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Homeless Remote Reporting: Creating a Link

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A Thesis in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology

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ABSTRACT

Homeless Remote Reporting; Creating a Link

Marianne Quirouette

It has been reported in the academic literature that the homeless experience a disproportionately high level of victimization and that reports are rarely made to the police, even in cases of repeat victimizations. In the context of Edinburgh's Homeless Remote Reporting project (HRR), service providers are formally trained to act as an official access point to the police, thus creating a link between a marginalized population and the justice system. The present study's main objective is to investigate whether HRR can effectively challenge neo-liberal notions of citizenship and support social inclusivity by encouraging homeless individuals to access the justice system as full citizens. Informed by thirty two in-depth interviews, this study investigates what stakeholders see as a) the strengths and weaknesses of HRR and b) the factors that either support or impede the goals of HRR. The interview data suggests that while the conceptual goals of Homeless Remote Reporting are met, serious weaknesses - such as the project's lack of monitoring and publicity - are likely to prevent Homeless Remote Reporting from being available to the maximum number homeless victims. I have found that while there are weaknesses and the number of Remote Reports has been low, stakeholders find it to be a good addition to existing services for the homeless.

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Introduction

On November 19th 1999, CNN (CNN.Com 11/19/1999) reported that, “with seven unsolved transient killings in downtown Denver in recent months, some of the city's homeless have taken to arming themselves for protection...” While this news report presents an extreme case, the victimization of homeless individuals is depressingly common. It has been reported in the academic literature that the homeless experience a disproportionately high level of victimization and that reports are rarely made to the police, even in cases of repeat victimizations (Manson 2003; Novac, Hermer, Paradis and Kellen 2007; Allan 2000; Huey 2008; Fitzpatrick and Kennedy 2001; Kushel, Evans, Perry et al 2003). Homeless individuals are reluctant to report their victimization for many reasons. Some of the reasons researchers have found include: fear of being checked for warrants, general distrust of authority (especially the police) as well as social codes that discourage reporting to the police (Huey 2008; Jacobs and Wright 2007; Anderson 1999; Rogers 2006).

Service providers who work with the homeless are those who, because of proximity and circumstance, are frequently called upon to provide security and lower level policing services for their clients (Huey 2008). They fulfill many of the duties which are normally part of the mandate of the police, such as crime prevention, peace keeping, order maintenance, receiving complaints, surveillance and serving as a liaison between the community and the state (ibid). Service providers are often seen as authority

figures to homeless service users, because of their proximity and their power to withdraw services (Huey 2007).

While the mandate of police officers is to protect citizens, the needs of certain populations are clearly not being met (Huey 2007). The present study evaluates a five year old Scottish project that trains service providers to act as links between the homeless and the police. The Homeless Remote Reporting project is an innovative attempt to facilitate homeless victims' access to the justice system. Since 2000, Lothian and Borders Police (L&B) have operated remote reporting schemes for several marginalized communities including gay, racial minority, and sex worker communities.

The Homeless Remote Reporting pilot project in Edinburgh Scotland was established in response to a local study, conducted in 2002 (Manson 'Catch 22 Study'). This study was based on interviews with forty-two homeless youth and reported that ninety percent of respondents had been criminally victimized while homeless and that seventy nine percent of them had failed to report their experience to authorities (Manson 2002). Based on the success of other Remote Reporting projects established in Edinburgh, and the recommendations of the Catch 22 study, a similar strategy was implemented for the city's homeless population.

Although some level of information exchange is common between social workers and police, the Homeless Remote Reporting takes these exchanges further. In the context of Homeless Remote Reporting, service providers are formally trained to act as an official access point to the police, thus creating a link between a marginalized population and the justice system (Take Control 2008). Victims are given the choice of reporting the crime formally or providing information anonymously. Contact with the police is made

by the third party thus making the process easier for those reporting a crime (ibid). Remote Reporting is not intended for crimes which require immediate attention. It is most often used for reporting crimes such as verbal abuse, assaults and thefts.

The homeless are often considered unworthy of such services because of their status as marginalized, failed neo-liberal citizens (Rose 1999; Bauman 2000; and Arnold 2004). I argue that there is a relationship between homeless populations' limited access to the justice system and their status as 'lesser', marginalized citizens. I also argue that Homeless Remote Reporting has the potential to foster greater social inclusion by providing better opportunities for homeless individuals to access their right to justice. As do Marshall (1950) and Faulkner (2006), I consider access to justice be to be an integral part of being a citizen in a democratic nation. Many representatives of participating agencies stated that they saw the Homeless Remote Reporting as a project full of potential and hoped it could help reconstitute "marginalized crime victims as citizens equally worthy of the services of the state" (Huey 2008; 2). The Homeless Remote Reporting project is a creative collaborative attempt to deal with complicated issues through existing service structures and the present study investigates whether stakeholders believe the project promotes a fuller form of citizenship for the Edinburgh Homeless community.

This study included thirty two in-depth semi-structured qualitative interviews with Edinburgh stakeholders including: homeless residents, service providers, a representative for government agency and police officers. The interviews were an effort to collect views, thoughts, beliefs, attitudes and impressions about topics such as homeless victimization, under-reporting, and the roles of police and service providers

who work with the homeless. The present study's main objective is to investigate whether Homeless Remote Reporting can effectively challenge neo-liberal notions of citizenship by encouraging homeless individuals to access the justice system as full citizens. The data collected in this research will inform a detailed evaluation of the Homeless Remote Reporting Project and will be accompanied by recommendations on how to improve the project. The present study can also be used to help gauge the viability of similar programs; both in the UK and internationally. A technical report about the Homeless Remote Reporting Project will be accessible on the University of Western Ontario's website and will be available to stakeholders in Edinburgh and to other parties interested in Remote Reporting schemes.

The structure of this thesis is as follows. In the first chapter I review the existing literature on homeless victimization, police and homeless relations, under-reporting of homeless victimization and the role of service providers. I also explore citizenship theories and relate them to homelessness, citizenship, access to justice and Homeless Remote Reporting. In the second chapter, I introduce my program of research and briefly provide some historical, political and social context for the topics of research. In the third chapter I introduce my data and relate my findings to the literature I have reviewed. I evaluate in the fourth chapter the Homeless Remote Reporting project and review my theoretical arguments. I then conclude with a set of recommendations regarding Homeless Remote Reporting.

Chapter One

“The culture of the people who live here, they don’t like police”:

Victimization and Under Reporting in Homeless Populations

Victimization

There is a significant body of research documenting high rates of criminal victimization among homeless populations (Novac et al 2007; Novac et al 2006b, Lee and Schreck 2005; Waccholz 2005; Fitzpartick, Le Gory and Ritchey 1993; Fitzpatrick and Kennedy 2001; Kushel, Evans, Perry et al 2003). For example, in their Canadian study of homeless victimization, Novac and her colleagues found that forty six percent of homeless women and thirty nine percent of homeless men reported having been physically assaulted in the previous year (2006b). Forms of victimization noted ranged from sexual assault and violence to assaults from police or private security officers. Sexual assaults were particularly high for homeless women. Novac et al also reported that seventy two percent of their homeless respondents had been victims of some form of crime within the previous year (ibid). When interviewed for a Vancouver study, one homeless man spoke of the constant threat of violence that comes with living on the streets, explaining that “people put a knife into you for a couple bucks...you’re looking more out for your safety than you are looking for a place to sleep for the night” (Allan 2000: 87).

High rates of victimization and vulnerability within homeless populations are the result of multi-dimensional and interlocking problems (Edgar, Dorethy and Mina-Coull 1999; Rogers 2006; Kushel et al 2003). Factors such as lack of protective shelter, proximity to high-crime areas, engagement in high-risk activities, history of previous victimization, mental illness and substance abuse all contribute to homeless individual's high risk of criminal victimization (Kushel et al 2003). Repeated victimization can have numerous negative effects such as withdrawal from contact with the community, low faith in the police and failure to report future victimizations (Rogers 2006). While the literature on homelessness is unanimous in reporting high victimization rates, reports on the relationship between homeless populations and the police are less straight forward.

Police and Homeless Relations

Police officers are simultaneously asked by society to help the homeless and to keep them at bay. Being a twenty four hour a day service organization, the police are often forced to make up for a lack of social service resources and negotiate conflicting demands (Huey 2007). Far from the Hollywood stereotype of the macho cop chasing and arresting criminals, police officers must often take on what can be described as social service activities (Kleinig 1993, Huey 2007). When interviewed for an American study, one officer explained that "the homeless should not be a police problem, but like anything else; the police ultimately become the problem solver" (Plotkin 1997: 82). In many cases, the "prevention of crime and pursuit of criminals is not ruled out, but is set in the larger context of social peacekeeping, in which some effort is made to be responsive to various forms of social disorder and human malaise, and some effort is

made to maintain or restore conditions of social well being” (ibid: 295). The peacekeeping policing model suggests that over and above being re-active to crime, officers should be pro-active in helping those who need it most (Huey 2007).

Police officers can be conflicted between the demand for compassion and the demand for enforcement. Plotkin suggests that the way police officers perceive the homeless is often based on “the type and number of contacts they have with homeless people” (1997: 61). In a study conducted in 1991, Plotkin found that the majority of police encounters with homeless individuals were related to alcohol and drug dependency. Further, police officers reported dealing with the homeless as offenders forty one percent of the time, and as victims only twenty eight percent of the time (ibid: 61). From this, Plotkin concluded that police officers were more likely to see the homeless as social problems, rather than as citizens in need of protection. Equally important, given the focus of this research, is that Plotkin found that the reasons for these police-homeless encounters were most often calls from ‘concerned citizens’ (92.3%) or business owners (74.3%)(ibid). In fact, only sixteen percent of reported contact was initiated by homeless individuals themselves. Plotkin’s work suggests that housed citizens seem to feel comfortable contacting the police, while homeless individuals do not. These results also imply that there is an adversarial relationship between ‘citizens’ and the homeless and police officers are placed in the middle.

According to Colin Rogers (2006), community -or ‘citizen focused’- policing differs from traditional law enforcement policing in that its mandate is to improve the quality of life of all citizens. Rather than being antagonistic, the relationship between the community and the police to be cooperative (ibid). Involving citizens is said to lead to

better understanding of the community as well as “increasing the public’s confidence and satisfaction with the police” (ibid: 179). Positive experiences with reporting would also potentially improve confidence and satisfaction in the police. Reassurance policing is concerned with legitimacy and ensuring that the public considers the police to be a “credible organization worthy of trust” (Crawford 2007: 163). Because lack of confidence in the police is highly related to under-reporting of crime, ‘citizen focused’ policing has the potential to encourage all kinds of victims to come forward. Peacekeeping, citizen focused or reassurance policing models require the police to manage “different, often competing, demands, interests and expectations” (ibid: 158). Such inclusive models of policing are ideal for communities like the homeless whose citizenship status is often questioned. Building a trusting relationship between marginalized groups and the police is important yet it is often made difficult because police must negotiate between demands of peace keeping, social work, and knowledge work and law enforcement (Huey 2007).

While police officers have “the highest rate of contact with homeless people of all public service providers” (Fisher 2004: 95), homeless people often characterize their relationship with the police as one in which they feel controlled rather than protected (Novac 2006b). As a frequent result of law enforcement-oriented policing, many homeless individuals come to feel as though they are always viewed as suspects (Huey 2008). Even when victimized, homeless individuals often report feeling that the police are not there to help. One homeless respondent interviewed for study in Vancouver explained that “the police sometimes choose not to respond to those on the street...because the person is a regular victim, they get tired of it” (Allan 2000: 89).

When describing their contact with local police officers, homeless respondents often stated that they felt alienated from police protection and that abuses of power were frequent (ibid).

Numerous examples of tactics specifically aimed at controlling the homeless are available. Ontario's *Safe Streets Act*, for example, bans soliciting and begging in certain locations, such as 'near' automated teller machines, taxi stands, public toilets, pay telephones, public transit vehicles and parking lots (Moon 2002: 74). Thanks to such vague policies, the police are given more power over those who are often demonized as a threat to public order and safety. In Orlando, Florida, "panhandlers are required to buy a permit to beg. Ironically, the permit requires a permanent address and many areas are off limits for begging... Begging without a permit can mean sixty days in jail and a five hundred dollar fine" (Arnold 2004: 110). When asked about the reason for this policy, one officer explained that the permit system made it easier to arrest panhandlers (ibid: 110). Anti-homeless policies or vagrancy laws are often said to punish status rather than conduct (ibid: 111). Indeed, many policies criminalize "behaviour which is part of the survival strategies of the homeless" such as sleeping, panhandling or urinating in public (Wachholz 2005: 144). Due to the fact that police are instrumental in enforcing such policies, the relationship between police and the homeless is further damaged.

