary organisations are

> more numerous. There is evidence that saturation point has been reached.....the unit has not transport provided. Staff complained of having to use their private cars to move equipment to projects.....with high staff turnover and gradually increasing caseloads, the stress on everyone is evident.....staff are in our opinion coping with great difficulty and .....unit could easily be brought to a virtual stand still if the cyclical nature of pressures increases much further."

The concluding comments (Inner London Probation Service, (1984a:45) were that:

> "... Community Service in Inner London is currently facing a serious crisis and that immediate action is necessary in order to deal with the situation."

Six months later the position locally had not improved and in March 1985, during the research period, a letter was sent by the local Community Service Senior Probation Officer to the Community Team's Senior. The letter (Inner London Probation Service, 1985) stated:

> "... we are not going to be able to absorb all the cases likely to be referred to Community Service.....we will need to do as we did last Summer and limit the numbers that we see each week. The problem arises not only in this unit, but throughout most of ILPS.....In the event of magistrates trying to overule this.....we will be grateful for the help of colleagues on court duty."

By the Summer of 1985, nearly one year after the initial review had been conducted, Community Service had still not introduced the improvements necessary to deal with the number of referrals from the Community Probation Team's unit. On a number of occasions during the Summer and Autumn period of 1985 I was told by team members that it was simply a "waste of time" trying to get someone seen at Community Service. One Probation Officer explained to me the problems this presented for her:

> "First of all I convinced Mr -- that he should go on Community Service. Then contrary to what I've been told I found out it wasn't available - so then I had to persuade him to go on Probation which, surprisingly, I thought, he actually got."

Another staff member explained:

> "The main difficulty is trying to keep up to date with what's happening. Sometimes Community Service is available, sometimes it's not. This means that I have to hedge my bets when I'm interviewing clients. It's very popular with the Courts but it's overused for all sorts of cases. The problem is that most or our clients can't pay fines and Probation isn't seen as strong enough."

Given the complexities of sentencing, it is unclear whether, had Community Service been more available, it would have been used more often and diverted any significant numbers away from custody. It is possible that it might have diverted some clients although Vass (1984) is less optimistic about the use of Community Service as an alternative to custody. He observes (Vass, 1984:59): "The idea that the order is used by courts as an alternative to custody is ill-supported by both official and independent sources". Pease (1977, 1980a) has also written extensively about the confusion about Community Service so far as the sentencing tariff is concerned. Additionally the inconsistencies in service delivery and resource provisions, particular problems for the Community Probation Team here, were other factors identified by Pease and McWilliams (1980:142-143), as jeopardising the quality of schemes. It is also likely that the continuing public expenditure cuts in inner city areas affecting voluntary organisations (as placements for Community Service) will further exacerbate administrative difficulties. The problems about the availability and unavailability of Community Service put further stresses on the staff, so far as service delivery to clients was concerned.

Overall then the Community Probation Team secured, to some extent, their aim of creating a team caseload with a higher proportion of Probation clients, than might be anticipated from their previous convictions or consistent with tariff sentencing practices. In the absence of specific guidelines about report recommendations and supervisory practices team members began to construct their own practices, based largely on providing a professional service to individual clients in social need. The perception by team members that individuals

social circumstances could be addressed in terms of need, thus justifying welfare interventions through recommending Probation Orders, was central to an understanding of the team's overall caseload composition and subsequently its practices. Their "successes" in this area, in terms of diverting offenders to Probation, were limited to offenders with minimal average previous convictions, thus risking the invokation of Cohen's (1979) "net-widening" fears, here equating "individuals in need" with "individuals at risk". As we have seen, the Community Probation Team members actively contributed to this development. However court, rather more than Probation Service practices, dictated the cut-off point for the team's Youth Custody/Detention Centre cases where the potential for welfare, in the form of a Probation Order was not realised, and where punishment, in the form of a custodial sentence, began. Having established how the team's caseload was created, and how it compared with other areas, we will now examine, in the following chapter, the ways in which the team produced and attempted to implement its "client programme", so far as its employment and "open supervision" initiatives were concerned.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Towards The Implementation of the Community Probation Team's Client Programme

This chapter analyses the ways in which the team framed, tried to implement, and sustain a programme of client activities and forms of client groupwork. Overall the chapter begins an exploration into the claims and day-to-day practices of, and consequences for a "new" Probation team, committed, at least initially, to celebrating methodological diversity and innovation. The work analysed here encorporates, to varying extents, elements of Community Probation Work, defined earlier, including enhanced service delivery systems, greater client access to Probation facilities, information, and local resources, and intra but not inter team co-operation. Client activities created to help the high proportion of unemployed clients (87 per cent of the team's total caseload) focus on the team's "Job Spot" programme and other activities. Additionally the supervison of clients described here refers to various forms of informal group work, referred to as "open supervision". Having acquired its client group, (185 cases as at May 1985), the immediate and ongoing issue for staff centred on the ways in which the team's notions of flexibility and diversity in supervision would be operationalised and sustained. Despite its emphasis on individualised problems and interventions given in Social Inquiry Reports the team decided to introduce a "client Probation programme" including strategies to tackle client unemployment and incorporating its "flexible and accessible" approach. As with a certain credit card the terms "flexibility" and "accessiblity" were determined by the sponsor. Unlike credit cards, however, there was a minimal impact on consumption.

The following then is a full record of the "client programme" as displayed on the walls of the team's group activity room on the second floor in 1985:

"Whether you are on probation or in informal contact with a Probation Officer, the following activities are available for your use: Mondays 2pm-5pm The group room is open for WOMEN WITH OR WITHOUT THEIR CHILDREN providing:-

Use of pool and table tennis equipment Companionship and support of women in similar circumstances to your own. Refreshments Voluntary workers to help with the care of children Occasional outings to places of interest

Tuesdays 2pm onwards The group room is open to EVERYONE, again providing:-

Pool - table tennis - dominoes - refreshements - companionship ALL PROBATION STAFF AVAILABLE

Thursdays 2pm-5pm The emphasis between 2-3.30 pm is on assisting with the search for EMPLOYMENT. In addition to Probation Staff, employment advisers are available. For further advice ask to speak to ....(name of Probation Officer).

Thursday evenings Your Probation Officer can arrange for you to meet with a psychiatrist who comes weekly to this office to offer an ADVICE and REFERRAL SERVICE.

General Groups Other groups, such as ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES, SOCIAL SKILLS AND ALCOHOL COUNSELLING are available from time to time. If you have any ideas for further groups, please talk it over with a member of staff and we will do our best to arrange whatever is required.

Community Groups The staff at this office are also involved with several community groups e.g. FIRST GENERATION ORGANISATION AFRO-CARIBBEAN CULTURAL ASSOCIATION BRIXTON ACTION YOUTH OUTREACH CIRCLE CLUB STOCKWELL PARK ESTATE TENANTS ASSOCIATION MOORLANDS TENANTS ASSOCIATION LOCAL YOUTH WORKERS"

The programme resembled an a la carte menu, dishes having previously been chosen by the staff, and each item separately marked and available for selection. The bill of fare incorporated what the Senior Probation Officer (V) referred to as both "reactive and proactive" elements in the sense that he equated the former element as work with statutory clients, and the latter element as work with voluntary clients. In practice however, as we will see later, this distinction became very blurred. These different options for clients then, principally various forms of group work in the activities room on the second floor, were complimented by

staff being more accessible to anyone on the third floor, where Probation Officers spent the majority of their time. This then was the staff's plan for the "open supervision" of the unit's clients, a programme emphasising informality and choice.

"Open supervision" refers to a form of Probation supervision where clients were given the opportunity, two afternoons a week, to meet with their Probation Officers (hence supervision) without making an appointment, (hence open) and based in a group and not individual setting. It is in many ways the antithesis of "contract" supervision of individual clients, as described, for example, by Celnick (1985). All open supervision took place within one activity room on the second floor of the Community Probation Team's building. By contrast a second form of supervision available to clients was called "open access". This consisted of clients having an opportunity to visit their Probation Officer, or indeed any other, not on a group basis, but again without an appointment. The third form of supervision for clients consists of appointment based individual sessions with individual Probation Officers. These latter two forms of supervision took place on the third floor. Here I will focus on the first form of supervision, "open supervision" with the remaining forms of supervision being explored in the following chapter. Whilst these distinctions concerning types of supervision were made explicit on the client programme, and by staff themselves, in practice there was often considerable blurring and overlapping which contributed to organisational and professional ambiguities. Furthermore and critically, it appeared that once the various programmes became operationalised, as with the Inter-agency estate work (to be detailed), they went through similar stages, namely; entry (of clients, staff), action (interaction between staff and clients) and withdrawal (of clients and staff).

The Senior Probation Officer (V) then at the unit described his ideas on how "open supervision" would be accommodated within the office and the ways in which a friendly atmosphere

would be constructed. He wrote (Perry, undated:1-2):

> "Firstly we decided that it was essential to create a relaxed environment - particularly as access to the office is far from ideal and it is located very near Brixton Police Station. Obtaining lounge-type furniture as opposed to the institutionalised office variety, a decor which was warm and friendly, posters which reflected the multi-cultural nature of our catchment area, all seemed important in making the office more accepting and welcoming to clients. .....we decided that an open reporting session on a Tuesday afternoon/early evening would be a central feature. This would offer clients the choice of relating to officers in this more informal, public setting, or having a private interview in a smaller office upstairs. Officers could also "break the ice" with clients by playing pool or offering coffee before taking them upstairs for a more formal interview."

For some clients, as we have seen, it was made explicit in Social Inquiry Reports that they were expected to attend the unit's open Job Spot/supervision sessions. For others such expectations were not made explicit in reports but negotiated individually between Probation Officers and clients. The following excerpt from Social Inquiry Reports which resulted in a Supervision Order being made illustrates the way in which expectations were raised:

> "Mr told me that he would welcome some supervision and support, particularly concerning work and/or training opportunities. A careers adviser regularly attends this office to assist adolescents in Mr -- position. I suspect that without such supervision and support Mr will be at risk of becoming increasingly involved in the delinquent subculture in this area. Community Service is not possible as the local unit is unable to accept him due to a lack of suitable projects. Given all these circumstances I recommend that he is made subject of a supervision order."

Another example makes the same point, albeit more briefly: ".....he would be encouraged to attend the various daytime activities held at this office, one of which is an employment session run by workers of .....". The activity room in which open supervision and Job Spot were combined, conjured up quite different images from the world of the standard Home Office Issue and "battle-ship grey" furnishings seen in most

Probation Offices. It was a room designed to attract youngsters and had the atmosphere of a Youth Club. It had lounge type furniture, a small kitchen, a table tennis table, a pool table and children's climbing frame. With the exception of the latter, because of the general absence of younger children, all the other facilities were regularly used by those who attended. The room was full of notices, many pulled down or torn, about resources in the area, facilities in the office, and an outline of the clients' programme. In respect of financial worries with benefits there was a telephone help line service advertised. To interest those who were unemployed there was a Capital Radio poster entitled "Gissa Job" with different racial groups represented on the poster. The telephone help line notice for drugs hung from one of it's corners held by a drawing pin. There were various Probation notices advising of forthcoming proposed trips to a pantomime, a camping trip, a visit to the seaside, and a visit to the countryside. These were all official posters and none of them had been prepared by clients. As already indicated earlier, the "user-friendly atmosphere" was a deliberate creation by the team to encourage client participation. The establishment of a Job Spot in the building reflected team concerns about the high levels of unemployment on their caseloads.

Responses to Client Unemployment

153 people, or 87 per cent of the total team's caseload, (including fifteen in custody at the time who were, in any case, unemployed before going into custody) were unemployed as at May 1985. The breakdown of the team's Probation cases by ethnic origin, age group and whether or not in employment, (Appendix H), indicates that of those 85 persons on Probation, only 12 (or 14 per cent of Probationers) were employed. Within this group the four Probationers of Afro-Caribbean ethnic origin worked in low paid jobs as a security guard, office cleaner, occasional musician, and a worker at a womens centre. Of the eight Probationers of North or South European ethnic origin, three were painters/labourers, two office clerks, one a catering

assistant and two were gardeners. European groups represented a larger number overall (51 as against 31 clients of Afro-Caribbean ethnic origin), were slightly older, had a higher proportion in employment and, as we have seen, had a slightly higher average number (1.93) of disposals prior to Probation than for the Afro-Caribbean group (average 1.37 prior disposals).

By virtue of the high levels of unemployment, clients, became available and eligible, theoretically at least,for the team's day time Job Spot/open supervision programme. Employment, or rather absence of it, also featured in Social Inquiry Reports. However, where someone was unemployed, it was exceptional to find any association made in Social Inquiry Reports between, on the one hand, the high levels of local and general unemployment, and on the other hand, the client's personal circumstances. Rather, the Social Inquiry Reports tended to individualise rather than contextualise client unemployment. Four excerpts from different Social Inquiry Reports illustrate the individualised nature of the comments made about client employment and unemployment:

Case No. Twenty Four (Male aged 19)

"Mr has had great difficulty in securing a job which he finds satisfactory and which pays what he regards as a reasonable salary. He left his last job as a sales assistant following a dispute with his employer about a wage increase."

Case No. Thirty Four (Male aged 21)

"Mr tells me he has had four casual jobs in the last year and he appears to find it very difficult to sustain permanent employment".

Case No. Eleven (Male aged 23)

"Upon leaving school Mr -- obtained a job as a fruit and vegetable porter ... He stayed in this employment for two and a half months before taking a better paid job ... He

left, however, following a disagreement with a female supervisor ... Mr -- has been unemployed since that time although he did attempt to work as a porter again but this only lasted one week as Mr -- was unable to cope with the very early morning start which was required."

Case No. Seven (Female aged 23)

"Mis --, with the exception of a four week period of employment several years ago, has not worked since leaving school. She appears to have been candid in admitting that she has no particular reason for not working and has not applied herself systematically in this direction."

Information on client unemployment tended to be individualised employment "histories", and were consistent with report conventions of providing individualised offending "histories" and social "histories". Attempts by the unit to help clients find employment centred on the provision and utilisation of resources external to the Probation Service. First, as a means of encouraging client self-help, an up-to-date listing of local vacancies from the Job Centre was posted up in the Probation reception area for clients to read, and hopefully act upon. Second, two employment workers from two separate voluntary organisations visited the unit each week on one of its client programme days (Thursdays). In respect of the first approach there were approximately 20-30 vacancies listed every week, the list usually, though not always, being changed each week. The examples of the vacancies given below were taken at random from a sample of 56 vacancies which were displayed during 1985. It becomes apparent that the vacancies were not restricted to the immediate locality and contained a range of minimum requirements.

A Selection of Job Vacancies Advertised in the Probation Office During 1985

- Trainee land improver. Wage £49.20 per week 24 hours per week.

- Night receptionist in Piccadilly Circus £120 per week, shifts 11 - 7am. To operate bleep and alarm systems and calculate bills using computer.

- Legal firm trainee draughtsperson. £4,000 at 16. 5 'O' levels including English. Must be smartly dressed and clearly spoken.

- Plumber/Supervisor £154.70 per week. Aged 40 to 60 Community Programme.

- General Assistant. £55 per week. Lifting and packing on shop floor. Aged 16-17.

- Computer Clerk. £6619 per annum. Must have some computer experience and basic maths.

- P.A. £6,000 per annum. Able to speak and read and write Greek fluently. Must be good accurate typist.

- Hairdresser £200 per week. Experienced Barber required.

- Part time cashier. £1.70 per hour. Must be well presented and polite to serve customers and take cash - so must be numerate.

- Fitter, experienced fitter required to strip down and rebuild electrical and mechanical equipment.

- Panel beater. £5 per hour over three years experience.

- Waiter/Waitress. £70 per week St. James Park. References required.

- Driver. £103 per week. 21-30 years of age. Must hold clean driving licence. The ability to read a ruler is essential as you will work in the joinery shop to work on machines.

- Assistant cook (live-in). Wage - 6 day rota to prepare vegetables and make sandwiches for staff and members restaurant in private club. Meals and uniform supplied.

This sample of vacancies were typical of the overall number in requiring variously previous experience, minimum/maximum age, qualifications or lack of current employment (to meet the conditions of the government's Community Programme). The vacancies also appear to reflect wider patterns of employment, in terms of the declining proportion of unskilled vacancies. Except in relation to being eligible for training programmes, in one or more aspects many of the team's clients were unsuitable, not in terms of potential, but in terms of fulfilling actual requirements. Additionally, issues of previous convictions and racial discrimination were, potentially, further limiting factors for black offenders in particular.

In order to make an assessment of current clients' qualifications and job experiences information was gained through interviews with Probation Officers about their clients' current employment situation, as well as examining the aforementioned sample of Social Inquiry Reports on those clients who were currently on Probation at the office. It has already been noted that it was common practice to indicate in these reports a brief account of clients' qualifications and employment where either or both existed. Interviews with clients, as we shall see, were also conducted about their employment situation.

Of the forty three Social Inquiry Reports examined, and in respect first of educational qualifications, five clients had between two and six C.S.E.'s (average three) ten had between one and four 'O' levels (average two), and twenty eight reports gave no mention of any educational qualifications. The patterns of client employment revealed an even starker picture of disadvantage and lack of training. Ten reports stated that the client had not been employed since leaving school, fourteen reports gave no mention of any employment record. In the past, four clients had been market porters,

eight had been casual labourers (painters or decorators), one had been an insurance salesman, one a trainee chef, one an auxiliary nurse and four female clients had been receptionists/typists. All of the twelve probationees who had current jobs worked in low paid and semi-unskilled jobs including a security guard, an office cleaner, a musician, three painters/labourers, two office clerks, one catering assistant, one charity worker, one gardener, and one worker at a women's centre. Of the total caseload only seven were currently at college or on a government training course. Even when including the team's 48 voluntary cases, some of whom had not been in trouble before, the education and employment levels were low and inadequate in terms of the demand of the market, as reflected in the vacancies.

Despite the high levels of client unemployment, I recorded only four occasions, throughout the research period, when clients examined the vacancies listing. Furthermore the Probation Officers themselves showed little interest in this list of vacancies in the sense that on no occasion were Probation Officers observed bringing this notice to the attention of clients visiting the office. Staff considered that this, and as we shall see other sorts of work, did not require their skills as trained social workers, but rather required sessional staff, to whom clients would be referred. The team's first Assistant Chief Probation Officer (Williams, undated:3) had previously written about: ".....the desirability of employing sessional staff as a way of using local people" but approval was never given for this development. Without either sessional workers or as we shall see, staff support from other offices being available, the team relied on the two employment workers from voluntary organisations to provide information and motivation to help clients find employment via the Job Spot/"open supervision" sessions.

Job Spot: History and Practice

The team's original employment programme for clients began in 1984, prior to the research. It consisted of a series of

eight weekly self contained sessions, staffed by the team's Probation Officers and held one afternoon per week. Twenty one clients attended the groups at the beginning, but after just one month there was a rapid decline in client attendance which prompted a review of the entire programme. There were, apparently, three reasons for the demise of these formal weekly sessions. First the anticipated referrals and support expected from nearby Probation Offices did not materialise, thus the team was forced to rely on its own staff and client resources. Second, the absence of a regular core of attenders combined with the late arrival of those few who did attend meant that the arrangement of individual programmes became impracticable. Third, even for those who attended, it proved extremely difficult to match job vacancies with existing client interests and skills. In the light of these formidable obstacles and within approximately two months of the formal sessions beginning, it was decided to abandon this "formal" approach. The focus changed more to "employment counselling" and social skills training. Letters were subsequently sent out to local Probation offices seeking more referrals from them. One of the letters (Inner London Probation Service, 1985a:Mimeo [1]) stated:

> "I feel sure that even for those clients who did not go on to obtain an interview, or a job, the afternoon proved to be surprisingly stimulating and at least motivated them to think about their futures."

The "new referral" system was made deliberately informal, and client self-referrals were also expected as the excerpt from another letter (Inner London Probation Service, 1985b:Mimeo [2]) sent out to local Probation offices makes clear:

> "Referrals for .....need not be too formal. If Probation officers do not get an opportunity to let us know if anyone wishes to attend - then clients can refer themselves."

Another letter (Inner London Probation Service, 1985c:Mimeo [3]) sent out at the same time reinforced the informal approach also clearly indicating a shift away from finding jobs to acquiring social skills:

> "A reminder that .....continues to come to this office every Thursday at 2pm to offer employment/training/advice and support.....has tended to see people in the 16-25 age group, either individually or in an informal group setting, and can offer social skills and literacy help.....In the younger age range, eight clients have permanent employement. Three have joined local voluntary literacy and numeracy schemes. Others have concentrated on increasing their knowledge of how the local Job Centre operates. .....Obviously everyone would like to see the numbers of people going in employment increased. Nevertheless, we consider that given the chronic shortage of work and a recent drop in referrals from other offices, the Job Spot has proved constructive for those who have maintained contact."

Despite these follow up letters to local offices and the move from a formal to an informal programme and referral system, clients from local offices did not appear. During the entire research period I never met a client from another office. During the research period the Job Spot sessions had been combined with the open reporting afternoons. This measure was designed to minimise clients' absenteeism for the earlier employment groups by inserting Job Spot into a period when it was anticipated that clients would be available and present (for the "open supervision" sessions). Each of the twice weekly combined Job Spot open reporting session lasted from 2-5 pm. Originally, the "youth club" type group room had been open just one afternoon a week. But according to the Senior Probation Officer (Perry, undated:3) the team decided:

> "... to open the office on a Thursday afternoon/early evening as a further open reporting/drop in facility with an emphasis on job seeking and employment advice."

Again, it was anticipated this move would encourage greater levels of client participation once previous attempts to socialise clients through "social skills training" had proved unsuccessful.

After about four weeks of observation, it was possible not only to record attendance patterns but the status (voluntary or statutory) of those attending. Significantly, out of the

team's total caseload of 185 clients, including 85 on Probation Orders, just fifteen clients, on average, attended each session over each three hour period. Of this fifteen only three or four (it was unclear) at any one time were on any statutory order (one Youth Custody client, two/three Probation clients). Furthermore, virtually the same group of people attended each session. The group, in fact, consisted of four different sub-groups with quite different characteristics.

The dominant group of about ten people consisted of young Afro-Caribbean males aged between 15 and 23, including one regular school absentee. Three of this group had previously been on Probation and of the remaining seven, five told me they were related to each other (brothers and cousins), and two were already friends of the others before coming to the Probation office. Members of this group were usually the first to arrive at the beginning of the afternoon at 2pm requesting the Probation Officers to open the room and make sure the table tennis and pool facilities were available, and not broken. Throughout the afternoons this group either played pool, table tennis or dominoes West Indian style. The latter contrasts sharply with images of English dominoes being played stereotypically by older men in country pubs. Here the game involved certain rituals particularly slamming down onto the table, individual dominoes. This was a gesture or challenge to the next player, as well as a means of asserting status. This dominoe slamming was also accompanied by special phrases. What amounted to a specialised cultural activity, also institutionalised in in Brixton's Domino Club, was played out every week. In the Probation Office cultural dominoes appeared, effectively, to exclude other white clients, though not usually white Probation Officers. Staff were skilled at getting "alongside" clients but their role contributed to them not getting "close". Additionally, the presence here of a portable music system playing reggae music, reinforced this sub-group's strong sense of cultural identity.

The second sub-group consisted of two white volunteers recruited by the team. One often appeared with a friend, who was also referred to, confusingly, as a "volunteer" and both partnered each other in pool matches or played against each other. Very occasionally these volunteers played pool with the black youngsters. To both these white "volunteers" (unemployed) the unit functioned as a place where they could socialise with each other and play pool cheaply and regularly: "There's a lot more going on at this office than my last Probation office", he commented to me. The third sub-group consisted of a variety of older (40-plus) white male clients who usually arrived and departed on their own. They mostly lived in local hostels for single men which did not have "day care" facilities, and used the Probation Office not for supervision, but as a refuge. These men tended to drift in, have a cup of tea, sometimes talk with whoever would listen, usually the volunteers, ask to see the Probation Officers for financial assistance and later depart. The fourth sub-group consisted of an ever changing group of two or three white adolescent clients who sometimes joined in the pool games with the Afro-Caribbean youngsters but largely came in and drank tea, either sitting on their own or striking up conversations with anyone who happened to be sitting in their vicinity, by the coffee table.

Significantly Probation staff, a fifth sub-group, were largely absent from the room for both the Job-spot and "open supervision" sessions. There was an informal "rota of attendance" for Probation staff to attend the group activities. However at the time the research was conducted the majority of staff had withdrawn their goodwill, so far as this issue was concerned. This point will be developed later, in connection with their consequences for "open supervision". At this point it is suffice to record that the staff's withdrawal from supervising the groups helped to explain the Senior Probation Officer's short, regular, and darting visits to the group room to "make sure everything's all right down there", and his requests to me, described earlier, for me to "supervise" the group on occasions. Although individual

Probation Officers came down from the third to the second floor activities on occasions, their regular absence raised questions about the meaning and application of "open supervision"within the Job-Spot setting. Furthermore, they could not be described as group participants as such because when they did attend, they tended to stay for relatively short periods of time, sometimes ten minutes, sometimes an hour. The only staff member who spent any continuous time in the activity room on any afternoon was the team's black female ancillary worker for whom, unlike the Probation Officers, being at the activity group was an integral part of her work and, seemingly, a meaningful experience. Occasionally a black youth worker appeared in the activity room, usually stayed for an hour or so, and talked almost exclusively with the young Afro-Caribbean group. One of the white employment workers regularly attended the groups, the other worker occupying an office, on the third floor, for appointments, or working from her nearby office.

The white employment worker at the group was very enthusiastic, always carried a selection of current London newspapers (which included job vacancies), sheets of writing paper, stamps and envelopes. He arrived prepared for work, anticipating client participation in securing employment, but not further training or education. He stated that he welcomed the opportunity to visit this particular team because it was "unusual to have groups of Probation clients together" and that his organisation had not received the same degree of cooperation from other Probation offices in the immediate Lambeth and Wandsworth areas of London. Indeed, he said that when he had visited other Probation Officers he was told that his job was a waste of time because of both high unemployment and the serious difficulties of finding employment for offenders. His regular attendance at the unit fulfilled two main functions. First it formally satisfied his organisation's expectations and funding requirements, to help unemployed offenders. The establishment of what was, in effect, a mini day-centre for unemployed youngsters, including some offenders as a Probation response to the 1981 Brixton disturbances, provided him with an opportunity

seemingly unavailable in other local Probation offices. Second it supported claims by the team that they were not "simply" doing individual counselling work, but offering more, by attempting to address, in a socio-economic way, problems of client unemployment.

In observing the employment worker in action two main strategies were used to encourage and persuade people to seek employment. These were:

1. He assisted them to complete hand written curriculum vitaes which he then typed out and photocopied. Stamps and envelopes were also provided by him. He then assisted clients to write general letters seeking work from local firms, who had not advertised, as such for vacancies. The beginning of all these letters were depressingly similar. The following is an illustration of the way many letters began: "Dear S r, I am 18 years of age and looking for a job. I have been o two Government courses so far and am very keen to have a job .."

2. He brough details of jobs from local job centres - in pract e, as e have already seen, these were usually low paid jo . or mployment which required <u>experience</u> and skills which the yo gsters did not have at that time since, as noted earli most of them had not worked since leaving school. He so brought in local evening newspapers and encouraged, ba g ed sometimes, clients to telephone or apply in writing for any ob advertised.

His problem wa s that e majority of the people attending these sessions preferred to play pool, dominoes or table tennis rather han seek jo s with his help. Additionally, despite the tea m's attempts t secure client referrals from other offices observations re ealed that there were no clients who had been referred fro other offices for the Job Spot, nor any P obation Officers fr outside the unit. The employment advi er also had problems even with those few clients who showed an interest in finding work. If on the one hand he was too directive in finding someone a job then

it was unlikely, in his view, that the client would attend the job interview having not participated in the planning process or, possibly, the choice of employment. On the other hand if he simply gave the clients the newspapers "to look for jobs themselves" my observations were that they tended not to make use of them. Indeed when he adopted the latter strategy clients tended to appear to accept his "newspaper offer" but then continued playing pool or dominoes.

The employment worker's status was not such that he was given or created a separate Job Spot area within the group. Rather, he had to accommodate his responsibilities within the dominant and dynamic activities culture. The close cultural identity and cohesiveness of the dominant black youngsters group, together with what was effectively collective group resistance to his approaches resulted in him adapting his strategies. When his temporary occupation at the coffee table area, for example, did not produce groups of "customers" for his general employment packages, he approached individual group members and negotiated his role on an individual basis. This represented a shift of emphasis away from the programme's initial group focus to an individual focus. He approached individual group members by saying, for example:

> "I've got some interesting jobs this week from the local newspapers. Are you interested in applying for them? You've got nothing to lose by sending in an application or phoning them up".

He assumed, usually accurately, that if someone was present at the Probation Office during the day they would probably be unemployed. If the response was not an immediate refusal (such as: "I'm really not interested at the moment", or: "I'll look for my own job") then he sat down by the individual concerned producing his newspapers, and stationery for job applications. Efforts were made both to draw individual's attention to the office's telephone facility and his own resources and skills.

It appeared that the more receptive clients were those that

did not know him or the Job Spot prior to their arrival. In other words, those few that arrived for "open supervision" did not know, as shall see, that the "open supervision" facility also functioned as an informal employment exchange. This surprise for newcomers produced different sets of responses. Some youngsters albeit a minority, expressed a cautious interest in his employment proposals. This particularly applied to those who, it later emerged, were already on Probation and visiting the office for a further Social Inquiry Report to be prepared. In this respect there was a consensus of perceptions by both Probation Officers and certain clients about the desirability of including 'job seeking' activities within the content of these Social Inquiry Reports. Attendance at the group, as we have seen, was often included in Social Inquiry Reports as a potential lever for influencing courts into following Probation recommendations.

For clients initially unaware of the Job Spot's existence, and arriving for supervision, there was not even a cautious interest expressed once the employment worker had introduced himself. For example, one client (on Probation at the office) said to the worker that he was "too busy" to spend time at the Job Spot, another simply left the room, a third, an older (ex-Probation client) man, said he wasn't interested, adding "it isn't any of your business". This man had also not agreed to be interviewed by me some weeks earlier. A fourth client stated that he already had a job and that, in any case, he had come to see "my Probation Officer. You are not a Probation Officer are you?" he said to the employment worker. There was then some confusion about whether the Job Spot was a part of, or separate from, "open supervision", or even part of an outreach youth club. Even for those interested in seeking employment there appeared to be little hope, in some cases, in pursuing an application. On one occasion an unemployed black youngster, a regular group member, was shown an advertisement, not for a low paid job, but for a painter and decorator's post at a wage of £120 per week. The youngster concerned said: "I won't even get an interview. There is no point in me trying. I've been

through all this before". On a further occasion a client was asked to complete a curriculum vitae by the employment worker. The young man replied: "what's a curriculum vitae?". The employment worker offered to help and explained it's purpose and form.

The employment worker chose never to be confrontational with "his" clientele but, nevertheless, employed manifest forms of persuasion, Haines (1975:96-97). Whilst latent persuasion in present in all relationships "in the sense that one person may be led to change his behaviour as a result of the example of another" (Haines, 1975:96), manifest persuasion is more overt. It occurs when, according to Haines (1975:97) conscious attempts are made "to bring about changes in the attitudes or behaviour of a client." Despite these conscious attempts it appeared that the employment activities had little meaning to the potential recipients in the light of their previous experiences.

The following brief accounts of clients experiences illustrates their views of their social and employment circumstances. The views of the black clients in particular reveal a degree of hopelessness and despair that has been identified by many authors (including, recently, the collected essays about urban unrest by Benyon, 1984; Benyon and Solomos, 1987) associated with poor housing, high unemployment and racial discrimination in multi-racial inner city areas. Of the persons interviewed, seven were voluntary "clients" (ie not on any statutory order), and three were statutory clients, reflecting the group's usual overall composition.

Client No. One, black, male, Aged 17 (voluntary client, friend of a client on Probation).

This youngster told me he had been helped to obtain three interviews through the Job Spot; one as a cleaning person at £60 per week, another as a painter and decorator at £35 per week and another as a kitchen porter at £55 per week. He told me he was very keen to find work but was not really

interested in attending these interviews because of the low pay and minimal possibility that he would even be given an interview. Some three weeks later he had heard nothing from the three job applications after sending off curriculum vitaes which emphasised school activities and attendance at a previous government training course.

Client No. Two, black, male, aged 18 (on Youth Custody Licence).

This young man had recently served 15 months in Youth Custody for robbery offences. He said he currently had a job on an MSC (Manpower Services Commission) Scheme earning £26 per week. He attended the activity groups at least one afternoon per week and mostly played pool and dominoes. He wanted nothing to do with the Job Spot although he told me he was trying to leave his current job because he wanted "a proper job" and said: "I come in here because my friends come up here". Some weeks later he left the MSC job after only a few weeks, and continued to attend the recreational activities at the unit and did not get involved in the Job Spot activities.

Client No. Three, black female, aged 42 (voluntary client with a psychiatric history).

This isolated, lonely woman attended the activity sessions regularly, the only woman to do so. She had recently been refused a job as a chamber maid because she could not speak English. Although she appeared to speak adequate English, she was very disappointed and angry about not being given this particular job. She told me that she had such little hope that she would ever be given a job in this country that she was intending to return to her country of origin (Dominican Islands) but she said: "The Embassy can't help me and I just can't raise the money from anywhere else to do this." She was regularly asked by Probation Officers if she was looking for work and that she "should see the Employment Adviser" but told me "I just come up her for something to do, for the company". At one stage during her attendance she formed a short-lived and unsatisfactory relationship with

client number 10.

The following four clients also provided some insights, albeit limited, into the nature of the relationship between them and the Probation Officers.

Client No. Four, black male aged 24 (on Probation)

He told me that he had been unemployed for "some time". He was receiving £46 per fortnight for both himself and his child. He said he desperately needed a grant of £200-300 to furnish his empty home. He said: "I keep getting problems with the Social. My Probation Officer is O.K. .....he doesn't really care but he is supposed to care. I can always use the phone here but he could be more helpful. I have to keep coming in here asking for help, I want a job but I really come here just to use the phone." His requests to use the phone on the third floor were usually accepted so long as they were presented as being concerned with employment not personal matters. In fact, whenever I was present and he was using the phone his calls were about personal matters and financial crises as he sought short-term loans from friends.

Client No. Five, black male aged 21 (voluntary client)

This ex-statutory client was very reluctant to talk to me, in part because he regarded himself more as a volunteer helper than a client. The change of status by staff from client to volunteer was made to accommodate what one of the Probation Officers called his "over-dependence" on the office (he visited almost every day) once his Probation Order had expired. He said "I used to be a client here but now its like a second home. I help out but I don't get paid." The purpose of the group according to him was not really to get a job but to "keep them off the street". Although he claimed volunteer status he was given no responsibilities in the activity group and staff were unable to prevent him from attending the "womens group", supposedly to be for women only.

Client No. Six, male, black aged 17 (voluntary client).

He played pool almost every week in the group. He told me he only came along because his friend "told him about it". He said he was not interested in looking for a job because he was shortly "going to college to do sport". The college place was found by him, not the Job Spot. One year later he had finished at college and was still attending the group and playing pool without having found a job. He told me: "I'll just have to keep looking. But I'm not really bothered". He preferred the Probation activities group to others in the area because others often involved drug dealing, fights and police raids.

Client No. Seven white, male aged 17 (on Probation)

He told me that his Probation Officer had helped him to find accommodation (a flat) and that:

> "they're much friendlier here. In Bexley they take you back to court in three weeks if you don't report regularly. They don't seem to be bothered here. I wish it was open for longer in the evenings. I would only stay at home if it weren't for the club. Other clubs cost money."

He told me that originally he thought Probation Officers would wear uniforms like prison officers and continued:

> "I don't know why I was put on Probation, but I've made friends with other people who have been in trouble up here and we understand each other. Brixton is not like it's shown on television once you know the area and the people."

He was currently unemployed, showed no interest in the Job Spot, and used the activities room as a place to meet new friends.

Voluntary clients' numbers eight, nine and ten seemed largely unaware of the Probation setting, as a forum for "open supervision". Instead they emphasised the social importance of friendship and company.

Client No. Eight, male, black aged 15 (voluntary client)

Whenever this youngster attended the group he was playing truant from school (except in the school holidays). "I just come along to have fun. I never did like school and this is better than being at school." He told me that "no one ever bothered him" at the group. Although staff did ask him, from time to time, about his school attendance, ("Aren't you supposed to be at school today?") he continued to attend, competing with his older friends for access to the pool table. He enjoyed attending the group because, unlike school, the Probation staff did not bother him or "ask him lots of questions".

Client No. Nine, male, black, aged 21 (voluntary client)

This young man had been attending the group, on and off for about two years. He was currently living with his girlfriend and child, was unemployed and living in bed and breakfast accommodation some miles from the Brixton Area. He told me:

> "I don't see why you have to be on Probation to come here. I've got lots of problems at the moment. Why should you have to be on Probation to get help? I want to get a flat round here. I just come in here to see my friends. I have no interest in the jobs that he offers. It's just a joke, I had a job on a government course at £29 per week but I got sacked after an argument. I worked well with one of the black men but didn't get on with the Irish man."

He told me that the police were O.K. so long as people didn't carry any drugs or blades. This young man was the self appointed group leader, and was extremely reluctant to answer my questions, only finally being coaxed by his Probation Officer to "grant" me an interview after she had given him a couple of cigarettes. The cigarette was insufficient reward for a longer interview and after talking about "blades" and the police he simply got up, shouted at somebody playing pool and left me.

Client No. Ten, male, white aged 50 plus (voluntary client)

This isolated man lived at a local hostel for single homeless men. He told me that this was a "nice place" to come to and that here they get "a better quality of person" than at the club (for single homeless):

> "You know at the club they don't even speak to you sometimes. I don't like the noise here though, today it's very noisy, other days it's much quieter. But you can always have a cup of tea and talk to people."

He had been on sickness benefit for several years and was not seeking employment.

In practice, group members, approximately 70 per cent of whom were voluntary "clients" and not statutory cases, perceived the unit as a place for socialising, a safe retreat, a refuge, but not as a place for seeking employment. As we have seen, a majority of clients did not attend the Job Spot/open supervision sessions and, even where job vacancies did exist, a majority considered it a waste of time for them to apply. In view then of organisational problems (about lack of staff support from adjacent offices) and absences by potential clients, the Job Spot functioned as a social meeting place for unemployed youngsters, not a place where statutory supervision took place.

The value of "occupation" as expressed by group members, focused on recreational and social functions, and not on being channeled, without additional skills training, into unskilled low paid jobs. During the six month period since the Job Spot had started in its current form (June 1985) and out of 56 clients referred for job interviews only ten offers were taken up of whom eight people had stayed in the job for more than a few weeks. The low take up rate and the lack of job opportunities had combined to result in a shift of emphasis from directly offering <u>jobs</u> to offering <u>advice</u> about how to apply for jobs. The second Probation approach to tackling the problem of high levels of unemployment on team caseloads was to use a second employment worker, from another voluntary agency.

The second employment worker, a white middle aged woman, occupied a small office five minutes walk from the Probation Team's premises and was also available (most weeks at the Probation team's office) on the Job Spot days. She dealt with either those clients who made an appointment themselves or, more usually, those who were made an appointment by their Probation Officer. As with the Job Spot this particular "employment" service was consistently underused. From figures collected at my request and during the period January to December 1984, for example, just 46 clients from the Community Probation Team were seen by the worker. This had dropped further to 25 for the period January to September 1985. The changing referral rate did not seem to relate to the consistently high proportion of unemployed clients on the team caseload. Rather it appeared to reflect Probation Officers' views about her effectiveness, clients' resistance to attending interviews and the growing levels of unemployment in the Borough. For both periods the group most often seen, accounting for 29 (or 41 per cent) of the total, were black clients in the 16-22 age group. By contrast, the white clients aged 16 to 22 constituted just 17 per cent of the total seen over this 21 month period. The higher proportion of young black people is mostly accounted for by the higher proportion of black clients (39 per cent) in that age group within the team's caseload, compared with those of North/South European origin (accounting for 25 per cent of the total). However it also reflected the generally higher levels of unemployment amongst black clients. Once referred to this employment worker, statutory and voluntary "clients" were encouraged to take up available job/training opportunities which, in part reflecting the vacancies advertised, focused on low paid manual employment and short-term training opportunities. The following examples illustrate the characteristics of some clients seen by the worker together with a description of the jobs into which she had placed them, or hoped to place them.