Toronto's *1992 Street Health Report*, a comprehensive, community-based survey of the health status of homeless people, concluded that nearly half of respondents reported having been assaulted by police in the past (Novac 2006b). The assaults ranged from pushing, to violence causing serious bodily harm (ibid). Fifteen years after the original study, the *2007 Street Health Report* claimed that "experiences of physical

assault, police violence and sexual assault have not changed significantly since 1992. Homeless people continue to experience assault at extremely high rates” (ibid; 45). One American study found that almost one third of homeless participants reported having been subjected to police brutality (Wachholz 2005). Participants believed the acts of violence were driven “by a disdain for the homeless and a belief that the homeless were powerless to protect themselves” (ibid: 153). Another study found that ten percent of respondents stated that they had been assaulted by police over the past year (Zakrison, Hamel, and Hwang 2004). While percentages vary, the fact remains that there are consistent findings across studies in which homeless people report being victimized by police officers. In the *Encyclopedia of Homelessness*, Fisher explains that as a result of such negative experiences, “many homeless people regard police as enemies rather than champions and avoid contact as much as possible” (Fisher: 96). Consequently, it is unsurprising to see low rates of crime reporting to police by homeless individuals.

Failure to Report

In his 1988 study, based on American National Crime Panel victimization data, Simon Signer found that failure to report criminal victimization was mostly influenced by the victim’s social environment. Signer writes that “victims of a lower social status for whom the police may appear less responsive are similarly less inclined to report their victimization to the police” (Signer 1988; 299). Fear of reprisal, which was found to be the leading cause for not reporting criminal victimization, is often enhanced by continued interaction between the victim and offender (ibid). In many cases, the cycle of not reporting can lead to “a series of repeated victimizations and serious injury to the victim”

(ibid; 299). Supporting Signer's findings, homeless victims often do not report because they fear retaliation. The intimidation of victims is often worsened by the fact that victims often live "in close proximity to their tormentors" (Rogers 2006: 103). This is definitely true for many homeless individuals who are part of marginalized communities and live in shelters or encampments.

While mistrust of the police is a strong deterrent for homeless individuals to report crimes, other factors also influence under-reporting. The street code prohibits reporting crimes, emphasizing that conflicts should be settled without the interference of police (Rosenthal et al 2003; Anderson 1999). The code of the street which requires players to 'take care of themselves', stems from a social hatred for and lack of trust in both the police and the justice system. Anderson explains that followers of the code of the street are not concerned with the legal system but with "personal security for self, family and loved ones" (1999; 317). This refusal to engage with either police or the justice system by homeless victims who adhere to this code can be seen as self-exclusion. Not only are they being excluded by the system but they are also contributing to this exclusion by finding alternative ways to deal with criminal victimization.

Due to the combination of generalized distrust in the police and normative street code that prohibits reporting of crimes, under-reporting of crimes by homeless populations is consistently problematic (Huey 2007, Novac et al. 2006b; Rosenfeld, Jacobs and Wright 2003; McCarthy, Hagan and Martin 2002; Anderson 1999; Rogers 2006). In fact, Novac et al found that of forty one homeless people victimized, only eight reported it to the police and only three were satisfied with the police's response (Novac 2006b). The reasons homeless people gave for not trusting the police, included the belief

that police would be unfair, uninterested in their report, biased against them or ineffective (ibid).

In some cases, the reason given for not reporting was that the offender was a police officer (Novac 2006b). In a study conducted in Toronto, Zakrison et al (2004: 599) found that “the proportion of homeless shelter users who expressed willingness to call police in an emergency was significantly lower than those willing to call paramedics”. A low level of trust in the police was found among homeless individuals of all ages, races and genders (ibid). In many cases, the fear of being arrested plays a role in the general avoidance of police by homeless people. In part due to the criminalization of the homeless lifestyle, it is common for individuals to have outstanding arrest for various minor offenses such as loitering. The police are avoided because of their practice of checking for warrants, regardless of whether the individual is a victim or not (Huey 2008). Understanding why homeless people do not report being victimized is essential to understanding how to tackle the issue with proper programs and policies. Furthermore, “the pernicious consequences of non-reporting could overlay existing social cleavages, redoubling the burden of those who already suffer disproportionately from other social evils” (Skogan 1977; 49). Essentially, the pattern of non-reporting is further marginalizing an already marginalized population.

Service Provider and their Clients

As they often receive complaints of victimizations from their clients, service providers who work with the homeless are very important players when it comes to tackling under-reporting (Huey 2008). Relationships between service providers and the

homeless however are very complex. Shelter and food line workers for example must play a multitude of roles within the context of their jobs. Like police officers, they must control and help at the same time. They must deal with interconnected and multi-dimensional problems and thus often offer multiple services to their clients (Edgar et al. 1999; Davey 1999).

In a 1994 study on the staff-client relationship in several American homeless shelters, Jean Williams (1994) found that many shelter users expressed a mixture of gratitude and distaste for staff. Some shelter residents reported that they avoided sharing information with staff both because of privacy concerns and fear of service providers' judgment and potential loss of services. Williams found there to be an expectation by staff that shelter residents would share private information with them as this enabled further monitoring. Relationships between staff and residents were characterized as "framed by the disparity in power and authority between them" (Williams 1996: 86). Trust relationships are problematized by the position of authority held by service providers.

Many shelters have very strict rules which foster frustration in shelter users who feel infantilized and patronized (ibid). The main problem identified by Williams in relation to the staff-client relationship is the understanding of residents as 'cases' that need to be dealt with by 'experts'. This tendency to resist professional 'help' is important as it could play a significant role in under-reporting trends. Rebellion against authority and expert help presents a real problem if one is to consider access the justice system. This rebellion against authority can be conceptualized as yet another way in which homeless service users are excluding themselves.

Studies do suggest that relationships between shelter residents and staff are not always negative. Tom Allan (2000) interviewed numerous residents of the Triage Emergency Services and Care Society shelter in Vancouver and found that residents appreciated having someone to talk to. One shelter user explained that “you can talk to the staff; they are there to help you” (Allan 2000: 110). Not only were the staff described as keen listeners, they were also described as an “idealized substitute for familial social relations in its provision of care and support” (ibid: 111). Some residents compared the shelter to a lifeline and the human connection between staff and resident was described as taking precedence over material comforts (ibid). Good relationships between clients and service providers are clearly important for Remote-Reporting programs to succeed. As I have attempted to show in this literature review, all stakeholders including police, service providers and the homeless themselves, contribute to both inclusionary and exclusionary factors which affect homeless crime victims.

Theories of Citizenship

Home Ownership

Critical examinations of theories of neo-liberal citizenship inform this study. The neo-liberal ethos proposes that one should have control over one’s fate, self-promote and self-govern (Rose 1999: 335). As Arnold (2004) suggests, having a home is synonymous with economic independence, political identity, rationality and citizenship. The home is seen as proof that one can care for him or herself as well as for dependents. Having a home also demonstrates to others that one is not challenging the norm and does not

constitute a risk or burden to society (ibid). Being homeless is understood as a failure to do this and in this sense, homelessness is equated with “social death” (Ruddick 2002).

In his book *Powers of Freedom*, Rose (1999) contends that neo-liberalism recognizes two forms of citizens: the affiliated and the marginalized. The term ‘affiliated’ refers to full citizens who have the financial, educational and moral means to be considered full citizens. Being affiliated requires making choices about one’s lifestyle in order to maintain the right image; raising kids, getting an education, working, consuming and investing in oneself and one’s family (ibid). This status requires constant maintenance and there is no better way to demonstrate this status than by becoming a home owner. Being a home owner is indicative of success in conventional society. The “marginalized” are lesser citizens who cannot manage themselves or their image properly. They are either affiliated to the wrong kind of group - which is considered a threat to the public and political order - or they are affiliated to no group at all (ibid).

Consumerism

Neoliberal citizenship according to Rose requires “engagement in a diversified and dispersed variety of private, corporate and quasi-corporate practices in which working and shopping are pragmatic” (2000; 327). The securitization of identity requires individuals to show citizenship credentials again and again. Citizenship credentials often come in plastic form such as social insurance, health or credit cards. Such control strategies exclude those who do not meet the minimum requirement for citizenship status. Again, participating in the flow of goods and capital is absolutely necessary if one is to be

considered as a full citizen. For the homeless, this is especially significant because they have little or none of the consumer power that is so highly valued by society.

Whereas consumers are welcomed in most spaces, the urban poor experience the city as a place filled with boundaries (Bauman 2000; Bickford 2000; Davis 1992; Feldman 2004; Mosher 2000; Huey, Ericson and Haggerty 2005; Rose 1999 and Wachholz 2005). Rose explains that “as civility is understood as affiliation by consumption, dividing practices are re-configured to problematize certain ‘abjected’ persons...the underclass, the excluded, the marginal” (1999: 345). To borrow a term from Wachholz, the homeless citizen is increasingly being “warned-out” of public spaces. The term ‘warning-out’ refers to spatial constraints which resemble “warning-out laws that were used to exclude homeless people from the public and private space of early New England communities” (Wachholz 2005: 141). Indeed, this exclusionary phenomenon is far from new as recent anti-homeless policies find their roots in 14th century England vagrancy laws (Feldman 2004).

The homeless, unemployed and poor, are structurally redundant and flawed consumers (Bauman 1999). They are not seen as having control over their own fate, they do not have economic independence and due to their failure to self-govern successfully, they are seen as burdens to the system and tax payer’s dollars. The homeless individual stands in opposition to what Arnold, Rose and Bauman describe as the successful neo-liberal citizen; they have no home and no purchase power.

Status, Rights and Responsibilities

Citizens are said to have both rights and responsibilities (Faulkner 2006; Ixer 2006). Graham Ixer writes that it is generally understood that it is a citizen's duty to "work, obey the law, pay taxes, and participate in the democratic process in voting, in return for receiving health care, education, (and) protection" (2006: 138) Failing to fulfil one's duties or responsibilities means losing one's rights (ibid). Losing one's citizenship rights is thus justified by the argument that one failed to fulfil their civic responsibility. Ruth Lister (1998), disagreeing with Faulkner and Ixer, makes a useful distinction between acting like a citizens and being a citizen. According to Lister, not fulfilling ones duties does not negate one's status as a citizen.

Unlike those who see citizenship as a simple question of rights and responsibilities, T.H. Marshall's (1950) version of citizenship is conceptualized as a status. In his famous book about post war England, *Citizenship and Social Class (1950)*, Marshall examines the relationship between citizenship and social class from a historical and comparative perspective. Concerned with social class and inequality, Marshall wrote about the 20th century rise in social citizenship which 'imposed' itself onto classic understandings of the capitalist class system. He explained that with the implementation of the welfare state "there is a general enrichment of the concrete substance of civilized life, a general reduction of risk and insecurity, an equalization between the more and the less fortunate at all levels-between the healthy and the sick, the employed and the unemployed" (Ibid; 56). Marshall argues that equality of status is more important than equality of income and that the sharing of risk is an important aspect of social citizenship.

Marshall proposes that along with sharing risk, citizens must also accept a set of rights and responsibilities. Marshall explains that for citizens, “acts should be inspired by a lively sense of responsibility towards the welfare of the community” (Ibid; 70). Among these responsibilities paying taxes and working are described as being of “paramount importance” (Ibid; 78). Nonetheless, Marshall’s theoretical conceptualization of citizenship is similar to Lister’s because for both, rights are not to be withdrawn when responsibilities are not fulfilled. Marshall proposes that full citizenship is composed of three groups of rights; civil, political and social. For this study, the most relevant are the civil right to justice and the social right to be included and protected. Many homeless victims are not accessing these rights and are therefore not being awarded full citizenship according to this definition (Marshall 1950).

It is important to discuss the issue of citizenship because political ideology provides justifications for government conduct (Rose 1999). The ideas people have about who is a full citizen and why, affect how governments will treat those who are deemed to be the lesser kind. The marginal status of homeless people affects them on many levels. One of these levels can be described as the internalized acceptance of the dominant discourse (Allan 2000). In the case of the homeless, this refers to the acceptance of neo-liberal and individualistic explanations of their marginalized status. Essentially, this internalization could translate into the belief that one is not entitled to being included and protected by the justice system. Influenced by the dominant discourse, homeless individuals may exclude themselves and choose not to report when criminally victimized.

Under-reporting of victimization in homeless populations is an important issue for numerous reasons. Marginalized and highly vulnerable, homeless citizens need access to

the justice system (Zakrison 2004). Having confidence that one is protected by the state is an important component of citizenship especially in democratic countries. Marginalized populations need the benefits of full citizenship - namely access to the justice system - however they are often excluded. It often becomes the responsibility of service providers to help marginalized groups access their full rights as citizens by offering suitable support (Lister 1998).