Case No One: Female aged 18, white (on Probation):

This client was on probation for the theft of £100 cash from a supermarket at which she was working. She held one C.S.E. in child development and was described as "having no skills or education". She was one of four children, her father having been unemployed for three years - she was referred to Project Fullemploy for short-term training, as well as the Job Centre's Community Programme (a one year temporary employment scheme for the unemployed). The referral had been made through her Probation Officer, and this second employment worker was still waiting to hear the outcome of her interviews.

Case No. Two: male aged 24, white (on Probation):

He was on Probation for motoring offences. He had been a building labourer and was described as "being interested in hop picking in Kent" and above all "caring for animals". He was particularly keen to move out of London and had been referred for work to a pig farm in Sussex, and advised about another job doing land clearance work in Dorset at £30 per week including board and lodgings. He was still "unplaced" in a job four weeks after being referred to these jobs, and the worker had not seen him since their early interviews.

Case No. Three: female aged 21, white (voluntary client):

She has two children aged two and a half and four, no educational qualifications and was described by the worker as feeling "trapped" in her situation she was keen to train to become a keep-fit instructor and was referred to a local college for training but failed to keep her appointment. "I'm now waiting to hear from her", I was told.

Case No. Four: male aged 22, black (ex-Probation client):

This young man was awaiting trial at the Crown Court for theft and handling offences. He had three C.S.E.'s, stayed on a catering course for six months, a Youth Training Scheme (Catering) for two months and been a steward at two private hospitals, and worked as a storeman for six weeks. He had

just been found a job at a Mexican fast food restaurant in central London earning £2.30 per hour. His rent was £25 per week and he had substantial outstanding hire purchase payments. The worker told me: "I don't think he can really afford to stay at this job, the pay is too low but he knows it could help in court if he's working".

Case No. Five: female aged 27, white (voluntary client):

This woman was recently released from a six month prison sentence following cheque fraud offences (her first conviction). She has three children and had just been found work on the government's Community Programme. She had been on the scheme for three weeks and all three children were of school age.

Case No. Six: male aged 40, white (on Probation):

He was on Probation for committing an offence of indecent exposure. He cannot read or write. He has been working for the last 23 years in just two jobs and had just been referred to the local council to secure a job as a road sweeper. It had taken the employment worker just over a year to find this man this job.

Case No. Seven: male aged 19, black (on Youth Custody Licence):

This man was currently on a Youth Custody Licence at the Community Probation Team. He studied City and Guilds in Youth Custody, and did some voluntary work. It was hoped that he would be starting on the Community Programme (in the Youth Service) in the near future. Again, the worker was concerned about whether this man would stay on this scheme because of its low pay (approximately £25-£30 per week)

These examples were typical of those described to me in terms of, on the one hand, the low skill levels of the clients and, on the other hand, the low paid, often temporary nature

of the employment/training to which people were referred. When asking about whether clients were referred for further skill training programmes, there seemed to be an assumption on the part of the worker that clients were only interested in immediate practical jobs and were intolerant of longer term training opportunities. In her words:

> "If one of these young men finds a job in a warehouse at £120 per week he is satisfied with that ... we must be careful of imposing our own values on them about careers and promotion. You are not going to get someone to stay in an apprenticeship these days. They want to be on the move doing practical work such as labouring and painting."

Her approach represented her view of "reality" which suggested that if someone had not succeeded at school and later committed an offence, the prospects for individual skill development were minimal, possibly non-existent. She considered that whereas in the past Probation clients could move in and out of unskilled jobs relatively easily, at the current time jobs, "even including the Council" were becoming less available. The government's rate capping policy in Lambeth, had combined with the Borough's already high levels of unemployment, 13 per cent as at early 1981 and 25.4 per cent in May 1981 for ethnic minorities (HMSO, 1981:paragraph 2.20) to make employment in Lambeth, or indeed elsewhere, a diminishing prospect for offenders and ex-offenders. The low paid positions she secured, whilst reflecting the current employment situation, served the function of channelling unemployed offenders, mostly black, into "dirty jobs" to fulfill society's economic needs , and also reinforcing existing status differentials.

In one important respect however she differed from workers in an employment exchange in that she also functioned as a "counsellor", although she was reluctant to use the work counsellor openly in case this "offended" professionally trained Probatin Officers. In particular, she adopted this role for the more "difficult" clients referred from the community team, for the psychiatric cases, drug cases and "those not really interested in looking for work." She

considered that she was increasingly being used by the Probation Officers to offer employment and occupation to clients who caused Probation Officers problems, rather than those who are necessarily motivated to seek work. She said to me: "how can I possibly find a job for someone who comes in here on drugs and doesn't even know what day it is?" The worker resented this "dumping" function and was seriously considering withdrawing her organisation's service to the local team although had yet to confirm this decision. She considered that this "dumping" was not a deliberate strategy on the part of the Probation Officers but, rather, reflected the measure of desperation experienced by staff "facing a constant stream of disturbed clients".

The so-called "constant stream" of clients (not necessarily "disturbed") arriving at the team's offices (this was called "open access") to be detailed in the next chapter, contrasted sharply with client and indeed staff attendance patterns at the Job Spot and "open supervision" sessions. To secure employment, satisfactory or otherwise, for offenders, or ex-offenders (particularly black clients) proved, as have seen, an almost intractable problem. The fieldwork also raises questions possibly about the validity for the Probation Service of this occupation as well as its approach to the problem, and the function it served. On the first point, Walton (1987) in observing the growing day centre/social skills response by the Probation Service to client unemployment, essentially the approach used here raises a further important point (Walton, 1987:134):

> "The fundamental dilemma for the Probation Service when considering the implications of current levels of unemployment and their impact on offenders is to decide whether it should primarily address itself to the employment needs or the unemployment needs of offenders. Should the Probation Service's approach be primarily based on the belief that eventually "real" job opportunities will emerge and therefore it must ensure that offenders receive whatever skills training is necessary for the acquisition of those jobs? Or should the service accept the strong likelihood that a very strong proportion of its clients will always be among the ranks of the long-term unemployed, and therefore that emphasis must be given to an approach which

> seeks to provide legitimate and acceptable alternatives to conventional employment in the form of "occupation"? If such occupation, whatever its nature and content, is to be of any real value it must be seen by the unemployed individuals as being of some relevance to their needs and aspirations as defined by themselves."

The problem here was that despite an acknowledgement, to some extent at last, that outcomes depended on negotiations between clients and workers, they did not necessarily, or in the case of the Job Spot session at all, appear relevant to individual needs. This was in part because previous attempts, and client perceptions of these activities, had forced the current form of the Job Spot to be that of a necessary compromise. It was also as a result of wider economic conditions and ideologies which severely limited any opportunities for individual choice, in terms of training and financial aspirations, to be met.

The team's direct action on individual unemployment became a simulation and synthesis of social welfare as individual self-help. Despite initial intentions, it is argued that the continued resistance by clients to accepting "realistic" perceptions about the "inevitable demands" of the employment market place acted as a brake on, and challenge to, interpreting the cumulative Probation employment activities as constituting an expression of overt formal social control. A social control interpretation requires at least two critical issues to be satisfactorily addressed. The first is that channelling unemployed people into low paid employment to meet society's, not individuals' expressed needs, equates with one form of social control. The second associated issue centres on whether, in any case, such activities were successful and accompanied by formal or informal sanctions. Schemes such as "workfare" in America where welfare benefits are conditional upon claimants working (ie for their benefits) are an example of the more coercive use of instrumental sanctions. At the Community Probation Team whilst attempts <u>were</u> made to accommodate individual employment needs within wider market needs, these activities were largely unsuccessful and unaccompanied by any formal or

informal sanctions (such as meeting a condition of a Probation Order, or a pre-condition for attendance at the group). The important issue of whether self-help, in itself can represent an informal means of social control is addressed further in the last chapter. At this point however since the unemployment as a social issue, not an individual problem, was not taken up publically by the Probation team, the opportunity to present the team's "employment work" within a social justice framework (concerned with, amongst other things, addressing structural, financial and resource inequalities) were denied and avoided. Rather it seemed that the Job Spot anticipated, but did not fulfull what Davies (1985:28-46) calls social work's "maintainance" function, that is, maintaining society's structure and regulations through direct and indirect social work activities. This point will be returned to in the last chapter.

Finally, in this chapter the practice of "open supervision", and other group work, although, as with the Job Spot, limited in their application, will be examined. This exploration first into "open supervision" is necessarily brief because of its marginal significance in practice, though not intention.

Open Supervision: The Reconsideration of Flexible and Accessible Practices

It will be recalled that one aspect of the team's "flexible and accessible" approach to the supervision of offenders was to use the twice weekly groups (incorporating Job Spot) as a further intended opportunity for the "open supervision" of offenders. The setting for "open supervision", as we have already seen was, awkwardly, the same as for the Job Spot, namely a large youth club type room designed as the Senior Probation Officer had noted (Perry, undated) to encourage attendance and facilitate participation. In practice it did neither to any significant degree, and this was directly related to increased workload pressures arising from the team's location, and organisational factors, as well as its

role as a court, not community based statutory service. The analysis of the main actors and actions suggests additional exploratory factors accounting for the very low "take-up rate" of "open supervision" and other groups, by clients.

The first point to note was that as a result of direct observations of "open supervision" over a period of months, the clientele were almost identical, with possibly six to ten exceptions, to the aforementioned group attending the group on Job Spot days. The second important point was that it was atypical, rather than typical for there to be a regular presence by the team's Probation Officers. Therefore, the opportunity for direct "open supervision", one of the stated purposes of the sessions, was not usually available. "Open supervision" was originally provided just one afternoon (Tuesdays) a week from 2-5 pm, but prior to the fieldwork had been extended to two afternoons (Tuesdays and Thursdays) to facilitate greater participation. Although initially regularly staffed by the team's Probation Officers, at the time the research was conducted the Senior had introduced a rota system. In accord with the unit's general operational culture, this system was "informal", and relied on voluntary staff participation for its effectiveness. "Open supervision" had been in existence for two years and, to a large extent, appeared to have lost its impetus and meaning for the majority of participants. The general absence of Probation Officers from "open supervision" could not be explained by their absence from the building, on "open supervision" days. It was noted, for example, that there were generally 2 or 3 Probation Officers upstairs interviewing individual clients, whilst "open supervision" was in progress on the downstairs floor.

Client attendance at "open supervision" was not a condition of a Probation Order, although as we saw earlier, often an expectation by staff. There were then no statutory sanctions available and patterns of attendance were associated with whether and to what degree participants' shared the group objectives and subscribed to the activities on offer. Despite the absence of statutory sanctions there were informal rules

concerned with no drugs (including alcohol) and no racist comments on the premises. The "no drugs" rule had been introduced earlier by the Probation staff after some younger clients had been found to be smoking marijuana, and some older homeless clients had been drinking alcohol (cider and beer) on the Probation premises. Additionally those clients whose behaviour had proved irksome to staff and other group members were also generally excluded. The premises then were bound by certain rules imposed by the Probation Service onto Probation clients, and as we will see, other persons.

Each afternoon the "client group" varied in size, but averaged just fifteen people for each twice weekly three hour session. As soon as it was possible, a matter of weeks, to identify regular users, it was also possible to identify the presence either of staff or clients from offices than the Community Probation Team. Originally, it will be recalled, some staff support and client referrals from outside the office were anticipated. All "clients" (voluntary or statutory) and staff at all the "open supervision" sessions were from the Community Probation Team. Early in the afternoons the youth club style room was usually empty apart from the group of black youngsters playing pool on their own. By about three o'clock more people arrived usually including one or two older homeless men. The Senior Probation Officer (V) visited the room at regular intervals throughout the afternoons in his supervisory capacity to ensure there was "no trouble or too much noise down there". When he did appear his brief, often non-verbal interactions with clients produced similarly brief responses. The team's black ancillary worker usually arrived between 2-3 pm, her presence always subject to her court duties having been completed. Initially my observations of the Probation Officer's minimal attendance suggested that these were haphazard. However, over time there appeared to be two sets of circumstances governing their appearance. The first was in response to a telephone call by the ancillary worker or a volunteer from the activity room informing a Probation Officer that one of "their" clients had arrived. In this case staff would come down to the activity room, have a brief exchange with the

client, almost always make a cup of tea, and then return upstairs with the client for more "formal supervision" in their room. This practice was observed on several but not an excessive number of occasions, perhaps once during each afternoon session. This process of providing an informal atmosphere leading to "formal supervision" upstairs, was, of course, one of the anticipated means of encouraging client supervision, as seen by Probation management (Williams, 1982; Perry, undated), but never fully realised in practice.

The second set of circumstances arose after Probation Officers had finished their paperwork or interviewing upstairs and came down for a cup of tea and staying for about half an hour. The time was spent sitting around the coffee table and talking to whoever was present at the time. Sometimes these short visits were problematic to staff in that, once identified as Probation Officers, particularly to newcomers, they became the focus for problem disclosures. These related variously to forthcoming court appearances, discontent about housing, lack of finances, anxieties about relationships, fines not paid to court, and problems with the Department of Health and Social Security,

The following example arose when a white male client came in, clearly annoyed, and spoke to one of the Probation Officers in the activity room:

> "Can you do anything about my flat? its taken me bloody ages to get a flat, its alright but I've only got a bed and a cooker in it. So what am I supposed to do? I've got to have some money to get some stuff in this flat."

In this case the Probation Officer first established the identity of the person and after finding out that his Probation Officer was not in the building, tried to advise him about making an appointment with the local benefit office to obtain a grant for flat furnishings. Unfortunately, it was after 3.30pm, the time when the benefit office was available on the telephone. The client refused the Probation Officer's offer of a cup of tea and left with his problem understood but non amenable to an instant solution. There

were also instances of confusion when clients already on supervision were clearly unaware that they were entering a room in which "open supervision" was on offer. They had entered the activity room by mistake and looked lost until directed by the ancillary worker to go upstairs to the Probation Officers. Whilst some assistance and help was offered by the quick thinking and socially skilled Probation Officers, akin to "instant" advice rather than "open" supervision, the activity room was mostly dominated by social exchanges within the various client sub-groups.

The possibilities for "open supervision" with this noisy activity context appeared very limited. The client problems brought to the group setting suggested ongoing individual work or direct liaison with other agencies and resources, and not short-term work by a Probation Officer unfamiliar with the clients individual circumstances. The absence of any formal structures for open supervision further facilitated the fragmentation, rather than a sharing of clients individual interests and difficulties.

Critically, unlike expectations about the formal responsibility for the supervision of individual clients, the supervision of "open supervision" remained a discretionary area of Probation practice. Thus members of the small staff group could effectively but not overtly withdraw their labour, in respect of attendance at, and therefore supervision of, open supervision without it being accorded the status of an enforceable duty. The same issue of staff discretion was also a key factor in the establishment of a special interest for two female members of staff, namely the establishment of a group for the team's female offenders.

The Women's Group was held on a separate afternoon from effectively what was combined "open supervision" and Job Spot sessions. Although it appeared important to observe this group in operation there were practical problems concerning access to this group. The Women's Group was run by women for women. After asking about access to the group I was told that it would have been "puzzling" for a male to have been

present. I was told: "you'll not only stick out like a sore thumb, people won't know what your doing there". Although it had been explained to the staff members concerned that my purpose would be to record the activities and experiences of the women's group, they remained adamant.

Nevertheless, whilst unable to negotiate formal entry, it did prove possible, and more acceptable to staff, for me to pay brief visits to the group if only to record membership patterns, attendance figures and activities.

The Women's Group appeared to be more important than the "open supervision" sessions, to the staff. However, it also received no client referrals from other teams. The Women's Group was held in the same room as the open supervision sessions, on Wednesdays (2-5 pm), and my notes indicate that there were on average three or four women clients and on average two staff members present at any one time. Staff representation consisted of one Probation Officer and one Probation Service ancillary. Although presented in the programme as a place where female clients could bring their children I never observed any children at these groups. Somewhat surprisingly, however, in view of what had earlier been stated about access, I did observe on two occasions a young man in the group playing table tennis with one of the female clients. This young man in fact was the volunteer/client (number five) I had interviewed in connection with the Job Spot/"open supervision" sessions. When later asked about his role in the group he stated: "I just come in when they need some extra help. I make tea and coffee and just do whatever I can." My interviews of the two Probation staff most involved in the group produced, as we will see, more substantial information about the function of the group. In particular staff members spoke about the problems it had experienced, particularly the organisational and financial ones.

So far as the organisation of the women's group was concerned there were three staff, including exceptionally, one staff member from another office on a rota system. When the rota

system did not always work because of the demands on staff, the Community Probation Team staff relied on the goodwill of one and occasionally two, outside staff from other Probation Offices. The team's ancillary worker in particular expressed her frustrations about not getting greater co-operation from the other ancillary workers in the borough. She explained that attempts to call a borough ancillary worker's meeting to discuss possibilities for better co-ordination and readjustments to her role had been discouraged by management and eventually abandoned. She told me:

> "Every time we have to go through the seniors. Nothing ever seems to get done. In one of the teams the Senior's policy is not to allow the ancillary worker even to attend the team meetings - so how are we supposed to organise things when she can't even meet with her team colleagues to discuss things."

The Probation Officer (Y) at the team told me about her experiences of running the Women's Group and emphasised the professional, organisational and financial constraints that had affected the group's development and staff morale:

> "Traditionally women do not get enough attention in the Probation Service. This group generates a lot of work and we just have not got the resources. They (headquarters) want receipts for everything we do, even bus fares and cups of tea. There is no support in the Probation Service to do group work. I believe the reason why other Probation Officers don't refer clients has to do with professional jealousy and sexism. It would help if there was interest shown by people from outside.....I won't do group work in the Probation Service again unless there are group work courses for this type of flexible group work. The only training courses held are about groups for drug addicts or sex offenders and so on. We are the only experts in this field - no-one else is doing this sort of work".

Before the fieldwork was completed, this initially enthusiastic staff member had effectively disassociated herself from the organisation of the Women's Group and felt thoroughly frustrated with the organisation restraints, which had prevented the group from realising its full potential. Soon afterwards she resigned from the Service after ten years

service to work elsewhere.

The news letter produced by the Probation staff for the Women's Group, called "Lambeth Limits", and produced on an occasional basis, provided some insight into the sort of activities that were offered to the female clients. The newsletters tended to contain three main elements, welfare rights information, notices of future recreational activities, and personal advice. The news letter Lambeth Limits - a News letter for Women in Lambeth, May No. 3, 1985, (Lambeth Limits, 1985) for example, provided information about entitlement on supplementary benefit for maternity clothes and other articles for pregnant women and babies, information about day trips to Kew Gardens, a swimming pool, and a trip to the seaside; and finally advice about the Local Authority's Women's Unit. In the news letters all contact telephone numbers for clients were Probation Staff either at the Probation Unit or at another local Probation Office. The name of the group "Brixton Women's Group" was deliberately chosen by staff to diminish the stigma staff considered might be felt by women joining an explicitly Probation group. Whilst news letters were prepared exclusively by the staff, attempts to involve clients in it's production, as well as transferring some knowledge to them, suggested notions of participation, within limits, not encountered nor perhaps possible in the "open supervision" groups.

The achievements of the Women's Group to date (by this time it had been in existence for two years) centred on fund raising and recreational activities. In fact some fund raising activities actually paid for the groups own recreational activities, thus expounding the virtues of self help and self reliance in microcosm, also a feature of team members' community work. However, on the occasions when self-help was impossible to sustain the group's co-ordinators applied for charitable assistance from the Courts Recorders Fund and the Sheriff's fund with accounts of easing pressures on deprived, single parent families being submitted to justify the application. The local statutory Probation Day Centre was unable to agree to open it's pottery facilities

for the women at the Women's Group, although the reason was never made clear. Perhaps the Probation Service's ambivalence towards funding the Women's Group can be illustrated by the "promise" of the £100 cheque which never materialised. I was informed that when the Chief Probation Officer visited the unit in it's early days he agreed, at the staff's request, to issue £100 as a "grant" for the women's group. However, the day after the cheque arrived a separate letter arrived from one of the Deputy Chief Probation Officers (finance) requesting that the cheque be returned immediately and not drawn. This problem of communication and commitment was summed up to me by one of the Probation staff (Y) involved who said "After that we were left wondering who actually runs the Probation Service?"

The staff's subsequent experiences of the women's group, were that it was expected to be largely self-sufficient but to draw on charitable support both in staffing and financial terms. As with "open supervision" the management and staffing of the women's group finally became sufficiently frustrating for it to become a marginalised form of supervision. Also as with the "open supervision" group the activities (trips, outings and jumble sales) masked the principal purpose of the group namely to encourage clients to fulfill their statutory obligations of being on probation. Furthermore, the average attendance figures recorded (2/3 each session) accounted for only 12 per cent of the total female caseload of 41 clients. These low figures represented the reluctance of Probation staff both within and outside the unit to refer female clients to the group, reinforcing individualised forms of client supervision. It also suggested that the activities themselves lacked sufficient significance for women to attend in large numbers even on an apparently informal and voluntary basis. When raising the former point with one of the staff members responsible she said that she could do no more than inform colleagues about the group's existence. She did not have the authority to insist they referred more women clients to the group.

The significance of one other specialist group, referred to as the "Breakfast Group" is, it is acknowledged, marginal. It merits inclusion only in so far as it illustrates again the problem of incorporating group work within a highly individualistic client processing and problem containment system. Before the fieldwork began there had been a Probation group for local alcoholics, usually older men who lived in local hostels. It was not called an alcoholics group but the "Breakfast Group", again de-emphasising the formal nature of the relationship between client and professional. This group had been run by one of the team's Probation Officers together with a worker from a local voluntary organisation throughout the winter period of 1983. It had consisted of staff providing what amounted to a refuge and breakfast (in the form of "tea and toast") because these men would otherwise, I was told, be "on the streets and getting into trouble with the police." The hostels concerned did not provide "day care" facilities but only overnight accommodation for residents. According to the Probation Officer (Y) involved the main purpose of the group was to offer "support and advice" to life long drinkers. This term applied to the ubiquitous local alcoholics who wandered around the parks and shopping areas of central Brixton. The group ran on a weekly basis on Monday mornings through the winter of 1983, essentially providing a limited Probation day-centre facility, similar to that described by Purser (1987:165) namely "a welcoming environment where tea and food are available". From another perspective the group fulfilled a function for society of sheltering and protecting it from "undesirables". The subsequent suspension of the "Breakfast Group" after just one winter partly accounted for the regular presence of alcoholics at the Job Spot/"open supervision" sessions discussed earlier. Additionally as with the other groups, the limitations on external resources and the reluctance by the team to act as a "change-agents" to attempt to secure additional local resources, reinforced notions of individual self-help. Staff as well as clients operated on the basis of self-management.

When the Probation Officer who originally started the group explained to staff that he now wanted to withdraw from the "breakfast group" other staff members showed no interest in running the group. At the staff meeting where this issue was discussed the other staff members commented: "I don't think we want to work with alcoholics", "I would like to take this on but I just don't have the time", and "No-one's really interested in this group, we've all got a lot on at the moment". The "Breakfast group" thus remained inactive and unavailable, even as a refuge, for a deprived and powerless client group. The co-ordination of this work was perceived of as additional and not integral to the Probation Officer's tasks.

The "Breakfast Group" like the Women's Group, Job Spot/"open supervision", and as will be shown, the team's community involvement, were all work areas which remained "negotiable territories" into which staff could enter, occupy or withdraw in accordance with their experiences of the increasing day to day demands and their views about the possiblities and limitations of social work within a Probation setting. In other words, within certain limits and in the absence of unambiguous policy statements, team members' created their own "mini policies" about Community Probation work. It has been argued then that staff perceptions about their roles and duties, the interaction between staff and clients, and organisational constraints were three critical internal factors which shaped team practices. The following chapter points to three further factors, external to the team, which also governed everyday action. These are concerned with pressures and constraints arising from the immediate locality, the Criminal Justice System, and the organisation's structure. Having examined here the Community Probation Team's work so far as Job Spot and "open supervision" were primarily concerned, it is now possible to explore these initiatives in more detail paying particular consideration to professional social work and organisational issues.

Open Supervision: Professional and Organisational Issues

The fieldwork suggests that the informal "open supervison" groups were based on assumptions and notions about helping individuals through what can be described as a "problem-behaviour" centred, rather than offending-centred approach, ie problems about being an unemployed person, being a heavy drinker, of being an isolated woman, of being a claimant, in several cases having more than one of these problems at any one time. Perlman (1960:58) in a somewhat dated style, nevertheless focuses on the essential meaning of a problem-centred approach:

> "... to engage the person himself both in working on and in coping with the one or several problems that confront him and to do so by such means as they may stand him in good stead as he goes forward in living."

However, Goldstein's (1978:70) view that a problem-centred approach requires a series of considered and planned steps to be followed suggests, apart from the Job Spot, that the focus by the team in its group sessions was a more pragmatic short-term and behaviour-orientated approach to social work.

More significantly, daily practice suggested that minimal intervention by staff was possible or necessary to resolve the problems. In particular it was hoped that better client access to literature, telephones, information and specialist staff, could achieve two objectives inexplicably bound up with each other. The first was that clients would report on Probation to the office, fulfilling their statutory 'control' requirements. The second was that clients might resolve their own 'care' problems with minimal direction but within the structure provided by staff. These problems related to both practical matters and to past and present social relationships. Where clients actually expressed their problems in the group these tended to be focused on a range of issues including the former but also on issues concerning future court appearances and anxieties. The black clients in particular valued the group as a safe location for

socialising within peer groups. By contrast staff appeared uncomfortable in their role as informal group supervisors and having "dealt with" administratively, at least the unemployment problems, valued the opportunities that presented themselves to engage in more individualised and formal forms of helping supervision. Indeed the sorts of "social relationship" problems presented in the client's Social Inquiry Reports, though not necessarily the the sole basis for subsequent supervision, suggested a more private and confidential location for Probation interventions than the activity room could ever provide.

Associated with this point was the emerging debate at the unit about Probation Officers' autonomy to make recommendations based on "welfare" considerations. The aforementioned tariff strategy, made explicit in the local Services Statement of Aims and Objectives (Inner London Probation Service, 1984:8) was, by the summer of 1985, beginning to filter down from higher management to team levels. At the Community Probation Team staff meetings there was both confusion about, and resistance to, this Probation management, and indeed Home Office, (1984, 1984a) initiative, which was perceived as challenging the social work element of Probation work. As one Probation Officer said at one staff team meeting: "What do I do if I have somebody whose up for a high tariff offence but there is no social work need? Do I recommend Probation? If I do, what am I supposed to do with the person?" Another Probation Officer added, in the same meeting: "We could of course have reporting only like the Police have for people on bail. I certainly don't want this".

In the absence of what the Senior Probation referred to as "official guidelines regarding targetting" (of offenders for Probation), but in anticipation of the arrival of such guidelines, the team sought, at three team meetings during 1985, to devise its own guidelines. Discussions centred around a compromise. The guidelines they attempted to draw up were intended to accommodate both team members welfare interests and the agency's tariff interests. The team had

the interests but neither the time nor guidance necessary to produce such a compromise "mini-policy". The Senior was forced to acknowledge:

> "We can't expect instant answers here. I'll have to discuss this with my Assistant Chief who I only see once every six weeks. We'll all have to be patient."

When, as on a number of occasions at these staff meetings, Probation Officers challenged what they regarded as less satisfactory policies emerging from higher management which appeared to give greater emphasis to the exercise of control over "tariff" offenders, with minimum social work content, the Senior Probation Officer told team members that they were being "paranoid" and "deliberately difficult". In the absence of any management guidelines about this issue during the fieldwork period staff remained in a policy vacuum with recommendations in Social Inquiry Reports still being based on staff's perceptions about the welfare needs of individuals.

So far as "open supervision" was concerned questions must be raised about the suitability of an imposed group structure for providing the basis for client learning, development and mutual aid. The very low, almost insignificant, attendance by statutory clients at the open supervisory groups combined with fatalistic expressions of discontent about present circumstances, and gestures of disassociation from the group's formal purposes, to produce a self-reinforcing and isolatory culture of client non-participation and withdrawal which was accepted, to some extent, by staff. The Probation Officer's attempts to reintroduce and emphasise individual supervisory sessions resulted, as we shall see, largely from the lack of staff satisfaction about social work within the open supervisory groups, as well as lack of staff support and client referrals.

The fieldwork on open supervision also raises questions, to be taken up in the last chapter, about the compatability or otherwise of the Probation Service combining helping/welfare

functions with its statutory functions. This debate is sometimes referred to in terms of the Probation Service making a choice between caring (meeting individual needs, helping) activities and controlling (statutory orders, and use of sanctions) activities. Harris (1980:163- 184), for example, has argued the case for separating these functions within the Probation Service.

As we have seen the staff group intended and were largely successful, so far as one can judge, in creating a team caseload with a fairly high proportion of Probation Orders. The majority, 80 per cent, of the Probation caseload consisted of offenders who had either committed no previous offence or who had only one previous conviction. A proportion, perhaps a substantial proportion of this group of "minimal offenders", might not have become Probation clients if the unit had not been there in the first instance, and if the staff had not been guided by welfare considerations concerning their recommendations in these cases. Guided by such considerations "offenders" then became "clients", and eligible to enter the system of flexible but statutory supervision. This can be regarded as the first planned "entry" stage of client engagement. The second planned stage consisted of the staff producing flexible opportunities for client attendance and participation. The third and unintended stage centred on what can be described as "withdrawal activities", eventually by both the majority of staff and statutory clients. Initial objectives became displaced and the residual activities became focused on small groups of largely voluntary "clients". Despite the staff's growing professional disassociation from the groups, and the staff vigorously maintained their belief in what they were doing, emphasising that the "model" (of flexible supervision) was not, could not be, in question. Rather that the lack of resources and lack of local support undermined their practices and potential. It is difficult to satisfactorily assess the separate weighting of these factors. Nevertheless it is maintained here that the problems of meeting statutory requirements and individual needs were not circumnavigated by attempts to introduce forms of "soft supervision". Rather it

appeared that the problems of engaging clients became compounded by withdrawal activities.

The self-reinforcing culture of team isolation and withdrawal resulted not simply from "internal agenda", namely the lack of meaning attributable to the acts, but arguably, as a result of "external agenda". Whilst as will be demonstrated in the following chapter, part of this "external agenda" focused on increasing caseloads and increased accessibility, and therefore vulnerability to poor clients living in the locality, organisational resistance to implementing innovatory practices can also not be ignored.

It will be recalled that staff expected to receive support from other teams, some training input regarding informal/problem-centred groups, financial support and client referrals. These expectations were not fabricated once the unit had begun but were clearly expressed, as we have seen, in a series of discussion documents, as well as outlined by staff once in post. These expectations centred specifically on the employment of sessional staff from the immediate locality, funding for the Women's Group, and the active participation by other probation staff in the area in the planning and management of groups. In examining explanations for the team's lack of support it is necessary to understand that local Probation teams neither operated a patch system, or could be required, not asked, to support the Community Probation Team. The individuating nature of the Criminal Justice system, the emphasis on the "case", (Mills, 1943) and the hierachical organisational structure made the establishment of inter-team support system an extremely difficult and elusive objective to implement. None of the other teams in the immediate area at the time operated an "open reporting" system or had organised team and group work programmes. Bridges (1984) has argued that inter-team co-operation is difficult to achieve in Probation work. He writes (1984:131):

> "These autonomous front workers can get on with their work developing their individual skills, relatively free from outside interference.

> However, the system is poor at building co-ordination between individual workers.....and is ill-suited to bringing about innovations."

Willson (1984) recognises that Probation Service patch systems require a qualitative shift of authority in which accountability and autonomy are negotiated very precisely. Of especial relevance here is his comment that the emergence of a plethora of specialist units is "... a highly reactionary response to the changed circumstances in which the services find themselves." (Willson, 1984:20). This statement also suggests that Probation innovation is introduced, and contained, by the creation of "new" units, rather than making adaptions to existing generic teams. Furthermore, the confusion about the formal identity of the team did not assist matters. The Community Probation team was described by some as a specialist community unit, by others a generic fieldwork team, by others both. Officially it has been both at different times. If classification is necessary and it probably is as a means of establishing identity, it is more useful to identify what it does than what it is called. According to this criteria it combined elements of both generic and specialist teams, its raison d'etre and community involvement emphasising its specialist nature, its supervisory work and traditional court functions its generic nature. It was the expectation of inter-team support and referral systems and staff interests in group work (initially) that denoted the emphasis on specialist practices.

Organisationally it was regarded as a generic team in the sense that it was required to conform to the rules and regulations of a hierarchical structure. Notions of inter-team support suggest lateral rather than hierarchical forms of communication and control. The limited ad hoc staff support that emerged from other teams was, in my case, based on personal favour rather than professional obligation. When, for example, one staff member outside the unit helping at the Women's Group moved elsewhere, the lack of any inter-team organisational structures resulted in the encumbant making personal not professional choices about

whether or not to become involved with the Community Probation Team's Women's Group. Months later a decision had still to be taken during which time the Women's Group, continued with its staffing problems. The lack of organisational decentralisation policies combined with the inertia of local inter-team work approaches served to reinforce the autonomy of local Probation Officers, and concomittantly isolated the Community Team. The lack of such support and referrals resulted in a downward spiral of stretched staff resources serving a decreasing number of voluntary "clients" in the group setting.

As we have seen in an attempt to break this downward spiral the Community Probation Team initially visited other teams urging referrals and support. According to team perceptions the "lack of co-operation" from and "inability to adapt" by other teams was most acute when, as will be illustrated, the ever increasing statutory work and workload reached "crisis point" in 1985. The attempts to introduce lateral not hierarchical forms of communication and control represented a challenge to the organisation's perceptions of decision making and policy formulation.

In respect of decision making by bureaucracies, Crozier, (1964:187-195), for example, identifies strata isolation and centralised decision making as two of several elements constituting what he calls "a vicious circle" of self reinforcing equilibrium. This equilibrium is reinforced through processes of "organisational distancing." He comments (1964:189-190):

> "... it is essential that all decisions that have not been eliminated by the system of rules be made at a level where those who make them are protected against the personal pressures from those who are affected by them .....People who make decisions cannot have direct first hand knowledge of the problems they are called upon to solve. On the other hand, the field officers who know these problems can never have the power necessary to adjust, to experiment, and to innovate."

Whilst here there were limited opportunities to experiment

these were contained within the team structure. The team met the senior management responsible for the unit on only two occasions during a three and a half year period. The first occasion was with one manager when the unit opened and the second when the manager's replacement visited the unit when further disturbances erupted in Brixton in 1985. Willson (1984:20) comments on the effects of a centralised system of organisational control in Probation:

> "The operation of a bureaucratic and hierarchic organisational structure displaces the use of initiative, budget control and other judgements from those knowledgeable and capable of making them."

The emphasis given to imposing and reinforcing reliability, stability and predictability in role cultures, usually at the expense of innovation has been well documented not only by Crozier (1964) but also Selznic (1949); Gouldner (1954); March and Simon (1958) and more recently Clegg and Dunkerley (1980). In respect of the Community Probation Team the hierarchical nature of decision making excluded opportunities for lateral forms of decision making. A previous borough discussion, not decision making, forum had already been abandoned some years prior to the research being conducted. Four years after it's "birth" the team still occupied it's old cramped premises, funding for groups and sessional staff had not been forthcoming, and neither had inter-team support systems developed.

The fieldwork data presented so far has concentrated on the organisational, professional and policy implications arising from the team's initial innovatory ideas and its subsequent experiences and practices. It has already become apparent that some initial aims and objectives, particularly those concerning the proportion of Probation cases on the team's caseload were intended outcomes, whilst others, specifically the Job Spot activities and various forms of group activity produced unintended outcomes. Additionally those practices designed to operationalise Community Probation Work aspirations remained only partially fulfilled, largely as a direct result of external organisational arrangements and

internal professional practices and expectations. The next chapter introduces key information about the reasons for, and the experiences and consequences of the persistent build-up of work pressure within the Community Probation Team's office. It is argued that the over-activity presented there, arising from the Probation Service's formal duties and the Community Probation Team's setting, largely accounts for the under-activity of the group sessions recorded here.

CHAPTER NINE

The maintenance of Community Probation Work: Pressures and Practices

This chapter examines various aspects of the team's supervisory practices. After first exploring the nature, the reasons for, and the effects of the continued increase in the Community team's workload, it examines in detail the day-to-day experiences arising from the implementation of the team's "open access" policy within its patchwork context. The chapter's latter half analyses the organisational constraints over, and conflicting perspectives on the area's problems affecting the Probation Service's role before finally exploring ideological considerations arising from the team's "open access" practices.

The Dominance and Impact of Statutory Duties

In the three years since the community unit opened, the gradual but unrelenting increase in statutory work, plus the consequences of the "open access" policy not only shaped the amount and type of Probation work possible but concomitantly highlighted and reinforced the role of the Probation Service as a court and not a community agency. In particular the dominance of work emanating from the courts, to some extent actually encouraged by the team, served the function of weakening the team's capacity to undertake extensive community or other non-statutory activities. It is first necessary to examine the changes that occurred in the team's caseload before moving on to explore the reasons why the initial plan for each Probation Officer to have a "protected caseload" proved impossible to implement.

Individual caseloads rose from an initial average level of 24 cases per officer (in 1983) to an average of 37 or 42 cases per officer, as at May 1985, depending on whether a

weighting is given for the Senior Officer's caseload. Table 13 illustrates the caseload changes between 1983 and 1985 in comparison with Inner London and national figures.

Table 13

Comparative Probation Officers' Caseloads (Notes 1 and 2): Totals and Averages for the Period June 1983 to December 1986 for the Community Probation Team, Borough of Lambeth, Inner London and National Levels.

PERIOD	LEVELS							
	Community Probation Team		Borough of Lambeth		Inner London Probation Service		National Figures	
	Tot	Avge	Tot	Avge	Tot	Avge	Tot	Avge
June 1983	96	24	1533	41.43	12514	47.905	131,980	34.2 (note 3)
Dec 1984	146	36.50	1498	37.45	11134	38.79	125,000	30.3
Dec 1985	195	48.75	1809	45.23	12144	41.17	127,850	30.5
Dec 1986	236	47.20	1695	41.34	11921	39.34	figs not avail.	(note 4)

Note 1 Excludes Community Service and includes cases supervised by staff other than maingrade officers. Persons receiving more than one type of supervision are counted only in the caseload for the type of supervision with the longest term imposed.

Note 2 The caseload figures do not include the supervision of Money Payment Supervision Orders. Overall these orders constitute only a small proportion of the total caseloads. According to Probation Statistics England and Wales 1985 (Home Office, 1986b:117) these orders accounted for, on average, 4.2 per cent of total caseloads for each year between 1976-1985.

Note 3 National figures for 1983 are not strictly comparable with those for other years since officers working part of their time, but not full-time, on community service schemes or in day centres are excluded in 1983 but not in other years.

Note 4 Whilst the most recent figures for the year ending December 1986 are not as yet available the downward trend in national caseload averages since at least 1976 suggests that the 1986 figure would confirm this pattern. In 1976, excluding Money Payment Supervision Orders, the average national caseload was 37.8 cases per officer; in 1977, 37.4; 1978, 34.8; 1979, 34.7; 1980, 36.2; 1981, 37.3, and in 1982, 36.4 .

Sources: Probation Statistics England and Wales 1984, 1985 (Home Office 1986a, 1986b). Inner London and Lambeth figures were obtained from that Service's Statistical Department.

Table 13 indicates the continuing upward trend in the Community Probation team's caseload which is counter to local and national trends and illustrates the higher caseload levels in the team compared with other areas. The Home Office (1986b:115) explains that average caseloads nationally were "substantially lower" in 1984 and 1985 compared with 1982 "reflecting the sharp fall in the number of young offenders receiving statutory after-care (which resulted from the reduction by the Criminal Justice Act 1982 and its maximum duration) and considerable falls in the number receiving C & YP Act and domestic supervision". Whilst both the latter categories were insignificant in the team's overall caseload, the numbers of young offenders receiving statutory after-care as we have seen, has increased not decreased. This may in part be a function of the demographic make-up of the catchment area covered by the team. As noted earlier, the area contained a much higher proportion, comparatively, of youngsters in those age groups first most likely to commit offences (see, for example, West, 1973) and second, according to Pratt (1985a:9), increasingly likely to be given custodial sentences. A second explanation already explored earlier, centred around the new team's expectations and, almost inseparable, commitment to creating additional Probation work. This took the form of recommending and sustaining higher numbers on Probation Orders (with minimal previous convictions) and actually encouraging and facilitating, as we shall see, greater client participation through it's "open access" policy - by being "out there", and more available to the community. A situation was created whereby this new project attracted work based on beliefs that greater contact between clients and Probation Officers was good for the clients and good for the external image of and internal commitment by the project. Table 14 provides a further comparison of the team's work, this time concentrating on a more detailed breakdown of changes in it's workload since 1982.

TABLE 14

Changes in the Community Probation Team's Statutory Caseload, 1982 - 1985, in Comparison with Inner London Probation Service(1) and National Figures (2)

Types of Statutory Supervision	Level	YEARS 1982	1983	1984	1985	% changes from 1982 - 1985
Probation Order	C.P Team	36	50	73	85	+ 136
	Inner London	4353	4535	4016	4583	+ 5
	National	36810	37950	40080	40880	+ 4
Supervision Order (1969 C & YP Act)	C.P. Team	1	3	6	9	+ 80
	Inner London	452	433	281	303	- 33
	National	10950	(3)	(3)	7740	- 11
Detention Centre	C.P. Team	6	4	1	5	- 17
	Inner London	642	521	241	188	- 71
	National	9910	N/A	N/A	8470	- 5
Youth Custody (4)	C.P. Team	N/A(4)	N/A	8	20	Not Comp.
	Inner London	2096	(3)	951	1229	- 41
	National	(5)	(5)	11930	13280	Not Comp.
TOTALS (8)	C.P. Team	49	62	88	119	+ 145
	Inner London	7543	(3)	(3)	6303	- 16
	National(6)	57670	(3)	(3)	70370	+ 18
	National(7) Estimates	59370	(3)	(3)	70370	+ 18

Notes

(1) Figures for the Inner London Probation Service were obtained from that Service's Statistical Department.

(2) National figures obtained from Probation Statistics England and Wales 1985 (Home Office, 1986b).

(3) Some data for 1983 and 1984 is not available because of industrial action by some members of the National Association of Probation Officers between 1st July 1983 and 30th December 1984.

(4) Borstal Training was abolished as a result of the 1982 Criminal Justice Act. A new custodial sentence, Youth Custody, was introduced by that act.

(5) Information on these categories is not provided in the national figures.

(6) This figure is incomplete (See Note 5).

(7) This figure has been estimated by including the figure of 17000 (the numbers actually starting Youth Custody Supervision 1985 (Home Office, 1986b:90) to the total.

(8) Figures for parole for 1982 and 1983 were not available. Although later figures for 1984 onwards were available the absence of earlier data made parole comparisons impossible. In any event even taking account of changes introduced in the 1982 Criminal Justice Act, by 1985 the team had only ten parole cases.

Again this table, Table 14 emphasises the contrast between, on the one hand, the team's ever-expanding patterns of statutory work and, on the other hand, decreasing caseload levels elsewhere. Whilst 1982 was, of course, the Community Probation Team's "start-up" year, and thus likely to result in an increase from a fairly low caseload level, the increases have been sustained throughout 1983, and up to the end of 1985. If for example, one uses 1983 or 1984 and not 1982 as the basis for examining caseload changes, the differences with other London and national figures are still significant. The trend is upwards. Again, as previously noted, the contribution of Probation Orders, recommended whenever possible by the team, to the overall caseload is significant. Although national Probation statistics for 1986 were unavailable at the time, it was possible to compare the Community Probation Team's caseload with London figures for that period. First in respect of Probation Orders for May/June 1985, December 1985 and December 1986, they increased again, from 85 to 99 to 102. In the Inner London borough of Lambeth during the same periods, the Probation Order figures are 760, 751 and 683. For Inner London as a whole, the figures are 4581, 4583 and 4403. For all statutory and voluntary cases the Community Probation Team's caseload increased during this period whilst Lambeth and Inner London caseloads decreased. The team's total caseload figures for June 1985, December 1985 and December 1986 are 196, 195 and 236. For Lambeth as a whole the figures for the same period are 1754, 1809 and 1695. For Inner London (same period) the figures are 12,308; 12,144; and 11,121. In other words the upward trend in the team's recorded workload has extended into 1986. Even the recent appointment in 1986 of an additional member of staff, a measure designed to <u>reduce workloads</u> and pressure on staff, appears to have had the opposite effect, namely <u>increasing workloads</u>. A vicious cycle of expanding work pressure, more staff, more work is in operation.

This cycle applies not only to the caseloads but to the numbers of Social Inquiry Reports prepared by the team. The average number of reports prepared per Probation Officer has

increased since the unit opened. Based on an analysis of reports collected from the unit it was discovered that in 1982 each Probation Officer prepared on average three Social Inquiry Reports (for criminal cases in Juvenile, Magistrate and Crown Courts) per month, rising to 3.2 reports by March 1983, to 5.4 by May 1984, and 6 by May 1985. An extra staff member was placed in post in 1986 but the most recent figures for the year ending December 1986 show a further increase to 5.65 reports per Probation Officer per month over the previous twelve month period. Despite some minor adjustments to geographical boundaries intended to reduce workloads the statutory work continued to increase and there were two principal reasons for this increase. The first relates to the relationship between the Probation Service and the criminal justice and penal system and the second to professional and organisational matters.

The continued increase in statutory work related first to the relative lack of control by the team, with the possible exception of Probation Orders and Supervision Orders, over the flow of work into the unit. Table 14 indicated that since the team's inception the overall numbers of statutory cases held by the unit have increased. Within that trend, however, whilst Probation Orders have increased, the proportion of the unit's Probation and Supervision Orders has decreased sharply in relation to statutory after-care work. This trend, as we have seen, was not the result of lack of willingness to recommend Probation Orders but rather, it appears, the lack of caseload capacity. Youth Custody Orders appear to be made more frequently within the area and generally than the "old" Borstal training sentences (and Young Prisoners' custodial sentences). This may of course be the result of increased criminal activity in the area, but it also appears to be associated with the use made generally of Youth Custody by sentencers. It has already been suggested by the Home Office (1985b) that some Youth Custody Orders, prior to the 1982 Criminal Justice Act, would have been Detention Centre Orders. This view is also supported by the monitoring group National Approaches to Juvenile Crime (1984) who also considered that Youth Custody has served to increase

the length of sentences for those who would previously have been sent to Detention Centres. In 1985, the first full year for which Youth Custody figures are available (Home Office, 1986b:93), there were 16,290 orders made whereas for the last year for which Borstal figures are available (1982) the numbers sentenced to Borstal, reflecting a continuing trend, was 6,600 (Home Office, 1986b:93). Whilst acknowledging that the two sentences are not equivalent this annual "5 per cent average increase" (between 1982 and 1985) for Youth Custody contrasts sharply "with little change between 1981 and 1982" (Home Office 1986b: 90) concerning previous Borstal and Young Prisoner sentences. Additionally in the same year (1985) that 16,290 persons commenced Youth Custody Orders, there was a decrease in the use of Detention Centre Orders from 10,000 in 1981, 9,910 in 1982 and 8,470 in 1985 (Home Office, 1986b: 93). [Figures for Detention Centre Orders were not available nationally for the years 1983 and 1984 in part because of industrial disputes.]

The amount and type of statutory after-care work undertaken by the unit, was then affected, in part, by wider changes within the criminal justice system. Additionally, it also resulted from the team's inability to substantially effect the amount and distribution of Probation work located within the team's geographical area. Subsequently the team's increasing workload resulted not only in staff frustrations, but an increasing incapacity to deal with cases other than on a short term reactive basis invoking, denying and rationing activities.

The Stimulation of Additional Activity

By making the critical decision to operate according to a defined geographical area instead of, for example, introducing special project workers or detached workers to the area, the team immediately became subject to organisational expectations and constraints. Adjacent teams in the borough were neither willing nor obliged to take on the extra work that flowed into the community team, other

than taking on extra work on a very occasional and ad hoc basis. There was simply no organisational mechanism for dealing with work 'overload' or indeed 'underload' circumstances. Teams operated independently, sustained through heirarchical structures, and not inter-dependently and laterally. Some two years after the unit was established, in June 1985, and after conducting a survey of clients' addresses, it was found that 30 (or 16 per cent) of the community team's total caseload (almost equivalent to one Probation Officer's caseload) did not reside within the team's catchment area. The Community Probation Team's Senior's fear was that by asking adjacent teams to accept the supervision of these cases this might reduce the contrary effect of increasing the community team's caseload by having more cases "transferred in" than could be "transferred out". Furthermore the locality itself was a contributory 'overload' factor here in the sense that the area's reputation for accommodating 'transient people' suggested that client moves outside the team's catchment area to adjacent areas, would be temporary. Local Probation custom and practice, based on a minimum (four week) period of residence prior to transfer of the case being agreed, failed to accommodate, and therefore amplified, the size and composition of the team's caseload. The Senior Probation Officer did not have the authority or organisational structure to produce a more equitable team caseload, in comparison with adjacent teams. Furthermore the Senior held the view that there was "professional hostility and jealousy in the area" towards the team, arising from its perceived special and "maverick status". A further factor contributing to the team's ever-rising caseload arose from the Senior Probation Officer's view of his role in the team.

He was most reluctant to adapt his professional practice to conform to Home Office and management expectations that Senior Probation Officers should become team managers without holding a traditional caseload. He perceived his role as that of an experienced social worker (or senior practitioner) who wanted to continue to perform his casework duties. Whilst as at 31st December 1984, for example, other Seniors

in the borough had average caseloads of 12, he had a caseload of 33, at that time higher than some team members. This was explained to me by the Senior Probation Officer in terms of: "keeping my hand in and offering support to the team which is already under pressure. I don't have the same degree of community involvement as other team members". Furthermore as argued earlier, individual team members created and attracted work by drawing in additional Probation clients intended both to influence their behaviour and establish "professional credibility" for the unit with local teams, apparently somewhat suspicious of this "new" team's special status and image.

A further critical factor concerning the increased workload related directly to the team's open access ideas and practices which, as we will see, also produced its own particular set of demands and problems.

Over a one month period (15th July 1985 to 12th August 1985) and with the assistance of staff a survey was undertaken of the Community Probation Team's "office usage". In other words a survey of actual users of the office was made. The results were then compared with two other Probation offices in the adjacent area. The following table, Table 15, indicates the number of visits made to the Community Probation Team in comparison with the other two teams.

Table 15. A Comparison of Office Usage for Three Probation Fieldwork Teams during a Four Week Period (Note 1)

	(A) Community Probation Office (1 team)	(B) Court based Probation Office (4 teams)	(C) A Fieldwork based Probation Office (2 teams)
Total Numbers of Visits	408	534	150 (Note 2)
Average Number of Visits per team per week	122.4 (Note 3)	33.37	37.5

Note 1. All figures taken over the same period of time. The figure of 408 visits excluded those who used the group activity room situated on the floor below the offices where the survey was conducted.

Note 2. Projected figures from 2 week period.

Note 3. Team A, the Community Probation Team had four Probation Officers plus a senior Probation Officer in its team compared with five Probation Officers plus one Senior in each of the other offices. Thus in constructing strictly comparable figures regarding office visits, team A's figures were given a weighting of 1/5. The figures for office B were obtained by going through the record book kept at the reception with the help of the receptionist. At office C a colleague agreed to collect the information for me, again as recorded in the receptionist's book. This recording system had only recently been introduced at office C and only covered 2 weeks of the 4 week period in question. Six other offices were approached by me to collect comparable information but I was informed that no written records were kept of the number of office visits. In any case my request for such information did appear to arouse some suspicion about the purposes to which this information might be put.

Although team B was placed above court buildings and therefore people entering are subject to some scrutiny from uniformed court staff, team C was based in an accessible position on the first floor in a main street. Not only was it physically more accessible to clients than team A but it covered a wider catchment area. Clients at this office would have to travel further distances to reach it than is the case for the community team. Both team B and C were also situated in built up inner city areas.

The increased usage of office premises as a result of greater accessibility to the catchment area is a finding also noted by Hadley in relation to "patchwork" in social services. (Hadley and Hatch, 1981:150-156). It is also a finding noted by Currie and Parrott (1986) in relation to a social services team moving its physical base into the local patch. The authors found (Currie and Parrott, 1986:27)) that during a three month period after the team had moved into the patch in 1978:

> "total referrals in the three month period rose by 32%, confirming the expectations that a team based within its patch would be found to be more accessible. The major change ... is in terms of office visits. In the three month period in 1977 only three people visited the other office referring problems from Hucknall, compared with 48 in the similar period in 1978." (emphasis added)

By referring to case files and information on individual cases I was able to identify not only the amount of office usage but the users themselves. Of the 408 visits made during the one month survey period to just five Probation Officers, 120 (29.4 per cent) were visits by those on statutory orders. This included 98 visits by people on Probation Orders, 13 visits by people on parole, and 9 by those on Supervision Orders. The majority, 244 (59.8 per cent) of visits were made by non-statutory or voluntary clients. Of the remainder, 12 (3 per cent) were by those arriving for Social Inquiry Report interviews, 6 (1.4 per cent) were visits from volunteers, 5 (1.4 per cent) were from people from voluntary organisations and 21 (5 per cent) were visits made by those on whom no information was available,

generally casual callers not known at the office. In other words 67.6 per cent of visits made during the survey period were made by those under no statutory obligation to visit the office. Furthermore the 408 visits were made by just 138 different people, each one, on average, visiting the office on 2.9 occasions during the one month survey period. Of these 138 people, 12 attended for Social Inquiry Report interviews, 40 were on statutory orders (21 white and 19 black clients) and 86 (56 black people and 30 white people) were voluntary callers (including some casual callers, volunteers and staff from local voluntary organisations), not on any statutory order. The greatest number of visits, 23, to the office during the month were made by one young black voluntary client (ex-Probation) who had reoffended and was mentally ill and homeless. He was encouraged to use the office daily because, according to his Probation Officer: "The only days he is not in the office is when he's being arrested. It's like a second home for him." Overall then office visits can be characterised by the high volume of office visits, the fairly high number of "repeater calls" (averaging three a month), and high proportion (62 per cent), overall, of voluntary callers.

Other workload pressures arose from staff outside the office. After each of the teams of Probation Officers completed self-reporting community work records over a one month period (within the period 17th June 1985 and 9th August 1985), it was discovered that each Probation Officer in the team (including the Senior Probation Officer) was spending, on an average, 13.8 hours per month on what we can broadly identify as community work. In total the team was spending 69.25 hours per month. This compared with an estimated average of 29 hours per month spent by other Inner London Probation Officers doing similar work during the same period as shown in the earlier questionnaire survey. In other words the pressures on the team arose not, as first suspected, simply from increased statutory work but as a result of team expectations initiated, at that time, in the quest for greater community involvement and greater client accessibility to the office. Having encouraged greater

client use of the office through its "open access" policy, and, as we have seen, encouraged "suitable' offenders (in terms of perceived social work needs) to become Probation clients, team members were faced, day in and day out, with the consequences of their role, actions and their location. Specifically these were concerned with the engagement, management and processing of clients, and others, who visited the office.

Observations of Open Access - Client Routinisation and Problem Containment

By regularly placing myself in the reception area and Probation corridors, it was possible to observe client-staff interactions. These observations led to the identification of a client management and processing system. This system consisted of four broad stages; client entry, problem presentational negotiation, problem containment/resolution, and, finally client exit. In respect of the office usage survey, administration staff listed not just the names of those visiting the office but provided shorthand descriptions, or labels of the visitors. The following are just a few examples of the receptionists' perceptions of these clients:

Homeless alcoholic drug user, at times suffering mental instability.
Homeless unemployed alcoholic.
Twentyish white female unemployed ex prostitute - supervision order.
Twenties unemployed male, white, mentally ill.
Young black male, homeless, unemployed.
Twenties white male of low intelligence.
Nineteenish black male, unemployed.
Twenties black male, unemployed.
Seventeen, white, homeless, unemployed.
Voluntary, young male, unemployed.
Nineteenish black male, homeless, unemployed.

The list continued in a similar fashion. Clients were mainly young and unemployed, or old and unemployed. These written observations symbolised the staff's externalised descriptions of internalised meanings. The descriptions given by staff to clients might even be regarded as the first stage of a "demarcation ceremony" in which delineations were established between, on the one hand, those with professional status, limited power and access to limited resources, and, on the other hand, those with minimal power and low status. Generally, visitors' descriptions centred on their social (employment, accommodation) status rather than their offender status, reflecting in part the low proportion of statutory offenders visiting the office, but also staff perceptions of their "problem" status.

After "reporting" to the receptionist giving their name and sometimes stating the purpose of the visit, clients waited in the semi-public area of the waiting room. Receptionist and other staff usually asked the question "Can I help you?". The answer usually given by new clients to the office was simply "I want to see a Probation Officer". Older clients released from prison tended to simply say "I've been told to come here" seemingly a justification for the person's presence at this particular office. If an ex-prisoner gave an address either outside the team's catchment area, or the person was of no fixed abode (NFA), then depending on whether the office was busy and staff availability, ex-prisoners were either sent to another Probation Office or dealt with briefly by the Community Probation Team. Gathering information, establishing the client's identity and nature of the problem was an integral part of an assessment process, not always receiving clients' full co-operation.

If the all-important connecting door between the waiting room and the Probation Offices was closed then "known" clients waited until "their" Probation Officer was ready to see them. The Senior Probation Officer's office was directly behind the connecting door, on the "Probation side." If, however, this

connecting door was open then the Senior Probation Officer, occupying his "gate keeping" role, prevented direct client entry into Probation Officers' space, moved towards the waiting room also asking people "Can I help you?". Increasing client contact resulting from the office's greater accessibility and pressures had, however, resulted in the connecting door being kept locked rather than open. Consequently clients were obliged to go through the more formal receptionist's route to help rather than, as initially occured, having direct access to the Probation Officers. Indeed increasingly since the office was opened three years ago, staff had adopted more retreatist practices and strategies. Thus the connecting door was more often closed than open, opening hours became restricted and the building was kept locked during the lunchhour.

Apart from those occasions when the purpose of the visit was predefined, such as when a Social Inquiry Report was required, the nature of client/staff exchanges was largely a matter of exploration and negotiation based on problem situations. Nobody arrived to say, for example: "I'm happy and I've got no problems." People arrived either because they had got a personal (usually financial) problem and and because they were obliged to attend as a requirement of a court or other statutory order. In order to emphasise the non-casework emphasis formally acknowledged at the office, but also for practical reasons, clients making use of the team's "open access" policy were generally seen by whoever happened to be at the office at the time. Most clients were offered a cup of coffee prior to the beginning of the "negotiation of the problem" stage but clients were not always prepared to wait until a Probation Officer was available. For example, when a particular Probation Officer was very busy, a client was asked to wait first in the waiting room, then in the group room, then have a cup of coffee. He said: "I can't wait, I don't play table tennis and I don't like fucking coffee" - and left without seeing the Probation Officer. The client was on parole and the Probation Officer said:"Well it's up to him when he comes in, at least I've seen him." Having reported to reception

clients waited until one of the receptionists had phoned through to one of the Probation Officers present. Sometimes clients came in with an appointment to see a specific Probation Officer. More usually clients were seen by whoever happened to be present in keeping with the "open access" policy. Because of office overcrowding once there were generally more clients in the building than rooms available (four), clients were interviewed in the waiting and corridor areas. This unsatisfactory arrangement encouraged short interactions.

Two broad approaches to "presenting problems" were identified: acceptance by staff of the presenting problems at face value, and the redefinition of the problems in emotional terms. The "negotiation of the problem" stage, like other encounters at the office, was short and rushed but usually courteously executed making dissent and disagreement difficult. During my observations, the majority of presenting problems were material, and were not automatically redefined in emotional (or any other) terms. Nevertheless, seemingly dependent on the time available and, to some extent, the seriousness of the problem, staff made ready use of any opportunities, if not to redefine the presenting problem then to talk generally about personal family and emotional matters. Only a minority of presenting problems were of an emotional nature, by far the majority being material (usually financial) problems. Here material refers to both requests for direct material aid, particularly financial help, but also indirect material help in the form of staff as mediators between client needs (including advice on benefits, provision of accommodation, improvements to housing situation, access to psychiatric services, advice on employment opportunities, access to local authority social services for additional resources) and service provision. As we shall see the opportunities for direct material assistance were extremely limited. However, in respect of indirect material help and as a result of covering a relatively small geographical area, staff became increasingly knowledgeable about the area's resources and could, on occasions, contact local resources through personal relationships with other

workers in the area. These contacts proved particularly useful in respect of emergency accommodation (bed and breakfast and hostels). On the other hand this increased local knowledge also brought its own frustrations when the limitations of local services and resources, particularly concerning longer term, not crisis needs, became apparent. Indeed the Probation staff's redefinition of the problems was less concerned with the emotional redefinition of material, or other problems, but rather the immediate short-term management of longer-term material and, to a lesser extent, emotional problems.

Problems tended to be presented either openly and directly for example: "Look I really need some money. My money still hasn't come through!", or indirectly referring to various emotional conditions, for example desparation: "I just don't know what to do any more. There just aren't any fucking jobs around." Or in another case a young man came in depressed and agitated, "Look what can I do, I don't know any more, fucking lock me up." The reply came "Lets talk about it". Tea was made as the Probation Officer successfully calmed him down. On another occasion a man came into the office when the only Probation Officer in the building was busy. I decided, on this <u>one</u> occasion to assist. Courteously, and in accordance with the "office culture" I asked him "Can I help you?". He replied that he wanted to discuss things "inside" with one of the Probation Officers. When I asked him about the nature of the problem so I could inform the busy duty officer, I was told "If I tell you what I want here, you'll just send me away. I want to talk inside with a Probation Officer". Apparently the man had just come out of prison after 23 years. He was later seen by one of the Probation Officers for ten minutes and given £3 for "bus fares".

There was a constant tension in the office about if and whether direct material or indeed emotional assistance could, would or should be given. Staff appeared most confident and comfortable in their role of personal counsellors and emotional advisers rather than material providers. In this former role staff intervention took the form of offering

short term emotional comfort (called "support") in the form of "active listening", i.e. listening and offering explanations about and comments on the problems. In terms of material problems staff acted either as direct providers, mediators or "rebuffers". As direct providers very little office money was available and held in the "poor box". Mediation took the form of either phoning a particular office (usually the Department of Health and Social Security) on behalf of the client, or more often suggesting that clients used the phone themselves. A rebuff meant, in effect, nothing could be done by the staff. The problem containment stage, for those not seeking direct and immediate material help, centred on staff encouraging clients to be independent of, not dependent on the office. This took the form of staff providing information and resources for clients to act upon. Clients were, for example, variously given the telephone numbers of the local D.H.S.S. office, the housing department, the homeless families unit, bed and breakfast and hostel accommodation, and a legal advice centre. The clients' rather than staff's mediation between client need and possible public resources was largely justified by staff in terms of reducing client dependency (on the professional staff). However, it was also rationalised as a planned strategy not a reactive measure. From discussions and exchanges it was clear that staff did not value undertaking these perceived onorous and time consuming contacts with other agencies, although practical, rather than emotional problems, were the norm rather than the exception.

On some occasions, the minority, or so it seemed, Probation staff agreed to make the contact with another agency themselves, managed to get through on the phone, and were able to clarify the client's difficulty and/or make an appointment with the agency on behalf of the client. With potentially threatening and demanding clients staff spent longer with them in interviews to diffuse tensions. Avoidance of conflict applied both in relation to many if not all local agencies towards whom staff often had very strong feelings (in terms of inadequate resources, delays in replying to queries, unsympathetic officials and, in the case

of the police, over zealous arrest practices) and in relation to clients behaviour in the office. Yet open conflict with such agencies was relatively rare. This was because staff felt that if they made too much of an issue of the way one client was treated then their other clients might be badly dealt with on other occasions. However possibly the greatest source of daily conflict between clients and staff concerned client request for direct and immediate financial assistance.

Staff were well acquainted with those clients whose principal reason for attending the office was to obtain money. In advance of any anticipated requests, difficulties or embarassments in these instances staff would state early in the interview that money was not available. The comment: "I can't give you any money today, you've had £2 already this week" represented a judgement made about individual need. The comment "We haven't got any money to give you" represented a factual statement about the state of the office safe, not always true. The latter approach suggested that problems were less negotiable. When staff were under pressure, in terms of numbers of people waiting and reports to be written, clients were either "paid off", and given small financial sums (£2 or £3) with little questioning about possible justification, or simply told to come back another day.

When staff were not under pressure and in respect of material assistance, some persuasion was necessary by clients that they had a "genuine need". Even in those cases when the Probation Officer was convinced by the client's need he then had to convince the Senior Probation Officer, who had the key to the poor box, to financial assistance. Sometimes this necessitated the production of over elaborate stories to get what they wanted. The Senior Probation Officer was described by staff as being "mean with the office money". It seemed that the more inquisitive he became about need, the more elaborate the stories became. For example, Probation Officer to Senior Probation Officer, "This man desparately needs a cooker. He's only just moved into his flat and has got no furniture at all. He might get a cooker for £10". In this case the team's poor box was made available although the

Probation Officer suspected that the money would not be spent on a cooker. He commented to me afterwards, "It's up to him what he does with the money, but it might help to keep him out of trouble". Another client was, exceptionally, given a weekly allowance of £1.50 by the Senior Probation Officer. It was suspected that the money would probably be spent on beer but there was some hope that the help offered would help to assist the client to improve his weekly budgeting and behaviour. Both clients and Probation Officers usually had to provide acceptable reasons for being given money. Shortage of money in itself was not generally an acceptable reason. The direct provision of material help in the form of financial assistance was appeared an expection of the longer term and older clients and given out by Probation Officers within the office budgeting limits.

Generally financial help was regarded as "unprofessional" and staff felt resentful about providing it. One staff member reflecting the views of other staff said, "We ought to be called a pawn shop, not a Probation Office. We simply give out money all the time". For others the direct provision of financial assistance was regarded as one part of the social work "package". There were no service guidelines about eligibility criteria for financial assistance to Probation clients. At times staff became extremely annoyed by constantly giving out money. On one occasion a frustrated staff member said "If he keeps coming in and not claiming his Social Security, I'll get him sectioned". On another occasion a client told me that Probation Officers should 'pay' clients sums of money up to £50 if they need it. "I've got a good relationship with my Probation Officer but I need money as well as a friend". There were also organisational constraints concerning financial assistance in that area budgets were both centrally allocated and limited. In the financial year 1985/86 for example within four months of the start of the new financial year, the Probation division (which included the Community Probation Team) had spent its yearly budget, producing further pressures on the team. Haines regards careful use of material aid as "the first step in the development of a helping relationship with an

individual or family" (Haines, 1975:79). In practice even with this justification of material aid leading to the development of a "helping relationship", the provision of such aid can lead to problems. For example one Inner London Probation Officer, Mr. G. Parkinson, was suspended from his job, pending investigation after publishing an article entitled "I Give them Money" (1970). He explained this practice in the following terms (Parkinson, 1970:32):

> "I give money with the difficulties and dangers and dependence it can produce because I feel I have precious little choice within the context of the situations my clients offer me. The sum does not have to be large. I hand out perhaps £2 per week but the fund available to the Inner London Probation Service, from which I draw this money, can be vital in opening up relations with a client".

The professional discomfort felt by staff when giving out money was one aspect of wider concerns about the lack of opportunities in the office to do "real social work". In other words there was a lack of opportunities to utilise social workers' counselling and casework skills. For example one Probation Officer said: "There is just no time or space to do proper work here even if clients were motivated. I spent two hours with a client last week at a detention centre. Eventually we got to talking about his feelings and I felt I was doing real social work".

The Senior Probation Officer made a similar comment: "How can you talk about interesting and important things like family background and emotions when all they want is their Giro?" Another Probation Officer in the team said to me she was trained to be a social worker "to help individuals and families in need" and was not paid to be threatened, and shouted at because of the "totally inadequate social security system", (the local office was extremely difficult to contact by phone). Every day staff were faced with a professional dilemma of wanting to develop their "relationship work" with clients but presented almost exclusively with material problems. One dilemma was that if problems were seen as material, or predominantly material and could be met, then

the social work role concerned with examining relationships might become almost totally redundant. That the presentation if not the resolution of problems was in material terms functioned as a depressant on casework opportunities.

The nature of the problem together with the manner in which it was resolved or contained appeared to determine the nature of the final, client exit stage. In almost all cases even when hard pressed, staff tried to give some time, if only five minutes, to each client. These short interactions enabled clients to ventilate their feelings, and gain some immediate understanding about their dilemmas. For the staff the "self help approach" of directing clients to the office telephones and directories, served intentionally to reduce the stigma possibilities arising from "expert professional treatment" and to produce a small measure of client independence which produced less not more opportunities for clients' dependence on casework relationships with the staff to be developed. It also encouraged clients to vacate the Probation Officer's immediate vicinity, if not the actual building.

Problems occured however when the more disturbed, lonely, desperate clients who often revisited the office, wanted to form more personal friendships with staff. In these cases the "blurring of boundaries" between professional and personal staff roles, encouraged to some extent by the informal atmosphere, produced exit difficulties. The main issue appeared to be the extent to which emotional demands on staff could be mediated or contained. Was five minutes, or one hour long enough for one client/staff interaction? Would relationships of dependency be formed if longer interactions were encouraged? Staff were well aware of the consequences of not providing immediate help to some people.

In one case the "demands" of one client had become such a burden on the entire staff group that, in anticipation of her regular Friday afternoon visit, the team decided to close the office on Friday afternoons for a period of time. More dramatically another woman refused financial assistance,

locked herself in the office toilets and slashed her wrists (not seriously). Another person not given any further financial assistance refused to leave the office and was finally ejected at 7pm without any money being given. A young man with a psychiatric problem threw hot coffee over one Probation Officer when not given the accommodation he wanted. The same Probation Officer was assaulted by a woman and required assistance to release her grip on him. One of the secretarial staff took a week's sick leave when a hooded man in a black balaclava came in and verbally threatened her. The new Senior Probation Officer appointed in 1986 (upon the resignation from the Probation Service of the original Senior) was punched in the face within weeks of his arrival when refusing a request from a client to read his own file. Although such critical incidents did not occur every week, more like once or twice a month, staff's daily actions and courtesies appeared guided by the emotional pressures and anxieties arising from these incidents as well as the on-going volume of visiting clients. Usually however the exit stage was executed with minimum drama, problems having been skillfully and quickly contained earlier in the exchanges.

The immediate task was always, or so it appeared, to "talk through the problem" which, in practice, meant recognising the feelings of the client but also trying to resolve problems. When, for example, a youngster came in complaining that he would not be seen by the psychiatrist again for another three months, the Probation Officer replied: "That must be really awful. But I think you are becoming much more stable now. You can always come to the group downstairs, I think you'll enjoy it". Although it was exceptional for clients to be given a further specific appointment, it was general practice for clients to be told that they could return another day if they "still needed to see a Probation Officer". This approach contributed to the diminution of immediate conflicts and tensions concerning clients' exits, but also contributed to the longer term vicious workload cycle of emergence of problems, availability and usage of a new area Probation resource, identification of short-term

client needs, and short-term professional responses. With the exception of referring clients to a local day centre for psychiatric clients (for mutual support), there were no opportunities made available to make links with others, for example through a Claimants' Union (or a "clients' union"!), to question existing policies. Here, as Satyamurti (1981:144) suggests elsewhere about social work, such a move might represent a "great threat" to staff.

The unit vividly reflects and illustrates, on the one hand, the demands of working in a deprived inner city area at a time when unemployment rates in the area were at their highest ever and when the welfare state is being "cut back", and, on the other hand, the difficulties of employing casework and counselling skills in that context. Morison (Home Office, 1962) had previously welcomed and encouraged casework some 26 years ago when clients' material needs were assumed to be met by the then expanding Welfare State. Despite the long passage of time that has passed since Morison's comments, it appeared that the Probation Officer's normative expectations of their role, as social workers, had largely remained unchanged. They were reluctant, as Hill and Laing, (1978:109) have noted elsewhere, to extend the social workers' role to supplementary benefits providers. With some recognition of the changed circumstances, the Senior Probation Officer had attempted to enlarge the office's loan facilities with the idea of developing a type of "credit bank". He said: "Why shouldn't the working class be given credit? the middle class have no problems with getting overdraft facilities, credit cards and so on." This idea was rejected by the Probation Service. Furthermore even had it wanted it, the community team did not have it's own budget, which was controlled and allocated centrally although as we will now see, it did operate a basic patchwork system.

Patchwork

Let me first consider what the term patchwork means, its organisational requirements and underlying assumptions.

Patchwork is generally described not as a type of social work but rather refers to a means of organising or re-organising service delivery. At its simplest it involves a range of different social service's staff, for example social workers, home help workers, and other ancillary staff, working together from a local rather than a centralised office to provide a more comprehensive and holistic service to its locality. It engenders a counter-praxis to specialist teams and is symbolic of the "community networks" approach to "community care" as expounded in the majority Barclay Report. That report (1982:207) describes local and patch teams in the following terms:

> "These vary in character but all include the allocation of social work staff to a limited geographical area. Preferably they have a base within the area and include other social services staff, such as home helps and street wardens, whose clients live in the patch."

Patchwork's chief aims have been identified by the team leader of the Normanton initiative, the project regularly referred to by Hadley in his writings (most recently Hadley **et al**, 1987) about the subject. These aims are first, to divert people from institutional care and second, to satisfactorily maintain people at home within their family and neighbourhood. (Cooper and Denne, 1983). Patchwork, according to Hadley and McGrath (1980), requires a degree of individual voluntarism, the capacity and willingness to care for others and, organisationally, the introduction of inter and intra team coordination, and the delegation and decentralisation of decision making. It appears that the interest in patchwork has arisen not simply from concerns about the advantages about informal care (i.e. kith and kin), over formal care (i.e. semi-residential or residential care), but also as a result of public expenditure cuts introduced, approximately, from the mid 1970's onwards. As Pearson (1978:161) writes:

> "The dedication to compassionate and imaginative welfare - through community care and preventive work rather than institutional repression - thereby enters into the strangest of all alliances, as the "faith of the Counsellors" teams up with hard cash

and the public expenditure crisis."

To Hatch and Humble (1980) the "community care" debate, of which patchwork is an integral part, is just one part of a wider argument for political power to be decentralised in the form of neighbourhood Councils or something similar. The problem in the 1980's for patchwork's efficacy concerns the current government's commitment to a more market orientated economy and reduced public expenditure in which less not more political and economic power is made available at the local and Local Authority level. Patchwork is also concerned with professional as well as financial decentralisation. Abrams (1980), for example, recognises that the desire for a degree of local control also depends on increases in responsibilities being matched with increases in authority and the strengthening of the informal (i.e. voluntary) sector to achieve equal status with agencies in the formal sector. He writes: "Some serious surrender of powers is unavoidable if one really wants any significant measure of social care to be provided within neighbourhood social networks" (Abrams, 1980:23).

Questions arise here about if and whether the aims and assumptions concerning patchwork are compatible with Probation work. Also, if they are, whether they are attainable. The Community Probation Team operated a very limited, minimal patch system, as one component of it's Community Probation Work. Initially, as we have already seen, the Community Probation Team sub-divided its catchment area into five sub-areas, or patches, for work allocation purposes (Appendix E). Despite the disparities in the composition and structure of each team member's patch, fairly equitable caseloads amongst individual team members were sustained, albeit with some "internal readjustments" between team members being required from time to time at staff meetings. Additionally each team member was expected to become involved in some unspecified way within each of their patches. For the Senior Probation Officer this additional involvement was limited to being a member of the management committee of a voluntary organisation for ex-offenders, a

traditional duty inherited from his previous office. For the remaining four main grade Probation Officers in the team, the absence of any such tradition for them necessitated the making of decisions about their patch involvement. As we will subsequently see, the two different types of community work pursued were directly and indirectly related to other local responses to the 1981 disturbances in the area. Furthermore the team's patchwork initiatives were isolated from the dominant local and organisational arrangements in the Inner London Probation Service.

Adjacent Probation teams did not organise their work on a patch basis, although there have been occasional abortive attempts. Further the Inner London Probation Service has not decentralised its operational, budgetary control, staffing, or decision making processes. The latter was particularly important, as we shall see, when local staff were asked to submit their views on their understanding of the Brixton situation, after the 1985 disturbances in Brixton. Policy decisions about staffing levels, qualifications, buildings, wages and training issues, were made centrally at headquarters, and also nationally through organisations representing professional and administrative interests. Policies were implemented through the heirarchy downwards from Deputy Chief level at headquarters, through regional Assistant Chief Probation Officers, to the teams' Senior Probation Officers. There were no lateral decision making bodies or administrative structures. Only one local organisation affecting the team, the housing department, had attempted to delegate its decision making to a local level. In any case the housing sub-office was designed principally to collect Council rents for and report repair requests to the main office. It was not a separate policy making unit or resource provider. Even in an area such as East Sussex, committed to social services patchwork (Parsons, 1986), its implementation is slow and difficult. Parsons (1986: 147) writes that it was two and a half years after patchwork "came in" to East Sussex that a social services team gained control of section one money and that the team concerned still did not have a patch office.

Furthermore Probation Service clients are, crucially, different from the elderly, the sick and the disabled for whom, amongst others, patchwork is designed. Probation clients have a statutory obligation to a criminal court with associated duties and legal sanctions. The vital element of voluntarism is missing. Nevertheless, at first sight the patchwork notion of directing people away from institutional towards community care could be applied to the Probation Service in terms of diverting people from custody. However, this consideration ignores the different decision making processes, concerns, client groupings and position of the Probation Service within the overall criminal justice system viz à viz social services. Decisions about releasing somebody from custody are normally not made by institutions alone or in consultation with "the community" and they are physically located outside a borough framework. Release decisions are necessarily made within the wider context of the criminal justice system. Furthermore the basis for decisions about somebody's release is not, in comparison with the types of social service's cases referred to earlier, related primarily to individual needs or institutional contingencies but rather results from judicial processes in terms of general deterrence principles, including the protection of society.