The Homeless Remote Reporting project has the over-arching goal to encourage social inclusion and encourage marginalized population to access their rights as citizens. Homeless Remote Reporting theoretically challenges normative conceptions of neo-liberal citizenship by relying on the principle that homeless citizens - as crime victims - have rights regardless of their fulfilling their duties or not. The Homeless Remote Reporting Project challenges the conceptualization of neo-liberal citizenship offered by Rose, Arnold and Bauman and supports that of Lister and Marshall, who offer a much more inclusive definition. The Homeless Remote Reporting Project can also be thought of as reinstating the homeless individuals as citizens by offering better access to their right to justice, inclusion and protection. The present study investigates whether stakeholders believe the project promotes a fuller form of citizenship for the Edinburgh Homeless community.

Chapter Two

Methods and Research Context

The present study investigates whether Homeless Remote Reporting can effectively challenge neo-liberal notions of citizenship by encouraging homeless individuals to access the justice system as full citizens. More specifically, I investigate the views, thoughts, beliefs, attitudes and impressions of stakeholders: homeless service users, service providers and police. This study will thus shed some light on issues related to homeless victimization, existing barriers to reporting of crimes, as well as the complex roles police officers and service providers play in policing the homeless. It is necessary to gain a better understanding of such issues if we are to address them with effective policies or programs. In particular, this research addresses the following questions:

- 1) What do stakeholders (police officers, service providers and homeless individuals) see as the strengths and weaknesses of Homeless Remote Reporting and why?
- 2) Do stakeholders believe that Homeless Remote Reporting promotes a fuller form of citizenship, and why?
- 3) What are the factors that either support or impede the goals of Homeless Remote Reporting?
- 4) Is Homeless Remote Reporting in line with Scotland's national banner of social inclusivity?

During May and June of 2008 I travelled to Edinburgh, Scotland for a two week period and conducted thirty two in-depth semi-structured interviews with police officers (2), service providers (12), representative for government agency (1) and homeless individuals (17) in Edinburgh I collected the views, thoughts, beliefs, attitudes and impressions of stakeholders in order to be able to evaluate the Homeless Remote Reporting Project and make recommendations concerning possible improvements to the program. All four groups of stakeholders were equally important as they contributed their unique point of views about the Homeless Remote Reporting project.

Many of the interviews respondents for this study were identified in advanced and contacted over email, mail and telephone. Police respondents were selected within the local City of Edinburgh division of the L&B Regional Police Force. Police officers were contacted through the police department by registered mail. Only police officers with direct experience working with the Remote Reporting project were selected for interviews. Service providers were located through Internet searches and were asked to participate first by email, then by telephone. Contact information for agencies who participate in Homeless Remote Reporting was available on the Lothian & Borders website. Service providers from all seven participating organization were contacted along with other local organizations which do not participate. Organizations who do not participate in Remote Reporting were also located through internet searches and contacted because their motives for not participating as well as their views, thoughts, beliefs, attitudes and impressions were considered important. I contacted as many

organizations as I could and those who were willing to be interviewed were all included in the sample.

Many of the service provider respondents served as gatekeepers to the local homeless community by providing access to their facilities. Thus, homeless respondents were identified and asked to participate through snowball sampling. It is important to note here that all homeless respondents in the sample were at the time of the interview using services specifically for the homeless. Even those who were approached in the street reported that they were sleeping at one of the local shelters. This is fitting because Homeless Remote Reporting is specifically designed for homeless service users. My sample, which was made up primarily of adult men, is representative because, as the Scottish Council for Single Homeless explains, the majority of homeless individuals in Scotland are single adults over twenty five (Poverty Site 2008).

This research employed in-depth semi-structured qualitative interviews for all three groups of respondents. The interviews focused on the impression that stakeholders had about their experiences with the Homeless Remote Reporting Project. Respondents were asked to share their views, thoughts, beliefs, attitudes and impressions concerning the strengths and weaknesses of the project. If stakeholders did not have any experience with Remote Reporting, they were asked about reasons for not participating as well as their general opinions concerning the project. Themes for the interviews also included: 1) relationships between police, service providers and the homeless, 2) victimization and under-reporting and 3) access to justice system and citizenship.¹

The semi-structured interviews allowed respondents to elaborate on the points that they felt were most relevant in a comfortable conversational style. The interviews lasted

¹ See appendix I and II for interview themes and sample interview questions.

between ten to ninety minutes and were recorded on a digital voice recorder. Informed consent forms were signed by interview respondents and kept on file. Respondents were offered a copy of the consent form which contained information on the project as well as contact information for the researcher. The Concordia University and Tri-Council guidelines on obtaining consent were followed at all times.

“A big tourism place like Edinburgh, they just don’t want to have homeless people visible in certain areas”: Scotland and Social Inclusion

In this section I review the main characteristics of Scotland’s political, legal and social environment as they affect the homeless. I will discuss the idea of social inclusion, various important pieces of legislation and relate this to the development of the Lothian and Border’s Police Remote Reporting scheme. Furthermore, I will briefly describe the environment in which I collected my data, the city of Edinburgh.

Scotland has a population of about five million (Homeless Pages 2008). Although Britain remains in charge of certain matters such as employment legislation and fiscal matters, many powers have been officially given back to the Scottish government, devolution, since the passage of the *Scotland Act of 1998* (Scottish Government 2008). For example, the Scottish Parliament has legislative power over matters of health, law, police, social work and housing (ibid). This particular situation means that while housing and service are dealt with locally, benefits are a federal matter. Scotland is more supportive of the political left or welfare state than the rest of the UK (Paterson et al 2001). Devolution allowed Scotland to move further away from neo-liberal politics

towards a more inclusive model which Huey compares to Ordoliberalen for its “inclusion of social justice aims within a market based economy” (2007: 52).

The ideal of social inclusion is central to many of Scotland’s official goals. The national Scottish website proclaims that: “We will reduce the inequalities between the least advantaged groups and communities and the rest of society by ensuring that support reaches those who need it most” (Scottish Government 2008). Part of this plan for social inclusivity is the total eradication of homelessness (ibid). The goal is to ensure that by 2012, “every unintentionally homeless person will be entitled to permanent accommodation” (ibid). While the factors that contribute to homelessness in Scotland are for the most part similar to that of other European countries, some factors are more localized. For example, a decline of the industries over the last century has increased unemployment, poverty levels, and housing problems (Homeless Pages website 2008).

Following devolution (1999), The Homelessness Task Force (2002) was appointed by the Scottish government to review the causes and nature of homelessness in Scotland; to examine current practice in dealing with cases of homelessness; and to make recommendations on how homelessness in Scotland can best be prevented and, where it does occur, tackled effectively. The Homelessness Task Force released their first report in April 2000. This report led to the enactment of section one of the *Housing Act of 2001* which “requires local authorities to assess the levels of homelessness in their area and produce homelessness strategies” (Scottish Government 2008). The *Housing Act of 2001* also stipulates that all homeless people have the right to temporary accommodations before assessment (SCSH 2008). Since this first report, the Homelessness Task Force has

successfully pressured legislative authorities to make changes which support the Scottish effort to be social inclusive, to reduce poverty and to eradicate homelessness.

The *Homelessness Act of 2003* has been singled out as one of the most progressive pieces of legislation in Europe for its inclusive characteristics. The aim of this legislation is to re-house the homeless for the long term without excluding those who may not have fit previous characteristics for housing eligibility (SCSH 2008). The plan laid out by the *Homeless Act of 2003* is to, over a period of ten years; eliminate “priority needs” and “intentionally homeless” categories which have traditionally been used to exclude individuals from services (ibid). The current socially inclusive policies and practices surrounding homelessness in Scotland have been shaped and influenced by the Homelessness Task Force and legislation of 2001 and 2003. Homeless Remote-Reporting however is an Edinburgh program.

Edinburgh has a population of approximately 1.2 million and is surrounded by areas of Mid, East and West Lothians. The city centre is an interesting combination of old and new with the two main arteries -The Royal Mile in Old Town and Princes Street in New Town- and the two connecting bridges -North and South- bustling all day long. Edinburgh is set against a backdrop of two extinct volcanoes, the Edinburgh Castle, and impressive foliage. Nonetheless, we find in Edinburgh all the characteristics of urban centers including poverty, crime and homelessness. This urban poverty becomes evident as one walks the streets of the Cowgate area where many of the city’s shelters and soup kitchens are located.

Despite the nation’s socially inclusive mandate, there have been some successful efforts to gentrify the Cowgate area since Huey’s initial research in 2005. Many service

providers explained that it has been a struggle to keep a central location with shrinking funds and spoke of services which had been forced out of the area. One service providers spoke of having to relocate: “Yeah Bread St. drop in center is moving out on Monday. The lease has run out, and the landlord would like to upgrade to someone nicer that’s not going to aggravate all the other tenants”. Soon after my fieldwork had come to an end, one of the organizations I interviewed reported in the local media that they would likely have to close within the year because of lack of funding (Edinburgh News 2008). There is an important contrast between the political banner of social inclusion shared by Scotland, Edinburgh and Lothian and Borders and the exclusionary reality as experienced by organizations and the homeless alike.

As in most tourist centers, the core of Edinburgh is peppered with panhandlers who sit, usually alone, and keep watch for police officers’ looking to roust them. Because of its status as a touristic destination, efforts are made to keep the homeless out of the city centre. By laws have been passed in order to prohibit public drinking in Hunter Square for example, a public space which was traditionally used by the homeless for socializing. The bylaws concerning Hunter Square are yet another example of tactics aimed at excluding the homeless (Huey 2007; Moon 2002; Arnold 2004; Novac et al. 2006b and Wachholz 2005). While it is common for tourist destinations to be concerned with the city’s clean image and reputation, such exclusionary tactics limit how homeless citizens may use public space and send a clear message about the undesirability of their presence.

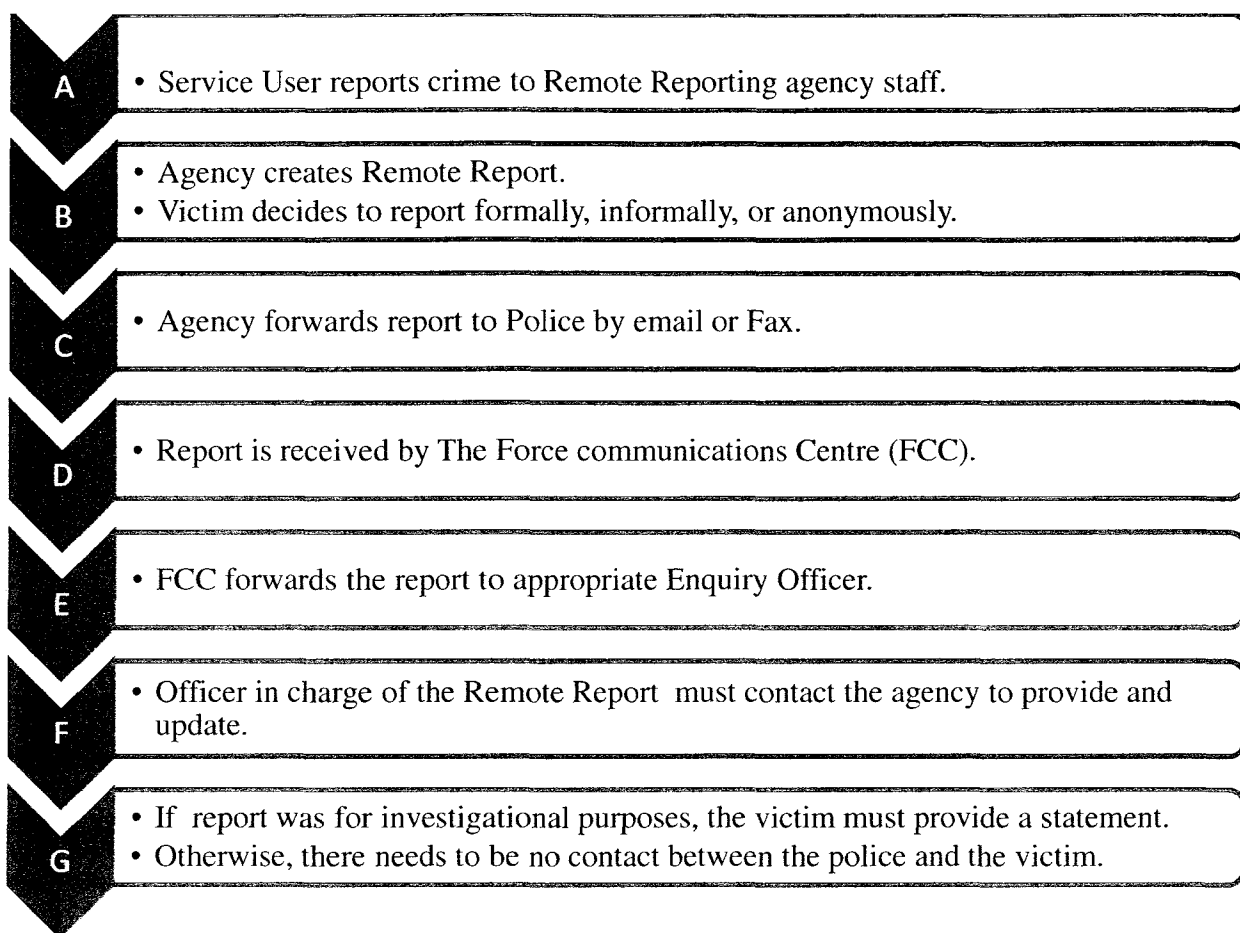
Edinburgh's Homeless Remote Reporting Project

Pressures for L&B police to find alternative methods of engaging with marginalized communities led to the development of the Remote Reporting scheme. Intended for marginalized victims who are reluctant to report directly to police, the first remote reporting scheme focused on race based hate crimes. The project then expanded to also include schemes for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community (LGBT), followed by schemes for individuals with mental health problems, learning difficulties, young persons, the homeless and finally sex industry workers (L&B website 2008). More specifically, the Homeless Remote Reporting project was established in response to Manson 'Catch 22 Study' (2003) which, based on the success of other remote reporting schemes in Edinburgh, recommended it be implemented and promoted with the homeless community. Coinciding with the re structuring and re orienting of the L&B police force towards a more community based approach, Remote Reporting is a L&B Police program which is fully in line with the national social inclusivity campaign.

For Remote Reporting, service providers such as case workers are formally trained to act as an official access point to the police, thus creating a link between a marginalized population and the justice system (Take Control 2008). The hour long training session consists of a power point presentation indented to teach participants about the background of Remote Reporting, the police investigation and inquiry process as well as how to complete a Remote Report Form. Participants are then asked to sign the protocol and are given supporting documents including publicity posters (See appendix V).

When victims approach third party agency staff and report a crime, they are given the choice to report formally, informally, or anonymously. The latter two options however can only be used for intelligence purposes. Contact with the police is made by the case worker on behalf of the victim, thus making the process easier, more discrete and more supportive for victims reporting a crime (Take Control 2008). The service provider is meant to offer the support needed by the victim during the duration of the investigation process. The service provider who fills out the Remote Report Form (See appendix IV) then forwards it to the Force Communication Centre either by fax or email. The form is then either redirected to the appropriate divisional crime manager for allocation to an enquiry or investigation officer or logged into the Scottish Intelligence Database for informational purposes only (L&B Training 2008). Finally, if an investigation is undertaken, the Officer in charge must contact the service provider from the third party agency in order to relay the information back to the victim. The Remote Reporting process is illustrated in Table one as seen below.

Table 1: Process of Remote Reporting



Remote Reporting is not intended for crimes which require immediate attention. It is most often used for reporting crimes such as verbal abuse, assaults and thefts. The tag line for Remote Reporting is “Take Control” and suggests that reporting incidents of victimization like verbal abuse, assaults and thefts is an empowering endeavor. In an address to the British Home Office, the Criminologist Paul Rock argued that victims are both citizens and “consumers in a neo-liberal marketplace of services” (cited in Faulkner 2006: 235) Interesting questions can be asked about whether Remote Reporting does empower the homeless as consumers of the police service and as citizens with rights.

While neo-liberal conceptions of citizenship dominate in both North America and England, Scotland is different. The situation in Scotland is particularly interesting because of their political commitment to social inclusion (Huey 2007; Scottish Government 2008). The Scottish government's pledge to social inclusion has led to the creation of the Homelessness Task Force, legislation such as the *Housing Act of 2001* and the *Homelessness Act of 2003*, and has undoubtedly helped the creation of Remote Reporting schemes with victims who are part of marginalized groups such as the homeless. On the other hand, gentrification of the Cowgate neighborhood, withdrawal of funding for organizations who work with the homeless and urban exclusionary by-laws which target the homeless are not socially inclusive. It is clear that there are both inclusionary and exclusionary forces at work which affect Edinburgh homeless crime victims.

Chapter Three

“I know a guy who got stabbed in the eye and he never grassed”:

Research Data

In this section I reconsider some of the issues which motivated Edinburgh stakeholders to push for Homeless Remote Reporting. Revisiting the themes of my literature review, I compare and contrast my data to that of other researchers. Topics include victimization, police and homeless relations, failure to report as well as service providers and their clients.

Victimization

My research supports previous research findings regarding the high levels of victimization in homeless populations (Manson 2003; Novac, Hermer, Paradis and Kellen 2007; Allan 2000; Huey 2008; Fitzpatrick and Kennedy 2001; Kushel, Evans, Perry et al 2003). Ten out of seventeen service users interviewed spoke of repeated and rather serious personal criminal victimization. The types of victimization discussed by respondents included harassment, extortion, theft, assault and rape. The only admitted rape victim was a middle aged woman who described her life as a constant stream of victimization including an abusive husband and numerous rapes and assaults over the course of her twenty odd years living on the streets as a heroin addict. This woman's history of abuse and sexual assault is not surprising because this type of victimization is

more common with woman than with men (Novac 2006b). The particular vulnerabilities of homeless women were difficult to investigate because they were much less visible on the streets and the shelters specifically for women were very protective and were not comfortable with facilitating interviews.

Describing how the stronger manipulate the weak, one homeless respondent explained that “people are getting harassed, and they are getting bullied into parting with money...intimidated for all sorts of stuff”. This sort of situation was described as the way street-wise individuals take advantage of those who are not. Respondents who lived in Edinburgh shelters also spoke of age-based abuses of power. The older men reported that there was a great deal of power difference and that they were regularly extorted, abused and stolen from by groups of stronger, younger men. Rather than denying the situation, many of the younger respondents agreed that they were indeed victimizing others. It was explained to me during interviews that if you don’t maintain a street reputation that demands respect, you run the risk of becoming the prey yourself. This is precisely what Elijah Anderson illustrates in his book “Code of the Street” when he writes that “in the inner city environment, respect on the streets may be viewed as social capital that is very valuable, especially when various other forms of capital have been denied or are unavailable” (Anderson 1999; 66)

Many of the residents who live in Edinburgh shelters are homeless after being released from jail or prison. Many others have been in and out of the penal system. This is significant because after being released, they carry with them attitudes about power, reputation and authority. Some of the service users interviewed explained that they felt that some amount of victimization was to be expected given their criminal lifestyles.

Others suggested that because of the fact that they had opted out of living as a tax paying and law-abiding citizen, they had ultimately given up on the right to resort to the justice system. This position is illustrated within the following excerpt of an interview with Mike², a man in his mid-thirties living in an Edinburgh shelter after getting out of the penitentiary. When asked about grassing and what he would do if he was ever victimized he said the following:

IR: According to my views, if someone has been a criminal his whole life, he is simply paying the price. But if he is a straight peg he is entitled to call the police. If he is a straight peg, chances are 99% of the time that he has worked most of his life paying taxes. So he has paid the polls to protect him. Okay so maybe he is down on his luck and has not had a job for a couple years, but he is still not a criminal. So he is entitled to pick up the phone and call the police. That's my views as a criminal.

MQ: So if you are a criminal you don't have the right to be protected by the justice system?

IR: Aye, aye, in my views aye.

MQ: Okay, I'm just trying to understand...so if you don't break the law then you can call the cops and you don't count as a grass?

IR: Because if you call the polls and you are a straight peg... You work, you pay tax, it's part of your job...I will respect you as a man, for staying a straight peg. If you are corrupt, then you lose respect.

Here, my data supports the argument that there is a relationship between homeless populations' limited access to the justice system and their status as 'lesser' citizens. Mike explained he believed that if you opt out of living as a tax paying and law-abiding

² Names have been changed

citizen you ultimately give up on the right to resort to the justice system. As described by Allan (2000), this type of attitude could be considered as the internalized acceptance of the dominant discourse on citizenship. Mike's explanation supports the theories of Faulkner (2006) and Ixer (2006), who say that citizens must work, obey the law and pay taxes if they wish to receive services from the state such as protection from the justice system. Influenced by the dominant discourse, homeless individuals may exclude themselves, thinking that as failed citizens, they are not entitled to being included and protected and therefore choose not to report when criminally victimized.

Police and Homeless Relations

Many participants offered extreme examples of their resistance to going to the police when victimized. One interviewee explained that she was "raped and just left for dead (and) still wouldn't talk to them". When asked why she wouldn't report to police, this woman explained that "What are they going to do? Just ask me a load of questions. Examine me and put me through more shit. No." A homeless man claimed, "I have been stabbed, I have had glass stuck in my face and had the police come up to me in the hospital and say to me 'listen, do you want to tell us what is going on' Nah, it's not going to happen." Many of the individuals who spoke of not wanting to be a grass explained that they had been "brought up to never ever speak to the police". A number of respondents also explained that they had been raised to take the law into their own hands, one respondent even suggesting that it is better to "pick up a gun" than to go to the police and grass. It is clear that this cultural aversion towards the police is difficult for victims to shake.

For some of the homeless individuals interviewed, negative experiences dealing with the police discouraged them from reporting when victimized. As Huey (2007, 2008) argues, law enforcement oriented ways of policing often make homeless individuals feel as though they are treated as suspects. In her 2005 research of Edinburgh's skid row, Huey found that police were largely viewed "negatively as authoritarian, arbitrary, discriminating – the opposite of members of an inclusionary institution" (Huey 2007: 75). While conducting research in 2008, I witnessed an example of these same kinds of relations during an interview with a woman on the Northbridge. We watched and she shouted while her partner was forced to leave his panhandling spot across the street by Community Beat Officers (CBO's) who was enforcing the local panhandling by law. While this was happening, the woman explained to me that this type of negative encounter was common. These types of exclusionary by laws force police officers into a contradictory situation. Officers must enforce policies that criminalize survival behaviours which are part of homeless individuals' survival strategies (Wachholz 2005). This type of policing contradicts the L&B police banner of social inclusivity and only serve to further alienate marginalized homeless citizens from the justice system.

Participants recounted stories of negative interactions with police in situations where they had committed non-violent offenses such as drinking in public, begging or sleeping rough. A representative for a government agency that deals with homeless issues illustrates: "things have gone wrong and some of those things have pulled them into the criminal justice system, and often for the most minor matters, so that they become not only homeless but they take on another name of being criminals too. People can feel estranged from justice and through those processes they can feel that justice isn't for

them.” Indeed, many respondents reported feeling little or no trust towards the police or the justice system. Despite the ‘code of the street’ and the aversion to police, many respondents recognized that good police officers did exist and served important purposes. Contrary to the findings of Wachholz (2005), Zakrisson, Hamel, and Hwang (2004) who found homeless individuals were often victims of assault by police, none of the seventeen homeless respondents I interviewed reported being seriously victimized by police. In fact, a few of the local community police officers were singled out by service providers and service users on numerous occasions as being exceptionally good with maintaining positive relationships with the marginalized community they work with. All categories of respondents recognized the importance of these exceptional community police officers. This comparatively good relationship between the Edinburgh police and their homeless citizens is testament to their efforts to be more inclusive.

Police and Service Provider relations

Of the twelve service providers interviewed, four reported having excellent relationships with their CBO’s. As the following quote demonstrates, interviewees specified that good CBO’s made a point to often come by, have a coffee and talk with residents and clients:

IR: Yes, we have a fantastic relationship with police here. Yeah, fantastic. And we have police presence here almost every day, and it’s not to arrest anybody. It’s hanging around, having a coffee. Yeah, we have a great relationship...

MQ: From the beginning?

IR: Yeah, our community officer is amazing. He just pops his head in, takes his hat off and has a soup and speaks to people. He is *around*. And he is very good at giving us information as well.

Many of the service providers who had positive experiences community policing spoke about the amount time required for a police officer to build a relationship with homeless service users. Addressing this issue, one shelter worker said: “they are lovely guys but as soon as the policemen come in the residents are like, ‘What’s going on, who are they here to lift?’ One guy has been coming in for a while and when he comes in the guys know that he’s just coming in for to say hello and stuff. And they eventually will come and say “Oh Hi Nick”. But people who have arrived recently are not like that”. One of the police officers interviews also explained that she felt ground level relationships and community intelligence were “the basics of policing”. Indeed, both police and service providers reported gaining valuable intelligence through mutual relationships. Service providers interviewed stated that regular police presence in the community and in the facilities helped protect staff and clients from potentially dangerous clients and helped remind the “residents of their obligations under the law”.