The evidence about "caring networks" for offenders, beyond individual families - and not always then - (Walker, 1982) suggests that other than the limited individual work done by volunteers, individuals and communities are resistant to helping offenders through the establishment of co- ordinated support networks. (See, for example, Celnick, 1985 concerning a recent attempt to develop such networks.) It is more relevant therefore here to consider the specific types of "neighbourhood care" with which the Community Probation Team engaged, rather than general "caring networks" for offenders. The former can be characterised by their emphasis on the "neighbourhood" as diversified client groupings, whereas the latter specifies individual and offender focused interventions. The neighbourhood groups and organisations

with which the team engaged were concerned not with identified offenders as such, but with a broad range of potential user types. The common characteristic of the users whether the elderly, youngsters, or single parents was that they were all regarded as being "at risk" and in need of more services. Youngsters were "at risk" variously of "becoming alienated", of offending (including committing public order offences); mothers and toddlers, the elderly, and "vulnerables" (mostly elderly people but also people with psychiatric problems) were "at risk" of becoming further isolated, lonely or afraid. There were two sorts of organisations and administrative structures with which the Community Probation Team engaged, and which sought to tackle the problems of youngsters, particularly black youngsters. The first, to use Abrams' (1980) distinctions, and to be outlined here, was concerned with neighbourhood care as service delivery. The second, concerned principally with neighbourhood care as "neighbourliness" emerged from estates work, to be analysed in detail in the following chapter.

The two organisations with which Probation team members were most involved in terms of time commitment, particularly during 1983-1985, were two "neighbourhood care" organisations concerned with improving service delivery to "front line" ethnic minority youngsters. The term "Frontline", in Brixton, refers to a street in central Brixton (Railton Road) around which the disturbances centred in 1981 and which has still retained its role as a meeting place for black youngsters. In both organisations the team's Probation Officers were on the management committee alongside the police, local authority, youth service, and local chaplaincy and local representatives.

For one organisation (the First Generation Organisation) one of the team's Probation Officers acted as chairperson for a year. This project, situated on the 'Frontline' within this Probation Officer's patch, offered advice and information for young ethnic minority youngsters. It stands just three doors away from another Neighbourhood Advice Centre (built some years before the 1981 disturbances). According to the

organisation itself (First Generation Organisation, 1985) it is:

> "a front line self-help project working from a coffee bar based centre offering advice and support to users on a drop-in basis. In particular it maintains links between community, family, and those in prison, mental institutions etc., attending court, offering support to families and regular visiting plus support and help on their release."

The Probation Officer on the management committee worked hard, with other staff, to convert an idea in 1982 into a working project which eventually opened in 1986. It continues to have funding problems which were exacerbated when the local authority was ratecapped in 1985/86.

The second organisation, cited in a 'temporary' portacabin since 1982 and situated just twenty yards from the one above is called the Afro-Caribbean Cultural Association. This organisation has considerably more floor space that the First Generation Organisation and provides recreational, cultural, spiritual and other leisure time occupations concerned with improving the "conditions of life" for older ethnic minority "youngsters", approximately in the 18-24 age group. Both projects are funded by the local council and the Department of the Environment through the government's Inner City Partnership Programme and opened, eventually, as a result of the 1981 Brixton disturbances. The Afro-Caribbean Cultural Association was also part-funded by the Greater London Council, until its demise in 1987. In terms of daily activities and numbers the latter project appears to have been successful in terms of attracting ethnic groups off the streets and into its premises. What also appears to have happened is that illegal drug dealing that allegedly previously took place on Railton Road and in the surrounding areas has, to some extent, been displaced into this project's building. Subsequently this behaviour has come to the attention of the police. When, according to the leader of the local council, one thousand police (The Guardian, 26 July 1986), some armed, raided the premises this prompted the following headline in the Daily Mail (26th July 1986) "Club

set up after riots was a narcotics warehouse". Whilst the Probation Service regarded its support for this project in terms of "helping to support the black community", it was also helping to contribute to the creation of certain types of societal responses to the disturbances representing institutionalised project "safety valves". King (1988:35) for example, refers to British Governments' response to youth crimes in terms of crime prevention measures which are "project-driven" (i.e. unco-ordinated), and not "programme-driven" (i.e. co-ordinated and sustained) as is the case, he argues, concerning certain French crime prevention measures. So far as the police and the public were concerned the creation of the second project also served the function of concentrating, for a time at least, some illegal drug activities into a smaller and more manageable, in terms of police surveillance, space. So far as the team's Probation Service representative on the project's committee was concerned, the project offered its users and workers some of whom, in his words, "were very alienated from society" an opportunity "to move across the road from offending to non-offending".

There appeared to be a real hope that these community projects would help to contribute towards the integration and reform of individuals, through activities and advice, and through their short-term employment as workers. It is not possible to make definite conclusions based on limited observations of these projects in operation, about which of the project's objectives were and were not realised. It is possible, however, to observe that both projects represent a particular type of response to the problems of past disturbances in the area. This response concerned members of the locality (as users and workers) with professional workers (as the main management committee members) being encouraged, through special short-term public funding, to regulate and assist its youth.

The second form of Probation Service involvement in the patches, Inter-agency work (to be detailed in the following chapter), centred not, as above on neighbourhood care as

"service delivery", but, in practice, as "neighbourliness". Here on two large modern estates two of the team's maingrade Probation Officers in the team have, in one case, joined and in another created Inter-agency teams to tackle estate problems.

Patchwork, then, for the Probation Team had the effect of bringing them into closer contact with the area's problems and localised means of resolving them. There was an emphasis then both inside the Probation office and outside in the patches, in relation to management work with the two voluntary organisations, and Inter-agency estate work, on the attempted integration of youngsters, particularly black youngsters, within the dominant values of society. The latter concerns both ends (involving the importance given to finding employment and/or becoming involved with leisure and advice seeking activities and, generally, activity for inactive unemployed young people) and means (concerned paradoxically, with imposed self-help and special projects). These points will be elaborated on later as well as in the final chapter. Nevertheless it is possible at this stage to identify certain constraints on the Community Probation Team which prevented and diverted them from addressing those original objectives concerned with both structural issues (including unemployment and racism) and more innovatory Probation practices.

Organisational Constraints and Conflicts

The emphasis on defining and seeking to contain social problems in individualistic terms can, in part, be explained by Mills' (1943) attention to the immediate situational setting as we saw in relation to the office's group work programmes. It can also be explained by an examination of internal and external constraints exercised by the organisation. Whilst some of the more immediate constraints or controls (over resources, staff recruitment, heirarchical decision making) were identified in the last chapter, here an emphasis is given to examining those constraints which arose

when critical incidents provided opportunities for change.

First, in relation to staffing the unit, and as we have already seen, the Senior Probation Officer selected staff who were professional, experienced, and neither racist nor political. The same considerations arose in a more visible form when one of the original staff members resigned in 1986. The organisation found it very difficult to recruit a new staff member. The all white team of Probation Officers (the ancillary worker is black), wanted to recruit a black Probation Officer. However, the vacancy was only advertised in the Inner London Probation Service's newsletter, denying opportunities for staff from other areas to apply. Pressure from the Association of Black Probation Officers contributed to the post being eventually advertised nationally. At a team meeting, the interest shown by the one ethnic minority candidate was openly discussed. However, he was considered "unsuitable" because of his "adversarial approach" of "sticking up" for client's rights and black voluntary organisations. This adversarial approach was in direct conflict, or so it was claimed, with the team's professional, consensual, conflict-avoidance approach to problem individuals and local problems. The ethnic minority Probation student, on placement at the unit, was also considered unsuitable because her lack of experience would, it was said: "require a lot of support, a lot of time, and a lot of direction". The emphasis by the team on <u>experienced</u> and <u>non-adversarial</u> Probation Officers finally resulted in 'suitable' staff being appointed, eventually consisting of three further full time staff. It is probably significant that none of the new applicants were current Probation Officers working in Inner London, and staff considered this was a direct result of the workload problems and external image of the unit within Inner London. All three "new" staff (two white and one black) had no experience of community work, one had returned from a year's leave, another (temporary appointment) had been on maternity leave for five years, the third no experience of inner city work. Thus again, as when the unit opened two years ago, the "new" staff appointed did not have relevant community work experience.

Within months of these new appointments further outbreaks of public disorder occured in Brixton on the weekend of the 28th-29th September 1985. Amidst a background of ever-rising caseloads, increased office pressures and staff changes, the new disturbances provided an opportunity for staff to discuss their Probation concerns as well as their understanding of this new development with Senior Probation management.

A visit was made by me to the team's premises on Monday 30th September 1985 in order to discuss the weekend's disturbances and its effects on the team. I was informed by the Senior Probation Officer first that he had received a phone call from an Assistant Chief Probation Officer who lived in the area, and who was concerned about the team, but also about the possibility that the disturbances might affect property prices in the area. Second a call was received from the Chief Probation Officer of Merseyside expressing support for the team. Third I was told that a delegation, consisting of the Inner London Probation Service's Chief Probation Officer, one of his Deputies, and the area Assistant Chief Probation Officer would be visiting that morning. This was the first visit by the Chief since the unit opened after the 1981 disturbances. When this group arrived, and after courtesies were exchanged and general concerns expressed, the different perceptions of the team's situation and possible remedies also emerged.

The Chief directly asked the team, "Can the Probation Service do both statutory work and community work?" The Senior replied: "Yes, we've proved it's possible," although he had earlier indicated to me that the reverse was the case. Another staff member told the Chief that the team wouldn't retain its credibility in the community unless it did community work. Another staff member, clearly upset by the disturbances (which he had "listened to" on short wave radio) said, "It was like they were burning my estate down." Senior management were generally sympathetic but also concerned with service wide work management objectives, whereas the team, despite their workload problems, justified their existence and their community involvement. In the light of comments

about the "protected" caseload level of 25, actually meaning, as we have seen, on average 40 cases per officer, the Deputy stated that he understood their difficulties but the team "must remember it's a nil growth situation". The Chief, reinforcing the emphasis on team, not inter-term controls and management, added: "What will you do about these other 15 cases?" The replies indicated that there were no easy answers to this question: "It wouldn't even do any good if we discharged orders early - they would still keep coming in just like they do now." The absence of solutions here, or overall to the problem of increased workloads arising, to a large extent, from the team's own "open access" policy, and lack of resources, continued to put pressure on the team's non-statutory work in the community, and reinforce the traditional aspects of Probation work. Even requests for some training in community work were turned down as the local Assistant Chief Probation Officer said to one of the staff that it wasn't necessary: "Your training as a Probation Officer is sufficient for your work here". The Probation Officer retorted: "I must disagree with you. This sort of work requires specialist skills. We just don't have them - we're learning as we go along!" The local Assistant Chief Probation Officer stated that it was: "becoming increasingly difficult to find staff for these specialist community teams, in the West End, Wandsworth, and Community Service. For the fieldwork teams it's not a problem." When staff said one of their biggest problems was "our contact with the local D.H.S.S.", the Chief replied that he did not understand this problem because he had, only recently, met with very senior D.H.S.S. officials. He said: "I don't think the people on the desk are properly implementing the D.H.S.S. policy". There was no recognition given to recent cut-backs in the local office, and elsewhere. When the delegation had departed staff were low in morale and considered the visit represented little more than a public relations exercise with little hope of any additional resources.

Following this spontaneous meeting with senior management the staff organised their own "team review" day, on 14th October 1985. This review day, to which I was invited as a

researcher, functioned as a support mechanism for the team, an opportunity to devize a "special case" for more resources, and a forum for the induction of new team members, inexperienced in community work or "open access" inner city work. Suggestions made at that meeting for more inter-team support mechanisms (through more borough wide staff meetings), the prioritisation of cases ("high" social work need, "medium need", "low need", "no need"), reductions in the number of court duties, and the drawing in of the team's area boundaries all remained unresolved some five months later when the fieldwork had come to an end.

The review day also functioned as an informal induction and socialisation course in which the team's consensus approach was explained, emphasised and reinforced. As when the unit opened, new staff explained that they did not know who to get involved with, who not to get involved with on their patch and asked how they should undertake this sort of work. The answers were supplied in the form of existing staff explaining their own inter-agency and patch approaches. In effect the team created, in the absence of training programmes and external resources, their own self-help milieu, reflecting their clients' environment, and the team's practices.

In contrast with the informal opportunity for staff to raise issues with senior management and for an internal review, the 1985 disturbances also prompted another opportunity, this time a formal one, for staff to try to set the terms of the debate about their role, and secure legitimacy for their interpretations of the Brixton area and its disorder. As a result of the 1985 disturbances the Inner London Probation Service's Chief Probation Officer asked the Community Probation Team to produce a "Probation Perspective" on the events. The first draft paper (Inner London Probation Service, 1985d) by the team remained substantially intact in its final version (Inner London Probation Service, 1985e) except for a short reference to local grievances about the local police's use of "stop and search" procedures and the team welcoming "the full implementation of Lord Scarman's

recommendations to combat racist behaviour and attitudes" (Inner London Probation Service, 1985d:3). The remainder of the paper submitted to the Probation Committee for their endorsement portrayed the Probation team's perceptions of the area as being in conflict, and in need of fundamental changes, as the following excerpt (Inner London Probation Service, 1985e:2-3) illustrates:

> "Of the major social problems, unemployment is becoming increasingly serious amongst young blacks in particular (one effect of institutionalised racism). The YTS scheme has little local support or credibility ... Inevitably, young people resort to "alternative" methods of getting by and this leads to crime, drug dealing and prostitution ... The creation of permanent and satisfying jobs is thus imperative in order to avoid the consolidation of sub-cultures and the development of ghettos. Housing problems are also a major concern ... More money than is currently available to the local authority is needed, in order to counteract the steady deterioration of council housing estates where the morale of residents is already extremely low. While Brixton's basic problems worsen, the position of the police becomes increasingly untenable ... our relationships with local police ... have been jeopardised by our clients' current anger and resentment towards the police force in general ... Also our customary role as mediators and apologists between police and community has been seriously undermined ... In the face of these pressures, the DHSS is on the brink of collapse."

Of the work done by various agencies and the Community Probation Team, the document added (Inner London Probation Service, 1985e:1-3):

> "... there was the realisation that the social problems are so deep rooted that the various attempts by community groups, statutory and voluntary agencies to improve the situation merely scratch the surface. The fact that the solutions are, therefore, beyond the scope and influence of a small probation team engender feelings of powerlessness and frustration ... In terms of the Brixton team ... the maintenance of such a high profile has vital resource implications. Fulfilling a diversity of roles in the context of a volatile and complex social and political climate makes excessive emotional and intellectual demands on staff. Work-loads thus need to be protected and regulated, a task made difficult by the prospect of nil growth of the Probation Service and the ever rising crime rate."

This paper then, together with one from the area's Assistant Chief Probation Officer (Rogers, 1985) also critical of some police behaviour, a similar view held by Lord Scarman (HMSO, 1981:4.62-4.68) and seeking recognition and support for the work done by local Probation officers in Lambeth was sent to the Chief Probation Officer to gain the endorsement of the Service's Probation Committee. The paper was rejected by the Local Probation Committee on the basis that it contained elements that the Committee considered it could not publically support. Shortly after the team's paper was submitted, and unusually and exceptionally, a sub group of the Probation Committee, together with the Chief Inspector of the Probation Inspectorate at the Home Office visited the team's premises and met with other teams in the area. This was in part, a member of the committee said, because they were worried about the "low morale of the team". It also functioned as a means of re-affirming authority and direct organisational authority.

At that meeting, held at the Community Probation team's premises in late 1985, the Chief Inspector of Probation questioned the benefits of "open reporting" and suggested that the "discipline" of regular reporting might be reintroduced and be more effective than the team's more "flexible" approach. The Probation sub-committee also restated its position that it was unable to support the team's written submission. One Probation Officer asked:"Your'e asking us to do this sort of work in the area, and we're asking for your support."The committee member replied that their non endorsement of the paper should not symbolise a lack of support."We think you are all doing a tough job in a difficult area but we cannot accept this paper." By relying on voluntary compliance by and loyalty of its staff, the team's and senior management's perception of the area's social problems were never made public. Criticisms made at that meeting of the Police and courts (in terms of institutionalised racism) was regarded as totally unacceptable by the Committee. One committee member said: "We are not racist. We judge each case on its own merits."

Another magistrate member of the committee said that the bench usually "bent over backwards" to prevent prejudicial sentencing based on considerations of colour.

Thus the team's views of the need for economic,social and political as well as individual solutions for the area's problems, and not simply the creation of new statutory and voluntary initiatives, were rejected by the Committee. After the meeting one of the area's Probation Officers said to me: "What are we supposed to do now if our employers simply don't recognise these problems?" Essentially the difference between on the one hand the members of the Probation Sub-Committee, and earlier Senior management, and, on the other hand, the Community Probation team and other local officers centred, critically, on conflicting perspectives about the existence and causes of racism and poverty, the acknowledgement of the impact of political and economic policies on Probation clients, and therefore, Probation work. Structural explanations, as with some of the earlier Community Development Projects (Loney, 1983:56-58, 60-63) were, simply, **ulta vires.** Sources of conflict which arose from institutional or structural deficiencies and which, therefore, suggested the need for some sort of social change were not seen as legitimate statements for the Probation Service to make.

Similarly, after the Broadwater Farm disturbances in Tottenham in 1985, the Middlesex Probation Service did not consider it a part of the Probation Service's role to publicly comment on "the wider community and social issues which have been highlighted by the disturbances" (Middlesex Probation Service, 1986:6). Furthermore that Service's statement that "Probation staff have therefore remained silent on issues about which they may well have important and constructive things to say", according to the Middlesex Probation Service (1986:7), was not simply an individual Service's view of its role. Rather the stance of public silence, arguably a political position itself, was not in accord with the expected role of the Probation Service as expressed in the document Discussion Paper on the Role of the

Probation Service in the Inner Cities (1986) produced by the Central Council of Probation Committees. As Blythe and Hugman (1982:66) comment about Probation work values: "A commitment to social change is in almost complete conflict with agency priorities, whatever ideals may be discussed". However Mathieson (1982:662) has argued that the Probation Service should make social comments, although he doesn't, as such, advocate that the Probation Service should contribute to forms of social change. Elsewhere Bowe, Crawley and Morris (1987:10-12) have also pointed to the conflicting perceptions between on the one hand, Probation main grade staff and the local branch of the National Association of Probation Offiers, and, on the other hand, senior management about ways of working in a similar inner city area (Merseyside) which had experienced disorders in 1981. In various ways then, both earlier, concerning the structure and staffing and operation of the "new" team, in 1982, and in response to special situations in which the imminency of change or continuity was at stake, internal regulatory forces combined with the hegemony of the criminal justice system to create and sustain homeostatis. Finally in this chapter, having considered the various constraints on the team's interpretation of social disturbances, area conditions, and operational practices, let us consider some broader ideological considerations about "open access."

Ideological Considerations Concerning "Open Access": The Emergence of Self Help

After identifying some typologies about societal reactions to offending, the Community Probation Team's dominant operational ideologies as expressed in the unit's "open access" practices will be considered. Edwin Schur (1973) constructs three "ideal types" to cover the dominant societal reactions to delinquency problems which the establishment of the new Community Probation team represented, as well as, in its estates work as we will see, reactions to other problems.

These types can be applied to area, as well as individual reactions. Schur's three "ideal types" are individual treatment, liberal reform and radical non-intervention. The individual treatment model is based on psychological theories assuming the differentness of offenders with delinquency attributable to special personal characteristics. This approach provides for counselling and casework programmes based on psychological deficiencies. The liberal reform type regards the immediate sources of delinquency in structural or sub cultural terms, often using such theories as anomie and status frustration as a basis for advocating social reforms such as increased educational and leisure opportunities, and preventative work at the street gang and area level. Schur's third alternative, radical non-intervention, incorporates assumptions based on labelling and interactionist concepts. Here the focus point of attention switches from the individual delinquent to his interaction with social control systems and policy. Interventions are directed towards changing the criminal justice system through the use of voluntary programmes and the removal of euphemisms concerning terms such as rehabilitation and treatment. The model non-intervention approach implies a policy of increased societal accommodation of youthful activity, the underlying premise being, wherever possible, to keep offenders out of the formal court systems.

One of the crucial distinguishing characteristics of the Community Probation Team was the extent of supervisory work it engages in with 'ex' or, strictly speaking, 'non clients'. Staff distinguished office visitors not by their Probation status but rather by the nature of the social and offending problems presented. Staff statements about there being a lot of alienated people in this area was particularly significant, especially its association with sub-cultural accounts of delinquency (see, for example, Lea and Young, 1984:198-225). Staff also spoke readily and frequently about high unemployment, poor housing, racial discrimination and "class bias" concerning offendings, arrests, and sentencing practices. Whilst staff regarded explanations of delinquency in structural and sub cultural terms, their supervisory

practices, in respect of "open access", were guided by interventions which can most readily be identified as consisting of both help and, paradoxically, imposed self-help. In the wake of workload pressures the emergence of self-help and help as ways for individuals to resolve their own social problems would, it was hoped, lead to an improvement so far as offending behaviour was concerned. Schur's radical non-intervention approach was inapplicable here as is his individual treatment approach informed by psychological theories. We have already established that "open access" was predominantly problem oriented and individually located. The "here and now approach" embraced by short term self-help measures emphasised a behavioural approach rather than a psycho-dynamic approach to problem resolution. The former took the form of the acquisition of basic social skills including budgeting, the use of telephone and improving client's direct communication with other agencies. One to one casework, by which is meant the emphasis on a helping professional client relationship with special reference to "emotional and mental functioning" (Haines, 1975:61) did on occasions take place. It was reserved as already noted, "for those who really need it". At this point before examining further the constituent elements of the behavioural self help model, we require further information about the general characteristics of a "treatment" approach.

May (1971:359-370) in his discussion of control and treatment models for offenders lists four inter-related assumptions in connection with treatment. These assumptions emphasise the motivational system of delinquents, differences between delinquents and non-delinquents, delinquent behaviour as the presenting symptom of a more intractable disorder and, finally, the delinquent, ultimately, not being responsible for his actions. More recently Bottoms and McWilliams (1979:172) have commented that:

> "The treatment model, in its pure form begins with a diagnosis by a caseworker of the client's malfunctioning; then the treater decides upon the appropriate treatment with little or no advice from the client".

Whilst acknowledging, as Hardiker (1977:134) observes, that social workers may not rigidly adhere to only one ideological position, it is argued in relation to "open access" supervision that it was possible to identify the dominant form of intervention, and therefore, operational ideologies, through observations of supervisory practices and staff/client exchanges. The lack of differentiation by staff between statutory clients and others, together with the emphasis on immediate tasks and client responsibility, effectively excludes the applicability of treatment approaches, as defined by May (1971:358-370) or Bottoms and McWilliams (1979:172). It should be remembered however that staff informed me that counselling, based on a diagnostic/treatment model, did occur behind closed doors when the few opportunities existed arose.

In noting the confusion that can exist between "treatment" and "punishment" (Bean, 1976:68-71), it is more helpful to regard the self-help and helping forms of intervention as characteristic of a "normalisation process". Garland (1985:238) describes normalisation practices as:

> "... concerned not just to prevent law breaking, but also to inculcate specific norms and attitudes. By means of the personal influence of the Probation or After-care Officer, they attempt to straighten out characters and to reform the personality of their clients in accordance with the requirements of "good citizenship".

So far as "open access" was concerned normalisation took the form not only of clients being encouraged to participate in a self-improvement process through self-help and help approaches which emphasised the place of individual responsibility. Similar approaches were also identified, as we will see, in respect of the team's estate work. In both settings it is argued these were not pre-planned but arose from the high level of demands placed on agencies unable to increase or alter their service delivery to clients. Whilst the majority of the team perceived the local context as one characterised by class, racial and material struggles, calls

to individual help and voluntarism, which ignored such conflicts, implicitly supported notions of consensus in the area. As an integral part of their criticism of the medical analogy concerning treatment, Bottoms and McWilliams (1979) suggest that a "help" model replace treatment. Whilst acknowledging that the model still requires theoretical clarification and further elucidation they say (Bottoms and McWilliams, 1979:172) the following about the 'help' model:

> "The caseworker does not begin with an assumption of clients-malfunctioning; rather, he offers his unconditional help with client-defined tasks, this offer having certain definite and defined boundaries ... If the offer is accepted, this leads to a collaborative effort between work and client to define the problem requiring help, and to work out jointly a set of possible alternative strategies; ... The client is then left to make the choices for himself." (emphasis added)

The problem with this collaborative approach is that it must be limited to non-material matters if 'material help' is equated with financial help, rather than advice about wider material concerns. It is suggested that collaborative efforts at this Probation unit would have been very difficult to implement. Whilst there were elements of the "help model" in the form of shared decision making centering on telephone communications with other agencies, the dominant supervisory model was that of a self-help model. Whilst this model triggers a quite different set of assumptions, practices and ideologies from either help or imposed treatment, importantly it also produced self imposed limitations, reinforcing the client's existing situation. Self-help was applied to those individuals the majority of whom staff regarded as sufficiently capable of "sorting their own problems out". This contrasts with a help model which was reserved at the office for those who were either demanding on staff, psychiatrically ill or generally regarded as incapable. Casework, or "real social work" as it was described to me, required a joint commitment to and interest in concerns about emotional functioning. The concept of self-help appears largely absent from Probation literature but the term can be traced back to the mid-19th century.

The self-help philosophy "heaven helps those who help themselves" was expounded, amongst others, by Samuel Smiles (1859) in the mid-nineteenth century. Self-help was one of the four great tenets reportedly reflective of a certain Victorian social philosophy, the others being work, thrift and respectability. However as Fraser (1973:96) has observed of Victorian self-help:

> "Self help was the middle class justification for the status quo which in the last resort was not static. Men could climb the social ladder. It requires only a small logical extension to enlarge the proposition that universal opportunities existed into a social theory in which men found their due place in society in proportion to their talents."

The Victorian notions of self-help and laissez-faire were somewhat idealistic and emerged during a period which heralded the introduction and ascent of the central administrative state. More recently the renewed interest in self help has emerged from the decreasing role of the central administrative state. The current government has spoken of the virtues of "a return to Victorian values" which is regarded as encouraging a reduced role for the welfare state, the "Nanny state" as it has been called. At a time of increasing economic and social pressures and decreased welfare and public services, the Community Probation Unit is not alone in embracing self-help ideals.

The Barclay Report (1982) recommends that future normative social work practice should identify and encourage the development of "caring networks in the community". However the growth of self care groups and the "self help movement" cannot be explained simply by the publication of this report. For at least the last ten to fifteen years there has been something akin to an "explosion" of self help groups. Thus we have self-help groups for alcoholics and gamblers, groups of people with different sorts of physical and mental handicaps, for sufferers of life threatening diseases, for widows, parents of subnormal children and so on. The distinction between self-help and professional help, in the

social care field, is illustrated albeit somewhat idealistically in the following excerpt from one of the few British books (Robinson, 1979:119) in this field:

> "Self help helping ... takes place in the context of friendship. There is no distinction between the treater and treated. All have problems. All are helpers. The distinctions between helping and being helped, problem solvers and problem sufferers, problem solvers and friends are lost. Self help helping merges into the everyday life of the self help group members. Self help, in fact, becomes a way of life."

This somewhat idealised and life long version of self-help offers no explanations concerning the increases in self-help. An American study however suggests that the group of people with low incomes, aged and minorities, are both underserved by formal agencies but also have a disproportionate incidence of problems (Warren, 1981:9). The author also suggests that such people are both voluntarily turning to but also being forced to rely on their own resources in order to survive, cope with and resolve their personal problems.

The Probation self-help approach identified here differs from the above self-help ideas in three important respects. First, the entry to self help is not through peers and equals ("fellow sufferers") but through a formal agency. Second, it is concerned with individual and not group self help. Third, for those on statutory court orders, formal sanctions regarding compliance were available to be used as and when necessary. The community team's self-help ideology has not arisen spontaneously but rather forced onto office users both as an immediate response to increase "consumer" demand and decreased availability of resources, as a practice exigency (Hardiker, 1977:133). The individual self-help model in operation at the probation office differs then from the self-help group models above as a result of the client group, the agency functions and the agency responsibilties. The specific characteristics of Probation self-help, as demonstrated in the community team, were first and paradoxically its directional nature, second its individualised approach, third its emphasis on client's self

determination, fourth its integral professional components and mandate, and last the inequitable nature of the relationship and contract between the two parties. Overall the professional (Halmos, 1970:13-62) and situation "case approach" (Mills, 1943:535) acted as contextual parameters.

Few if any opportunities existed for clients either in the group room or receiving "open access" supervision to regard themselves other than segregated individuals expressing an unburdening of their problems on professionals, rather than other self-help experiences which emphasise the collective "sharing" of problems with peers. In the self-help model, although the client was not regarded as sick or ill (viz à viz Probation treatment) he was nevertheless, perceived as responsible for, and capable to some extent, of resolving the problems which initially brought him to the attention of the Probation Service. Adaptation and conformity to existing social systems, processes and structures were both required and expected through individual efforts, persistence and self discipline. Any assistance offered (real or imaginary) was expected to engineer change in the client and offer energy to propel physical and mental activity, in the form of self-help, for a more satisfying and healthier living.

Crucially the overall affect and function of the self-help approach was that it reinforced and legitimised minimalist intervention policies through the emphasis on private effort alone rather than supporting a collaborative approach between public and individual effort. Self-help here helped to isolate and contain the problems, worries and anxieties of many individuals who experienced low, sometimes nil incomes, poor housing, and public services under pressure. It also helped to create what Vass (1979:3), in respect of community work in Britain, calls convenient "Robinson Crusoes" seeking to find their own solutions to problems without regard to moral, political, economic and social constraints and inequalities. As Warren (1981:9) has also noted those groups with low income who are already underserved by formal agencies are being forced, and not choosing, to become increasingly reliant on their own resources to survive. At

the Community team's premises the reinforcement of the status quo, through class and status differentials was a daily occurence. Ironically the projected proactive goals of the team, through greater accessibility, served in practice to reinforce reactive responses. In its daily supervisory practices the dominant emphases were on the person, and not the issue, the situation and not the context, individual action and not the structure guided by pragmatic workload management strategies, as well as, albeit to a lesser extent, perceptions of professionalism and organisational constraints.

CHAPTER TEN

Inter-agency Probation Work on Two Housing Estates: The Search for Consensus

Whilst the last chapter analysed Community Probation Work with offenders, and with others inside the Community Probation Team's Office, this chapter examines work done outside the office setting, on two estates. It concentrates on the work done by two of the Community Team's Probation Officers working within Inter-agency groups on two separate estates between May 1985 and February 1986 on the Moorlands Estate (referred to as Estate M), and between March and November 1985 on the Stockwell Park Estate (Estate S). None of the other team members were engaged in estate-based work. Both estate Inter-agency groups, broadly speaking, were initially concerned with social measures designed to reduce crime. It is argued, however, that these 'generalised interests' became subsumed and blurred by definitional and practical difficulties prompting the emergence on non-crime specific forms of community work. It is argued here that whilst a new administrative body, the Community/Police Consultative Group for Lambeth, created in Brixton as a direct result of the 1981 disturbances provided the opportunity, opening and legitimacy for Probation intervention, subsequent developments, negotiations and difficulties resulted in the two Probation Officers, and others, becoming embroiled in problems other than those originally anticipated. Furthermore, as with the team's Community Probation work based at the office, on both estates a range of internal pressures and practical consideration, forced those involved, including the Probation Service to retreat, re-examine and adapt their initial objectives.

The work on both estates is examined together, although considerably more attention is given to the work on Estate M because of its more substantial overall nature. The analysis that follows centres on an account of the location,

characteristics, and perceptions of both estates, the origin of the two Inter-agency groups, their decision making processes and perspectives on social problems, and the role played by the Probation Service. A detailed examination is not made of individual agency initiatives on the two estates except where these were originally planned within the Inter agency group setting.

Overall the team's estate work is presented within the wider context of the responses by a newly created Probation Team to the social problem of the 1981 Brixton disturbances. The analysis draws on Fuller and Myers (1941) formulation of social problem with its "natural" and distinguishing phases or stages of problem awareness, policy determination and policy reform, as a conceptual and heuristic device. Central to their argument is the claim that social problems exhibit "a temporal cause of development in which different phases or stages may be distinguished" (Fuller and Myers, 1941: 321). The data presented here suggests that their notion of distinguishing stages although useful gives insufficient consideration to the significance of different agency perceptions about the nature of the social problems and their resolution or amelioration.

Problem Awareness: The creation of a new administrative structure in the borough

Both estates S and M were initially selected for interagency not single agency intervention at separate meetings of the Community Police Consultative Group for Lambeth. This organisation was set up after the 1981 Brixton disturbances and prior to Lord Scarman's recommendations (HMSO, 1981:5.69), that "a statutory framework be developed to require consultation between the Metropolitan Police and the Comunity at Borough or Police District level". The Borough of Lambeth's consultative machinery was established in November 1982 by the Home Office prior to statutory provisions being made in the 1984 Police and Criminal Evidence Act. Although the group provided, and continues to

provide, an opportunity for local grievances about local crime and policing matters to be voiced, its role is limited to a consultative one. It provides a formal mechanism for represented groups, the public (through press reports), and officials to make people aware of certain local problems and issues. Fuller and Myers (1941: 322) write the following about the awareness stage or phase of the natural history of a social problem:

> "The genesis of every social problem lies in the awakening of people in a given locality to a realization that certain cherished values are threatened by conditions which have become acute ... Before a social problem can be identified, there must be awareness on the part of people who express their concern in some communicable or observable form."

Let us first examine how these two estates, and not others, were chosen by the local Probation Service. At consultative meetings there was, however, not only an awareness that certain problems existed on these two estates but, concurrently, suggestions made about what could or should be done. There seemed to be an overlap between two of Fuller and Myers' (1941, 322-324) distinguishable phases, namely problem awareness ("something ought to be done") and policy determination ("this and that should be done"). The consultative group co-ordinated and recommended certain initiatives but when problems were raised it did not have the power to implement and resource estate initiatives involving inter-agency groups.

It had no statutory powers for example concerning the levels and the deployment of local police, or indeed local services, such as the Probation Service, Social Services, and Eduaction Authorities. It is financed by the Home Office for two full time administrative staff. It has no other financial resources As a consequence of the establishment by the Home Office of this group the local authority introduced a policy of very limited cooperation with the local police, and did not recognise the authority of this newly formed consultative group (Lambeth, 1985). Instead it established its own Police Support Unit, and eventually made council property

unavailable for the Community Police consultative meetings. The relationship between, on the one hand, the local police who pursued "consultation" through the consultative meetings, and on the other hand, the local authority who, broadly speaking, pursued police "accountability" to the local authority, through its Support Unit was, formally, one of tension. This tension between the local authority and the police was not a new phenomena and in respect of the use of the Special Patrol Group, dated back to the mid 1970's (Lambeth, 1981).

It was then at meetings of this consultative group in 1984, prior to the start of the field work, that concerns about Estate M and Estate S, eventually leading to the formation of two separate Inter-agency groups, were voiced. Those meetings, the only ones which enabled the Probation Service to become involved in local "problem solving", raised problems about two particular housing estates, Estates S and M. Prior to these meetings the bulk of the Community Probation Team members involvement in the area, not in the office, had been with two aforementioned black voluntary agencies established through Inner City Partnership Funding from the Department of the Environment and the local authority. Figure 2 provides an outline of the origin, focus and development of the Community Probation Teams community and crime prevention work on Estates M and S between 1983-1986, illustrating, amongst other things, the changing nature of the problems addressed.

Figure 2

An Outline of the Origin, Focus and Development of the Community Probation Team's Community and Crime Prevention Work on Two Housing Estates: 1981-1986

Stages of probation involvement	Main issues addressed	Social problems: broad stages of development	Local Probation and policy developments
No involvement	Area disturbances (1981)	Awareness/ policy determination	Scarman Report (HMSO, 1981)
Entry	Absence of visible Probation presence in the area	Policy determination/reform	Internal Probation Service Review/ Creation of new Community Probation Team in Brixton (1982)
No involvement	Police consultation/crime reduction	Policy determination	Creation of Lambeth Community/Police Consultative Group (C/P/C/G/L) by Home Office (1982)
No involvement	Estate crime/gangs S (1984)	Awareness	Concerns expressed at C/P/C/G/L about Estate
Entry	Estate crime/gangs	Policy determination	Creation of Inter-agency group on Estate S (which Probation then joins) (1984)
No involvement	Crime/ policing	Awareness M (1984)	Concerns expressed at C/P/G/C/L about Estate
No involvement	General Crime Prevention	Policy determination	C/P/C/G/L forms Crime Prevention Working Party (1984)
No involvement	Crime, policing, housing	Policy determination	C/P/C/G/L commissions report on Estate M (1984)
Entry	Crime, policing, housing, social facilities	Policy determination	C/P/C/G/L produces its own report about Estate M (Probation Officer helps to produce it) (1984)

Figure 2 (contd)

Stages of probation involvement	Main issues addressed	Social problems: broad stages of development	Local Probation and policy developments
No involvement	Crime, policing, housing, social facilities	Reform	C/P/C/G/L unable to secure support/ resources for its Estate M recommendations (1985)
Involvement	Various - social facilities, policing, crime prevention	Awareness	Estate M's Probation Officer establishes Inter-agency group on the estate (1985)
Involvement	Various - improved social facilities, increased service delivery, crime prevention	Policy determination	Estate M's Inter-agency group draws up proposals for action
Withdrawal	Definitional disagreements/lack of resources	Policy determination	Probation Officer on Estate M formally suspends Inter-agency Group (1985)
Involvement	Small scale fundraising & social events	Reform	Probation Officer helps to create new small scale self-help project around Estate M (1986)
Withdrawal	Small scale social events/self-help	Reform	Estate M Probation Officer withdraws from estate work (1986)
Involvement	Estate youth	Reform	Estate S Inter-agency Group draws up proposals for action (1985)
Involvement	Estate youth/ problems	Policy determination/ awareness	Estate S Inter-agency Group unable to implement its youth proposals/begins further discussions (1985)

Figure 2 (contd)

Stages of probation involvement	Main issues addressed	Social problems: broad stages of development	Local Probation and policy developments
Withdrawal	Mixed	Awareness	Estate S Probation Officer withdraws from Inter-agency Group as Group continues discussions (1986)

At the meetings of 7 July and 17 July 1984, concern was voiced by a member of Estates S's residents association (not the Tenants Association) about the "presence of groups" on estate S. The police replied that: "uniformed police could act in a preventive role while targetting and surveillance could be carried on to deal with more active criminals," (Community Police Consultative Group for Lambeth, 1984a: 76/1984). Further meetings of 4th September and 18th September 1984 (Community Police Consultative Group for Lambeth, 1984b/c : 85/1984 and 91/1984) provided a different perspective on Estate S's problems in that a member of an organisation called the Defence Organisation stated that it would "solve the problem itself" if the police did not act to deal with the gangs. The heated exchanges and threats voiced in that meeting were reported in the London Standard, (10 September 1984) and the local press under the headline "'Mob Rule' warning" (South London Press, 7 September 1984). At the meeting of 18 September 1984 it was suggested that adult estate leaders should be identified to work more closely with young people and that an Interagency group should be established as soon as possible.

So far as Estate M was concerned the community Probation Team's much more substantial involvement again originated from concerns expressed at meetings of the newly created Community Police Consultative Group for Lambeth. At a Consultative Group meeting on 21st February 1984 (Community Police Consultative Group for Lambeth, 1984d: CP18) concerns were first expressed, by a member of the Lambeth Federation of Tenants, about levels of crime, and 'poor' police responses on Estate M. At the borough Consultative Group's meetings of 21st February and 20th March 1984, the group's Chairperson explained that a questionnaire survey of Estate M intended to "help reduce the problem of fear and the incidents of crime" would be carried out, and that the Home Office would be requested to fund it (approximate cost £1,200). Originally another Lambeth estate, also categorised as one having a potential for public disorder, (London Weekend Television, 11th July, 1986) had been chosen. However the Tenants Association on that estate had refused to grant

permission for a crime prevention survey because the police were already heavily involved in running that estate's youth club. Once the survey's questionnaire's were returned, the Probation Officer whose patch included Estate M asked the consultative committee to invite him onto the committee's Crime Prevention Sub-group. Subsequently this Probation Officer helped to write the final report The Moorlands Estate Report of the 1984 Enquiry (Community Police Consultative Group for Lambeth, 1984). This report was based on the report Moorlands Council Housing Estate Findings of the 1984 Survey (MacDonald, 1984) financed by the Home Office. More significantly he played a major developmental role in unsuccessfully attempting to implement with no resources the former reports' recommendations, and more substantially, working unsociable hours with other neighbourhood measures.