While shelter staff, social workers and other service providers did highlight the exceptional work of some local police officers, many also reported that their current CBO’s were not around very often. Despite widespread agreement about the benefits of positive relationships between the homeless population, local service providers and the police, respondents agreed that CBO who had the time and made the effort to engage with homeless community member were far too few. It is important to note that while most respondents focused on the complex and difficult relationship between homeless

clients and the police, none of the service providers reported having explicitly negative relations with their respective CBO.

Reporting

Three of the service users interviewed claimed they would go to the police if victimized. All three of these respondents explained they would report if the crime was serious enough that they could not handle it themselves. When asked if he would go straight to police if victimized, one respondent said “Yeah, for me it’s that simple. It is interesting to note that none of these three interviewees reported any criminal involvement, negative experiences with police, or having served any time in prison. Some of the homeless interviewees may have claimed to be willing to report to police but the majority of service users were not. In fact, fourteen of seventeen service users were adamant about the fact that they would not be willing to report to police if victimized.

While motivations for homeless victims not wanting to engage with the police or the justice system when victimized are varied, all categories of respondents including homeless, police and service providers singled out the same group of issues during interviews. Reasons cited by respondents are also those commonly found in the research literature: not wanting to be a grass, fear of retaliation, fear of being arrested for an outstanding warrant, fear or dislike of police, fear of not being believed, lack of trust in the system not wanting to be in the system and not wanting to talk about or deal with the victimization (Huey 2007, 2008; Novac et al 2006b; Rosenfeld, Jacobs and Wright 2003; McCarthy, Hagan and Martin 2002; Anderson 1999 and Rogers 2006). My findings suggest that another factor which discourages reporting to police is the masculine ideal of

the code of the street which suggests that men should be able to handle problems themselves.

Table 2: Reasons for Not Reporting Victimization to Police

Reasons for not Reporting	Number of respondents citing each reason
Code of the Street/No Grassing	10
Code of the Street/Police as Enemy/Warrants	6
Code of the Street/Men handle it themselves	3
Code of the Street/Fear of retaliation	6
Lack of faith in the system/won't help/too long	6
Fear of police due to past negative experience & low social status	5
Total number of respondents not willing to report ³	14

Table 2 represents the reasons given by homeless respondents for not reporting to police when victimized. Many respondents stated the only way that they deal with incidents of victimization was within the community and without the help of authorities. One young homeless man explained “We just deal with shit ourselves. You know what I mean? You get the street gangs together and they sort it for us”. The code of the street (Anderson 1999; Novac 2006b; Huey 2008; Rosenthal et al 2003), which is very much present in the streets of Edinburgh, prohibits victims from engaging with the enemy (police) and instead suggests that things should be dealt with within the community. As the following quote illustrates, some respondents saw the police as the enemy because of their criminal history: “I don’t like the police. I’ve got a couple previous”. Indeed, approximately a third of respondents explained they would not report because the police would likely run their names through the system looking for warrants.

³ Numbers in table do not add up because respondents gave multiple reasons for not reporting to police when victimized.

As in any community, the residents of Edinburgh shelters are forced to manage a hierarchy of power. Due to the poverty and close quarters most of these men live in, even the most minor insult, extortion or theft - a few dollars or a cigarette for example - can be seen as a significant challenge to one's masculinity. Dealing with victimization without help from the police means maintaining one's reputation as someone who can take care of himself. Within my sample, this attitude was most common with the younger male respondents who felt their pride depended on being able to "man-up" and handle it themselves with the boys. While the majority of the homeless men interviewed were not willing to report to police, many of them viewed reporting differently when the victims were women or children. One such respondent explained that: "there is a limit to how much you can deal with yourself until you have to get the police, like with pedophiles."

Several respondents claimed that going to the police was acceptable if done in the name of a victim who was either a child or a woman. The cultural pressure not to report to police was often explained as a question of masculinity. Despite the fact that male interviewees felt that victimized women were exempt from the no grassing rules, Rose⁴, the homeless woman I interviewed, was adamant about the fact that she would never in any circumstance go to police. In fact, she would never go to any kind of authority including service providers for anything when victimized. This refusal to engage with either police or the justice system by homeless victims can be conceptualized as yet another way in which homeless service users are excluding themselves.

Homeless participants often explained that they did not and would not report to police when victimized simply because "people don't like grasses". Interviews revealed that the social pressure not to involve authorities among homeless respondents had a

⁴ Names have been changed.

heavy influence. Repercussions for having ‘grassed’ were reported to range from a damaged reputation to intimidation or even serious violence. In *The Fear of Reprisal and the Failure of Victims to Report a Personal Crime* (1988), Signer found both that fear of reprisal was the leading cause for not reporting criminal victimization and that this fear was enhanced by continued interaction between the victim and offender (ibid; 299). Twenty years later, my findings support both these claims. A number of older shelter residents explained that they could not report to police when extorted or hassled by the younger residents, because they were afraid to ‘pay the price’. Just as Roger (2006) and Signer before me, I found that homeless victims’ fears were enhanced by the fact that they were living “in close proximity to their tormentors” inside the small local network of shelters (Rogers: 103).

One service provider touched upon an important part of her clients’ fear of grassing and the potential repercussions: “its one thing to be marginalized but it’s another to be marginalized again by the people you are connected with at the center, that just awful”. It is because of this cultural hatred for the police and for those who ‘snitch’, ‘grass’ or ‘rat’ on their peers that many homeless respondents reported being afraid, reluctant or opposed to reporting. My findings support those of Signer (1988), who found that failure to report criminal victimization was mostly influenced by the victim’s social environment.

Yet another reason mentioned by respondents for not reporting was the long term commitment required to engage with the justice system. The time required for a police investigation of court case to run its full course can discourage reporting because service users know that “if you report something, the solution’s not going to be there and then. If

you report somebody's been taxing you for your money, they're not going to come straight away and arrest the guy. It's not going to stop"(interview with homeless man). One veteran outreach worker explained that "some days one thing is really important today, but by tomorrow...something else has happened and it takes precedence over that. So they might be into it today but by tomorrow they might be so keen on it". For homeless individuals who face interlocking problems such as addiction and mental illness, long term commitments, such as those required when engaging with the justice system, may be very difficult to follow through with.

Respondents explained that even if they did want or need help, they believed their status as homeless citizens would prevent them from getting access to justice. One respondent said: "I was beat up right before I came in here. I was kicked up and down the street by a gang of lads who had just come out of the pub. I was sleeping in a doorway. Police came and they arrested me...For vagrancy." It is clear that, despite the national banner of social inclusivity, exclusionary vagrancy laws such as those reported by Wachholz (2005) and Feldman (2004) remain an issue in contemporary Scotland. Unfortunately, most of the respondents who reported having had negative experiences with police in the past also reported they would not go to them if victimized.

Referring to his status as a homeless citizen, one interviewee explained, "We don't exist. That's the best way I can describe it, we don't exist." Another stated that "You don't get the police involved. They're not interested". Here again, my data supports the argument that ideas about who is a full citizen are internalized by the homeless. Homeless individuals, who cannot participate in the economy, are the antithesis to what Arnold (2004), Rose (1999) and Bauman (2000) describe as the successful neo-liberal

citizen; they have no home and no purchase power. I argue however, along with Zakrisson (2004), that regardless of their fulfilling their duties as citizens, Marginalized and highly vulnerable, homeless citizens need access to the justice system.

Service Provider and their Clients

In *Negotiating Demands*, Huey (2008) found that service providers are often the ones who, because of their proximity, provide their clients with victim support; my own findings offer support for this. Eleven of the seventeen service users interviewed stated that they would go to staff if victimized. One service user, who, at the time of the interview had begun to work as a volunteer, attributed his success in overcoming victimization to the support of the staff at his shelter. He stated that, “If it wasn’t for the people in here I would still be the mess I was.” While reluctant to report to police, homeless service users often confided in service providers such as counselors, outreach workers and case workers. The manager of a Shelter for the homeless explained: “the people who have had a crime committed against them have been quite open and honest to staff about ‘look, this is what happened to me’...”

Just as Allan found in his Vancouver based study, I found that the majority of service providers and service users interviewed reported having good relationships with each other. Nonetheless, both Williams’ 1994 study and my own found that providers’ interviewed claimed the power and authority differential often made relationships with service users challenging. Service providers interviewed all spoke about the difficulty of maintaining a trusting relationship with their clients. As a service provider explained:

People put all sorts of perceptions about authority onto me, onto staff, because we're here. So it's how we work with that, work with people who carry that baggage that's important. So, yes they're going to be suspicious of us. Why shouldn't they be suspicious of us? Why should they trust us, you know? In a sense we have to earn people's trust by showing them we're on their side.

Many of the service providers interviewed made a point to explain that they had to show solidarity with their clients in order to gain and keep a trusting relationship. Because of the importance of trust in social work, respondents explained that they were typically not willing to be forceful when encouraging victimized clients to report to police.

Service providers who work with the homeless are acutely aware of the reasons why their clients are reluctant to report and for this reason, are often reluctant to push them into the justice system. One case worker explains: "for homeless people there is also stigma. They are homeless; they predominantly have a history of criminal involvement, substance misuse, maybe mental health issues, multiple support needs more than likely. Many may not want to be in the system generally." Shelter workers spoke of clients who did not have identification and who lied about or refused to give personal information. Whatever the reasons behind this desire for anonymity, it was clear that there is an important resistance to being 'on file' within the Edinburgh homeless community.

While many service providers explained they were cautious not to push their clients into reporting, many of them expressed a desire to encourage their clients to seek justice. Comments by a case worker illustrate this point: "There have been a few times when people have been victimized and I say, well, you need to call the police about that to

report it and they will say “there is no point”. And it’s like, someone has stolen from you, you need to report it so that something can be done about it.” Service providers also spoke of their willingness to take on extra hours and duties in order to be supportive. Talking about a case where she had worked very hard to link a young female victim with a police officer, one case worker explained that: “Ya, it was extra work...but, then I’m going to support that young person to get to her chief goal”. Other case workers also expressed that they “would be willing to be involved and to help and to advocate on the behalf of people and help them pursue a variety of things” including reporting to police.

One case worker explained that she respected her client’s choices: “we try to encourage them to report it, but we understand if they say no...There are other ways to try to help people deal with things as well.” Not all service provider respondents felt equally comfortable encouraging reporting because some feared it could potentially lead to repercussions such as re-victimization, disappointment, or even endanger the trusting relationship the worker has developed with his or her client. The manager of a homeless women’s shelter explained that her staff was hesitant to encourage their clients to report to police when victimized. The staff at this shelter wondered: “would that give the impression that staff members would be a grass...Not just the individual but also the staff? Would that jeopardize their working relationship with the individual? Would the resident themselves not feel confident disclosing information thinking that it would possibly be passed over to the police.” Supporting Lister’s (1998) claims, my findings were that while service providers are reluctant to push victims into reporting to police, it often became their responsibility to help clients access their full rights as citizens by offering suitable support.

All service providers interviewed agreed that while their clients had problematic relationships with the justice system, they should, at least ideally, have access to the justice system as good as any other citizen. Speaking about her homeless clients, one social worker illustrates: “Yeah, I think accessing justice is an essential part of being a citizen, I think it’s important for people to know that the police are there to provide a service and that they are actually the customer”. This attitude suggests that service providers would support Lister’s (1998) and Marshall’s (1950) more inclusive conceptualization of citizenship rights.

My data supports the argument that there is a relationship between homeless populations’ limited access to the justice system and their internalized status as ‘lesser’ and marginalized citizens. An interesting illustration of this argument was provided by three homeless respondents who each agreed that opting out of a life as a tax paying and law-abiding citizen ultimately disqualifies your right to resort to the justice system. While these homeless men were in theoretical agreement with Faulkner (2006) and Ixer (2006), I agree with Lister (1998) and Marshall (1950), who claim that failing to fulfill ones duties as a citizen should not negate one’s citizenship rights.

Chapter Four

Homeless Remote Reporting: Evaluation

According to the L&B Force, the goal of Remote Reporting is to offer “an alternative method for reporting incidents... helping the community access services which may have been extremely difficult for them to access previously”, thereby encouraging social inclusivity (Lothian & Borders 2008). As stated in the prior section, five years after Homeless Remote Reporting was started, the need for creating alternative ways for marginalized victims to access the justice system remains. Through this evaluation I will seek to determine what stakeholders see as the strengths and weaknesses of Homeless Remote Reporting, identifying the factors which support or impede the attainment of the projects goals. Furthermore, I will also assess whether or not stakeholders believe that Homeless Remote Reporting promotes a fuller form of citizenship, and why? By answering these research questions, I will also be addressing practical issues related to the projects implementation and functioning.