For both Estates S and M then different problems, but predominantly those about crime and young people, had been raised by certain interest groups at the borough's Consultative Meetings. The Probation Officers already covering Estate S and M, then but without previously having any clear sense of direction, secured and utilised official opportunities to fulfil their own, and the Probation Service's interests in greater community involvement. These were, as we shall see, mediated by a complexity of practical and professional interests. Before examining the Probation Officers' subsequent involvement on the two estates it is first necessary to gain some understanding of the estates' characteristics and settings, as well as perceptions of their problems. This data provides a necessary situational context for, as well as providing an indication of, points of reference available to both estates' Interagency groups.

Characteristics and Perceptions of Estates M and S: A Question of Problem Definition

These estates, both located in central Brixton will henceforth be referred to respectively as Estate M and Estate S. According to the 1981 census Estate M comprised 382

households and Estate S, 928 households. They are both within a five minute walk both of Brixton's main shopping area and therefore, the Community Probation Team's Office. Estate M, consists of three Enumeration Districts and forms a small part of the Herne Hill electoral ward Estate S consists of five Enumeration Districts and forms the majority of Ferndale electoral Ward. These wards constitute two of the five central Brixton wards containing, as we saw earlier, the more acute features of social deprivation in Lambeth. Indeed by extracting census material which exactly matches these two estates the pattern of "deprivation convergence" identified earlier can be further extended, beginning with Inner London, then the borough of Lambeth, the Community Probation area, and here, Estates M and S. Selected characteristics of these two estates are compared here with other areas and presented as Table 16.

Table 16

Selected Social Characteristics of Estates M and S, in comparison with the Community Probation Team's Area, the Borough of Lambeth and Inner London, as at 1981

ected ial racteristics	Estate M	Estate S	Community Probation Team area	Lambeth	Inner London
ulation	1130 (Note 1)	2854	12,875	244,143	2425,630
Figures expressed as a percentage of each area's total population					
ulation aged 5 (male and ale)	26%	26%	18.8%	13.8%	13.1%
ulation aged 24 (male and ale)	20%	19%	19%	17.7%	16.7%
vate House- ds with three more dependent ldren.	11%	17%	10%	6.8%	6.2%
nomically ive in the 24 age group le and female)	72%	65%	69%	73.3%	74.5%
residents n in common- lth or Paki- n	22%	25%	24%	23%	18.8%
seholds with car	74%	77%	71%	59%	58%
ulation living rented (local hority) accomm- tion	97%	96%	62%	43%	43%
e parent ilies	43%	39%	22%	16%	13%
ial Class upings (note 2)					
ss I	0%	1.7%	1.2%	4.7%	4%
ss II	7%	16%	13%	19.5%	10%
ss III n manual)	18%	16.5%	14%	17.3%	11%
ss III nual)	38%	36%	29%	27%	20%
ss IV	15%	13%	17.4%	17%	13%
ss V	20%	17%	15.6%	8.8%	5.8%

ources 1981 Census (Government Statistical Office, 1982; Office of Population Censuses and Surveys, 1985); Key Facts Comparative Statistics (Lambeth, 1984)

Note 1 By 1981 Estate M was not completed. When it was completed in 1983 the number of households had increased from 382 to 518. Figures for the current population of Estates M are unavailable.

Note 2 Information regarding class groupings is based on the Registar General's standard social classification (See Table 6).

As can be seen from Table 16 overall and in comparison with the other areas each estate contains a concentration of residents born in the New Commonwealth and Pakistan, younger groups (in the 0-15, 16-24 age groups). Lone parent families, economically inactive young people (in the 16-24 age group), non car owners, and, generally, people in the lower three social class groupings. All these characteristics are present, overall, in the borough of Lambeth, a point noted by the Department of Environment (1983) in its assessment of social deprivation in England. Certain areas in Lambeth, including Estates M and S and the central area of Brixton itself (see earlier Table 5), represent the more acute aspects of social deprivation, in comparison with the rest of the borough, or with Inner London, or indeed at the national level. The extent and sheer diversity of these deprivation indicators, together with other factors including a series of major local conflicts and financial crises before, throughout and after the research period indicate the complexities and difficulties facing any agency, including the Probation Service, of trying to address some of the area's social problems.

Characteristics of Estate M

The construction of Estate M began in 1971 in anticipation of

the London motorway box plan. The abandonment of the motorway box plan has left the estate with medium rise high density blocks immediately adjacent to a higher rise block Southwick House known locally as the 'Barrier Block' and described in one report as: "thought by some to be an extension to Brixton prison" (Community Police Consultative Group, 1984:2). This comment refers to the block's high walls of dense grey concrete, broken only by one row of tiny windows and near to the roof. It resembles those easily defendable observation spaces found in Norman castles. On the east side it is bordered by a "respectable" Guiness Trust Estate. The bulk of Estate M however, consists of five hundred medium rise 3 and 4 bedroomed flats. The estate has been officially described, (Community Police Consultative Group 1984:2) somewhat optimistically, as follows:

> "The construction and design criteria led to reflect a post high-rise insight and concepts traditionally associated with village communities or, in a more contemporary sense, that of street life. Indeed, casual observation of the estate gives the impression that some significance was placed upon ideas of recreating neighbourly areas. Yet, the constraints of land space and finance inhibited the full realisation of the architectural ideal."

The end result is a relatively small estate which took thirteen years to build, whose design was compromised by financial considerations and a majority of whose residents, according to a major survey, to be detailed, are dissatisfied with its construction, state of disrepair, and facilities. Its location, as much as its design, is critical to an understanding of its perception as a "problem estate" by others, and perhaps by residents themselves.

It is adjacent to what in 1981 and for several years afterwards was known locally as the "front line" i.e. Railton Road. This road not only formed the "epicentre" of the 1981 Brixton disturbances but is regularly used by groups of black youngsters as a social gathering place, and reputedly, a base for illicit drug dealing. As we shall shortly see there is evidence to support the claim that Estate M as with Estate S

have been publically labelled as "problem estates". The temporary portacabin (for six years!) which houses the Afro-Caribbean Cultural Centre, and the First Generation Organisation building (which took three years to build), established as advice and recreational centres for "front line" black youngsters after the 1981 disturbances and involving two Community Probation Team members, as management representatives, (as we have seen) are also located on this road.

There did not appear to be a problem regarding sports and leisure facilities for young people living on the estate in terms of existing provisions. Estate M is within a five minute walk, probably less, of two leisure facilities. the substantial five storey multi-million pound Brixton Recreation Centre (which took twelve years to complete after running into financial difficulties) provides a wide range of sports facilities. It has reduced charges for those people, including some youngsters of course, on supplementary benefit. A second somewhat run-down leisure/sports facility located on the North-East perimeter of Estate M was built to attract local young people. An informal (i.e. unregistered) youth club operates out of two council flats on the estate itself and Railton Road has its own youth and community centre, as well as three advice centres within ten doors of each other.

There was a problem however about the existence, or otherwise of Estate M's Tenants Association. Throughout the research period there was no single Tenants Association representing Estate M., rather claims to by two disunited groups to be the single "voice of the estate". The significance of this absence was that the Estate M Inter-agency group had no direct channel of communication with the estates elected members. Estate M's Tenants Hall, the only communal facility on the estate for all age groups, always seemed in a poor state of repair. In view of completing claims for legitimacy this hall was often kept locked and appeared hardly ever used by the Tenants Association or indeed other estate groups. The junior school (where most of the Estate M Inter-agency

meetings were held), a shop and a local housing office complete the list of estate facilities. Estate M's housing office sited on the Estates's perimeter, had limited functions. It did not manage estate allocations (this was done by the district office) but offered tenants advice, collected rents and received requests for repairs. In the light of an armed robbery at the estate housing office in 1985 when a council employee was shot, the office introduced an entryphone system and large reinforced glass partitions at the reception desk. When walking around Estate M during the day and the evenings to attend the Inter-agency meetings there was a noticeable lack of public activity and interaction other than those involving men repairing old cars and small groups of youngsters, black and white gathered on corners. In the early evenings when the junior school had closed and the Inter-agency meetings had finished this compact densely populated estate appeared quiet, with public areas almost deserted and commercial facilities on the estate virtually nonexistent.

Characteristics of Estate S

Estate S, as already indicated is a much larger housing estate than Estate M, and again is situated in central Brixton. Completed in the mid 1970's it is an amalgam of three different housing blocks consists on 996 housing units, and can be characterised by its complex of roads, walk ways and gangways linking the various mid-rise dwellings. Two of the blocks were previously managed by the Greater London Council (until 1974) and used to rehouse homeless people from across the whole of the Greater London area. The third block, Stockwell Park, was used between 1974-1977 to house families, mainly black families, who were on Lambeth's waiting list at that time. The more established blocks have their own Residents Association, the newer block, a Tenants Association. The Estate's poorly lit pathways, lack of sign posts and complexity of connecting path ways to unnamed blocks and destinies restricts the opportunity for estate familiarity. The minority of tenants that own cars appears

to prefer to park them on the internal roads of the estate rather than use the purpose built garages under the blocks. Whether this was due to the council's practice of only letting garages to those without rent arrears, or because of stated concerns about car vandalism and theft, or for other reasons, the net result is that a substantial number of garages remain locked, some burnt out, most unavailable.

The estate's housing allocations, once done by Estate S's own housing office, were now done centrally through the Clapham district housing office. According to the council's housing representative at one of the estate's Inter-agency meetings, and the Tenant's Association, the Clapham office's high housing caseloads and public expenditure cutbacks have put "severe pressures" on the management and maintenances of the estate's housing stock. Indeed much of the estate is in disrepair and boarded up. The estate's Tenants Hall was used for all the Inter-agency meetings, as well as for Tenants Association meetings. The estate has a Youth and Community Centre which, like the nearby Afro-Caribbean Cultural Centre and the First Generation Organisation, was set up within the "At Risk Adolescents" section of the Inner City Partnership Scheme (Lambeth, 1983a) after the 1981 Brixton disturbances. The centre is short staffed, its opening hours erratic, and its range of music, recreational and sports facilities appeared very underused. As we shall see the "youth problem" was primarily defined by the Estate's Interagency group in terms of the problem of underuse by estate youngsters of this local facility. A previous detached youth project based on the estate was withdrawn in 1984 due to internal disagreements. Plans for an "education surgery" for truants run by the Educational Welfare Service have not materialised to date. There was then no shortage of recreational facilities for estate youngsters prepared to make a five minute walk from the estate. In addition to the aforementioned Brixton Recreation Centre, there are two sports centres, the Ferndale and Flaxman Sports Centres on the borders of the estate.

Formally then both estates can be characterised by their

centralised location, their high density of population, high proportion of poor adult (families and lone residents) and younger residents, and, overall, a high proportion of residents born in the New Commonwealth and Pakistan. According to these criteria a majority of residents on both estates, as eventual clients for the two Inter-agency groups might be regarded as victims, of their locality, economic circumstances, housing policies (see, for example, Rex and Moore,1974) and for black groups, according to Lord Scarman, amongst many others, (for example; Hiro, 1973; Dummett, 1973; Benyon, 1984) of racial discrimination. A substantial number were also recipients of state aid and intervention. Thus not only Brixton as a whole is disproportionately composed of deprived sections of the overall population (HMSO, 1981: paragraph 2.13) but these features were exaggerated both for ethnic groups generally and on these two estates in particular. These estates are what Wilson (1963) in respect of two estates in Bristol described as "difficult housing estates". Of ethnic minorities and housing, generally Lord Scarman wrote (HMSO, 1981:2.35):

> "overall they suffer from the same deprivation as the 'host community' (i.e. the white population), but much more acutely. Their lives are led largely in the poorer and more deprived areas of our great cities. Unemployment and poor housing bear upon them very heavily"

Of Estate S in particular he wrote (HMSO, 1981:2.8):

> "My visit to Stockwell Park confirmed that in spite of an enlightened neighbourhood management approach by the Coucil, the dreams of modern architect and planners do not necessarily provide any more of a setting for social harmony than do the run down Victorian terraces in Railton and Mayall Roads. On the contrary, they give rise to problems which terraced houses avoid."

It is to the perception of Estates S and M as "problem estates", in terms of disorder and not deprivation to which attention is now directed, prior to an examination of the role of the Community Probation Team representatives at the Inter-agency meetings on both estates.

Estates M and S: The Identification of Problem Areas

Both estates were regarded, to varying extents, as areas representing conflict, disorder and tensions by the local and Metropolitan Police, some of the local press, some residents and, as we shall see later, the community police consultative group for Lambeth formed as one local response (Home office initiated) to the 1981 Brixton disturbances. According, for example, to the Brixton Police Strategy Plan for 1984, both estate areas were ones "which present particular difficulties for police in maintaining public tranquility" (Speed, 1984: 125). Additionally this report, and others, endorsed neighbourhood and community policing on both estates as part of the local and Metropolitan Police's crime prevention strategy. Furthermore The local police's newly created "sector working parties", encouraged by the police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 to make public consultations, divided Lambeth into geographical areas, including the area adjacent to Estate M as well as Estate M itself (C Sector) Inter-agency co-operation, crime prevention initiatives by the police and public were to be encouraged in this area (Beckett, 1985). So far as the Metropolitan Polices Public Order Branch A8(1) at Scotland Yard was concerned (reproduced in written documents made available to me and reported on London Weekend Television, 11 July 1986) both estates, amongst several others in London, posed particular problems in the form of having a potential for public disorder. This "potential" existed if the following factors were confirmed:

> "A high density of population.
> A high ethnic mix of population.
> Environmental factors - design of flats with multiplicity of walkways, interconnecting alleys, and a lack of facilities.
> Disturbances between gangs commonplace.
> Hostility towards police, as manifested by incidents of complaints, difficulty in making arrests.
> A high visibility i.e. attracts media attention or political activists.
> A high incidence of street crimes in the surrounding area but not necessarily within the location itself."

According to these criteria the police designated Estate S as a 'medium risk' area, and Estate M as a 'high risk' area, in terms of a potential for public disorder. The above "factors" are not based simply on existing criminal activities, but on a loose combination of demographic data, police perceptions and public (i.e. media) reactions, all presented in a neo-scientific, possibly self-reinforcing framework, as predictive deviancy factors. It also suggests that the emergence of these problem estates were associated with a series of interrelated internal and external social processes (Herbert, 1983; Gill, 1977).

So far is the local press was concerned Estate S was also a problem estate where "frightened families" needed to "protect themselves from roaming gangs of youths" (London Standard, 10 November 1984), an estate "on the verge of anarchy" (South London Press, 7 September 1984), an estate where a "whites only" tenants group exacerbated "existing tensions on the estate" (City Limits, 7-13 December 1984). According to the Community Probation Team's Probation Officer who worked on the estated it offered little hope for 'her' clients:

> "Over the two years that I have worked on the estate my clients and their families have impressed me as being, by turns, fearful, angry, resigned, frustrated, depressed, apathetic and all desperate to leave the estate."

These perceptions and frustrations in part both prompted and foreclosed this Probations Officer's involvement with Estate S's Inter-agency group after several months involvement.

In addition to Estate M receiving the attention of both the local and Metropolitan Police, as described above, it too had received the attention, on occasions of the local press. The South London Press (18 December 1984) reporting on a survey carried out by the community Police Consultative Grup for Lambeth (1984) had the headline 'Fear that puts tenants "under siege". Here, fear was referring to fear of crime, as reported in the survey. The mass media's role in reporting the 1981 disturbances and subsequent events has been analysed

by, amongst others, Murdoch (1984, 73-95). He has argued that many of the media's images distorted events in Brixton and elsewhere. By presenting headlines such as "Prisoners behind the net curtains" (Daily Mail, 5 March 1982) - a dramatic account of a widow being robbed on Estate S, "Police rout Brixton mob" (Daily Mail, 2 November 1985) - a description of police operation in Railton Road, adjacent to estate M, and "Club set up after riots was a narcotics warehouse" (Daily Mail, 26 July 1986) - an account of how up to 1,000 police officers, some armed, (The Guardian, 26 July 1986) raided the Afro-Caribbean Cultural Centre in Railton Road, it appeared that parts of the mass media constructed their own definitions of social problems. According to Cohen (1980:3) the media often exaggerates criminal acts legitimises additional necessary measures for controlling them. From these and other local press stories about Lambeth borough, about Brixton, and about Estates M and S in particular,[15] a public picture was constructed of a predominantly deviant area, in crisis, even perhaps out of control in respect of the reporting of the 1981 and 1985 disturbances. Information presented earlier, however, argued that the two estates or, rather the residents on the estates, could also be generally regarded as suffering acute acute relative social deprivation, and not executants of deviant acts. It remains a prime task here to understand the terms in which the Probation Service and other agencies, initially became involved via the borough's Consultative Group, perceived the nature of the estate's social problems, the measures attempted, and the assumptions made.

There was then an awareness, external to but associated with the Consultative Group, of these two estates in the area. The post-awareness phases, so far as Probation involvement was concerned, can broadly be divided into what Fuller and Myers (1941:324-326) call a policy "this and that ought to be done" determination phase, and a "this and that are being done" reform phase. As we still see in practice, these two phases overlapped and there was a lack of understanding at least initially, about what was expected of the two Probation Officers on Estates M and S.

Policy Determination: The Search for Solutions

The suggestion on 18th September 1984 at the borough's Consultative Group that an Inter-agency group should be established on Estate S as soon as possible was taken up by the 18th December of that year.

Membership of the Estate S Inter-agency meetings was decided upon by Estate S's Tenants Association who, in turn, vetted all applicants in terms of their contribution to the "well being" of estate residents, as defined by the Tenants Association. This resulted, for example, in the borough's Police Support Unit being excluded from these meetings because, according to the chairperson of these meetings "their anti-racist policies make a lot of people very angry", and because the Tenants Association agreed to inviting the police (Both groups, publically at least, were not meeting). The Probation Service was also not one of the original agencies invited to these Inter-agency meetings. Probation involvement resulted form a chance meeting between Estate S's Probation Officer and one of the Estate's home beat police officers following a lengthy period when the Probation Officer had been searching for ways to "gain entry" to Estate S, a major part of her patch. Previously she had attempted to get involved with a Family Support Service, a Black Women's Centre and a Youth Club. In interview the Probation Officer told me:

> "During a period of six months I had been walking around the estate hoping to find something. I knew we were all supposed to be doing something on each of our patches. When I returned to ask my Senior "what am I supposed to be doing?" I didn't receive an answers. I had already approached several local organisations but received no response. There was, I think some distrust about why the Probation Service should be interested in a local group. Also what was I offering? I did not know myself and neither did my Senior. I had wanted to work with youngsters on the estate, but that did not work. Instead I joined a network of workers who met at monthly meetings."

The Estate S Probation Officer considered that her stated interest in starting a drop in-club for estate youngsters, and with 'non-reported offences' such as wife battering and neighbourhood disputes helped her to be accepted by and acceptable to the Tenants Association, who chaired the Inter-agency meetings. The subsequent involvement, by this Probation Officer at Estate S's Inter-agency meetings accounts for all the community work done by that officer in her patch. Having been rejected by smaller local commmunity groups and been unclear, in any case, about the role of the Probation Service in the locality, this Probation Officer's 'community' became, as we shall see, a network of other professional workers. This "professional community" of interests, subsequently met on a monthly lunchtime basis in the Tenants Hall on Estate S.

As with the Probation Officer on Estate S the Probation Officer working on Estate M felt a certain agency expectation that greater community involvement was required. This expectation was also officially confirmed in written documents, (Perry, undated; Williams, undated) and in interview the Probation Officer working on Estate M told me:

> "The Moorlands Estate is in a mess. There's either a seige mentality with people locking themselves in at night, or there's a preditary mentality with people fighting and attacking others for survival. A lot of my work comes from this estate ... Although I'm expected to do something, that is clear, it is almost impossible to know where to start. The first priority is to get all the agencies together who work on the estate and discuss things."

The Senior Probation Officer endorsed team members involvement in the community but was unclear about its purpose and the Probation Service's role. He told me in interview:

> "We are expected by management to become more involved in the community. It is not clearly defined by left to the team to sort out. We are asked, by Scarman, to work more with statutory and voluntary agencies in the area and link up with the ILPS document about Probation work in a multi-racial society .... The patch system allows

> for greater autonomy and gives Probation Officers extra status in their areas. We are using our traditional negotiating and mediating skills to act as brokers between different agencies helping the police to be more understanding, groups to be more tolerant of offenders and Tenants Associations to be understanding of professionals."

After asking the Probation Officer working on Estate M what guidance for this community work he received from higher management he told me that apart from a general expectation after the riots that "we should all be doing something," he wasn't clear. In the two years he had been in post he had only seen his area Assistant Chief on one occasion, and then that was to confirm his appointment, and not to discuss his "community work". Additionally he was unaware that the training department had put on any special courses for such work: "Indeed the Training Department has asked us to help them develop a course!" This emphasised not only the absence of clear management policies and training support systems, but also the pioneering nature of the work. In respect of discussions about "what ought to be done" on Estate M, the Consultative Group played a direct role, by commissioning an independent report (Macdonald, 1984), funded by the Home Office. This report formed the basis for the Consultative Group's own Report (Community/Police Consultative Group for Lambeth, 1984). Both contained problem definitions and proposals about "What ought to be done". The "independent" report (Macdonald, 1984), based on 291 household interviews (total households 518) indicated considerable disatisfaction by residents about the survey's our main subject areas namely, housing, crime policing, and resource provisions for various age groups.[16]

In sum the report was a catalogue of complaints about the lack of proper servicing and resourcing of the estate. The report's final section (Macdonald, 1984: 29-32) summarised the points and suggestions made by resident respondents, but did not make any separate specific or explicit recommendations. By contrast the Consultative Group's document The Moorlands Estate Report of the 1984 Inquiry (Community Police Consultative Group for Lambeth, 1984)

produced in November 1984 two months after the independent survey made a number of recommendations about the problems on Estate M. This report was produced by members of the Consultative Group's Crime Prevention Working Party.

This working party of 12 people comprised, with one exception, professional workers from various statutory and voluntary agencies only four of whom worked in Estate M. This lack of involvement between professional workers with estate residents remained a central feature of subsequent community planning. It also indicated the "consumer" conception of the clientele (estate residents) and the directive/sponsor-based nature of subsequent developments. The Crime Prevention Working Party's Report (Community Police Consultative Group, 1984) gave a higher priority to matters of cooperation between estate residents and the police about the "crime problem" than the independent survey. The thrust of the consultative groups report was that more material resources, greater neighbourliness, improved physical security, and the creation of defensible spaces would reduce the degree of estate 'social disorganisation' and, therefore crime. The report's eighteen recommendations (see Appendix J) to the Tenants and Tenants Association, (4 recommendations), the police (3), the Inner London Education Authority (2), and the local authority (9) stipulated that the provision of additional resources by each agency and greater cooperation between agencies and other groups were necessary to reduce crime. These were similar in nature to the Broadwater Farm Report's recommendations (Lea **et al**, 1986: 3-11). This cooperative thrust was also strongly indicated on the report's final page (Community Police Consultative Group for Lambeth, 1984: 12-13).

> "We can state as an axiom that the path to better law and order lies by way of public cooperation with the Police .... however efficient and community-minded the Police become, they will not be able to squeeze out crime unaided. We have recommended that council Departments share certain of these responsibilities for law and order. There are several things that could be done. First .... many individual homes are still inadequately protected ... the strengthening of doors, windows and fastenings is a Council responsibility. The

> marking of property .... would gradually discourage burglars and the receivers of stolen goods. In addition increased vigilance on each other's homes and communal areas coupled with knowledge of how to get quick action from the Police could show results. To be beneficial, however, this would have to be carefully tailored to local custom and sensitivities. Essentially, this would be a development of good neighbourliness. It has been given the name Neighbourhood Watch in other localities ... it was clear at the beginning of this enquiry that law and order questions were very closely linked with the quality of life. We became more and more convinced as we got to know the tenants better that the key to progress in both these respects was a much better community participation. Most people take a pride in their own homes, if they combine together they will be able to take a much greater pride in the estate .... But these are great discouragements at the moment and it is vital that Council Departments and the police within their spheres of competence both give support to the people and share responsibilities with them. The tenants need the council Services and they need the police but they also need each other." (emphasis added)

This particular excerpt encapsulated both hopes that extra resources, cooperation and consensus would emerge, but also, in the penultimate sentence, recognised the tensions between the local authority and the police. The Probation Officer on Esate M, having contributed to the writing of the Consultative Group's report, and eager to become more involved in his patch (essentially Estate M) took the initiative to try to implement, with others, the reports findings. The absence of any organisational structures attached to the consultative group to implement the groups recommendation, the perceived ineffective and "burnt-out" community worker on Estate M, the fragmented nature of the estate's Tenants groups, combined with the then vacuum in community development work for Estate M's Probation Officers to facilitate Probation entry to Estate M. His role during this policy determination stage, with others, was to help write the Consultative Group's report. The Probation Officer on Estate S, by contrast, was not involved in this phase to the same extent, but, as we have seen arrived at the Estate's Inter-agency meetings after that group had been initiated. Although what follows is described as the policy reform

stage, in order to provide a useful conceptual framework, it becomes apparent that those who sought to reform, at both Inter-agency groups, also discussed and redefined the problems to such an extent that they shaped and determined, and not simply implemented reforms, whether clear or ambiguous, suggested earlier.

Policy Reform: The Quest for Consensus

Fuller and Myers (1941:326) describe this stage as follows:

> "Here we find administrative units engaged in putting formulated policy into action. General policies have been debated and defined by the general public, by special interest groups and by experts. It is now the task of administrative experts specially trained in their jobs to administer reform."

So far as Estate S was concerned there were, as we have already seen, no clear policies provided by the Consultative Group regarding the objectives of the Inter-agency group working on that estate. This was not the case in respect of Estate M although such policy guidelines and recommendations that were made were abandoned, formally at least, very quickly. Let me begin with Estate M.

Once the Consultative Group's report was published in November 1984 public meetings with Estate M tenants were arranged for December 1984 and early January 1985. These meetings pre-dated the fieldwork but I was informed that only 12 people attended both meetings, and just six copies of the report were collected. According to the Probation Officer who attended both meetings this "lack of response by the public" stemmed no only from a lack of general interest, but from there being: "no unified Tenants Association on the Estate. How do you then arrange to meet the public? I don't believe they are disinterested, its a problem of communication." Nevertheless the decision was taken not to hold further meetings with the public at that time. Instead the Probation Officer on Estate M decided, ambitiously, to

form a new professional workers group on the Estate.

Full of enthusiasm, but also apprehension, on 10 January 1985 the Probation Officer on Estate M wrote a letter to a number of local agencies inviting them to a meeting of professional workers with interest in Estate M. He wrote:

> "Following the recent publication of the Moorlands Estate Enquiry, I am writing to invite you to a meeting .... There has been much talk of multi-agency cooperation in recent times but as yet this has not been fully realised or its potential assessed at a local level. Many workers may feel that individual agencies can do little to choose the environment in which we work and it would also appear grandiose to assume that multi-agency cooperation can instantly change matters. Nevertheless there would appear to be some benefit to those who work locally, if ideas and concerns were expressed." (Inner London Probation Service, 1985h)

The Probation Officer was extremely concerned about the "poor state" of relationships between some of the agencies. He told me:

> "There was massive distrust and tension between the Social Services and the Police, the local authority and the Police between completing Tenants Association groups, and between the estate youth club and the Youth Service. But we've got to get them talking to each other."

The Probation officer on Estate S who had begun attending that estate's Inter-agency meetings in February 1985 was altogether less hopeful about inter-agency working. She told me:

> "The group has conflicting interests. the Tenants Association dominates the meetings. It is into elderly groups, young children and single parents, not offenders as such. My concern is about the numbers of youngsters, particularly black youngsters going into youth custody from that estate. My role is to represent the views of youngsters as residents, not as offenders. There is no interest in this. In fact apart from the police there is actual opposition to youth provision being "on the agenda."

Both Inter-agency meetings included professional workers (as

experts) and excluded residents.

At the first meeting on Estate M in February 1985, 18 different agencies were represented and 28 people attended. These included the police, schools, the Educational Welfare Service, The church, social services and others. A number of agencies however were unable to attend either at that meeting or regularly at subsequent meetings observed. Critically for the estate these were the housing office (irregular attendance), the Youth Service (never appeared), the community worker covering the estate (later moved to another area because he was "burnt out"), The Education Welfare Service, housing department (special needs), and the Homeless Families Unit. The significance of the absence of these agencies is that they were all most central to the problems subsequently brought up by the group for discussion. Given the wider context of tension between the local authority and the local police. The Probation Officer on Estate M publically emphasised that the Moorlands Estate Project was "independent" of the Borough's Consultative Group. This mediating role between conflicting groups, calling for considerable diplomacy and energy, was one continually adopted by both Probation Officers in their attempts to create consensus amongst competing and often hostile interests within and outside the Inter-agency meetings. Estate M's Inter-agency sub-groups met irregularly, due in part to poor attendance, between February 1985 and August 1985, reporting back, as we shall shortly see, to the main group.

On Estate S the Inter-agency meetings were chaired by the Tenants Association and not, as was the case for Estate M, by the Probation Service. Estate S's Inter-agency group varied from month to month but always included the police (two representatives), and usually social services (a generic social worker and a worker from Intermediate Treatment), consumer advice (local authority), community work (one representative), the housing department, educational welfare, and a youth worker. All meetings were held on a monthly basis, in the Tenants Hall and with an unwritten agenda,

usually controlled by the group's chair who was also estate's neighbourhood worker.

Estate S's Inter-agency meetings usually discussed issues as one large group, not as sub-groups, (the only exception to this being the temporary formation of a "youth sub-group"). It produced its own listing of "categories of need", but in practice these were, rather categories of agency interests, and, also in part categories of perceived social problems. The focus on the elderly/vulnerables, and youth and single parents depended largely on the types of agencies present at any one time, and the interest shown in the topic rather than any overall unified inter-agency interests. Effectively the agenda of each monthly meeting on Estate S was produced by the Chair of the Tenants Association on the day. Let us now consider the diverse manner in which both Inter-agency groups defined the problems specifically the "youth" and crime problems and the approaches used to address these problems.

Conflicting perspectives on social problems and their amelioration

The interagency meetings on both estates can be characterised by the conflicts of interest between group members about needs, priorities and objectives. This is not to state that there wasn't some agreement, in broad terms, that there were problems which needed addressing. Priorities appeared to relate directly to each agency's interests and conflicts were most marked when the "youth problem" was discussed.

At the very first meeting of Estate M's Inter-agency group on 6th February 1985 (held then and subsequently at the junior school on Estate M) the different perspectives were highlighted. A representative from the central Housing Department viewed environmental problems as the most pressing (expressed in terms of dirty passageways, boarded up properties, poor lighting). The police spoke of the problems of crime, particularly robberies in the area (not only on the estate). A local headmistress spoke of the need for

increasing educational resources at the nursery school. A voluntary organisation's worker identified a need for more volunteers for her small organisation. The Probation Officer spoke of the need to help and support "vulnerables" on the estate and, generally, to improve the quality of life on the estate. These and other different approaches soon prompted the formation of four Inter-agency sub-groups on Estate M.

These groups examined physical security/tenants association issues, volunteers/school centred projects, under fives/mums /vulnerables issues, and, finally, youth issues. The nature and grouping of these sub-groups were a compromise between what, ideally, was wanted (a larger number of separate groups), and what in practice was possible. Critically a housing sub-group could not be set up not only for practical reasons but because of the continued absence of a regular representative from the local authority, but as a result of the local authority's policy decision of limited cooperation, at that time, between the local authority and the police. This policy did not prevent the unofficial attendance, on occasions, of a local not central representative from the housing department, although he could not then act as a provider of potential resources, only as a source of information.

Police interests

Of all the agencies, as far as attendance was concerned, the police were the most reliable. Their regular presence represented the priority given by the local police to policing both Estates and ensured that their agency, not individual, interests in crime prevention had prominance at meetings. In all, 7 different police offices including two sergeants, two youth and community officers, two home beat officers, and one inspector, appeared at different times at both Interagency meetings. In respect of "youth" and estate S, the police proposed increased involvement in running recreational activities encouraging youngsters to use the estate's community centre, and urging local youth club

members to visit the police station. A police inspector (new to the area) arriving unannounced at one Inter-agency meeting on 11th November 1985 on Estate S said:

> "My remit is to increase contact between youngsters and the police in the Brixton area as part of the Metropoliton Police Crime Prevention Strategy for the area ... Youngsters are always hanging about on the walkways. I want to increase contact with them in order to reduce the tensions we have when my officers come into contact with them. I want to know how this group can help me".

No one present directly challenged the inspector's unannounced presence at the group. Although his authority to be there was not challenged the police perspective on "problem youths" was, as we will see, contested by some, and accepted by other members of the Inter-agency group. The inspector was asked at the meeting to "prevent the estate's bad reputation getting worse" (by the Neighbourhood Worker) after information about crime levels on the estate had again been sensationalised in the local paper. (This information was disclosed at a recent consultative meeting).

On Estate M the police also wanted to implement the local policies crime prevention strategy as a means of countering the crime problem, seemingly inseparable from the "youth problem". This took the form of holding a crime prevention week on estate M using a mobile police caravan (despite opposition from the local "private" council authority about use of council property) in an attempt to introduce a neighbourhood watch scheme involving the residents. Generally the police prompted measures to reduce crime by distributing literature at the estate's nursery school, and at social events promoted by the Inter-agency group, not the police. For example the Disney characters from the film "One Hundred and One Dalmations" appearing on the front cover of a Metropolitan Police leaflet had been changed to depict scenes from the Metropolitan Police Disney world "production" of "Never go with a stranger". Another leaflet with the same message, and produced by the Australasion National Mutual Life Insurance Organisation created an image of the ubiquitous opportunist nature of crime: "The criminal will

steal or commit other crimes anywhere and at any time". It was initially somewhat confusing, since the Disney leaflet stated of the real Disney film "See it soon at a cinema near you", and the Insurance leaflet offered property protection insurance, whether this was commercial advertising or state funded crime prevention advice. It was in fact a combination of both private and state interests.

On Estate M, a local police sergeant also tried several times, to implement another crime prevention measure suggested by his inspector and called the 'Blue Card' Scheme. This was to involve estate as youngsters voluntary workers, with identity badges being supervised by the police to tidy up the estate and run errands for the elderly "to reduce fear and increase trust between the elderly and the youngsters". The main reasons for this not being implemented were that, unlike the use of the police crime prevention caravan, this required the active cooperation of estate youngsters and a substantial degree of organisation with estate residents. During the fieldwork neither estates S or M introduced "Neighbourhood Watch" despite the views of the police that they should. In fact according to the Home Office (quoted in Donnison and Scola, 1986:19) as at December 1984, there was not one Neighbourhood Watch Scheme in Brixton, and generally much lower numbers of schemes in poorer areas than richer areas. For example, there were 738 Neighbourhood Watch Schemes in Norbury (prosperous, owner occupier area), 365 in Epsom, and just six in Bethnal Green and Leyton in East London (Donnison and Scola, 1986:21).

On Estate M the Probation Officer became concerned that the police appeared to be using the meetings as a way of promoting their own, not the Inter-agency groups proposals. He told me that even when he had raised this issue with them they tended to agree with him at the time, but "carried on anyway." Generally the main difference between the police's and other agencies approaches on both estates to youngsters and crime centred on the assumptions by the police about deviant youngsters, the desire to change some residents attitudes towards ones favourable to the police, and to be in

direct control of developments. This approach by the police to the Inter-agency meetings on both estates seems similar to the "colonization" type of multi agency policing described by Kinsey, Lea and Young (1986:118-119) when other groups become what they call "appenders of the police". The research evidence here however, suggests more complex and dynamic forces at work as some agency workers challenged the police's definitions of the problems.

Competing interests of other agencies

Estate S's black community worker was regarded by the police as a potential ally in modifying the custom of some black youngsters, according to a police sergeant's perception, of carrying knives. At the meeting on 15th September 1985, for example, the community worker bluntly rejected the proposition that he could influence their behaviour, or was a representative of youth on the estate. "That's not my job" he said, "If you want to speak to black youngsters then you do it yourself." He did suggest to the police sergeant that the police should be "more sensitive in their treatment of black people". The intermediate treatment worker on Estate S considered that the 'youth problem' was not so much "a law and disorder" problem but one concerned with other issues about high levels of unemployment, and lack of trust between the police and youngsters. He said at a meeting on 23rd July 1985 for example:

> "Intermediate Treatment is already providing something for youngsters to do ... but children are self-interested, they do not care for the victims ... society is punishing people who are isolated and alienated. It is difficult for us to offer them something but it must be better than pool or dominoes. We're not talking about <u>their</u> problems but <u>the</u> problems others are making for them".

According to the social worker at the same meeting on Estate S:

> "I'm doing as much as I can at the moment by offering time, advice and a counselling service. Fifty per cent of all juvenile cautions in West

> Lambeth come from this estate ... There is a lot of different problems here ... We've got to get the youngsters participating in these meetings to understand what they want".

According to the neighbourhood worker on Estate S the problems and ways of resolving them were quite different. For example, she said at the meeting of 23rd July 1985:

> "We've got to face youth with their problems. You know that there are gangs on the estate. We have go to try to create a better sense of community by instilling a sense of belonging and responsibility ... The bloody estate is a desert. We don't have stable tenants and the allocations department, not us, decide on these things ... The local authority's anti rascist policies anger locals ... Anyhow by the time the kids get to 15 it's too late we have got to try to catch it earlier on. The crucial issue is developing family support for the 8/9 year olds".

Estate S's Probation Officer had another understanding of youth issues. These were concerned with the large proportion of her clients on that estate, mostly black and aged 19-22 who we regularly sent to Youth Custody. She wanted to try to improve "recreational facilities" on the estate for this small group of youngsters in order that she could "put something positive about them in their court reports." To another worker, from social services (special concern for the elderly) the issue of youth was not one in which she had any interests or responsibility. To another worker (housing department) there were even doubts expressed about the Inter-agency group as a forum for policy decisions: "I know we are all supposed to be joining in this Inter-agency approach but its never been established what in practice this actually means."

On Estate M an Inter-agency youth sub-group had also formed, in February 1985. This originally consisted of the police, the Educational Welfare Service, a student volunteer and a education worker from an organisation concerned with basic and supplementary teaching. Critically no members of the youth service attended the subsequent sub-group meetings, first because of continual staffing difficulties for the

service and second because there was not a recognised (by the Youth Service) youth club on Estate M. Subsequently after just three meetings between February and April 1985 the sub-group was disbanded and questions about "youth" were discussed within the full Interagency group and chaired by the Probation Officer. Issues about community service by youth and added recreational facilities provided the focus for discussion. At this forum a black "youth leader" of the informal youth club (operating out of two flats on Estate M came) under pressure from other agencies. The police wanted him to "formalise"and register the club with the "proper authorities", a task with which they offered to help. The youth worker replied:

> "The only reason my club is so popular is that it is flexible. We can open and close when we want and I'm always fair. We don't have rules and we don't need rules. They can contact me when they have troubles. If the police come in it'll all be changed ... I admit we need funds but I don't think I want to register."

So far as the school centred sub-group members were concerned the estate youngsters should, it was stated, be encouraged variously to remove graffiti from the estate, help the elderly and disabled, clean up the estate, and generally contribute to the community by helping out with after-school activities. According to another worker from community education there was a different approach to the "youth problem":

> "We don't need more facilities for youngsters. The problem is not lack of facilities but lack of interest. They've already got two large sports centres nearby. We all know this ... What they need is skills training to get jobs".

These were available from Community Education. So far as a local councillor was concerned: "the entire estate should be blown up and replaced with Victorian terraces". The councillor's anger about and solution for the estates troubles were, perhaps, understandable given that she had been physically threatened and frightened by a group of youngsters on Estate M when she was canvassing votes for the

local council elections some months earlier. Overall the images of estate youngsters and views about what they needed were presented by a range of diverse voluntary and statutory agencies based largely on agency perceptions and not on the elusive youngsters' views.

Estate Youngsters: The elusive participants

There were just two occasions when youngsters were present in the same meeting as professionals. The first occured by accident when a black youngster who had been on Probation accidentally entered a meeting including a uniformed representative form the police of Estate M's physical security sub-group on 19th June 1985. The youngster who had been on Probation and was known to the Probation Officer was immediately asked by the Probation Officer to leave because it was a private meeting. The youngster moved forwards, rather than turning to leave and looking directly at the police sergeant angrily gave his view of the problem. He said that the police harrassed young blacks. He continued:

> "If a couple of whites are fighting and a couple of blacks are fighting the police walk past the black and help the whites. They just can't stop harrassing blacks. The police keep stopping me and searching me for knives and drugs - I don't carry knives and drugs".

The police sergeant deliberately avoided the youngsters eyes, and said nothing. The youngster said that he couldn't get a job because of the way he looked and the way he talked. The Church Minister present said that there needed to be "compromise on both sides", and that he should consider "changing his appearance" in order to get a job, quoting an example of a local black women who had had her Rastafarian hair braided to get a job as a secretary. "Why should I change?" was the youngster's response. When the Probation Officer explained that the group was trying to get better policing for the estate the youngster agreed that this was desirable and after further softened exchanges left the meeting at the request of the Probation Officer. The second

occasion was at a meeting of the Borough's Consultative Group.

During the six months I frequently attended meetings of the Borough's consultative group from April to October 1985, a youngster spoke on just one occasion in October 1985 (after the 1985 disturbances) and then from the public gallery, not from the group. The black youngster explained to those unaware that he had previously been an elected member of the group but had resigned through frustration. He said to the Chairman that the consultative group was:

> "a middle aged, middle class friendly society. It is just a bureaucratic exercise. The group is just a lacking of the Police and harms individual liberties. It has to produce press releases to list its achievements. It has long lost the support of the public outside".

The exclusion of youngsters from meetings can, it is argued here, be best understood within the wider organisational and the professional/expert planning context of those agencies present who wanted initially, at least, to extend <u>their</u> service delivery systems to others. The following account of an attempt on Estate S, to involve and plan something for local youngsters illustrates some of the dilemmas faced by the agencies.

The continual problem for the Estate S Probation Officer in particular was how issues about youth on the estate could be discussed at meetings and helped. The perceived needs of offenders, as such, were not accepted by the Interagency group as having top priority. This group was stated, variously, as being "too old for youth activities", "past helping", and "impossible to approach". As a result the Probation Officer attempted, with others, to examine how to work with "youth", and not simply "offenders". After four months of monthly Interagency meetings on Estate S between February and June 1985 an intermediate treatment worker, a community worker, the Probation Officer, and Estate S's neighbourhood worker finally agreed to meet with youngsters selected by the Community Worker to ask what youngsters

wanted. During these Sub-group planning meetings in July 1985, suggestions by the Neighbourhood Worker (also Chair of the Interagency Group) that police and parents should be involved, and that youngsters "put their grievances in writing" were rejected by the remaining three workers. Additionally whilst the Probation Officer and the social workers wanted to discuss issues concerning legal rights, sentencing practices, policing problems and levels of unemployment, the neighbourhood worker insisted that "the gangs of youths, mostly tenants" on the estate, was the problem. Furthermore, she added: "We have to create a better sense of community and instil a sense of responsibility and belonging."

Eventually the compromised outcome took the form of agreeing that two "approved" youngsters would meet with this small group of workers the following month (August 1985). The power to approve these two youngsters rested with the neighbourhood worker. Of one she said that she was "alright because she's had life and social skills training". Of the other he was fairly respectable because he "kept in contact with drug users and helped to keep them under control". Approval was therefore given for the first youth and professional meeting to take place. When neither of the youngsters appeared at the meeting workers took the opportunity to speak openly about their agencies problems particularly shortage of staff, low morale, high caseloads and lack of support. Names of "problem clients" were disclosed and the meeting functioned, apparently as an ad-hoc support and information sharing group for overworked staff. Breaches of confidentiality were not generally a feature of either of the main Interagency groups. The idea of directly meeting estate youth again as a way of identifying their needs, was never openly discussed again, particularly after a further attempt to meet with "youth" at an open day for youths on Estate S planned for September 1985.

Plans were made by the Estate S Interagency group from May 1985 onwards to hold an "open day" for youth in September 1985 in the Estate's Community Hall. It was planned that an

entire day would be put aside for representatives to sit at "market stalls" promoting their "products" and services to youngsters. There were to be representatives from the housing department, consumer advice, Youth Training Schemes, Probation Service, a welfare rights group, the police, local employment schemes, and others. The role of the Probation Service, as represented by the Community Probation Team's Probation Officer was, with other, to encourage unemployed youngsters, as perceived beneficiaries, to meet with organisational resource holders. This strategy operationalised assumptions that the existing types of resources advice, counselling, employment schemes were not in congruence with youngsters needs. This emphasis on paucity of resources, as a possible explanation for the emergence of "problem estates" has also been identified, and largely rejected by Gill (1977). As Gans (1967:387) has written in his classic study about the juvenile problem in Levittown:

> "Adult solutions to the juvenile problem were generally shaped by other institutional goals which took priority over adolescent needs. The organisations that scheduled dances wanted to advertise themselves and their community service inclinations ... Indeed, those who decide on adolescent programmes either have vested interests in keeping teenagers in a childlike status ... or are changed with the protection of adult interests".

The first open day for youth on Estate S was postponed by the police following concerns about public disorder on 30th September 1985 resulting from the accidental shooting by the police of a black woman, Mrs Groce. A month later on 28th October 1985 the event was put on and the large community hall was packed with agencies, leaflets and videos, counselling services and advice. A large stereo system played reggae music through loudspeakers placed outside the hall on the pavement to attract custom. Whilst at the hall for three hours in the afternoon not one youngster came in. I was told by one worker that only six to ten youngsters had arrived throughout the day, and that we know these ones anyway." The man from the local Youth Training Scheme told me:

> "It's not unusual. We can not get people on Youth Training Schemes. There's a long waiting list of adults for the community Programme, but the YTS Scheme at £26 per week, just doesn't attract the youngsters".

The disappointment expressed by the next full Estate S Interagency meeting in November 1985 about problems in implementing both these youth initiatives left the group feeling demoralised and impotent. The workers concerned with youth were nulled by the lack of interest from clients, their lack of knowledge as to what to offer them if they arrived, the absence of any additional resources. There was an unwillingness by the Interagency group to discuss this matter further.

For the next four months the Estate S group turned its attention to planning arrangements for the elderly. By July 1986, almost two years after the group was initially formed, the Probation Office on Estate S, together with a Social Worker decided to work outside the Interagency group and planned to establish an Estate S advice centre for their clients on the estate. This was regarded as the only practical way of discussing "youth". The fieldwork came to an end and the Probation Officer on Estate S left the Community Probation Team to work elsewhere before this plan could be implemented. She told me before she moved from the Community Probation Team's office:

> "Since coming to Brixton my caseload has doubled. There's a lack of support from management, lack of financial support and relentless work pressure ... The estate meetings were useful for finding out more about clients and the community. But we all need some input from community workers, wee need to develop neighbourhood skills. But I'm not even sure now the Probation Service should be doing community work."

As we have seen earlier these doubts and lack of direction arising from organisational and local pressures contributed to the eventual withdrawal by the team from their initial community involvement.

By August 1985 attendance at the Estate M Inter-agency

meetings had fallen from an initial 26 representatives, in February 1985, to just six. On 29th August 1985 the Probation Officer convened Estate M's Inter-agency group meetings formally suspended the Inter-agency Group in a written letter. A subsequent short-lived attempt, between November 1985 and February 1986, to reformulate the Inter-agency group was abandoned when, again, other agency support (in the form of attendance) was insufficient. Yet another Probation-led initiative on Estate M which began in April 1986 finally abandoned notions of Inter-agency cooperation and was aimed at encouraging self-help initiatives by Estate M residents themselves. The eventual formation of C.A.R.E. (an acronym for Community and Recreational Endeavour) arose from the interests of a small group of residents from the so-called "respectable" estate adjoining Estate M. This group, still chaired by the Probation Officer working on Estate M, eventually produced its monthly C.A.R.E. newspaper. This advertised "new" local events, such as bring and buy sales, bingo, sewing mornings, and existing services run voluntarily. These included a playgroup for the under 5s run by parents, afternoon tea for the elderly, craft and toymaking, and sports facilities for youngsters at the "unofficial" estate youth club operating out of two empty flats. Given the debacles, inaction and problems for the earlier Inter-agency group of addressing at an estate level some of the estate's considerable problems, the production of a monthly newspaper, monthly meetings, and small-scale voluntarily run events represented what, eventually, was practically possible, but no originally intended. Neighbourhood care (Abrams, 1980) as care by the neighbourhood through networks of interest, replaced neighbourhood care as care for the neighbourhood as the only, and most practicable means of delivering services.[17]

Inter-agency Problems in Adopting a Professional and Estate Perspective on Social Problems

The limitations of the Inter-agency approach to social problems resulted from a combination of associated factors.

These were primarily the different perceptions held by the agencies involved, assumptions held about local interests being reconcilable, the complex nature of the problems discussed, and, overall, the continuing and undermining effect of local events and national policies which reduced the availability of local authority funds. The role of each professional agency and group, as Zisk (1969) has observed elsewhere, was conditioned in part by what the institutional framework of laws and public policies permitted or encouraged, and in part by individual perceptions, attitudes and motivations. Even though the law permitted direct participation of the citizen at meetings and committees, opportunities were either denied or not accepted. Professional workers acted as advisers and administrators determining the problems, the solutions and the strategies. The dominance given to individual agency interests in community work settings is one noted by the National Association of Social Workers (1986:11):

> "Single purpose social agencies such as those concerned with a specific segment of the community such as children, the aged, families, transients ... generally conduct direct services ... Frequently they may limit community organisation functioning to predetermined specific goals usually set by the agency's official purpose and its own organisational priorities." (emphasis added)

Also the findings of a study into the perceptions of two different professional groups, engineers and public health officials, (Porteous et al, 1979:167) highlights the perceived status, meaning and importance of different "professional" solutions:

> "In summary, it seems that the perceptions and attitudes of the two groups of professionals studied have all the characteristics of a closed system. Their views seem to be highly conditioned by training, adherence to standards and practices of the respective professions, and allegiance to the agency's or firms goals or mission. Both groups believe they are highly qualified to do their respective jobs and that they act in the publics interest. contact with ... the general public, is considered either unnecessary or potentially harmful."

Although, as we have seen, the "problems" were defined in a variety of ways by different agencies, the guiding perceptions that increased services and neighbourliness would decrease social disorganisation (including local crime and area public disorders) rested on two critical assumptions. First some forms of consensus could be constructed by welfare interventions based on professional assessments of need, and second that area and even national conflicts could be subsumed by focusing exclusively on the estates as locality. On the first assumption, and as Parsloe (1976:73) notes in relation to social work and criminal behaviour the social welfare approach here emphasised notions of area rehabilitation, treatment, inadequate family and community strengths, and, importantly, indeterminate professional assessments. On the second point, the fieldwork also raises questions about the Probation Service applying a micro perspective, as Bottoms and McWilliams (1979) recommend, for problem amelioration. By far the majority of the proposals for action suggested at both Inter-agency settings required the following: the provision of capital and/or revenue expenditure for additional material and staff resources; the permission and/or financial support of the local authority; the re-allocation and re-adjustment of existing agencies priorities to service the estate better; the realignment of agencies administrative boundaries; additional financial resources for both Inter-agency groups and the borough's Community Police Consultative Groups; and, finally, individual agency's to become more accountable to the Inter-agency groups, and not just to their own agency. It is reasonable to suggest at this point that the Inter-agency groups' lack of material resources and structural relationship with other agencies was similar, a micro level with the Community Development Projects set-up in 1969 when the Home Office was given overall responsibility for combatting poverty by increasing a sense of community identity without directly having control over any of the relevant services (Gilding the Ghetto, 1977:49).

The emphasis here on self-help for the estates' residents suggested an informal means of social control providing that

this outcome was realised. The emphasis on social work remedies to social problems here were attractive, as Sinfield (1969:41) has argued, to: "those who do not want to transform the structure of society, but only the means of accommodating "problem groups" to the rest of society". Attempts at community work by the Probation Service, and others, rested on ideas about both coordinating and developing services within and among organisations in a local community and, eventually, in the case of Estate M, starting up a self-help scheme. The idea that the professionals initially would and should be the resource providers, meant that the residents (the young, the elderly) would be expected to act as clients.

When such resources were not forthcoming, or co-ordinated then existing resources, Estate S's Community Centre, the local police station, Estate M's junior school and community education, and the Community Probation Team's own offices were repackaged, extended and re-advertised to further accommodate and draw in local youngsters. This remained the most practical approach, but it also represented an acknowledgment of a particular approach to community work. It emphasises, to return to our earlier community work models, a social planning approach (Rothman, 1969:26-27) with its emphasis on task goals oriented toward the solution of social problems, expert bias, and the presence of a power structure within the sponsoring group. Here Inter-agency group members adopted in part a "realist" positional view of the community, that is (Rothman, 1969:34):

> "the community is made up of a multitude of conflicting public or interest group which endlessly contend with one another in the public area. Public officials respond to these pressures ... the public interest exists only as a particular transitory compromise resulting from the conflictual resolution of group interaction."

It also simultaneously adopted an idealist positional view of the community in so far as perceptions about the community's capacity for self-help, and neighbourhood care were concerned, without having previously identified or included potential "care networks". On Estate M the Probation

Officer's role was to mediate between conflicting professional and public interests without influencing, or attempting to influence, the resource providers external to the estate. On Estate S the Probation Officer was faced with an intractable Tenants Association (concerned about "gangs on the estate") and unclear expectations about what was expected of the Probation Service in the area. Eventually the Probation Officer became party to the group's general perception, operationally problematic, that the provision of recreational facilities for youngsters would help to resolve the area's social and crime problems. Recreational attempts to reduce the opportunities for estate based crime, as Fielding (1986:185) notes, "suits the present policy to sidestep the culturally and structurally embedded problems".

Intentions of increasing informal social control, through better service delivery and though never made explicit (except by the police), became subsumed by a combination of external conflicts, internal practical considerations and professional concerns. The welfare path emerged, finally, as the one least strewn with debris, contradictions and competing external interests. As Marris and Rein (1972:235-236) comment on poverty and community action programmes in the United States in the 1960's:

> "So the inventiveness of community action tended inevitably to dwindle progressively towards its realization. The prospectuses were mostly less than the imagination which inspired them, the organizations less than their prospectuses, the programme less than the organization intended. A vision of opening opportunities for millions of maltreated youngsters might end with a dozen children in a makeshift nursery school, or a class of seamstresses learning a poorly-paid trade for which they were already in demand. The weakness of the movement lay in the impossibility of supervening in the competition of interests amongst which its innovations had to win their place."

This is not to deny the energies involved in and value derived form small scale achievements arising here or elsewhere (see, for example, Jones and Mayo, 1975) as a result of community work.

As well as experiencing specific agency, group status, and legitimacy problems the Inter-agency Group also experienced the effects of wider structural and political conflicts which occurred through out it's existence. In addition to the continuing lack of cooperation between the local council and the police at the Consultative Committee level, the Inter-agency groups experienced, directly or indirectly, the consequences of the following major conflicts.

1. A year long dispute between the teachers' unions and the government (1985/86). This resulted in the estate's Junior School being insufficiently staffed after scho0l hours for proposed activities.

2. The death of a child (Tyra Hendry) on the Lambeth Social Service's Non-accidental Injury Register, and the subsequent enquiry, resulted in the police and social services neither cooperating nor meeting publically for a six month period during 1985.

3. As a result of the local council's delay in setting a legal rate in 1985 two councillors covering estate M, as well as others, were debarred from public office providing a further vacuum for local consultation.

4. The local authority's capacity to provide an increased range of services was severely limited by the government's ratecapping policy and also it's limitations on local authorities to finance Intensive Housing Building and Rehabilitation Programmes. It will be recalled that one of the major problems for Estate M tenants, was poor housing conditions and delays in house repairs.

5. A further serious disturbance occured in Brixton in September 1985 following the accidental shooting by Police Officers of Mrs Cherry Groce. This incident, amongst other things, served to heighten tensions between the police and the local authority, and the police and community representatives at the borough's

Consultative Group meetings.

6. The closure by the Post Office of its Railton Road office (adjacent to Estate M) following an armed robbery in 1984 provided further difficulties for one particular group, the vulnerable elderly, one group the Estate M Inter-agency group so wanted to help.

7. Financial constraints imposed by the government on the (then) London Transport resulted in them not acceeding to the Estate M's and the borough's Consultative Group's request that they provide a bus service more accessible to, and safer for estate residents.

8. Overall the heirarchical nature of organisations targeted for change (the local authority, but also the professional organisations represented at the Inter-agency meetings), and their concerns with departmental not locality interests frustrated the proposals of the non-heirarchical and locality interests of the inter-agency groups. (On this point as it applied to the Southwark Community Development Project also see Davis **et al**, 1977:51-57).

Summary

This chapter has examined the processes involved in and activities arising from Probation Service involvement with two Inter-agency groups on two housing estates. It was argued that Fuller and Myers' (1941) "natural history of a social problem" conceptual approach provided a useful framework for analysis. Nevertheless the findings presented here suggest that their thesis of a social problem having "natural" and distinguishable phases of problem awareness, policy determination and reform (Fuller and Myers, 1941:321) is questionable. Specifically this reservation centred on the intermingling of their latter two stages as both Inter-agency groups constantly moved, almost imperceptably at times, between discussing, reconsidering, and reformulating

policies, strategies and tasks. These processes combined with the primacy accorded to agency interests functioned as a means of shifting concerns away from social problems towards agency problems and interests. The "youth problem" selected for action by each group appeared not so much a social problem in terms of the identification of a "social evil" but, rather, was perceived of as an undesirable condition affecting a significant number of people and warranting collective action. This understanding of a social problem is in accord with that adopted by Horton and Leslie, (1974:4).

It was theoretically possible, given the data and perceptions of the two estates, as well as the Estate M surveys, that a range of issues, as problems, could have been addressed by the Inter-agency groups. The discretionary areas of decision making, and the absence of any lineal link between the consultative and Inter-agency groups arguably even encouraged diversity and choice concerning the selection of objectives. However a combination of interactional, structural, organisational and practical factors continually shifted each group's emphasis and challenged its legitimacy and purpose. According to Sampson **et al** (1987:20) the source of potential if not actual confusion about inter or multi-agency work can be best understood through a structural conflict analysis. Thus:

> "Because of structural conflict between the state agencies, tensions within localities and differential state agency power relations, the forms of cooperations and outcomes of multi-agency initiatives are often the result of a complicated set of social relations and interactions which are neither consistent nor directly observable."

Despite the complexities, difficulties and the multi-faceted and dynamic nature of social problems that faced the Probation Service and and other agencies in the area it was possible to detect a thread of conceptual continuity and consistency. This centred on the creation, via Inter-agency group mechanisms, of a "social welfare" approach in the locality representing the professional view of social problem amelioration. This ultimately focussed on attempts to

change, not wider institutional arrangements or structural relationships but, as with the teams' Community Probation work, changing the social behaviour of certain individuals within specific locations, and by avoiding conflicts through professional servicing, and self-help strategies.

It remains the task of this thesis' last chapter to draw together the different threads of the fieldwork, by examining some operational, theoretical and policy implications for the Probation Service of becoming involved in Probation Service community based practice and developments.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Some Operational, Theoretical and Policy Implications Arising from the Research

This thesis has analysed community based practice and development in the Probation Service, as a framework within which Community Probation Work, community work and crime prevention components were located. It was argued earlier that prior to 1907 social work and criminal justice were largely separate and distinct areas with the former emphasising forms of voluntary social welfare and informal social control, and the latter an increasingly centralised type of formal state social control. The 1907 Probation of Offenders Act was highly significant in that it marked the official merger of social work and criminal justice with different interests being presented as compatible, if not actually identical. Henceforth hopes of individual reformation were accompanied by legal sanctions. The limits of the legalistic framework on social work are summed up by Garland (1983:11-12) as follows:

> "While the logic of penal reform offered by positivist criminology, and the strategies of social action proposed by social workers, usually involved the transformation of social conditions and the environment as well as the offender, the dictates of law insisted that the proper object of reform was always and only the pathological individual. Questions of social reform, or social reconstruction and charge, were thus displaced to other institutions and levels of social action."

Whilst Garland's claim that the transformation of social conditions, not just individual circumstances, by social workers is, possibly, an exaggerated one (see, for example, Halmos, 1970) nevertheless the legal constraints on court based social workers actions, are acknowledged. Within this generalised legal framework there have of course, as we have seen, been substantial changes governing Probation practice since 1907.

Since 1948 the Probation Service, reflective of changes within the criminal justice system and concerns outside that system, has experienced several, significant, and sometimes contradictory changes, both ideological and practical. These have concerned changing Probation practices and policies, but also the nature of the Probation Service as an organisation. Whereas previously supervision took place within a statutory framework based exclusively on the Probation Order (with standard conditions), the demands of the criminal justice system have been such that a plethora of legislation now governs the work of the Probation Service. These statutes now apply outside the offender's home to confined residential settings (including Bail Hostels, Probation Hostels and previously voluntary hostels and Probation Homes), non-residential settings (Intermediate Treatment and Day Centres, previously Day Training Centres and voluntary day-centres), the "community" (Community Service) and post-custodial supervision (Detention Centre, Youth Custody and Parole Licences). More recently the 1982 Criminal Justice Act introduced further measures and powers; those concerning Night Curfew Orders in social work terms, perhaps, the most contradictory and restrictive to date.

It was argued that until approximately 1984 one factor had remained constant - namely the Probation Service's primary focus on offenders and, to a lesser extent, ex-offenders. However, in 1984 the Home Office (1984) encouraged the Probation Service, to engage in what it called "work in the wider community". Whilst what this actually meant remains unclear in some respects, it contained an expectation that the Probation Service would become more involved, together with other agencies, in crime prevention work in localities. Subsequent to those early Home Office statements there have been a range of formal and informal discussion and policy documents on this subject including those by the National Association of Probation Officers (1984a, 1985, 1986) the Home Office (1984, 1984a, 1986) and in the document Probation - The Next Five Years. A joint statement by ACOP, CCPC and NAPO (1986). The "community", in the sense of locality, and

no longer "just" the individual offender, has become a new authorised and approved target for Probation intervention. This thesis has argued that the application, and shoehorning of community ideas into Probation practice has raised critical operational, theoretical and policy issues.

Whilst it is acknowledged that overall these community developments remain, at this stage, sporadic, even experimental, the evidence suggests that policy interests, if not actual practice, are increasing, and likely to increase further, Furthermore, it was maintained that the outbreaks of disorder in certain inner city areas in 1980, 1981 and again in 1985 have, to some extent, accelerated and focused this developing interest in such work. By reference to a detailed case study, as well as broader questionnaire findings and policy discussion papers, it has been possible to analyse the work and context of one team directly involved in Probation Service community developments. As a response to sets of social problems, public concerns, and policy interests, the research has produced an analysis of social policy in action. This final chapter attempts to draw together the research findings to date by examining in turn the operational, policy and theoretical implications for the Probation Service engaging in such work.

Operational Implications

Three models of Probation Service community developments have been identified; one focusing on increasing access and servicing to Probation clients within a Probation office (community Probation work) a second focusing specifically on activities purposefully designed to reduce or prevent crime (crime prevention work), and a third involving the Probation Service working with groups and organisations in the locality without having a crime focus (community work). First then I want to explore the operational implications arising from the team's community Probation work initiatives. This will be done by examining their outcomes as related to objectives (where stated), the terms in which they can be described as

successful, unsuccessful or a 'mixed blessing', and the reasons for their emergence. It is maintained that first, the various outcomes were implicit consequences of the way key questions were addressed and second, they resulted from the interdependence of a number of coterminous factors. These are associated with organisational structures and functions, professional expectations, and the nature of client "needs".

(1) Community Probation Work

The two most apparently successful outcomes, as means not ends, were the provision of more accessible and flexible forms of supervision. These forms of supervision were made available largely as a response to client demands, in practice subject to staff time and workload constraints. These outcomes were possible because the necessary administrative procedures and professional skills were sufficiently flexible at the team level. Once the Senior Probation Officer had recruited the sort of staff he wanted and fostered a largely consensual office culture it was relatively straight forward, at least initially, to introduce group activities and flexible reporting to complement traditional supervision methods based on fixed appointments. The absence of previous office traditions, emphasising officer autonomy perhaps, was also a critical factor. Additionally, the value of the team's original Probation Officers being recruited locally to undertake specific tasks, rather than being recruited centrally to undertake general tasks can not be underestimated. The creation of a "safe secure environment" for clients within the office was also a successful outcome and important to those who used the recreational facilities. Ready access for clients to use the telephones also proved helpful. The free use of office photocopying equipment to community groups, whilst perhaps a minor point, was also a valued service and symbolic of the team's resource function. Overall the Community Probation Team provided a service considerably more accessible to clients than one using an exclusive appointments system and was able to attract a significant number of office users, at

least so far as "open access" supervision was concerned. Furthermore, the office's informal atmosphere, at least initially, and staff skills enabled and encouraged client troubles to be addressed, softened and contained. The staff's "mini policy" of obtaining, overall, a team caseload with a high proportion of Probation Orders, whilst not a precisely stated and measurable objective, also appeared quite successful, in amplifying, not simply reflecting national trends since 1982 (Home Office, 1986b:Table 1.2)

The unsuccessful outcomes, in terms of not achieving stated objectives, resulted from over optimistic expectations and assumptions about the capacity and willingness of the organisation and practitioners to adjust priorities, practices and policies. The outcomes are critical so far as future practice is concerned. They included the inability to maintain protected workloads, the inoperability of other than a minimal patch system, the lack of staff support and client referrals from local Probation offices, the inability to recruit local people (as sessional supervisors), the isolation of the team, and the absence of organisational opportunities to share the team's experiences with others and to learn from others.

Because the criminal justice system and levels of crime do not respect or adjust to administrative changes by the Probation Service the team's rising caseload and pressures remained largely unchecked and uncheckable. When these problems were eventually addressed by the appointment of an extra Probation Officer to the team in 1986 this resulted, paradoxically, in more not less work. The endless stream of work emanating from the criminal justice system, organisational (and, ultimately, Home Office) requirements that Probation Officers have a minimum client caseload, and team expectations about flexible working practices all combined to swallow up and absorb the team's potential extra capacity. Increased pressure produced a vicious cycle of extra staff, more work and more pressure. The team's "open access" policy, which encouraged a measure of client dependency eventually proved to be both a problem in its own

terms as well as a justification for the team's requests for extra resources.

So far as operational structures were concerned, a patch system requires, amongst other things, decisions to be delegated, and resources to be controlled and available at a local level. In other words, it requires administrative and professional power to be decentralised and the implementation of lateral organisational structures. The issue of the employment of sessional supervisors and requests for funding the women's group vividly illustrated the centralised nature of decision making in the organisation. Decentralisation, (Hadley et al, 1987:122, 146-147) a vital component of any patch system, in this case also required other professional colleagues as part of a wider patchwork system, to adjust working practices, traditionally guided by both informal rules and codes of conduct. Here the latter meant the willingness and capacity of adjacent teams to make significant adjustments to the geographical boundaries which bordered on the Community Probation Team's area. It will be recalled that 16 per cent (roughly equivalent to one Probation Officer's workload) of the team's clients lived outside the team's catchment area. This created "unnecessary work" for the team. The inoperability of a patch system, the lack of inter team support mechanisms (to run the groups), client referrals, and lateral knowledge sharing systems, combined to induce and sustain team isolation, and more important in policy terms, the isolation and marginalization of the more innovative aspects of the team's work.

In one of the few articles written on patchwork and the Probation Service Willson (1984:18-20) comments:

> "Patch systems require a qualitative shift of authority in which accountability and autonomy are negotiated very precisely ....The operation of a bureaucratic and hierarchic organisational structure displaces the use of initiative, budget control and other judgements from those knowledgeable and capable of making them. One response to this situation is the emergence of a plethora of specialist and/or maverick units, teams and pressure groups.... this is a highly reactionary response to the changed circumstances

in which the Services find themselves."

The absence of any qualitative shifts of authority and accountability left the Community Probation Team, on the one hand vulnerable to local pressures, on the other hand constrained by centralised decision making processes within the Probation Service and the criminal justice system in implementing innovations. The absence of any training response, within Inner London Probation Service, to community involvement was a further contributory factor in isolating the team's innovative ideas. Also, the lack of training courses for informal non-psychodynamic/task centred groupwork when combined with the absence of lateral knowledge systems resulted, in the short-term, in staff frustrations and in the long-term, staff disillusionment about the efficacy, and integration of such methods in Probation work. Critically the marginalisation of the team's innovatory practices served to reaffirm and reinforce those traditional methods and values in Probation work in part initially challenged by the team and encouraged by the organisation. Also the long awaited relocation of the Community Probation Team, by the Inner London Probation Service, in December 1987, to a less accessible, purpose-built office away from the central Brixton area symbolised both the reassertion of centralised organisational authority and physical retrenchment. In contrast with the earlier team's priority given to "greater accessibility", and in part in response to the physical risks and pressures arising from that approach, the "new" team's premises emphasise greater security, not greater accessibility. Thus the receptionists now talk to clients through a fixed reinforced glass panel (not sliding as before), the waiting room's chairs, table, and ashtrays are bolted into position, and there are <u>two</u> locked doors between the waiting area and the Probation Officers rooms.

A further unsuccessful outcome concerned the irregular and low attendance of statutory clients. It is suggested that even when statutory clients attended there was usually a fundamental conflict between what clients said they wanted (material assistance) and what was offered (counselling in

relationships and 'self-help'), leaving both parties, in effect, frustrated. As Halmos (1966:17) comments:

> "The statutes which provide for probation, for psychiatric treatment for rehabilitation, and so on, assign more and more significance to unspecified and as yet unspecifiable personal services of professional workers, and less and less to fixed definable material and institutional provisions....."

This seems a harsh generalisation which denies the "reality" of high levels of demand (at least by non-statutory clients) and low supply of material and service resources. Nevertheless, there was a sense in "open supervision" and "open access" in which client workers interactions centred on the application of rationing and denying activities. Where, on occasions, money was provided in small amounts this raised expectations from clients that further sums might be provided, and for staff that this might eventually lead to opportunities to engage in "real social work". By conferring claimant status on clients the symbolic function of the unit as a welfare unit was affirmed.

Whilst there is little doubt about those outcomes that were successful or unsuccessful, in terms of stated and written objectives, there were other outcomes that are less easily categorised or explained. The question, for example, of if and whether the team developed "non-treatment" approaches is a complex one, given the team's diverse views on this issue, and their variable practices. Nevertheless I would want to suggest that whilst in the medical sense in which the term "treatment" is used clients were not generally regarded as "sick" or "ill", the construction of helping and self help measures for individual clients confirmed the view that they were responsible for "holding the key to their own destiny". Probation Officers fostered and emphasised, sometimes reluctantly, and other times in quite extraordinary circumstances, the notions of self-determination self-reliance and self-help. It is suggested here that the expectations by staff to do "real social work" (in general terms casework with individuals and families) or for overt

forms of social control to be implemented were ousted by daily exigencies which as Willis (1986:177) has also recorded, resulted in help being addressed more to questions of individual social need, and much less to issues about offending behaviour.

The "presenting problems" whilst generally of a material nature, were not always concerned with the macro-issues (Bottoms and McWilliams, 1979) of lack of employment and money, but with local micro-issues such as dissatisfaction with housing, hostels, hospital treatment, and most frequently, social security practices and decisions. With the Senior Probation Officer occupying a mediating and conciliatory role between senior management and fieldworkers, the team were reluctant to and prevented from publicly addressing these micro or macro issues other than internally, occasionally, and on an individualised basis. There appeared to be little energy left for or commitment to do other than respond to mounting day-to-day pressures and crises.

The attempts to help clients secure employment are also included here as an outcome which was neither wholly successful or unsuccessful outcomes. Some clients (eight in six months) were helped to find employment, the majority did not. It is less clear how long these clients stayed in their jobs and whether these experiences were satisfactory. The low number of jobs available locally, the high rates of unemployment in the area, combined with the discriminatory opportunities arising from being a black ex-offender, provide the most satisfactory explanations for the limited number of job placements. The establishment of relationships with local colleges, and training institutions might just have encouraged some of the low-skilled youngsters to improve their financial status and "marketable assets" by acquiring specific skills.

The alcoholics "Breakfast Group" lasted through just one winter and, apparently, attracted a regular, albeit small, number of local drinkers who came in for sustenance (tea and toast) and talk. The setting provided a respite from the

cold, and the police. The group was not sustained beyond one winter because the Probation Officer concerned was "too busy" with his increasing amount of community work, and because no-one else volunteered to take on this additional and unpopular task. Once intra-team support systems failed, the drinkers venture folded. The lack of professional space and personal interest and, overall, nil agency priority or recognition of this extra work resulted, as with the activity groups, in declining team interest. The Womens Group, although fairly regularly staffed lacked substantial numbers of referrals from within the team itself. There were normally only four or five women (mostly voluntary) clients, in the group despite the fact that, at the time, 32 (or 34 per cent) of of the team's clients on Probation and Supervision Orders were female. The comment in a previous research study (Broad, 1982) that referrals are the "life blood" of Probation groups here appears a one-dimensional and inadequate explanation as additional factors became apparent. The eventual staff resistance to group objectives, the lack of participatory and status opportunities, the lack of resources (always resources!) and team commitment, were all factors that combined to challenge notions that statutory supervision is possible with a group context. It thus critically reaffirmed traditional individualised work.

I now want to move away from the operational implications as they relate to the community Probation work practices to an examination of those concerning the team's wider community based practices involving community work, and to a lesser extent, crime prevention work. Again in explaining and exploring the different types and nature of the outcomes a distinction will be drawn, where possible, between organisational, client, and ideological factors. The emphasis will be on the relationship between on the one hand the ways in which key questions were defined and addressed and on the other hand the nature of the outcomes.

(2) Community and Crime Prevention Work

The main successful outcomes in terms of achieved or indeed

other objectives, were, with other agencies, to establish two advice/recreational centres (the Afro-Caribbean Cultural Association and the First Generation Organisation) for ethnic minority groups and increase awareness by other professional agencies about the role of the Probation Service. The background Probation work done with these two groups was completed, as noted earlier, prior to the fieldwork. The success of the first outcome can be explained by the following factors; a political committment by the local authority, the availability of resources, the specificity of the task, and the political appeal, nationally and locally, of funding such centres as an acceptable way of channelling the energies of unemployed black youngsters. By the latter is meant the construction of and financial control over leisure projects which offer little threat to existing social arrangements and serve the function, at least in theory, of helping to keep "the streets safe" (Muncie, 1984:147). Both projects were particularly suitable for Probation Service involvement because they were consistent with team practices inside the team's Probation office of providing leisure, training and advice facilities both for young offenders and for those "at risk" of offending.

The second successful outcome, greater awareness of the Probation Service by other agencies in the area, can simply be explained by the deliberate mobilisation of a "professional bias" which, to all intents and purposes, excluded the public from Inter-agency meetings. Theoretically, as we shall see, this outcome also revealed the assumptions made about that a consensus of community interests could be engineered through increased social organisation centering on professional approaches and neighbourhood self-help. A third and less tangible successful outcome was concerned with raising the consciousness of different agency workers about the various problems that existed on Estates M and S. The form which community work by Probation team members took, emphasising consensual arrangements and professional welfare approaches, delimited the nature of interventions and outcomes.

By contrast the same assumptions about the locality, plus others, explain why other more substantive outcomes were largely unsuccessful. These concerned the team's initial objectives of tackling "structural issues", (racism and unemployment) helping the community to become more self-supporting and self-policing, implementing crime prevention and Inter-agency initiatives and presenting a co-ordinated approach to social problems through increasing levels of service delivery.

Perhaps the most questionable assumption which underpinned the various strands of the team's community involvement was its understanding that "community" could be equated with "locality" or neighbourhood. This belief was largely encouraged and guided, by the initial administrative arrangements which created a new area team, and accompanying sub-areas or patches (Appendices D and E). Plant's (1974:40) comment about community work and locality highlight the nature of the problem:

> "... the very fact that community work is needed within the locality in an attempt to transform the social relationships in the locality entails that locality is not to be regarded as a sufficient condition for community."

The limitation of "locality communities" was also acknowledged in the Seebohm Report (1968:147):

> "The definition of a community, or even a neighbourhood is increasingly difficult as society becomes more mobile and people belong to communities of common interest, influenced by their work, education or social activities as well as where they live."

In the area in which the Community Probation Team was located it appeared more, rather than less, likely that the closer groups became, greater the potential for conflict. Not only was there considerable competition between public groups for power and influence but there was a significant degree of conflict and disagreement between groups as to the definitions, nature of, and solutions to social problems. This conflict also arose from resistance by the professional

agencies (with perhaps the exception of the police), to adjust their priorities and services within the Inter-agency groups. The eventual adoption of "self-help" (by certain residents) rather than professional helping strategies (for certain residents) was a measure of expediency. It floundered because up until the point was reached when care by the community became the "new" strategy, the networks of potential care had not been identified but been excluded from discussions. In any case there must remain serious doubts, according to Lee and McGrath (1973) and Benington (1974:275) about the potential for solving or ameliorating certain sets of problems at a local level. Lee and McGrath (1973:185), for example, state:

> "Many problems of disadvantage experienced by immigrants, and other underprivileged groups are rooted in the social and economic structure of our society in a way that is not easily amenable to radical change at local level ... Community work based on the expression of felt need and "self-help" strategies should not be seen as a substitute for effective national policies to tackle problems of inequality and disadvantage."

The levels of centralisation of decision making in private and public organisations also limited the scope for effecting substantial changes at a local level. As Benington (1974:275) notes:

> "An exclusive focus on "small" neighbourhoods of concentrated multiple deprivation may prove to be misleading. Many of the critical problems identified ..... are manifestations of wider processes in society. To isolate a small geographical area for study or action can isolate that population from the wider class structure within which "deprivation" has to be examined."

Whilst intially there was a recognition by the Inter-Agency groups that the remedies to the locality's problems were located both outside and within the area, the Inter-agency groups lack of power and status combined with the resistance by organisations to adapt their practices and priorities resulted in the locality, as a practical necessity, being perceived of as the sole provider of "solutions" to its "problems".

It remains to consider, on the basis of the empirical findings what, in theoretical terms, are the implications for the Probation Service of becoming engaged in Probation Service community developments. It is maintained that the diverse elements (community Probation work, community work and crime prevention work) can be best examined and most clearly presented by using a three-fold conceptual construct referred to as social control, social justice, and social welfare models, presented as Figure 3. It is argued that the majority of the team's practices can be located both with the social welfare and social control models. Significantly the social justice model remains, at this stage, largely inoperable and little more than a theoretical possibility.

Theoretical Implications

It will be maintained here that in terms of practice and outcomes, and not ideals, the Community Probation Team's various community development practices reaffirmed but also extended into the locality some of the Probation Service's traditional notions and expectations concerning its work with statutory offenders. Specifically these were concerned with offering professional welfare solutions, based on help and self-help ideas, to social problems. It will also be argued that the Community Probation Team, with others in the locality settings, sought to instil greater self-regulation and help for its client groups and were deflected from addressing wider issues about social injustices. Various contextual themes are identified including; problem expression and definition, the guiding perceptions about the population, the methods of organisation and decision making, and the types of solutions sought. First then an account of the social control model.