This evaluation of the Homeless Remote Reporting project is informed by thirty two interviews as well as data obtained from the L&B police as per the *Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act of 2002*. During interviews, all respondents were asked to describe their experiences with the project and discuss what they saw as the project strengths and weaknesses. Out of the twelve service providers interviewed, six had experience with Homeless Remote Reporting and four were aware of Remote Reporting but had not participated. While they did talk at length about victimization and reasons for not reporting, none of the homeless service users spoke of direct experiences with

Remote Reporting and only one had been previously aware of it. Both police officers interviewed were involved with Remote Reporting.

The evaluation in this chapter will be structured as follows. First, in the program overview, I present and discuss the figures obtained from the L&B Police. Then, in three parts, I discuss the strengths and weaknesses of Homeless Remote Reporting as well as identify the factors which support or impede the projects goals of the Homeless Remote Reporting project as they relate to: 1) Police; 2) Service users and 3) Service Providers. In these sections I discuss the roles of various stakeholders as well as the views provided through interviews. I also draw my own observations based on the synthesis of all data included; Remote Reporting figures and interviews. The reason why I begin the evaluation with the L&B police is because they both created and manage the Homeless Remote Reporting project. After the three part discussion, I provide a summary of the factors – both internal and external – that either support or impede the goals of the Homeless Remote Reporting project. Finally, I consider how the data I collected for this evaluation relates to the Scotland's national banner of social inclusivity.

Program overview

Table 3: Homeless Remote Reports

YEAR	REMOTE REPORTS	CRIME REPORTED	REPORT TYPE
2003	15		
2004	5		
2005	2		
2006	6	Breach and Malicious Mischief	Information only; no Crime Report
		Assault and Breach of the Peace	Information only; no Crime Report
		Assault and Theft	Information only; no Crime Report
		Assault and Robbery	Information only; no Crime Report
		Assault with Intent to Rob	Information only; no Crime Report
		Assault	Formal crime report, no investigation; report created for information only
2007	2	Breach of the Peace	Formal report and investigation requested; enquiries negative
		Hit and run Vehicle Accident	Formal report for minor injuries; enquires negative
2008	1	Breach of the Peace	Information only no Crime Report

Table 3 presents the total number of Homeless Remote Report cases. After making numerous requests under the *Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002*, I was informed that no details were held prior to 2006. This table reveals that reports were highest during the first year and have been dropping since. The other important thing this table shows is that of the nine reports, for which details are available, only three were formal, and after enquiries, none led to a criminal case.

Lothian and Borders Police

Homeless Remote Reporting is most frequently used anonymously, and for information purposes only. This is not to say, however, that anonymous Remote Reports are futile. Both police officers interviewed insisted on the importance of information for good police work. Such intelligence is especially valuable when coming from a community which is marginalized and traditionally does not engage with police. Although anonymous reports can only be used as information/intelligence and cannot lead directly to charges, they are still considered as useful. In the following quote, one CPO explains the value of these types of reports: “Remote Reporting is a great method for us to establish that a problem exists, and it’s a great way of discovering trends and new individuals that may be responsible. It’s good for indicating a problem and not for assisting with an investigation.” Thus, while official reports are preferable for prosecution purposes, the information obtained by anonymous reports remains valuable. For this reason it is not considered problematic that six of the nine reports for which we have details were for informational purposes only.

The police sergeant interviewed suggested that Homeless Remote Report numbers were down because “people are reporting more to their CBO’s or are feeling more comfortable about reporting”. Supporting this hypothesis, one service provider explained that her and her staff “have a fantastic relationship with police... our community officer is amazing ...and we have police presence here almost every day, and it’s not to arrest anybody. It’s hanging around, having a coffee”. Not only did this good relationship influence this service provider’s decisions to participate in Remote Reporting, but it may also explain why there is little need for it. When asked why there had been no reports

during the previous year, this service provider answered: “I think it was because Brendan⁵ has been around, our community police man. He’s been more out in the front so that they have been more apt to sort it out and have words with him”. It is possible that improved relationships between CBO’s and the homeless community have led to lower number of remote reports. Regardless, many interviewees reported they were happy about their experiences with Homeless Remote Reporting and hopeful its future potential.

After contacting the seven agencies listed on the L&B site as participating in Homeless Remote Reporting, it became clear that the list was not up to date. One of the agencies had been shut down for over a year, and another was completely unaware of the project at the time of my interview. Indeed, the Senior Housing Officer of this agency claimed she had never even heard of Remote Reporting. Even after asking half a dozen other employees, she found no one who was aware of the project. This respondent suggested that it was likely that the service providers who had agreed to participate in Remote Reporting were no longer working there.

After being informed of the list’s inaccuracy, the police sergeant who works closely with Remote Reporting explained that it is the duty of participating agencies to inform the L&B when there are changes to their involvement in the project: “Nobody tells us, the way it works is once somebody, once an agency becomes a remote reporting site we send out, there is like a single point of contact, an officer in each division who goes out and trains the staff. We get a brief overview of what they do... but unless they tell us they are closing we don’t have any way of knowing that. The onus is really on them”. Such inaccuracies would clearly have to be corrected.

⁵ Names have been changed.

Homeless Service Users

Table 4: Service Users and Homeless Remote Reporting

	Positive	Negative
Service users who think Homeless Remote Reporting is a good idea	9	8
Service users who claim they would use Homeless Remote Reporting	6	11
Service users who would “deal with it themselves”	6	11
Service users who said they would/do go to sp’s when victimized	11	6
Service users who would go straight to police if victimized	3	14

Table 4 summarizes the opinions I collected during interviews with homeless service users. It is important to consider service users as consumers of services as the viability of programs such as Remote Reporting depends on them.

Six of the seventeen homeless service users interviewed stated they would be willing to use Remote Reporting if victimized. These respondents explained that the main advantage of Remote Reporting was the anonymity; either total or from their peers. The concern with anonymity is in large part due to the immense social pressure to refrain from both engaging with police and from grassing. The code of the street problematizes the reporting process by prohibiting contact with police. In the following quote, a service provider with extensive Remote Reporting experience argues that Remote Reporting is a successful and innovative way to address this problem:

This is why we need this remote reporting. Because they come in plain clothes as well, if you do request an interview, they will come dressed like you or I, you know, jeans and a t-shirt. So nobody actually knows who they are when they are coming in to speak with you. You can also arrange to see them in the center or arrange to meet them in a coffee

shop, you can arrange to meet them outside, and people don't know it's the police you are speaking to.

Homeless Remote Reporting may be an especially good option for recent immigrants who are not familiar with the local justice system, may be vulnerable and may also have to face language barriers. One service provider spoke of her experience on this matter: "People from Zimbabwe don't have relationships with the police at all. It seems very brutal; you don't have the same chances. So for them to actually flag down and then sit down with a police man would be very alien". Since Poland joined the European Union, Scotland has seen a huge wave of polish immigrants who also have language barriers and pre-conceived notion about the police based on experiences in their mother county. For this reason, the L&B have translated the posters into four languages including polish. This effort to overcome multiple obstacles in order to encourage marginalized victims to report is testament to the L&B force's commitment to socially inclusivity.

Homeless women who engage in survival sex work are among the most marginalized and most vulnerable for victimization. The L&B sergeant interviewed explained that sex workers often make use of anonymous Remote Reporting: "what we do get is prostitutes reporting sexual assaults or rapes but they are usually old and they just want the police to know about it, they don't always want to give the details but they do want to pass on a description of the person and any vehicle". The use of Remote Reporting for homeless survival sex workers is important because of their acute vulnerability.

It is also important because this type of report suggests that victims feel it is their duty to report incidents in order to prevent their peers from also being victimized⁶. It is interesting to note that while the Homeless Remote Reporting Project is intended to encourage marginalized victims to exercise their right to access justice; homeless victims are also using it to fulfill what they see as their responsibilities towards their peers. Addressing the issue of rights and responsibilities, one service provider working with young homeless people spoke about why she participated in Homeless Remote Reporting: “we are also trying to teach people rights and responsibilities. Rights and responsibilities work both ways”.

In my research I found that many anonymous Remote Reports were made because the victims wanted to make sure others would not also be victimized. One service provider claimed that “anything that promotes... that lets people know about their entitlements and their rights, I think is good because I think there’s a positive message to the person that they are of value and that because they happen to be homeless or whatever else, they are still of value.” I would add to that that Homeless Remote Reporting is also important because it allows marginalized victims, who may or may not wish to make formal reports to the police, to fulfill what they see as their responsibility. This is yet another way that Remote Reporting can be considered to promote social inclusivity.

A service provider described a case where she had a positive experience facilitating a Homeless Remote Report for one of her clients as follows:

Remote reporting allowed me to do it here, in a safe environment...in an environment in which the young person feels that she can say anything horrific that’s happened, and be open and honest... he was great – he

⁶ It is also interesting to note that Canada has a very similar reporting scheme called Third Party Reporting which had been officially adopted by the RCMP and is specifically aimed at encouraging sex crime reports.

came plain-clothed...it allowed me to kind of bring it to here...there was no formal authoritarian figure, no policeman...it was me and her...and, I have a great relationship with her...she trusted me...So, no, I don't think the form is lengthy. I think for us to be part of the remote reporting allows for the trust to build here. And, I have that trust that something will happen between the law enforcement agency and the crime that has been committed...

This case is a perfect illustration of the strengths of Remote Reporting. Using an existing service structure and trust relationship, Homeless Remote Reporting facilitated the report of a crime which otherwise would not have been reported. The police were discrete and gained information about the victimization of a marginalized citizen. Finally, the overall process had a positive impact on the victim while leaving her feeling validated as a citizens with rights.

While the majority of service users agreed that they were comfortable confiding in service providers when victimized, some made it clear that they would not tell anyone but their peers. Six respondents explained that if they were victimized, they would not consider using Remote Reporting and would rather “deal with it themselves”. When asked if she would confide in staff at her hostel if victimized, one heroin addicted respondent answered: “No, because you can't trust the workers either you tell them something in confidence and before you know it the whole fucking hostel knows that you've done it. Trust me”. This respondent reported feeling that telling staff would still count as grassing and that either way, the harm could not be undone and talking about victimization could only bring her further suffering.

Approximately half of respondents felt that Remote Reporting was a good idea. Most of those who viewed the project negatively cited reasons which fall under the 'code of the street'. Others were worried about potential abuses. One homeless man and two service providers who did not participate were concerned that people would use Remote Reporting in order to make false reports against their enemies. Although this risk is conceivable, false reports are part of the reality police face and are not threatening enough to affect the overall worthiness of the project.

Other homeless respondents also claimed that they would avoid reporting to police if victimized because they felt they would gain nothing from it. The following quote by a young man living in a shelter illustrates this position: "Aye, but see, myself, at the end of the day I would rather keep all the hassle out of my life. And if that meant taking it on the chin, keeping my mouth shut. If I kept my mouth shut, then at the end of the day I could still keep my head high". When prompted to elaborate on their reasons for feeling it was not 'worth it', some respondents explained that engaging with the justice system would not provide them with timely results.

Service Providers

Whether Remote Reports are done anonymously, formally or for information only, a trusting relationship between clients and service providers is absolutely essential. Most of the service providers interviewed reported that service users often came to them to confide they had been victimized but previous to Homeless Remote Reporting, it was very difficult to convince users to make police reports. One case worker explains:

The people who have had a crime committed against them have been quite open and honest to staff about 'look, this is what happened to me'.

And if the staff team tried to convince them to go to the police they wouldn't go. And when the remote reporting came in it was actually quite good to be able to tell people 'you don't need to do it officially you can go to remote reporting...

Some service providers were sceptical about the validity of their clients' stories of victimization. Nonetheless, the majority felt that they were routinely trusted with delicate information and that Remote Reporting enabled them to suggest viable plans of actions to their victimized clients.

As the following quote demonstrates, service providers understood the importance of their homeless client's exercising their citizenship rights: "I think accessing justice is an essential part of being a citizen, I think it's important for people to know that the police are there to provide a service and that they are actually the customer". As indicated in the previous chapter, all service providers interviewed agreed with the more inclusive definitions of citizenship provided by Lister and Marshall and thought their clients should ideally have access to the justice system. While some were more sceptical than others, the majority of service provider respondents felt that Homeless Remote Reporting had the potential to reinstate homeless victims as citizens by offering them better access to their right to justice, inclusion and protection.

While the Homeless Remote Reporting Project is successful on the theoretical level, practical issues are also very important to the project's success. The basic procedures involved with Remote Reporting training were described by a sergeant from the L & B as follows:

The first time it's usually to just chat about what remote reporting is and to see if they are interested, they do want to go ahead he or she will

go back train the staff, it's a 1 hour power point presentation, gives the background on remote reporting and will train them on how to fill out the form and then they will get a supply of the posters to put up, to promote the facility and then we will send them a copy electronically of the form in case they don't have a fax and really after that its meant to look after itself.