The Social Control Model

Let me first examine the term social control.

The term social control, like community, is often used in different ways to mean different things to different people. Thus it is important here to arrive at some sort of working

definition. According to Cohen (1985:2) the term social control is, generally:

> "... something of a Mickey Mouse concept. In sociology text books it appears as a neutral term to cover all social processes to induce conformity ranging from infant socialisation through to public execution. In radical theory and rhetoric, it has become a negative term to cover not just the obviously coercive apparatus of the State, but also the putative hidden element in all State-sponsored social policy, whether called Health, Education or Welfare. Historians and Political Scientists restrict the concept to the repression of political opposition, while sociologists, psychologists and anthropologists invariably talk in broader and non-political terms .... All this creates some terrible muddles."

Higgins (1980) appears to regard most forms of social policy as constituting social control measures whether she is referring to Unemployment Insurance in 1911 or the Community Development Projects of the 1970's. Specifically she has argued that the relationship between social control and social policy was rediscovered and sharpened following the urban crises in the United States in the 1960's, and in some European Countries. Writers such as Mayer (1985) and Stedman Jones (1985) are, however, critical of the wider use of the term social control to characterise a range of measures and processes. On class based control and control by professionals Mayer (1985:19) writes "in short, precisely who was doing the controlling for what reasons and by what means remain unclear issues". It is not intended to use an all embracing or political definition of social control but rather to adopt a sociological framework for discussion based on the following definition by Cohen, which is "response-specific", not based on ongoing generalised policies. He writes (Cohen, 1985:3) of social control being:

> "... those organised responses to crime, delinquency and allied forms of deviant and/or socially problematic behaviour which are actually conceived of as such whether in the reactive sense (after the putative act has taken place or the actor being identified) or in the proactive sense (to prevent the act)."

According to this definition a social control perspective of

Probation Service community developments took the form of an organised response to socially problematic behaviour arising from public disorders, and in anticipation of some future problem or rule-breaking occurring. To support this claim the Probation Team's work focused on the problematic but not necessarily criminal, behaviour of youngsters on housing estates and elsewhere who were described variously as "troublesome", "noisy", "at risk. This understanding, like social work with "at risk" adolescents arising from the 1969 Children and Young Persons Act, extends state social control into preventive arenas, with non offenders (see, for example, Adams **et al**, 1981).

According to what can be called this community model of social control the area or part of the area, and individuals could have been primarily described in deviant terms, culturally, sub-culturally and criminally. "Labelling" and stigmatising processes (Becker, 1974) would begin to affect the area's self image and behaviour, as well as the perception by others of the area. Organised social control responses supported by sanctions would become necessary. For Probation clients these would take the form of effective social training, social treatment and punishment measures. These would include efforts to influence the attitudes and behaviour of deviants. But as Parker (1978:62) notes: "The crucial issue revolves around who determines the societal values and the types of norms and rules of behaviour that guide social workers and other agents". A social control perspective might also emphasise diagnostic and expert components (Bean, 1976:66-68, 73-74), and pathological assumptions. (criticized by Bottoms and McWilliams, 1979:166-167). In its work on Estate S and M there was an emphasis, particularly on Estate M of diagnostic and expert components which largely excluded opportunities for citizens to participate in decision making processes. The rehabilitory reform programme, eventually acknowledging professional limitations, was eventually shared, on Estate M, with the citizenry but on Estate S remained within the control of Inter-agency group. The moral imperatives of the community social control model extend beyond the individual

and family to the area as it was assumed that the community was morally responsible and liable for the actions of its deviant members.

Furthermore direct relationships would be made between, on the one hand, the unregulated community, (as locality) and, on the other, the rates of crime in the area. Maccoby's et al (1958:51) conclusion based on an analysis of two similar geographical areas, states that:

> "Our study suggests that a neighbourhood pattern of social isolation of families maybe an important factor in delinquency.. the lack of social integration appears to have certain direct effects in a lowered level of social control of delinquent and pre-delinquent activities."

The inference is clear; increased social cohesion and integration bring about increased social control. The apparently symbiotic nature of the relationship between social cohesion and social control is also examined by Conklin (1975:99). He writes:

> "Although we lack conclusive evidence, crime also seems to reduce social interaction as fear and suspicion drive people apart. This produces a disorganised community that is unable to exercise informal social control over deviant behaviour."

The social control perspective, therefore, legitimises two approaches; a specifically crime-led one to increase community cohesion, and the introduction of various socially integrative measures designed to reduce crime and also fear of crime. Both approaches representing both formal and informal types of social control were supported by the police but also the Probation Service on both housing estates, but particularly Estate M. The difficulty, as we saw in the previous chapter was in <u>applying</u> those approaches without the availability of resources (as rewards), formal sanctions (as regulatory devices) or the citizenry (as informant/participants).

The promotion and construction in symbolic terms of an "urban fortress" and to a lesser extent an "urban village" to

prevent or contain crime in the area is also central to reducing tensions and increasing "social cohesion". The former Chief Constable of Devon and Cornwall, John Alderson's writings (1979:192-193) about area assessments and citizenry self-reliance and self-help are relevant here:

> "... identify existing communities where community spirit is noticeable; secondly to indentify Quasi-communities where there are remnants of communities but where there is a need for stimulus ... thirdly to identify areas where ethnic minorities are concentrated and where new communities could be established; fourthly the polyglot areas where there are people but no sense, no hope, no remnant of a community ... Since the village in the city is for the purpose of preventing crime and delinquency problems it will have no resources other than those provided by local government and by charities. It does not need resources much beyond those already available, the most important resource is the residents."

The lack of clarity about what is actually meant by "community spirit", whilst understandable, is characteristic of much writing in this area. Also his taxonomy of areas is reminiscent of the early ecological theories of Park (1936) and Shaw and Mackay (1942). The Community Probation Team, in attempting to create a more self-supporting "community", perhaps similar in some ways to Aldersons "urban village", became involved in both crime-led and community integration preventative work. This involved the team on two estates promoting non crime-led preventative measures and in the case of Estate M's Inter-agency group creating unintentionally a forum for the police to pursue their own Neighbourhood Watch policies. It also took the form of attempting to increase social integration in the form of various social and moral self-help initiatives designed to promote neighbourliness and self-reliance necessary for the maintenance of the existing social order and institutional arrangements. Their significance, both inside and outside the office, lay in their inoperability and limited outcomes.

The emphasis on local "communities" taking more responsibility for their lives, and the behaviour of their members is a notion supported, amongst others, by Young. He

writes (1975:89):

> "We have to argue ... for the exercise of social control, but also to argue that such control must be exercised within the working-class community and not by external policing agencies .... Further it is only in the process of struggle for control that the community can evolve out of its frequently disorganised and disintegrated state".

Exactly how "communities" can be identified and how social control would be exercised are not issues developed by Young, as Downes (1979:12) comments:

> "The most likely result of implementing Young's ideas would be a reversion to the chaos that prevailed in London before the Metropolitan Police Act of 1829. It would leave the poorer and more vulnerable sections of the working class far worse off than now, reproducing a state of affairs that already exists in the worst Amercian ghettos"

Social crime prevention measures for youth in the area, attempted to channel "at risk" youngsters and others into activity based youth clubs and other voluntary ventures. Their function, in a social control model, would be not to empower or inform, but, put crudely, to limit opportunities for delinquency through the provision of containing, supervised and restrictive activities. Both inside the team's office, and outside through the Inter-agency groups efforts, such measures were largely ineffective in their application, although a small number of youngsters did, admittedly, regularly attend the office's activities. Additionally the Afro-Caribbean Cultural Association did attract, so far as one could tell, a regular youthful clientele. In turn, as we have seen, these became more visible and accessible to police surveillance.

The forms of organisation necessary to introduce such measures were based around the "community planning" and "community development" types of community work outlined earlier. Inside the team's office the structure for such activities was made available by decisions to create a "new" Probation office, and internal staff decisions about "flexible" opportunities for statutory supervision. Extra

resources, other than human, were not necessary in this social control model because the emphasis was on increasing a sense of personal obligation and moral duty, not on changing existing social arrangements. Therefore approaches were necessarily directive rather than participative, organisation and inter-organisation centred rather than community based, and even when community based, essentially excluded those deviants in the area from any discussions regarding their regulation.

Rather than being an advocate and change agent, the function of the Probation Service in the social control model of community developments was as a control agent. In this role the Probation Service acted as a mediator between conflicting groups in an attempt to reduce and defuse existing tensions. In the social control model these functions can be characterised as encirclement and enforcement, the emphasis being on containment of the deviant or problem, as far as possible within specific geographical parameters, and, in the case of alleged illegal drug use, within prescribed physical boundaries. In sum then the social control model of Probation Service community developments required the Probation Service to work with the Police and other organisations concerned with the maintenance of the existing social order. The emphasis on pathological explanations for local criminal acts and area social conditions would provide the necessary theoretical basis for the introduction of a range of "blurring", "masking" and "net-widening" restrictive measures (Cohen, 1979). The Community Probation Team encouraged greater client attendance through it's "mini-policies", and attempted to exercise self-restraint by clients through socialisation processes. Forms of self-help <u>for</u> clients, and introduced <u>by</u> Probation staff acted as a means of exercising social control, albeit limited in application by the degree of absenteeism of statutory clients. Indeed the mobilisation of client socialisation strategies had the effect, if not the main original intention, of encouraging non Probation individuals to conform to what was expected of Probation clients. What according to the "social justice model" (below) are

problematic social conditions and issues, became pathological, opportunistic and ecological problems in the social control model.

Regulations and restraints became necessary as legitimate forms of intervention to sustain the moral and social consensus. The consensus model of society can be summarised (White, 1973:15) in the following terms. It is:

> "... basically unitary. Parliament respects us all: the executive acts in the common interest ... the law is equal and just to us all and is administered without fear or favour for the common good .... Conflicts that there are will be on a personal level .... Structural conflicts between interested groups if not entirely absent will be transformed into questions about the enforcement of individual obligations."

Just laws are thus in harness with just distribution. The consensus model: "... posits a consensus amongst rational men on the morality and permanence of the present distribution of property." (Taylor **et al**, 1975:3). The Community Probation Team appeared to have neither the power, willingness, authorisation nor authority to challenge existing social and political arrangements within the area. Had it decided to accept and act upon with others some of the conflicts for its clients within the area and engaged, most probably on the estates, with a public who, when given the opportunity, did voice their concerns about housing and other social issues then, it is argued, the following "social justice" perspective if only to a limited extent might just have resulted, as an objective but also as a set of principles.

FIGURE 3

Probation Service Community Developments: Characteristics of Social Justice, Social Control, and Social Welfare Models.

Contextual Themes	Social Justice	Social Control	Social Welfare
Guiding perception of the population	Victims	Deviants	Clients
Nature of Problem	Social Conditions	Pathological Behaviour	Individual and area disorganisation
Expression of Problem	Repressed population	Unregulated population	People in need
Societal Model	Structural/ Conflict	Consensus	Pluralist
Goal	Empowerment	Encirclement/ Enforcement	colonisation/ containment
Purpose of Response	Redistribution of rights and resources	Reassertion and extension of formal authority	Individualised/ local help and self-help
Role of the Probation Service	Advocate/ Facilitator	Mediator/ Facilitator	Harmoniser/ Mediator/Rationer of resources
Function of the Probation Service	Change Agent	Control Agent	Agent of Normal-isation
Approach	Task/ Process based	Task Based	Task based
Focus	Collectively/ Community centred	Policy/ Organisation centred	Problem/ Professional focus
Type of Response	Directive	Directive	Negotiated

The Social Justice Model

At the outset it should be stated that the term "social justice" should not be confused with the term "justice" as used in the so-called "justice/welfare debate". There the "justice approach" was used (for example, Parsloe, 1976) to depict the main purpose of the criminal justice system as punitive in purpose, whereas the "welfare approach" in criminal justice denoted rehabilitative objectives. Although the principles of that debate are relevant here, my concern focuses on social justice.

The term "social justice" used here is concerned with philosophical concepts about the nature and place of "just principles" in society. The complex nature of this debate is reduced here, necessarily over schematically, to considerations about existing patterns of material and financial distribution and opportunities for citizen participation. In sum we are talking about the reduction of economic and status differentials. Of the first Harvey (1973:97), observes that: "The principle of social justice therefore applies to the division of benefits and the allocation of burdens." Of the second aspect of social justice Harvey (1973:97-98) writes that this can:

> "... consider conflicts over the locus of power and decision making authority, the distribution of influence, the bestowal of social status, the institutions set up to regulate and control activity, and so on."

The evidence that such inequalities exist is voluminous and it is not intended here to restate the case either generally, or about the relative failure of the welfare state since the war to substantially readdress structural inequalities. The latter point has been developed by, for example, George and Wilding (1976), and Hadley and Hatch (1981), and more recently Mishra (1987).

The social justice model requires the Probation Service to move beyond what Halmos (1978:12-13) describes as the "normal tutoring for mankind" role fulfilled by social work. A

victimisation perspective in structural deficiency terms, not individual terms provides the necessary framework to facilitate progressive, i.e. redistributive and participative rather than regressive i.e. non-distributive and elitist interactions, practices and policies. The model would seek to operationalise the view that status and opportunity differentials arise not from pathological inadequacies, but from a combination of class, racial, gender, and spatial factors. Attempts to counter racial discrimination are particularly relevant in the 1980's in inner city areas such as Brixton (see, for example, Benyon, 1984, 1987; and regarding social work Ely and Denny, 1984, and Coombe and Little, 1986).

The model assumes that the hardships and difficulties experienced in an area occur primarily through no fault of its own. i.e. the opposite assumption to that contained in the "blame the victim" view. The social justice model asserts that an area's social conditions are best understood within the structuralist/conflict rather than consensual, or even pluralist, theoretical frameworks.

The structuralist/conflict theories stress the diversity rather than the unity of values present in a society, but regard such diversity (Worsley et al, 1969:390):

> "... as either a consequence or a cause of conflicts of interest: the existence of conflict-groups .... The society itself is not held together by consensus, but, primarily by the use of power and force; dominant groups may try to promote consensus but only do so to improve their position of domination."

The identification of the area's problems essentially as being public issues arising from social conditions, is a critical element of the social justice model. As Halmos (1978:20) writes:

> "It is not a novel observation, yet it is necessary to repeat once again that when we talk about a "social problem" we really mean a social condition which gives rise to deprivation and frustration of a certain need or needs."

Attempts to begin to resolve the problem of social conditions become focussed on collective forms of social action designed to empower marginalised groups, including lower class groups, ethnic groups and women, as victims of structural oppression. The term "empowerment" is used to characterise objectives which would seek to give the "disenfranchised and disadvantaged" (Leissner, 1984:3) greater access to decision-making processes and economic resources, and ultimately, if perhaps idealistically, political power. The community action model of community work is suggested as the most likely candidate despite its limitations, in social work terms, of achieving those goals. But what is community action? The Calouste Gulbenkian Study Group's Report of 1973 lent its support to Bryant's (1972:206) definition of the term:

> "Community action may denote a particular approach to organised local groups and welfare publics; an approach in which the political impotence or powerlessness of these groups is defined as a central problem and strategies are employed which seek to mobilise them for the representation and promotion of their collective interest."

This definition of community action is particularly relevant here as it encapsulates the key issues and approaches inherent in the social justice model. Of the power structure, for example, Rothman (1969:37) argues that in social action (approximating community action)"... the client is usually conceived of as some community subpart or segment", with, importantly the power structure "... seen as an external target for action." In respect of community action Thomas's (1983a:126) methods of working with people and organisations in community work generally, are particularly crucial here. These methods are:

> "- encouragement of the "collectivisation" of problems, and of attempts to tackle them.
>
> - a collegiate/partnership approach to working with people.
>
> - putting emphasis on aspects of problems that lie outside the person, in the "structural" or public sphere.

- Putting expressed, or felt, needs above professional or bureaucratic definitions of need.

- An equal emphasis on pursuit of process goals (promoting political, organisational, skill development etc.) as on task goals (resource, redistribution, power sharing, etc.)

- democratisation of decision making."

However, the limitations of community action as an approach designed to introduce social reform measures also needs to be recognised. Various writers including Mayo (1983), Benington (1974) and Marris and Rein (1972) have drawn attention to this issue. Marris and Rein (1972:296), for example, writing of power and influence in the Poverty and Community Action Programmes in the United States in the 1960' comment:

> "The process is circular: without power, you will not be heard; but until you are heard, you cannot influence the basis of consent to the power you seek. Community action set out to change the way problems were perceived by opening new channels of communication. In this it largely failed, in the short run, because it had no power to alter the priorities of attention."

But, they more optimistically add (1972:296):

> "... from its frustrations arose a movement to protest the right of the poor, and all politically disadvantaged minorities to be heard which over the decade has profoundly influenced our conceptions of democracy."

The difficulty for the Probation Service concerns its capacity for and commitment to engaging in forms of community action which adopt a structural/conflict societal model. Inevitably such action would bring it into direct public conflict with other agencies and government policies. There are, however, examples of Probation Service involvement in community action programmes in Going Local in Probation (Scott, et al, 1985). Some of the problems for the Probation Service and its staff becoming involved in various types of community work are also highlighted in that monograph, in particular problems, we have observed here, of worker and agency ambiguities, and organisational marginality.

Without actually either promoting community action or advocating social change as such, two Probation areas, albeit in a small way, have seen fit to make public comments about social issues. The Chief Probation Officer of Merseyside, in an article entitled "Social Comment - an Appropriate Role for the Probation Service" (Mathieson, 1982) has written of the inevitability of social comment being about politics but proposing that the Probation Service become a social agency of prominence and influence. Second the Middlesex Probation Service in it's submission to the Broadwater Farm Enquiry commented on fears that the Police might "take advantage of any future disorder to satisfy their sense of grievance", and that the local police and Consultative Group shows "an unwillingness to accommodate the views of disadvantaged and minority groups." (Gifford, 1986:146-147, 210). The victimisation perspective in the social justice model requires social comment to be translated into community or social action. The actions of the organisation, both locally and centrally, together with volume and nature of client demand, (reflecting the "deprived" catchment area) acted as a demoralising brake on opportunities to make, never mind act upon, social comments about the area's conditions and conflicts. There were, nevertheless, some instances when individuals were helped to improve their own situations by direct Probation Officer involvement, for example concerning rehousing.

The "social justice" model then has considerable implications for the Probation Service. Specifically it suggests that the service adopts the additional role of advocate/facilitator in the community in order to fulfill a "change agent" function in promoting social change. This work may be either of a short term or task-based nature or be longer term and process-centred. By the latter is meant the promotion of the sorts of organisational, educational and political skills found in some adult and community education work. The Social Justice models support for a more directive and informed approach in this area of work provides an even more serious challenge to those Probation Teams working in poor inner city

areas such as the team in Brixton. However a combination of organisational controls, professional codes of conduct, and the needs for personal as well as professional survival combined to deflate practice and deflect it into traditional rehabiliative areas. In particular the absence of any unifying and lateral organisational structures effectively prevented opportunities for the team, had they subscribed to a social justice model of engaging the first principle of community participation, namely collective activity. A third model of Probation Service Community Developments, a social welfare model, is, it is argued, the one on which the Community Probation Team primarily based its work.

The Social Welfare Model

Overall the social welfare model denotes an emphasis on a personal service, professionally delivered, to people designated as clients. Of the generic, and perhaps not so fashionable term "social welfare" itself Marshall (1965:114) writes:

> "Opinions may differ as to the full and perfect definition of social welfare, but there is general agreement about its central core. It refers to a service that is personal, and of a general rather than a specialised kind; its aim is to help someone to make the best of life in face of the disabilities with which he is afflicted, or the difficulties which confront him, and have either already defeated him or threaten to do so. It offers support to the weak and aims either at rehabilitation or at adjustment to circumstances that cannot be changed."

The term social welfare applies to a potentially wide range of groups in need of statutory or voluntary welfare provisions including those such as the homeless, problem families and discharged prisoners (Marshall, 1965:114-115), whose client status has been largely socially acquired, as well as groups with either inherent or acquired disabilities. Parker (1975:125) writes:

> "Thus in speaking of welfare we are concerned with the social care ... available for those who are dependent on others ... and for those who offend against public norms of behaviour and

respectability."

More generally we have the "institutional" and "residual" models, amongst others, of social welfare. Of these models Pinker (1979:6), for example, writes:

> "The institutional model of social welfare treats collectivist intervention in the form of social policy as the most desirable end-product of political action. Priorities are ordered and resources allocated by reference to criteria of need .... By contrast the residual model of social welfare treats as morally commendable actions individualistic forms of self help. Priorities are ordered and resources allocated according to the criteria of price."

It is argued that the citing of the new Probation office in a poor inner city location combined with the nature of the clients problems, and the staff's responses to produce opprtunities for residual welfare to be applied. Clients problems presented almost exclusively in material and service terms suggested gross inadequacies in the state's institutional model of collectivist welfare interventions. It also suggested, alarmingly, that the situation of the team's clients, the vast majority of whom were dependent on the public provision of services and finance, was, if anything, getting worse, not better so far as supply and demand were concerned. The removal of discretionary cash payments (and other restrictions) as a result of the Social Fund introduced in 1988, together with ongoing financial crisis in the borough of Lambeth will, it is argued, further deleteriously effect service provisions to the poor and needy. The displacement of state deficiencies, so far as its welfare provisions were concerned, onto state officials who were Probation Officers not local authority Social Workers, posed dilemmas which were variously acknowledged, ignored and denied.

In the "open access" setting staff administered social welfare in terms which were both the most practical available, and with which they were most comfortable as professionals. The provision of short-term financial help to clients functioned as a way of meeting immediate client

"demands", but also postponed the re-emergence of problems of poverty and desperation. It also produced professional tensions (on this point see Satyamurti, 1981:143-149) about if, and whether financial help should be an integral component of social work assistance. In this respect the clients social problems, more than their offending problems helped to shape and determine the team's role and functions. It could be argued that these ultimately took the form of being a state buffer or mediator between, on the one hand, the poor and delinquent, and on the other hand both the rich and influential, and locally respectable and hard-working. Whilst ideologically strident and polemicist, this suggestion ignores the interactional complexities, negotiations and outcomes described earlier.

Specifically the dominant mode of "client resitance and exclusion" cannot simply be ignored. Both inside the office at Job Spot and "Open Supervision" sessions, and outside, on both Estates M and S, client non-participation was considerable. First-hand accounts by non-participating clients proved illusive. Nevertheless, it is possible to argue that the lack of meaning given to these activities by the professional workers themselves, by <u>their</u> absences and actions in combination with an "expert-bias" (so far as decision making and problem definitions were concerned), produced a resistance by citizens, (including some offenders) to acquiring client status. Assumptions made about apolitical professionalism combined with non and minimal client participation and, on the estates client exclusion, to minimalise opportunities for any participatory citizen/worker collaborations focusing on issues of social justice to be formed. Notions of "flexible reporting" without appointments ("to avoid setting up client failure", according to one staff member) deliberately blurred the boundaries between "acceptable" and "non-acceptable" levels of reporting, and legitimised staff practices, with just two recorded exceptions during the research period, of not breaching Probation offenders for non-reporting. Rather, notions of individual help and self-help focusing on social, not offending problems were invoked. Overall, practices were

directed at implementing a traditional and official aim of Probation, that of assisting clients with "help in difficulties over money, accommodation or employment" (Home Office, 1978: paragraphs 17, 53). Indeed as Willis (1986:167) notes elsewhere in an empirical study, what is also implied here is "a calculated rejection of overt social control as a subordinate Probation goal". Where "social welfare" did merge with "social control" was in the application of self-help principles (Pinker, 1979:6) to those clients, the majority, financially dependent on the state.

The sheer scale of the low economic status of the team's clients, amplifying local patterns, suggested that self-help practices were invoked primarily as a crisis response, and not as a pre-planned strategy. Problems of poverty, combined with lack of access to and dissatisfaction about public services appeared the main reasons for clients attendance at the office. There is some evidence (Becker and MacPherson, 1986:689-691) for suggesting that the scale of poverty of those people coming to the attention of social services personnel is increasing, and requires urgent consideration, so far as social work practice and policies are concerned.

Whilst as Hardiker (1977:131-153) notes Probation staff tend to operationalise different social work ideologies, the team's activities and practices in Social Inquiry Reports, at "open access" sessions, and on the estates tended to individualise, localise and conflate both personal problems and inadequate social conditions. Perceptions of the professional/client situation enabled staff to abstract their client's economic, social and political context, and instead implant counselling and self-help and helping activities. Organisational constraints appealing to liberal values, (George and Wilding, 1976:117-123) reinforced this approach. As Pearson (1975:208) notes in connection with social work and its relationship with politics:

> "The dominant spirit of technical professionalism ... determines which questions should be asked ... Moral and political debate is not outlawed, but it is kept in its place, and the questions which are regarded as legitimate and "useful" are questions

> with technical solutions. In doing this social welfare does not only forget its explicit history, it also imagines that certain questions (of a moral and political character) are already answered satisfactorily."

Here whilst in terms of analysis by staff, social problems and client situations were seen as both a result of a combination of problematic social conditions (particularly for black clients), and problem individuals, in terms of action clients were encouraged to adapt to , and impose their own position. This was in part a result of perceptual parameters which delineated power holders (in terms of actual or potential resource providers) as being outside the realms of professional practice, and also because they appeared beyond reach (Marris and Rein, 1972:224-265), but not beyond redemption. It was somewhat ironic that when one such "power holder", in terms of potential influence, the Mayor of Lambeth, was finally persuaded by one team member to become involved in an estate's problems, that he too considered he could not commit himself to estate activities because of his non-political office.

Overall, unit members preferred to deal with traditional social work areas of family and inter-personal problems but were reluctantly forced by circumstances to become more pragmatic practitioners. There were continual pressures from clients, and frustrations about lack of organisational support, resources, and opportunities to do "real social work". These factors eventually combined or so it appeared to reinforce less innovative practices and eventually legitimise more structured Probation approaches. They also contributed as we have seen to a complete turnover of the staff group (with just one exception, and not for want of trying) within four years.

Having now considered the operational and theoretical implications of "community involvement" work it remains to examine the policy implications arising from this type of work.

Policy Implications

It has been argued in this thesis that the work by the Community Probation Team represents, to some extent, an attempt to change the emphasis and direction of Probation work from reactive work with statutory clients to pro-active or preventative work, from individual offenders to community groups, from concerns for the individual offender in society to concerns about certain areas, from single agency to multi-agency work, and lastly from concerns about actual crime and individual criminals to concerns about actual and potential public disorders. The implications and consequences for the Probation Service engaging in community developments, have already been identified in operational and theoretical terms. What appears to be lacking at the present time is a coherent statement of policies whether from the Home Office, the National Association of Probation Officers, The Association of Chief Probation Officers or the National or Local Statements of Objectives and Priorities. As Lloyd (1986:71) comments, in his analysis of Probation Area's Local Statements as they relate, generally, to "Community Probation Work",

> "Local statements provided very nebulous information.....Many areas failed to describe explicit strategies for carrying out proposals, and in this field of work more than any other, it was very difficult to separate objectives for the future from those that had already been implemented."

The following then seeks to redress the current policy vacuum in this area of work by examining some policy implications arising from the fieldwork. Let us first be clear about the terms in which "policy" will be discussed before considering its application and implications.

In general terms the word "policy" could include here reference to various potential policy areas, for example; penal policy, Probation policy, organisational policy, social policy, economic or political policy. Additionally, we also might have to consider the policy decision makers, processes

and executants which influence policy, as well as asking the question policy implications for whom? (the Probation Service?, its clients?, its staff?, others?). In general terms what is essentially a single case study, albeit supplemented by other material, is more suited, as Hall, Land, Parker and Webb (1975:13-17) point out, to addressing some questions than others. In particular they agree (Hall, Land, Parker and Webb, 1975:17) that providing a conceptual framework is established, reasonably similar sets of cases are available to provide cautious comparisons, and one strives to look at "policy-making-through-time" then "the case study approach is justifiable and profitable" in suggesting general propositions about how policy develops. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to identify policy development so far as general penal policy is concerned. It is however legitimate and necessary to understand the implications for Probation policy development arising from the research and set within the wider penal context. Whilst some consideration must also be given here to understanding, overall, the implications for organisational policy formation so far as the Probation Service is concerned, the detail presented earlier under "operational implications" will not be repeated here. This final "policy implications" section then concentrates on the implications of Probation Service community developments (community Probation work, community and crime prevention work) for Probation policy.

The "development" or "innovatory" status of community Probation work, with its emphasis on "new" ways of carrying out existing duties, remains unclear. So far as <u>means</u> are concerned elements of patchwork, teamwork, informal group work, open access/supervision and office resource utilization appear relatively innovative. So far as medium term <u>ends</u> (the supervision of offenders outside penal institutions) and longer term aims are concerned, community Probation work occupies a developmental status in the sense that it represents an extension to current practices. Longer term aims, for Probation Orders, for example, focus, according to the Home Office (1986d:31), on the fundamental purpose of upholding the law and protecting society "by the probation

service working with the offender to improve his behaviour". So far as community and crime prevention work are concerned the thesis has argued that both, so far as the Probation Service's history is concerned, can be accorded "innovatory" status in the sense that they generally represent a recent change of Probation Service policy direction (Home Office, 1984, 1984a, 1984b). So far as crime prevention work is concerned it suggest a shift away from Probation concerns about the prevention of individual re-offending, towards the prevention of wider criminal acts. In so far as community work's diverse aims, are concerned, as previously discussed, they would appear innovatory so far as Probation policy is concerned providing, unlike here, that there is no explicit or implicit association between community work and crime prevention, or indeed crime reduction. The emphasis on reducing structural inequalities, and improving environmental conditions through forms of community action as described in Going Local in Probation (Scott et al, 1985) suggests innovatory individual practices, but not innovatory service policies. Having considered the policy status of community and crime prevention work and community Probation work it is now necessary to examine, so far as the Probation Service is concerned, the policy implications of each, beginning with community and crime prevention work.

In relation to community and crime prevention work by the Probation Service we can consider the existence of both optimistic consensus and pessimistic conflictual scenarios in terms of policy development. The optimistic view of such work, expressed in part by Henderson (1988) is that such work is gradually expanding, retains a measure of practitioner and management support, and merely awaits implementation for it to become a complimentary force in Probation work. The pessimistic view, is one which emphasises the conflictual nature of the Community Probation Team's locality and the problematic issue of the Probation Service as an instrument of social change.

Bottoms and McWilliams (1979:187-195) and others identified earlier (in Chapter Three) suggest that the Probation Service

is well placed to and should move into the crime prevention "arena". In so doing this sort of work it would, perhaps, need to become more clearly defined, task-based, manageable (in terms of time) and evaluable (in terms of objectives). An emphasis on clarity of objectives would, it is argued, be in accord with the current emphasis on "Probation by objectives", the objective of a crime prevention/reduction role being one supported by the Home Office (1984) and more broadly by the government. According to this optimistic view practice ambiguities and conflicts could be subsumed within wider policy statements, entrusting the operationalization of community and crime prevention policies to local management and Probation teams. As we have seen here it is possible for the Probation Service to make a small contribution in urban localities, here in two projects for black youngsters, providing that external funding sources and the political will are available. Whether or not such projects, or attempts on Estates S and M to introduce greater social cohesion, actually reduced levels of crime in the area is a complex one beyond the scope of this thesis. Nevertheless, in this optimistic scenario there is a possibility, and it is no more than that, that the two cultural/advice/recreational projects for black youngsters acted as institutional "safety valves" for pent-up frustrations and feelings of boredom. Furthermore the recreational and advice work done elsewhere by the Probation Service described by Hill (1987:229) also confirms the view that such work is possible. Overall then the limited examples of Probation Service, not N.A.C.R.O. led Inter-agency initiatives (Stern, 1987:209-25), whether community or crime prevention work, support the view that such work might develop beyond its infancy. However the pessimistic scenario, informed by the thesis' empirical work and literature review strongly suggests that this, rather than an optimistic one, is the more likely.

The pessimistic scenario of policy implications is based, broadly speaking, on the assumption that policies are not simply imposed and "directive" in nature (Batten, 1967) but in part derive from a series of actions and negotiations, informed by concerns about the value of "professionalism",

between bargaining actors. First, and at a Service level, the questionnaire findings suggested that perceptual differences about the meaning of Probation terms preceded by the prefix "community", as well as subsequent practices indicated serious limitations on the application of community developments, whether called community work or crime prevention. The practices outlined in the questionnaire findings suggested more a re-affirmation of existing statutory duties concerning the supervision of offenders outside penal institutions (ie developmental work), than a shift of emphasis into innovatory policy areas. Moreover, the understanding by questionnaire respondents that community developments with Inner London Probation Service, despite rhetoric to the contrary, was given a low and/or very low priority, acted as a brake on, not a spur to greater involvement. At the case study level the involvement by two of the Community Probation Team's staff in inter-agency work on two estates was initially cautiously enthusiastic. However against a background of increasing workloads and pressures emanating both from within the criminal justice system and from office visits (from voluntary clients), as well as conflicts between agencies about "problem" definitions and interventions, this enthusiasm slowly waned. Objectives primarily founded on consensuality, and professional servicing became replaced by concerns about resident self-help and mutual aid once the extent of inter-agency rivalry, local conflicts, and the complexity of the local problems became apparent. These tensions imply that future Probation Service community involvement requires a recognition that many of the conflicts and problems in some inner-city areas require wider economic, social and political solutions. Furthermore it is suggested that community and crime prevention work which has the active support of key resource holders and residents involvement, rather than work which reflects single agency interests, is more likely to succeed. The work by the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (Stern, 1987) and the government's Priority Estates Programme (funded by the Department of the Environment) are examples of a degree of government commitment to selected areas.

In so far as anti-racist Probation practice in localities is concerned with "empowering" black projects/residents through resource redistribution and black resident involvement (Dominelli, 1979:29; Ely and Denny, 1986:84-98) and not "colonising" them, the research suggests a problematic relationship between the Probation Service and local residents in inner city locations. This problematic relationship centres on the primary role of the Probation Service as a professional state agency concerned with individual reform and treatment and which is accountable to its courts and Probation committees, rather than "nebulous" localities. This absence of direct accountability to local residents, projects or voluntary organisations, combined here with the individual exercise of professional and discretionary practices (Adler and Asquith, 1981:9-32) to exclude, in terms of outcomes, black (and white) estate residents from participating. The little publicised, though not confidential report, "After the Disturbances. Not Back to Normal" (Working Group, West Midlands Probation Service, 1986) in reporting to that service following the Lozells and Handsworth disturbances of 1985, was extremely critical of that Service's shortcomings, so far as the implementation of its report "Probation and After-Care in a Multi-Racial Society" (Taylor, 1981) was concerned. In relation to community work, for example, the report (Working Group, West Midlands Probation Service, 1986:9) stated:

> "It is the experience of black people that white organisations have an insatiable appetite for information about black people, but very little faith in their views, a great deal of interest in enquiries and reports but a low commitment to their recommendations ... We know from early reactions in the West Midlands Probation Service and elsewhere to the formation of the Association of Black Probation Officers that white people are afraid of the development of power for many black people. But how can anyone or a people recapture and protect their dignity and self-respect unless they achieve the power, resources and space to do so?... Certain projects like the Young Person's Accommodation Committee ... were set up to try to meet the needs of black offenders outside mainstream Probation Service funding ... These voluntary organisations suffer from short-term

> funding, mainly through grants subject to re-application, which builds in a sense of impermanence and low value." (emphasis in original)

The report (Working Group, West Midlands Probation Service, 1986:24) concluded starkly:

> "It will be apparent our message is: the Probation Service must put its own house in order. It cannot give a service that will be perceived and experienced as relevant to the needs and circumstances of black people until it has - that is, until Probation officers have demonstrated they accept and understand we are doing something about the experience of black people in this country: namely racism. The Lozells and Handsworth disturbances were a response by the people to what had happened to them Racial discrimination and racism is about civil injustice."

According to the report's perspective about the nature of racism, and the prescriptive "social justice" role for the Probation Service, greater community involvement here by the Community Probation Team members on estates does not suggest a furthering of anti-racist Probation practices in so far as the employment and involvement of black residents are concerned. Rather, it is suggested, greater Probation expansion, more in accord with a non-racist perspective, took the form of creating further opportunities for a predominantly white organisation to reaffirm and display, with others, its institutionalised power base through the discretionary medium of professionalism. However with the help of two of the team's Probation Officers, and others, two new short-term funded projects for black people were created. They both contained a considerable proportion of black staff. In the current economic and political climate the establishment of such projects might become the primary and most accessible way of helping black youngsters. However in this pessimistic scenario there still remain complex questions so far as policy implications for the Probation Service are concerned. Primarily these centre on whether the Probation Service should help to instigate such projects, or should encourage local black residents to start up and sustain these sorts of projects. In other words to what

extent can the Probation Service engage in non-directive community and crime prevention work? It is in this particular area that the policy implications for the Probation Service are perhaps their most ambiguous because of the work's locality, and not individual offender focus.

By contrast the implications for community Probation work are somewhat clearer. Because the official recording of what are essentially adaptations to existing micro practices, not macro policy changes, is limited and because of considerable definitional problems, it is unclear if and whether Community Probation Work is, or will become, a developing force, or a developing approach in Probation work. Recent developments elsewhere concerning intake group's (Brown and Seymour, 1983) networking (Celnick, 1985, 1985a), differential working methods (Kavanagh, 1988) and developments in formal and informal drop in centres (Fairhead, 1981), quite separate from "grander" Home Office objectives, indicate a fragmentation rather than a consistency of policy interests. These are, perhaps, more consistent with a service whose current direction is fuelled more by notions of pragmatic diversification the most recent phase of service development identified in Chapter Two, than policy coherence or consistency. The Community Probation Team's "mini-policy" of recommending Probation Orders, wherever possible, (and especially for black clients) represented more of an attempt to operationalise individual concerns about "individual need" than the then emerging Inner London Probation Service objectives (1984) concerned with tariff sentencing. In the sense that the Community Probation Team's "open access" policy resulted in higher levels of visits than in nearby offices its policy was successful in its own right. However, the low proportion of statutory offenders, both black and white attending the office suggested that opening the Probation doors wider and for longer periods was not sufficient to meet clients needs. It was argued earlier that having entered the building burdened with both socio-economic and personal problems the experiences of becoming a Probation client, and socialised into the Probation culture were at best minimally useful, at worst irrelevant to people's needs.

This is not a criticism of the staff's skills which were well developed in handling volume clients in need. Rather it is a critique of a professional social work culture, within the criminal justice context, which, whilst striving to reduce client stigmatization opportunities through "informal approaches", nevertheless seemed unable, in Social Inquiry Reports and in day-to-day practice, to de-individualise and textualise white clients experiences of poverty or indeed black clients experiences of racism, whether occurring inside or outside the criminal justice system. On the two occasions (a meeting with members of the Inner London Probation Service Sub-Committee, and in the "Probation Perspectives" paper on the Brixton 1985 disturbances) when criticisms of alleged racist practices by the police and the judiciary were raised, for example, these interpretations were bluntly and officially rejected by those in authority. These incidents, together with other ongoing organisational constraints suggested a re-affirmation of views of an organisation upholding existing values centred around individual and pathological explorations of criminal activities, and social responsibility. Furthermore, it must remain doubtful in respect of the majority of the team's Probationers, in terms of their minimal number of previous court disposals and nature of the offences for which they had been placed on Probation, whether the team diverted a significant proportion of its Probation clientele away from custodial sentences. In terms of traditional Probation Service aims, as identified by, for example, Bottoms and McWilliams (1979:179) "diverting appropriate offenders from custodial sentences" has remained a central part of the Probation Service's philosophy "since its inception". However the research here supports their view that unless Probation Officers "abandon treatment concepts in making recommendations" (Bottoms and McWilliams, 1979:184) then this aim cannot be readily achieved. It is suggested here that it is much more likely that the team's relatively high proportion of Probationers amplified the recent trend of increased use of Probation Orders (Home Office, 1986b:21) and endorsed Bottoms and McWilliams' (1979:168) view that two of the Service's primary aims are "the provision of appropriate help for offenders" and "the

statutory supervision of offenders". It is further maintained here that so long as extra prison places continue to be made avaialable through their prison building programme (Home Office, 1984, 1986) that more punitive punishment, in the form of penal sanctions is likely to remain the dominant sentencing force (Morgan, 1983:148-167).

All the Community Probation Team staff fulfilled what they considered to be their proper and primary function, that is providing a social work service to the courts, and a statutory welfare service to its clients. This is consistent with the Home Office's view (1986d:22) that it is the duty of the Probation Service "constantly to find the correct balance between the interests and needs of the offenders and those of society as a whole". Under considerable workload pressures staff fulfilled this function, as they saw fit. The emphasis given to welfare interventions based on perceptions of individual client need also enabled them to make sense of, if not comprehensively apply, their training as social workers to the court. This took the form of emphasising help as Willis (1986) and Fielding (1984) also note, de-emphasising overt forms of social control and coming to terms with the conflicting demands placed on them.

In 1961 Radzinowicz summed up the progress of "community preventative" programmes in the United States (Radzinowicz, 1961:147):

> "....crime is deeply embedded in the very texture of American Society. If this is so, how substantial and lasting can the influence of the community programmes be, even if it is acknowledged, as it should be, that they may succeed in raising the general standards of life, in strengthening supportive and remedial arrangements, and in disseminating information about the problem of crime and the limitations of the measures hitherto adopted in dealing with it?"

It should not be expected that as a direct result of community programmes alone, or indeed any other individual measure, that crime levels will necessarily be reduced. Rather it is claimed here that local areas, at neighbourhood

level, may become better informed about matters of resource and status distribution, become the beneficiaries of policies which enhance existing levels of service delivery by professional groups and, as participants in decision making forums be better placed to effect and influence local policies. These outcomes, it is argued, are valid in their own right. It is recognised, however, that they first require an agreement by the Probation Service to produce a non-crime orientated community policy and second are dependent on the implementation of a range of decentralisation policies, both of which are problematic for a hierarchical organisation operating within the formidable constraints of the criminal justice system. The evidence to date is that, in its work "in the community" the Probation Service is performing its traditional diagnostician role with its accompanying reform and treatment imperatives. The immediate danger of such approaches is to produce the same sorts of labelling and stigmatisation outcomes outside the criminal justice system as are evident within the criminal justice system. Second there is a danger that by focusing on areas to provide "their own solutions" to social and crime problems, the Probation Service is supporting myths about "communities", as localities, being homogeneous, self-determinant, and resource generative.

Although the Probation Service might only have a limited role in its work in the community, the ideologies and practices it adopts, together with those by other agencies are nevertheless important in influencing and shaping the sort of society in which we live. However, unless the Probation Service systematically implements coherent policies which embrace community Probation work, community work, and crime prevention work, and makes the necessary organisational changes, then these creative forms of Probation practice will, it is argued, largely remain as extra-mural activities which, like a message in a bottle, will be washed away on the next tide of criminal justice legislation. There is, for example, a government green paper promised for the summer of 1988 emphasising (more) "punishment in the community" (Patten, 1988) introducing new "tiers of control" for

Probation clients and other offenders. However because Community Probation developments appear to provide considerable opportunities, probably more than in other policy areas, for discretionary professional practices, coherent and consistent policies might remain intrinsically elusive. It appears likely then, if this is the case, that the values derived from professional beliefs and organisational imperatives, and, ultimately shaped by the demands of the criminal justice system, will combine to influence future developments in this field. According to the evidence provided here these developments within socially deprived and economically disadvantaged inner city areas are likely to represent an amalgam of further social control and social welfare measures, at the expense of approaches which address, in any substantial way, wider issues of social justice.

NOTES

1. See, for example, Stanley and Baginsky (1984).

2. Initially, in March 1985, I wrote to all 57 Probation areas in England and Wales (as well as the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders, and higher educational establishments) in order to establish if and whether a "similar" survey into Probation Service community developments had been carried out elsewhere. Of the replies received (38) none stated that such a survey had been conducted which indicated that it would be impossible even at a generalised level, to compare the Inner London Probation Service's questionnaire findings with others from elsewhere. Nevertheless many services (23) either included excerpts from their local statements of objectives and priorities (S.L.O.P.S.) concerning community developments generally, or provided information, albeit very limited, about individual initiatives and projects. Different Service documents, for example Lancashire Probation Service's paper on patchwork (Lancashire Probation Service, 1984), and Humberside's paper on community development in Cleethorpes (Young, 1984) suggested that much of the Probation Service's work described was either at an early developmental (i.e. discussion) stage, or focused on individual initiatives and not Service wide policies. The information that was provided then was inadequate for comparative purposes. Additionally a proposed postal questionnaire survey to complement the one sent to all 47 Senior Probation Officers working in fieldwork teams within the Inner London Probation Service area and to be sent out to a sample of main-grade Probation Officers within the same area was not undertaken. The reason for this decision was simply that once the questionnaire sent to Senior Probation Officers were eventually returned and the case study had begun in earnest, a further postal questionnaire seemed unnecessary.

3. The discrepancy between thirty-one teams covered and twenty-four questionnaires returned can be explained by the fact that five questionnaires contained responses about the work of two teams (working closely together and/or occupying the same premises) and one questionnaire provided the workload details of three Probation teams on one questionnaire.

4. Patchwork in Social Services attempts to localise generic staff and decision-making processes with the aim of making Services more accessible and relevant to its client population. It is an approach to social work in the main body of the book Social Workers: Their Roles and Tasks (Barclay: 1982) and described by Davies (1985: 123) in the following terms:

> "There has been no development more significant in British Social Services during

> significant in British Social Services during the 1980s than the emergence of the idea of "Patch" as a model for service delivery. In its most simple form this might mean only that a team of social workers (or even a single social worker) is attached to a clearly defined geographical district, but in its most advanced forms, it means that the office buildings are decentralised, that the social worker coordinates teams of colleagues in the patch, that maximum use is made of volunteers, of informal caring networks and of inter-agency liaison, and that the social workers are therefore both more visible and more accessible to the community."

5. In August 1984 I was both a full-time Probation Officer at the Community Resources Department (in the Inner London Probation Service) and a part-time student registered for this doctorate. Copies of letters to senior management from that time clearly indicated that I asked for the questionnaire survey to be conducted as part of my doctoral studies. My employing organisation agreed in principle about the purpose and distribution of the questionnaire. However, the authorisation for the questionnaire's distribution was delayed until November 1984 when a request for it to be undertaken, seemingly a management initiative, was contained in the service's Statement of Objectives and Priorities (Inner London Probation Service, November 1984: 26). The postal questionnaire was thus designed for the doctoral studies but its findings, or some of them at least, had to be made available to the Inner London Probation Service prior to their reconception, reformulation and inclusion here. I believe that had I argued that the questionnaire findings should not be made available to the Inner London Probation Service, I could have found my position both at the Community Resources Department and as a doctoral student being allowed access to one of that Service's teams as the basis for the case study, very awkward, possibly even jeopardising the entire research study itself. I do not believe that the findings presented here were compromised by my official position at the time despite the fact that the questionnaire appeared to respondents as an official (i.e. Headquarters) not academically independent questionnaire. It is possible, for example, that its perceived official nature might have curtailed opportunities for respondents to be critical of official policies about Probation Service community developments. However, the vouchsafed confidentiality to respondents and the range of views, critical and supportive of aspects of this type of work, lead me to conclude that the questionnaire's findings are a valid and valuable indication of respondents' views on the subject matter. Although admittedly not a consideration at the time, it is also possible that had the questionnaire not appeared as an "official" one, it could have produced a much lower response rate, more typical of postal questionnaires in general (Mann, 1985: 169). It is also

a further validation of the questionnaire's findings that Henderson's own postal questionnaire survey (1986) into this same area of Probation work raised concerns and issues commensurate with those produced here. Additionally it should be made clear that the design and content of the questionnaire was my sole responsibility. Although the Inner London Probation Service gave its formal approval to its content and distribution and also made helpful suggestions about additional questions that might be asked, these suggestions were not accepted by me nor "imposed" by that Service.

6. There was only one statutory client (on a Youth custody licence) about which I had no information. Although this client was supervised by the Community Probation Team, the file was held at an office in another borough.

7. The use of ideology as a concept is one way in which the complicated issues concerning community based Probation practice can be explored. Ideology is a complex "equivocal and elusive" (Larrain, 1986: 13) concept, not usually ordered into a logically consistent whole but providing an analytical exploration of "taken-for-granted" and "commonsense" statements and suppositions about social behaviour. To identify an ideology or ideologies is to make clear connections between, on the one hand, certain intellectual standpoints, and on the other hand certain forms of experience. In relation, for example, to the social phenomenon "mugging" presented as a social problem during the 1970s, Hall **et al** (1978) regarded it as a convenient ideological symbol exploited by a state experiencing a crisis of authority. In their argument they first identified two basic conservative and liberal "lay ideologies" or basic exploratory framework of crime. They then went further (Hall **et al**, 1978: 170) to explore the more articulated, "worked-up" and elaborate ideologies of crime which have shaped juridicial state apparatus. Less ambitiously perhaps another author, Parton (1985: 14) has analysed the ways in which the social problem of child abuse has been constructed within a range of competing ideologies, the latter referring to: "... the general assertions that are held about human behaviour, its causes and how to change it". This study is not concerned with the general parameters of competing ideologies, rather with those specific assertions made by Probation practioners in one team about their work, their "clients", and their locality. It is, therefore, concerned with pre-theoretical practice or operational ideologies, and not with ideology as a complex theoretical concept. It is argued here that as a result of making detailed observations of Probation practice, interviewing staff members and analysing official documents it was possible to identify certain operational ideologies. No single ideology is identified, and given the discretionary nature of professional practice (see, for example, amongst many authors on this point Cohen, 1985: 165; Morris and Giller, 1981, Satyamurti, 1981) this could have been expected. Smith and Harris (1972: 27-45), for

example, found that whilst there was an official ideology in social service departments based on notions about the family and community as the basis of social need, social workers operationalised these relatively abstract ideas in a variety of ways. Hardiker's work Social Work Ideologies in the Probation Service (1977: 131-154) is particularly relevant here as she examined if and to what extent "treatment" or other ideologies dominated the work done by a group of Probation Officers.

8. These included a Police Sergeant from the Brixton Division's Youth and Community team, three members of staff at three voluntary organisations (the Afro-Caribbean Association, The First Generation Organisation and the Circle Club), a senior youth service administrator for Brixton, a youth worker who visited the Community Probation Team's group work sessions, and a local community liaison Probation Officer.

9. These categories were: client's name, ethnic origin, type of order, date of birth, place of birth, length of time in Brixton, whether employed, type of employment, Government (or other) Training Course, whether registered for work, type of accommodation (by type, whether public or private, and standard of accommodation), family situation, number of children, psychiatric history, alcoholic history, drug history (specify) gambling history (specify), solvent abuse, whether child(ren) on the Local Authority's Non-accidental Injury Register.

10. The only person not interviewed was a student on placement at the unit. On two occasions prior to her finishing her placement she postponed interviews with me. Three letters and sets of open-ended questions sent to her home address after she finished her placement produced no replies. That the student was experiencing difficulties at her placement, as I learnt later, probably contributed to her unwillingness to discuss with me her experiences of being a student at the unit.

11. Originally it was intended to conduct formal interviews with two samples of clients, one randomly selected and a second selected by Probation staff. Staff were however most reluctant to agree to my interviewing a random sample of clients at clients' homes or at the office. At the time the research programme was being negotiated and conducted, it seemed that staff members were under pressure from clients and courts, but, being a "new", "experimental" unit, from the organisation itself. Research in areas over which they had effectively no control (i.e. with a random sample of clients) was, I believe, regarded as threatening. Without then being "given" direct access to a randomly selected client group it was considered that formal interviews with a group of clients selected by staff alone would have been of limited value overall and, of course, inadequate for the purpose of comparative sample analysis. Later the

thrust though not the logic of this particular argument seemed less forceful to the point where the decision not to "find" and interview a selected client group was questioned by me. Nevertheless it is maintained that the semi-formal client interviews in combination with the observational and other data, proved more than sufficient as research instruments for exploring the unit's as well as the clients' experiences of community-based Probation practice.

12. In fact, in 1985, I made two visits to the Probation team's premises in March, four in April, seven in May, twelve in June, nine in July, five in August, three in September, four in October and five in November, 1985.

13. This material emerged whilst acting as a part-time consultant, between 1986 and 1987, to a Probation team engaging in similar work in a "post disturbance" locality to the team which forms the bulk of this study's fieldwork.

14. Personal communication.

15. Many of the popular press stories about Estates S and M, and about Brixton generally originated either from the police or were feature articles about actual or suspected crime levels in the area, or about specific incidents. In the weeks prior to "Operation Condor" (on the Afro-Caribbean Cultural Association on 24th July 1986) for example there were several press stories about the Brixton area. These included the London Standard 8th July 1986 ("Cocaine War in London" - a story of "gang warfare" among drug dealers in Brixton); the Daily Mail, 9th July 1986 ("Black Cocaine War, Ruthless Mobsters bringing Miami killings to Brixton Streets" - "sane story"); London Standard, 10th July 1986 ("Brixton, why police are only just coping"); London Standard, 11th July 1986 ("Muggers Mile" - a story discussing policing problems in Brixton); The Mail on Sunday, 13th July 1986 ("Analysis" feature - Brixton's head of CID was quoted as saying "We are now dealing with more crimes than the busiest precinct in New York"). Of the identification of Estate S as an estate with "a high potential for disorder" (London Weekend Television, 11th July 1986) a local Chief Superintendent, Joe Weber, was reported as saying "I regret that the estate has been named on some kind of hit list" (South London Press, 18th July 1986). The Daily Express, also carried a feature article on 29th July 1986 ("The Back Door to Hell. Front line report on Brixton - Crime Capital of Britain") Of Estate S this article stated "Once this was a showpiece estate ... now all the lights have been smashed to ensure the continuing protection of dark, so useful when you have a knife at the throat of a victim" (Daily Express, 29th July 1986). In other words, some of the popular press in particular constantly created, sustained and presented images of Brixton, including Estates S and M, as a problematic area in terms of policing and public order. The opportunities for

portrayal of Brixton as an economically and socially deprived area meriting economic intervention and assistance were largely not taken up. The terms of the public debate about Brixton were set in other words by members of a popular press in terms of deviance, requiring more control. As Benyon (1985:409-421) notes of the popular representations of the 1981 disturbances in Brixton their presentation as unique events and exceptional threats to law and order provided a rationale and justification for exceptional law and order responses.

16. In respect of housing 88 per cent of those residents (n=219) that expressed dissatisfaction about housing stated that they disliked the design and construction of their properites, and 40.2 per cent complained about poor maintainance repairs. The Islington Crime Survey (Jones et al, 1986:7) has also recorded housing as a major problem, third, with 61 per cent of responses only to unemployment (87.1 per cent) and crime (70.7 per cent). More specific complaints were that their dwelling was currently in need of repairs (71 per cent), that 85 per cent of those needing repairs had already reported the matter, and that 78 per cent of this group had been waiting for more than a month for repairs to be done.

In respect of crime on the estate, burglary and mugging were regarded as the "worst problems of law and order on this estate," far ahead of all other responses (MacDonald, 1984: 10). Whilst these findings were not based on beliefs about the changing levels of crimes, a criterion used by the Policy Studies Institute (Smith, 1983) and the Islington Crime Survey (Jones et al, 1986), nevetheless they confirm those studies, and Hough and Mayheir's (1983) findings about the public importance attached to those two crimes.

Based on the total number of households, (518) the actual burglary figures (112 during a 14 month period ending October 1984) indicated that, on average, each dwelling risked a chance of one being burgled once every four and a half years, assuming each property has the same potential "burglary rate." In relation to robberies, and calculated on a 3 person occupancy rate for each property, each resident on the estate coud be expected to be robbed once in 73 years. Even taking ito account The British Crime Survey's analysis of levels of unreported crime, estimating that 48% of all burglaries and only 11% of robberies are reported to the police (Hough and Mayhew, 1983: 24) the residents' stated fear of these crimes, if comparisons can be approximated, appeared to exceed the likelihood that residents would be actual victims of them. Nevertheless the point is made, by residents, whatever the actual figures might show, that fear of certain crimes was, when asked, a major concern. Whether fear of crime on Estate M, as Lea and Young (1984:30) have argued, proved an incapacitating force in its own rights is a vexed question which cannot be satisfactorally answered here.

Of policing on the estate and in response to the question, "What are the Police doing to protect people on this estate?" three fifths of those replying (n=123) expressed negative opinions stating that the Police do very little or nothing or that their presence was not felt (MacDonald, 1984: 12). These negative opinions of police effectiveness, expressed by 60 per cent of respondents answering the question, are in line with the main findings of the Broadwater Farm Estate Report (Lea et al, 1986: 20). Although 71.2 per cent of respondents (n=123) considered the police "got on with people on the estate," the greatest tensions between the police and estate residents involving 47 per cent of replies concerned relations between police and young people (MacDonald, 1984:14).

In response to interviews of a sample of young people (sample size not provided) aged between 12 and 21, the survey produced an account of youngsters being bored, with some wanting greater "entertainment provisions" (unspecified). Some areas of inter-racial tension were indicated by the sample of young people interviewed, (MacDonald, 1984:7), and, in another part of the survey a majority of older residents (71 per cent, N=219) considered young people, and indeed the elderly should be provided with more "clubs and social activities "(MacDonald, 1984:19).

17. In 1988, in recognition of the non-implementation of previous reports' recommendations (Macdonald, 1984; Lambeth Community Poice Consultative Committee, 1984) about Estate M, the administrative device of a residents' survey was again introduced. The resulting draft report (Safe Neighbourhood Unit, 1988) produced no less than 30 recommendations to the local authority and eight to the Metropolitan Police. In its conclusion, and in respect of the former the report (Safe Neighbourhood Unit, 1988:15) stated:

> "... many of the recommendations outlined in this report will have considerable capital and revenue funding implications for Lambeth Council at a time when the Council is having to make substantial reductions in spending."

These recommendations unlike earlier reports above both exclusively centred on situational (i.e. structural) not social means of crime containment and made no recommendations to the tenants. This approach suggested a "new reality", broadly endorsed by the government, namely one concerned with physical security measures, not direct forms of community participation, as a means of ameliorating the problem of estate crime. It also served the function of locating responsibility, both locally and centrally, within a specific department, namely the housing department. In 1988 the local authority was still awaiting a government decision about whether they would fund these

"security measures" on this "crisis estate" (South London Press, August 28th 1987).

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENTS IN THE PROBATION SERVICE

QUESTIONNAIRE A.

BACKGROUND

This questionnaire is designed to assist ILPS to gain a more comprehensive picture about existing community developments and initiatives in the Service. It has specifically been requested by the Chief Probation Officer in that section of his "Aims and Objectives" statement which is concerned with Community Probation Work. In part, the subject matter of this questionnaire reflects the current climate of interest within the Probation Service and elsewhere about the potential and problems involved in working more closely with local communities and community based agencies. This particular questionnaire is being sent to SPO's in ILPS fieldwork teams.

A separate questionnaire is being sent to a sample of maingrade PO's asking for more detailed information about their individual involvement with community groups.

AIMS

By testing the assumption that it is possible to classify the different types of Community Developments being pursued, it is hoped that there can be greater clarity as to the purpose, potential and problems of different community developments in Probation Work.(Community developments include community liaison work, patch work, use of community resources and community action.) It is intended that a report for ILPS, based on the results of the questionnaire will be made available by the summer of 1985.

COMPLETING THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Senior Probation Officers completing the questionnaire are requested not to discuss it with other colleagues until having completed it, to avoid influencing responses. I do hope that all the questionnaires will be completed and that if there are some details about which you do not have full information, you will give estimates where you can do so, otherwise, leave blank.

A previous pilot study suggests that the questionnaire will only take between 30-40 minutes to complete. I am requesting that the questionnaire be completed and return to me by no later than

May I thank you in advance for your co-operation. I believe that, with your help, this research study could make a positive contribution to the current and wide ranging discussions about Community Developments in the Probation Service.

Bob Broad, Probation Officer
Community Resources Department
Inner London Probation Service

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENTS QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Which London borough(s) does your team cover?

2. Approximately what % of housing in the area is council housing?

0 - 30%	30% - 50%	50% - 70%	over 70%	Don't know

3. How long have you been in your current post?

4. When did you become a Senior Probation Officer?

5a. Does your team do patch work at the current time? Please tick box.

(By patch work I mean either A - a member, or members, of your team physically situated outside the team office, or B - individual team members taking work from a concentrated and clearly defined geographical area).

Yes	No

5b. If yes, please indicate by ticking the appropriate box whether this patch work is type A (based at sub-office) or B (based at team office).

A	B

5c. Again, if the answer was yes to Question A, when did this patch work begin?

Approximate starting date	

6a. Has any member of your team prepared a local community profile? (i.e. a comprehensive listing of local agencies/resources to the Probation Service).

Yes	No

6b. Has a community profile of the area been prepared elsewhere which is used by the team? Please tick appropriate box.

Yes	No

6c. If yes, please state its origins.

COMMUNITY LINKS

7. Please list any community based probation projects (e.g. Probation Hostel) or non-Probation Projects (e.g. Victim Support Schemes) with which members of your team and yourself have a formal link (e.g. Liaison Officer, member of management committee, etc) or maybe even an informal link.

Name of Probation Officer	NAME OF PROJECT	D E T A I L S			
		Type of Project	Position Held	Nature of duties engaged in.	Time spent per month engaged in these duties

OTHER COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

8. In addition to the community liaison work you've outlined in Question 7, please list any other existing community initiatives/developments in which either yourself or members of your team are engaged (e.g. involvement with local housing, planning, or other community pressure groups).

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

9. Which organisations/agencies do you and your team members meet with to discuss matters of mutual interest? Please list agency and tick the accompanying boxes. (Note: This question is not about ongoing client focused inter-agency contact, but about matters relating to the needs of the Probation Service and/or local area).

Please indicate whether SPO or PO PO or SPO	AGENCY/ORGANISATION	FREQUENCY OF CONTACT				
		More than 4 times a year	Between and 4 times a year	Agreed Intervals of more than 1 year	As and when necessary	Never

Appendix A (contd)

10. Any further comments re. Question 9.

11A. In your opinion, how is the community links work (see Question 7) done by individual staff regarded by the team in general.

DEGREE OF IMPORTANCE				
Very High	High	None	Low	Very Low

11B. Please use this space for any further comments re. Question 11 (A).

GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENTS IN THE PROBATION SERVICE

12. To your knowledge, what structures/committees are there in ILPS specifically set up to support and encourage community developments and initiatives?

13. How much importance do you think "community involvement" is given by the Probation Service? Please tick.

Very High	High	Low	Very Low	None

14. How much importance do you think that community developments/initiatives should be given by the Probation Service?

Very High	High	Low	Very Low	None

QUESTIONS ABOUT NON-PROBATION PROJECTS

15. What, if any, are the specific benefits to the Probation Service of working more closely with community based non-probation projects? (such as alcohol counselling services, self-help groups, law centres etc).

16. What, if any, are the specific difficulties to the Probation Service, of working more closely with community based non-probation projects? (such as alcohol counselling services, self-help groups, law centres etc).

17. Finally, please use this space to add any further comments you might have either about this questionnaire or the topic of community developments in the Probation Service.

Thank you.

I am very grateful to you for your help with this questionnaire. In the next phase of the Research Project, I plan to do a limited number of follow-up interviews to discuss some of the issues arising from the questionnaire findings.

If you are willing to be contacted again by me for a short follow-up interview, please tick the box below and enter your name. In addition to the results of the survey being reported in articles, it is hoped that they will also inform training courses and stimulate policy discussions about community developments in the Probation Service.

Please return the completed questionnaire to me no later than at the following address.

Bob Broad
Probation Officer
Community Resources Department
Inner London Probation Service
73, Great Peter Street, SW1

I am willing to do a follow-up interview if asked to do so ☐

Name of Senior Probation Officer _____

Probation Office _____

Appendix B

The stimulus questions used in the staff interviews centred on the following concerns:

1. What is expected of the Community Probation Team?
2. What is expected of you?
3. What adaptations, if any, have you made in your overall work to allow you to engage in your community work?
4. What have been the achievements of the unit to date?
5. What have been your achievements to date?
6. What, if any, were the initial problems for you and this unit in engaging in community work?
7. If there were any problems, how and to what extent have these now been resolved?
8. What support have you received in doing this work?
9. What support would you have wanted in doing this type of work?
10. What are the purposes of your community work?
11. How did you first become involved in your patch?
12. Why have there not been more referrals and support from other teams?
13. How is this team regarded by other Probation Officers in the area?
14. How does working here compare, so far as you are concerned, with working in another unit?
15. What sort of help are you offering clients here?
16. Why have the workloads continued to increase?
17. What, if anything, can be done about this increase?
18. Tell me three things you like about working here.
19. Tell me three things you don't like about working here.

Appendix C

The series of short semi-formal interviews with clients centred around the following issues:

1. What is your age?

2. What sort of court order are you on? (if any at all)

3. How long have you been attending this Probation unit?

4. Why do you come to this unit?

5. How often do you visit this unit?

6. What is your employment situation?

7. Do you come here for help with employment?

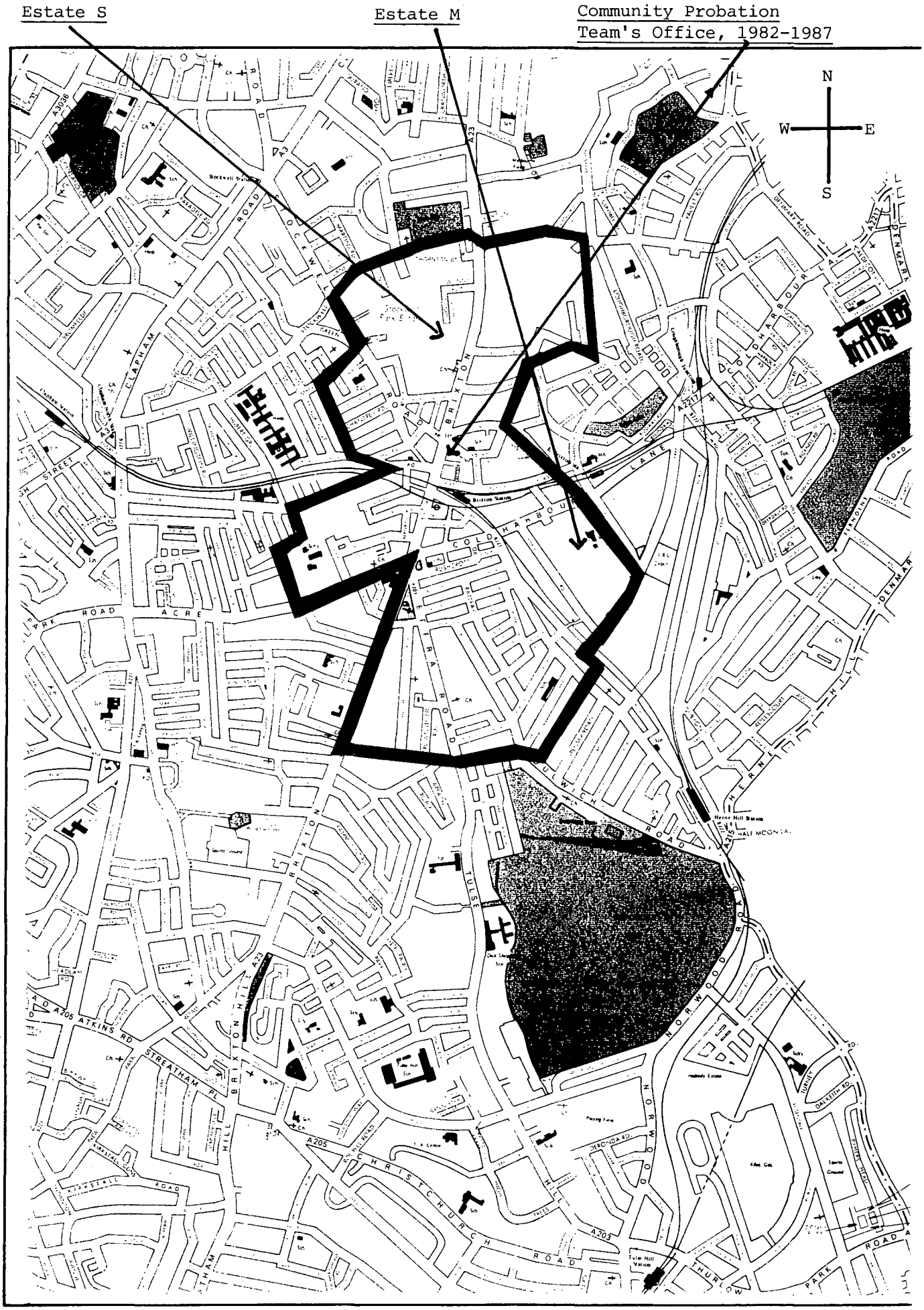
8. (If "yes" to question 7) How have this office's employment initiatives helped you?

9. In what ways, if at all, has your Probation Officer helped you?

10. In what ways, if at all, is this Probation office different for you compared with other ofices you have visited? (this question was asked to those who indicated they had had previous Probation contact)

11. What do you think is the purpose of having these group activities?

THE CENTRAL LAMBETH AREA including the
Community Probation Team's catchment area (highlighted) as at 1985



Source: Geographical Borough of Lambeth (1985). Scale 4" = 1 mile.

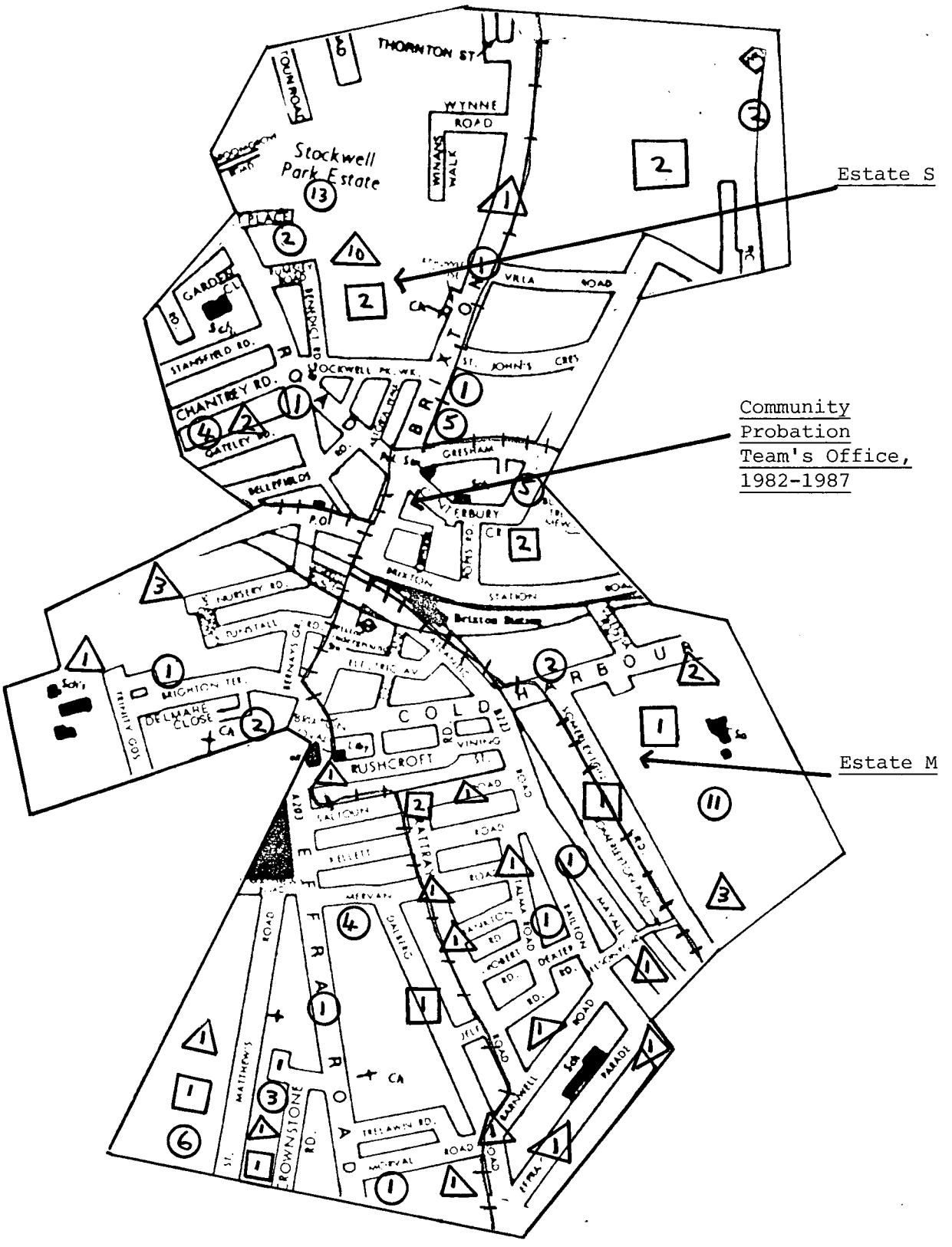
Geographical area covered by the Community Probation Team, specifying the location of clients, by selected groups, as at May 1985

○ = Clients on Probation Orders (67 out of 85 living within the catchment area)

△ = Clients on Post-Custodial Statutory Supervision (35 out of 37 living within the catchment area)

□ = Voluntary Clients (13 out of 23 living within the catchment area*

++++ = Boundary of each Probation Officer's patch (this is necessarily an approximation).



* i.e. A total of 30 people (or 16.2% of the team's total caseload), including 18 people on Probation Orders, 2 people on statutory post-custodial supervision, and 10 voluntary clients had addresses outside the team's catchment area.

Appendix F

Probation Orders held by the Community Probation Team by Length, and type of Court as at May 1985

Type of Court	Length of Probation Order					Totals
	Six Months	One Year	Eighteen Months	Two Years	Three Years	
Magistrates Court (Supervisory)	2	21	4	20	0	47
Magistrates Court (non-Supervisory)	0	9	0	4	1	14
Crown Court	0	9	2	11	2	24
TOTALS	2	39	6	35	3	85

Appendix G

Persons placed on Probation at the Community Probation Team by Offence for which placed on Probation, and Ethnic Group, as at May 1985.

Offences for which placed on Probation	Probationees				Expressed as a percentage of Total Probation Orders
	North/ South	Afro-Caribbean	Other	Total	
Theft and handling stolen goods (excluding motoring)	22	15	1	38	45
Burglary	10	6		16	19
Fraud and Forgery	3	6		9	10.5
Robbery	0	1		1	2
Criminal Damage	1	1		2	2
Violence against the person	1	2		3	3.5
Sexual offences	1	0		1	1
Other indictable Offences	1	1		2	2
Summary Offences	10	3		13	15
Totals	49	35	1	85	100

Appendix H

The Community Probation Team's Probation Caseload by Ethnic Origin, Age Group, Gender, and Whether in Employment, as at May 1985.

Category	Probation Caseload								
	Afro-Caribbean			North/South European			Other (Notes)		
	No.	% of A/C Prob C/load	% of Total Prob C/load	No.	% of N/S Euro C/load	% of Total Prob C/load	No.	% of Other Prob C/load	% of Total Prob C/load
Male	20	57	23	35	71	41	1	100	1
Female	15	43	18	14	29	17			
Total	35	100	41	49	100	58	1	100	1
Age Groups									
Under 17	1	3	1	1	2	1			
17-21	21	60	25	19	38	22			
22-29	12	34	14	23	47	27			
Over 30	1	3		6	12	8			
Totals	35	100	41	49	100	58	0	0	0
Total in full -time employ- ment	4	11	5	8	16	9	0	0	0

Note (1) The "Other" category here, denotes a Chilean Probationee

Appendix I

Previous Criminal Convictions, Court Disposals and Current Offence(s) of all Youth Custody/Detention Centre Cases held at the Community Probation Team as at May 1985

Total[1] no. of cases where information available	Breakdown of Previous Convictions by Type/ Number	No.	Breakdown of Previous Court Disposals by Type/ Number	No.	Current Offence(s) for which receiving Youth Custody or Detention Centre	No.	%
	Theft	20	Fine	26	Robbery	17	29
	Burglary	15	Conditional Discharge	18	Burglary	15	24
	Handling Stolen Property	6	Probation Order	9	Theft	4	7
	Actual Bodily Harm (Assault)	5	Detention Centre	9	Breach of Probation Order	5	8
	Robbery	5	Community Service Order	4	Breach of Community Service Order	2	3.33
	TDA Motor Vehicle(s)	5	Supervison Order	6	Attempted Theft	2	3.33
	Offensive Weapon	4	Youth Cutody	2	Attempt to enter premises	2	3.33
	No Insurance	2	Borstal	2	Other offences (1 of each)	13	22
	Attempted Burglary Section 42 (Assault)	3	Attendance Centre	2			
	None	2	Others	6			
	Other (all different)	19					
	Average no. of Previous Convicts	3.7	Average no. of Prior Disposals	3.5	Average no. of current Offences	2.5	
24	Total	89	Total	84	Total	60	100

Footnote 1: There was only one case where information was not available (file at another office).

Appendix J

Summary of Recommendations made in the document "The Moorlands Estate. Report of the 1984 Inquiry." (Community/Police Consultative Group for Lambeth, 1984:13-14)

"a) To the Tenants and Tenants Association

1. Tenants should take a greater collective part in the development of their estate through the Tenants Association.

2. Parents should take a more active role in youth work on the estate.

3. Tenants should recognise that they have a shared responsibility to each other and with the Council and the Police for the physical security of their homes and for crime prevention.

4. There should be early discussion among the tenants to see if they wish to combine together on a crime prevention scheme.

b) To the Police

1. The Police should recognise that they have a shared responsibility with the tenants and the Council for the physical security of tenant's homes and for crime prevention measures.

2. Crime Prevention Officers should conduct a domestic security campaign on the estate.

3. Assistance should be given to tenants to mark their property.

c) To the Inner London Education Authority

1. The Junior and Infants Schools should be made available outside school hours for use as centres for family and other suitable activities.

2. Training to enhance natural talents should be provided for adults and young people involved in ILEA-supported community projects on the estate.

d) To Lambeth Borough Council

1. The Council should recognise that it has a shared responsibility with the tenants and the Police for the physical security of tenant's homes and crime prevention measures.

2. The Council should recognise that questions of law and order are closely linked with the quality of life on the estate.

3. The physical conditions on the estate should be improved, and specifically the removal of graffiti and vandalism should be speedily dealt with.

4. Doors, windows and fastenings should be strengthened to make entry into tenant's homes by burglars more difficult.

5. The tenant's, through the Tenant's Association, should be more involved in the Council's decisions affecting the estate, through such measures as: (a) closer liaison between Council Officers and Tenant' Association Committee, and (b) consultation with the Tenant's Association over allocation of dwellings.

6. Allocations to the estate should be made to achieve a more balanced community, in terms of ethnic composition, and the number of elderly and vulnerable households needing social and community support.

7. Squatters who are manifestly anti-social should be evicted.

8. Disruptive households should be cautioned and reminded to conform to their tenancy agreements.

9. Training to enhance natural talents should be provided to adults and young people in Council-supported community projects on the estate."

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