Service providers with Remote Reporting experience all agreed that the training did not require much time or effort. Most respondents agreed and reported feeling that the procedures involved in Remote Reporting are straight forward and reasonable. This is clearly an advantage considering the heavy workloads social service providers are already dealing with.

Although social service agencies who work with the homeless are always over loaded with work, several of the service providers interviewed claimed that they had made consistent efforts to encourage Remote Reporting. For example, one organization incorporated Homeless Remote Reporting into the list of services they introduced to new clients during admission process, put up posters⁷ on the premises, made reporting forms readily available and filed and organized past reports for future reference.

The long term nature of criminal cases however can make service provider commitments complicated. Indeed, one case worker who does not participate in Homeless Remote Reporting explained that if she was to begin such a process with a service user she would feel duty bound to assist them throughout the entire process. Being that many homeless service users come and go from one shelter to another, keeping contact and providing continued assistance is difficult if not impossible. On the

⁷ for example, see appendix IV

other hand, a manager for an emergency shelter and advice centre for the homeless explained that while she had helped with approximately sixteen Remote Reports, she was only aware of one of their outcomes. She stated that this was “because our rule is that we move people on after quite a few days... we just start it, we don’t do the whole process. We just start it, fill out the forms, give it to the contacts, they deal with it then. We stop at the remote reporting”. While it is not always possible, service providers are meant to provide support for their clients throughout the entire Remote Reporting process and ensuing investigation. In the case of reports which are anonymous or for informational purposes only, this long term commitment issue becomes obsolete.

Even though the training involved in Homeless Remote Reporting is very minimal, staff turnover is extremely high in the social service sector and for this reason keeping up to date with training can be difficult. Even the two organizations interviewed that reported the highest number of Remote Reports and were the most enthusiastic, explained that it was a great challenge to keep up with the constant re-training. One service provider explained that “the only reason it is dwindling is because the staff required more training and we have a turnover of staff. The two staffs that were initially trained have moved to management positions and so now I have two seniors that require training for remote reporting, and it just cascades down”. This same respondent further explained that Homeless Remote Reporting “has been slowly dwindling, and unfortunately we have so much other stuff on I actually didn’t realize...it’s been put on the back burner”. Given the fact that service providers who work with the homeless are often dealing with crisis situations, the list of priorities must constantly be reshuffled.

There is an important discrepancy between the statements of L&B police and the service providers I interviewed concerning a warrant policy. Huey (2008) found in her study that there existed an informal agreement that victims filing Remote Reports were not to be arrested for minor warrants. All of the service providers I interviewed who had experience working with Remote Reporting also spoke of this informal agreement. While some described the arrangement as a promise not to pick up victims who had warrants for minor things such as drinking in public, one case worker explained the informal warrant policy as follows: “what I understood from it, is that if it’s a minor offense, they can either neglect to pick up on that particular occasion or help the people to do something about that warrant. However if it is a serious offense, of course, they would then pick somebody up for it, which I think they should anyway”. Service providers mentioned this informal agreement because it was considered to be one of the Homeless Remote Reporting projects selling points.

The special constable I interviewed claimed she knew nothing of such an agreement; “I haven’t heard anything about any protocol about not getting checked out for making the report, not heard of that at all... sorry, there is nothing written into the remote reporting general order that says that”. This is problematic as misunderstandings of this kind could jeopardize the integrity of the project. When service users were asked about what might attract them to Remote Reporting, many claimed that the warrant policy would be an important factor in their decisions making. Being absolutely clear about such arrangements is very important and having an open dialogue between stakeholders would help iron out such inconsistencies.

One of the service provider respondents explains why this informal warrant agreement is source of such misunderstandings as follows;

I think that's a difficulty that the police have because the way policing works is that it's down to the discretion of individual officers and they apply their own discretion to how they apply the law. ... So there's a cultural thing within the police that I think creates a little bit of a problem. That's why it has to be a very clear strategic policy with clear guidelines on how incidents should be treated, how things like that ... it should be very explicit and upfront.

Although informal agreements between police officers and service providers were reported to be common, they are essentially unreliable and it is very important that they not be presented to service users as otherwise.

As the following quote demonstrates, service providers stressed that the lack of monitoring was a central reason for the projects breakdown.

It got off to a good start. A lot of energy came out at the beginning. Big launch. Then one or two agencies fell away. The monitoring that they hoped would take place didn't really happen. Or at least the liaison between the police and ourselves really quickly folded after three or four months. I'm sure that the police are still recording what's been going on, incidents and responding to them, but that link between the organizations and the police kind of disappeared. Other things came on to the agenda, I'm sure. This would be the flavor of the month or the year of whatever.

Another hostel manager stated that the reason why his organization had seen the number of reports dwindle was the lack of monitoring. He explained: "I think that's been lacking, the monitoring and reviewing of it. Then it really would be successful. It would help keep

it on the agenda. I would then know more about ...successes...we'd be getting some feedback ... I see that as a weakness in it...There should be monitoring, which there isn't." It is clear that while the project remains, much of the initial energy has been lost because of this communication breakdown.

Had there been better monitoring or better lines of communication between participating agencies and their police contacts, surely L&B would have been aware of the fact that their seven agencies have dwindled to five. Furthermore, the issue of training new staff members likely would have been easier to address and the misunderstandings concerning the informal warrant agreement likely would have been discussed. The fact that the list of Homeless Remote Reporting participating agencies was not up to date on the L&B website supports this idea that the initial energy has faded and that the monitoring which was expected by participating agencies did not materialize.

Aside from the lack of communication and monitoring, another problematic aspect of Homeless Remote Reporting is that of publicity and awareness. One outreach social worker interviewed explained that not only was she never approached about getting onboard with Remote Reporting, she found it difficult to access information about the project even after approaching a L&B Officer. "I think we were quite up for being involved in it, we just never really have been. And to be honest I haven't really heard much about it since then...What we did try...because we had a client that did want to report an incident, is that we tried to find out more about reporting that way and we really came across a stumbling block trying to get information about it". This respondent claimed that her CBO was not aware of the project at all. Perhaps this is related to the issue of staff turnover within the police force, although I was informed that Remote

Reporting was part of the L&B training manual. Either way, it is problematic that a service provider had difficulty obtaining information about the Homeless Remote Reporting project when inquiring with her CBO. It is also worth repeating that one of the organizations listed as participating in Homeless Remote Reporting was entirely unaware of the project's existence. This too is testament to the lack of local publicity and awareness.

Publicity aimed at candidates for the Homeless Remote Reporting project is meant to be handled by participating organizations and service providers. Aside from one organization which had really incorporated Remote Reporting into their system, the majority admitted having spent little to no time on publicity since the launch of the project. It is interesting to note, however, that Remote Reporting has been highly publicized for the LGBT community (Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender) with much support from L&B police. When visiting the police head quarters I was told of the recent publicity campaign specifically aimed at the LGBT community which included a large launch party, advertisements printed on the back of 525,000 bus tickets, flyers in four languages, a DVD including testimonial of LGBT people who had used Remote Reporting and cards which were to be handed out by outreach workers (interview 2007). Of the seventeen homeless service users I interviewed, only one had heard of Remote Reporting. This indicates a serious lack of awareness about Homeless Remote Reporting in the community and a real need for publicity.

Some service providers were sceptical of the motivation and level of commitments to the project shown by L&B police; "I'm not naive. There's always ambiguity there. Right at the outset I wasn't convinced that this was a selfless act by the police".

Respondents explained to me that they were fully aware that projects such as Remote Reporting are associated with socially inclusive policing and help generate positive publicity for the force. As I have shown, service providers also felt that the energy which was present when the project was launched in 2003 had faded over the years which suggested to them that commitment to the project, for example the monitoring and publicity, were sorely lacking.

The tag line often used for the publicity of Remote Reporting is “Take-Control”, which is meant to suggest that reporting incidents of victimization can be an empowering endeavor. The following quote illustrates what a few respondents reported to me: “for some people who have been homeless, they may take this in the completely opposite way from what is being described as Take Control. They may feel that others are taking control”. During interviews, difficult questions were considered about whether or not Remote Reporting empowers the homeless as consumers of police services, as citizens with rights, or rather empowers the police by providing information at the expense of victims. The skepticism towards Homeless Remote Reporting shown by some service providers and users is not surprising. The power dynamics inherent to law enforcement are such that the homeless are often on the losing end and service providers are often witness to this.

In short, table 5 summarizes the factors which I found to either support or impede the attainment of goals of Homeless Remote Reporting as well as its proper implementation and performance. The factors which are identified as external to the program are differentiated in red. While such external factors do not stem from Homeless

Remote Reporting, they must be considered as they affect stakeholders' ability to use the program and achieve its ultimate goals.

Factors that support the attainment of goals, implementation and performance of HRR -Strengths-	Factors that impede the attainment of goals, implementation and performance of HRR -Weaknesses-
Simplicity of training and procedures	Re-training and staff turnover issue
Anonymous reporting option	Lack of communication between police and participating organizations
proper discreet support made available for victims who wish to report	Lack of publicity and awareness
Accumulation of police intelligence leading to better understanding of issues faced by homeless community	Lack of faith in service providers, police and justice system and generalized skepticism
developing of positive relationships between CBO' and the homeless community	Code of the street: Anti-snitching rules
inclusion of homeless immigrants (documents now available in Polish)	Short term service providers cannot provide long term support for official reports made

Social Inclusion: Is the goal being met?

The Homeless Remote Reporting project has the over-arching goal to encourage social inclusion. Stakeholder's all agreed that the Homeless Remote Reporting has the *potential* to foster greater social inclusion and nourish citizenship by providing an alternative route for homeless victims to access their right to justice. When asked if he felt that Remote Reporting addressed the national theme of social inclusion, a representative for a local government agency working with the homeless answered:

I think in principle it is, because it is about ensuring that a population that is marginalized that is not traditionally very good at speaking up for themselves don't become the kind of 'double victim' of their circumstances because their circumstances are already quite victimizing

themselves. It definitely under the banner of inclusion because it's doing something that is particularly geared towards people who are vulnerable in society.

Homeless Remote Reporting theoretically challenges normative conceptions of neo-liberal citizenship by relying on the principle that homeless citizens - as crime victims - have rights regardless of their fulfilling their duties or not. When victimized, citizens -housed or homeless- have the right to police assistance and justice. The fact that particularly marginalized groups of homeless people such as survival sex workers and recent immigrants are able to access justice through Homeless Remote Reporting supports the argument that the program is indeed very socially inclusive.

Despite the unanimous opinion that the *goal* of Homeless Remote Reporting is social inclusiveness, my research indicated that there are numerous exclusionary forces involved. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, the internalization of neo-liberal conceptions of citizenship did in some cases translate into the belief that one is not entitled to being included and protected by the justice system because one does not pay taxes. Quoting reasons provided by the dominant discourse on citizenship, some homeless individuals interviewed excluded themselves and chose not to report when criminally victimized. Other homeless respondents excluded themselves by choosing to follow the code of the street and refrain from reporting when victimized.

Other interviewees expressed scepticism about the commitment the L&B Force have shown in regards to Homeless Remote Reporting and social inclusivity. Highlighting the lack of monitoring, some service providers suggested the project was intended to create undeserved positive publicity for the force. While the L&B's Homeless

Remote Reporting is indeed in line with Scotland's social inclusivity campaign, my findings support those of Huey (2005) who found that even though the policing model in Edinburgh is inclusive, local police continue to play a role in the marginalization of the homeless. The resulting paradox is one where CBO's forced to balance law enforcement duties and the mandate of social inclusivity interact with the homeless population in contradictory ways. Despite the identified challenges to tackling the problem of under-reporting, respondents felt that "in some circumstances (Remote Reporting) might be the ideal option" being a good add-on option with socially inclusive potential.

Chapter Five

“It’s such a good service; it’s too good to lose it”: Conclusion

I collected data on homeless victimization, under-reporting, the roles of police and service providers, as well as access to justice. My findings are in line with the body of literature I reviewed and confirm that the problem Homeless Remote Reporting is intended to address –under-reporting of victimization – still exists. The goal of Remote Reporting is to offer an alternative method for marginalized population to report to police thereby encouraging social inclusivity. All service providers interviewed supported the goal of Remote Reporting and agreed that homeless citizens should, at least ideally, have better access to the justice system. One service provider commented that: “Folks should have access, it goes without saying; how you do it is the difficult thing”. My data shows that there is indeed a relationship between homeless populations’ limited access to the justice system and their status as ‘lesser’ and marginalized citizens.

The Homeless Remote Reporting Project can be conceptualized as an attempt to reinstate homeless individuals as citizens by offering them better access to their right to justice. The fact that marginalized individuals have been able to access justice through Homeless Remote Reporting supports the argument that the program is indeed socially inclusive. The main strengths and factors that support the attainment of goals of Homeless Remote Reporting are: 1) the simplicity of the training and procedures, 2) the option of anonymous reports (3) the proper support made available for victims who wish to report 4) the accumulation of police intelligence leading to better understanding of issues faced by homeless community, 5) the developing of positive relationships between

CBO' and the homeless community,6) the inclusion of homeless immigrants (documents now available in Polish). My evaluation suggests that while the conceptual goals of Homeless Remote Reporting are met, serious weaknesses are likely to prevent Homeless Remote Reporting from being available to the maximum number homeless victims.

After interviewing thirty two stakeholders, I have found that the main weaknesses of Homeless Remote Reporting are: 1) Lack of project monitoring and communication between police and participating organizations stakeholders, 2) lack of publicity and awareness, 3) Challenge of re-training and staff turnover. Other factors external to the project that impede the attainment of established goals are: 4) Lack of faith in service providers, police and justice system and generalized skepticism, 5) Anti-snitching rules and finally 6) the fact that organizations which provide short term services for homeless individuals cannot provide the long term support needed for the entire progression of a criminal case. When asked about the frequency of reports and the overall success of the project, the police sergeant interviewed admitted: "to be very honest with you, remote reporting is not used as well as it could be".

Through qualitative evaluation of the Homeless Remote Reporting Project, I have found that while the number of Remote Reports has been low, stakeholders find it to be a good addition to existing services for the homeless. While weaknesses were identified, these could be addressed and Homeless Remote Reporting remains a project with little cost and much potential for bridging the gap between marginalized victims and the justice system. Despite the reported lack of monitoring and publicity, the majority of service providers with Remote Reporting experience were happy about with the program and hopeful for its future potential. Respondents also reported that victims who used the

project had positive outcomes on the “moral and emotional” level and were left feeling their status as citizens with rights were validated because police were interested in the crimes committed against them rather than focusing on their criminal activities.

While there is a wealth of literature on victimization of homeless individuals, there is a substantial gap in the research record in relation to how the homeless deal with such incidents. By providing new empirical data about how the homeless deal with victimization and how they access justice services as victims, this study enables others to further study these issues in the future. It also extends the theoretical literature which focuses on issues of access to justice and citizenship. With this study I contribute to scholarly debate by arguing that Homeless Remote Reporting has the potential to foster greater social inclusion and nourish citizenship by providing better opportunities for homeless individuals to access their right to justice. Nevertheless, more research and analysis is needed in order to better understand how inclusionary and exclusionary forces interact and affect marginalized victims and their likelihood of engaging with the justice system.

This evaluation is also practical because it provides concrete information to interested parties about the strengths and weaknesses of Remote Reporting. I have made recommendations⁸ based on my findings and will create a policy oriented document which will be made available to police, social service organizations, and policy analysts who wish to consider similar reporting schemes. Over and above, this study will bring attention to the Remote Reporting Project which could help stakeholders who wish to

⁸ See appendix V

levy for continued support or interested parties wishing to establish similar projects in the United Kingdom or internationally.

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Appendix I:

Themes for interviews with all three categories of respondents

Homeless

- Experience with and perception of police
- Experience with and perception of service providers
- Victimization
- Views on Homeless Remote Reporting Project
- Views on “access to justice system and citizenship ideas”

Service Providers

- Experience with and perception of police
- Relationship with homeless clients
- Views on Homeless Remote Reporting Project
- Reasons why they participate or do not participate in the project
- Experiences with and opinions about the project (strength and weaknesses)
- Views on “access to justice system and citizenship ideas”

Police

- Experiences with and opinions about the project (strength and weaknesses)
- Relationship and experiences with homeless
- Relationship and experiences with service providers
- Views on “access to justice system and citizenship ideas”

Appendix II: Sample Interview Questions

Police Officers:

-How would you describe your involvement with the Homeless Remote Reporting Project? (Will probe for length of time, number and types of cases, collaborating agencies...)

-Based on your experiences, what do you see as the strengths and weaknesses of the project and why?

-What do you think are the ultimate goals of the Homeless Remote Reporting Program?

Service Providers:

-How would you describe your involvement with the Homeless Remote Reporting Project? (Will probe for length of time, number and types of cases, collaborating officers...)

-Why did you choose to participate (or to not participate) in the Homeless Remote Reporting Program?

-Based on your experiences (or on my description of the program), what do you see as the strengths or weaknesses of the project and why?

-What do you think are the ultimate goals of the Homeless Remote Reporting Program?

Homeless Individuals:

-If you were the victim of a crime, would you be likely to report it to the police and why?

-If you were the victim of a crime, would you be likely to report it to a service provider and why?

-What do you know about the Homeless Remote Reporting Project?

-Based on your experiences (or on my description of the program), what do you see as the strengths or weaknesses of the project and why?

Appendix III: Remote Reporting Form

REMOTE INCIDENT REPORT

Agency Ref No:
Police Ref No:
CR/Captor No:

Date Reported:

This Form is to be completed by staff noting details of any incident or information and should be faxed or e-mailed to Lothian and Borders Police, Force Communications Centre on 0131- 440- 6889 /6888 or remote.report@lbp.pnn.police.uk For the attention of The Public Assistance Desk Supervisor

The Police will not be able to assist you if you do not provide the required information. If you do require a police response, dial 999 or 101.

1. INCIDENT:

When did this happen?

Time: Day: Date:

Where did this happen? (i.e. in or near the home/street/place of worship/business premises)

2. TYPE OF INCIDENT:

Which of these best describes what happened?

(More than one category can be ticked)

Assault Verbal Abuse/Threats Graffiti

Damage to Property Theft

Other (Please provide details) _____

What do you think the motive behind this was?

3. SUBJECTS WISHES:

Are you the victim of this incident or are you reporting it for another?

Victim/Reporting for another - (relationship)

What can we do to help you have this incident recorded?

- (i) Report the matter to the Police and make arrangements for officers to meet with you to carry out a full investigation?
- (ii) Report the matter to the police formally but ask them not to investigate it further? (Option for victim only)
- (iii) Would you like to report this incident for information/intelligence purposes only?

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In any event, would you like the police to contact you about this?
Yes / No

If YES to above, would you like the police to make any specific arrangements, to do this? (e.g. contact via member of staff, meet away from home address, meet in presence of staff member, plain clothed police officer only etc.)

Would you require an interpreter or any other assistance? (e.g. disability access)

4. SUBJECT DETAILS:

Would you provide your personal details for the police? Yes / No

Full Name: _____

Age: _____ **Date of Birth:** _____

Gender: _____ **Occupation:** _____

Address: (including postcode)

Contact Number: _____

Have you been the victim of similar crimes before? Yes / No

If so, did you report it to the police? Yes / No

4. (i) If you are not the victim, can you provide the victims personal details? Yes / No

Full Name: _____

Age: _____ **Date of Birth:** _____

Gender: _____ **Occupation:** _____

Address: (including postcode)

Contact Number: _____

In any event, would the victim like the police to contact them about this? Yes / No

If YES to above, would you like the police to make any specific arrangements, to do this? (e.g. contact via member of staff, meet away from home address, meet in presence of staff member, plain clothed police officer only etc.)

Would the victim require an interpreter or any other assistance? (e.g. disability access)

5. SELF DEFINED ETHNICITY – VICTIM ONLY: (Optional)

Which of these groups would best describe your ethnicity?

Indian Pakistan Bangladeshi

Asian-Other (Specify) _____

Caribbean African

Black-Other (Specify) _____

Chinese

Mixed (Specify) _____

White-British White-Scottish White-Irish

White Other (Specify) _____

Gypsy Traveller Unknown

Declined Other

6. SUMMARY OF INCIDENT / INFORMATION:

Could you describe exactly what happened? (Include as much detail as possible and continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

7. DESCRIPTION OF PERSONS RESPONSIBLE:

Do you know who was responsible for this? YES / NO (Include as much detail as possible and continue on a separate sheet if necessary.)

Name & Address (If known)

Can you describe the person(s) responsible?

Age _____ Gender _____ Ethnic appearance _____

Height _____ Weight _____

Hair (colour, length and style) _____

Eyes (include if glasses worn) _____

Scars/Marks or Tattoo's _____

Can you describe what the person(s) responsible were wearing?

Clothes _____

Can you think of any other relevant information?

8. WITNESSES:

Were there any witnesses to this incident? Yes / No (Include as much detail as possible and continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

(1) Name: _____ Age: _____

Address: _____

Contact Number: _____

(2) Name: _____ Age: _____

Address: _____

Contact Number: _____

AGENCY USE ONLY

9. INITIAL ACTION TAKEN BY REPORTING AGENCY: (Include all agency referrals. If the informant is a repeat victim, specify what action, if any, has been taken in relation to previous incidents)

Agency/Partner Submitting Report: _____

Member of Staff Involved: (Please print name) _____

Contact Number: _____

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POLICE USE ONLY

10. DIVISIONAL CRIME MANAGERS/CRIME DESK INSTRUCTIONS:

Allocated to:

Please ensure that the Local Community Safety Department is updated with details of enquiry officer

11. SUMMARY OF INVESTIGATION:

12. REFERENCE NUMBERS:

Captor Incident Number: _____ CR Number(s): _____

Has Finalisation Sheet (Force Form 50a 50b 50c 50d) been forwarded to Reporting Agency?

Yes / No

Date?

If No, then reasons why?

13. FINAL OUTCOME: (e.g. arrest, summons, unsuccessful inquiry, logged for intelligence purposes, etc. (please provide brief details)

ENSURE COPIES OF COMPLETED REMOTE REPORT FORMS ARE E-MAILED OR FORWARDED TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY SAFETY DEPARTMENT AND FORCE DIVERSITY UNIT.

Reporting Officer: _____ Date Sent: _____

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Appendix IV: Remote Reporting Promotional Poster



YOU DON'T DESERVE ABUSE OR CRIME

WHOEVER YOU ARE, YOU DON'T DESERVE IT

IF YOU'VE EXPERIENCED OR WITNESSED VIOLENCE, ABUSE OR ANY CRIME - YOU CAN NOW REPORT IT WITHOUT CONTACTING THE POLICE DIRECTLY. TAKE CONTROL LETS YOU REPORT ANY CRIME OR GIVE INFORMATION AND YOU CAN REMAIN ANONYMOUS. VISIT THE WEBSITE OR PHONE AND FIND THE TAKE CONTROL CONTACT DETAILS MOST SUITABLE FOR YOU.

TAKE CONTROL WEBSITE - WWW.LBP.POLICE.UK/TAKECONTROL
PHONE - 0131 311 3909

   Stonewall SCOTLAND
HAPPY TO TRANSLATE

Appendix V: Recommendations

My research indicates that the main weaknesses of the Homeless Remote Reporting project fall under two categories: the lack of monitoring or communication between stakeholders and ground level publicity. In light of these findings, my recommendations are that:

Monitoring

L&B police and participating organizations commit to better monitoring of the project as this would enable numerous problems to be addressed simultaneously. Monitoring of the Homeless Remote Reporting Project should include an annual report combined with a meeting for stakeholders. This organized and sustained monitoring would enable many of the project's kinks to be worked out:

- 1) Organizations could take the opportunity to book training for their new staff.
- 2) Lothian and Borders police could update their data on participating organizations.
- 3) New challenges like non-English speaking immigration waves could be discussed.
- 4) Stakeholders could exchange information about both how they think Homeless Remote Reporting could be improved and how they have used Remote Reporting successfully.
- 5) Misunderstandings about the informal warrant agreement mentioned in previous chapters could be addressed and settled.

With such a relatively small but sustained effort, the energy which was present during the initial stages of the Homeless Remote Reporting project could be revived and maintained through the years.

Awareness

Improvement of the ground level awareness of Homeless Remote Reporting would be greatly beneficial. Only one of the seventeen homeless people I interviewed had heard of Remote Reporting which indicates a lack of awareness about Homeless Remote Reporting in the community and therefore a real need for publicity. Participating organization could publicize the Homeless Remote Reporting Project in the following ways:

- 1) Shelters, service centers and soup kitchens could put up posters and make information cards available within their facilities.
- 2) Outreach workers could hand out information cards while in the field⁹ and could also put up posters where rough sleepers might sleep.

⁹ In fact, the sergeant who had worked on the publicity campaign for the LGBT community Remote Reporting project suggested that perhaps something similar could be done for other marginalized communities. If such event did take pace, cards and posters could be easy to distribute and awareness would improve.