Volunteer Police Cadets:

Expansion, digitalisation and impact

Authors

Dr Jeffrey DeMarco	Principal Investigator
Professor Antonia Bifulco	Co-investigator
Professor Julia Davidson	Co-investigator

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Foreword from Chief Constable Shaun Sawyer

I am very pleased to support Dr Jeffrey DeMarco's report on the progress within the Volunteer Police Cadets during the term of the Police Innovation Fund Programme.

Dr DeMarco has been associated with the Cadets National Team since 2009. During this time his work has contributed significantly to the ever deepening pool of knowledge about the beneficial effects for young people achievable through their association with the cadets.

His wealth of experience, gained through many years of work with Middlesex University and the Centre for Abuse and Trauma Studies, brings a deep understanding of the emotional pressures that young people experience. His research encompasses the challenges young people face and the wider societal benefits that are delivered by young people engaging with their communities.

The development of a solid evidence base on which to draw conclusions is a vital component in our strategic planning and will help us in determining our future direction.

I commend this report.

Chief Constable Shaun Sawyer

Foreword from Ed Sherry OBE, National NVPC Director

This research has been vital in laying the foundations of a credible long term evidence base for the Volunteer Police Cadet to prove the true worth of the programme. Not only the value to the police, but also the young people and the communities they serve. It is now vital that Police Forces utilise this tool to maximise our opportunities to build a strong sustainable, evidence based future for the VPC.

I would like to personally thank Dr DeMarco and his team for their efforts over the past two years.

Mr Ed Sherry, OBE

Acknowledgements

The authors of this report would like to thank the police staff, cadets and volunteers across the country who have been supportive, critical friends over the course of the project. We are particularly grateful to the five pilot forces involved in the construction of the digital platform, and who participated in the qualitative and quantitative research and design. Additionally, we would not have been able to accomplish this work without the good working partnership with the National Volunteer Police Cadet team, including Ed Sherry, Adrian Rabot and Graeme Ironside. Furthermore, the Police Innovation Fund team based at the Devon and Cornwall, led by Mr. Martin Bush and Robyn Price, have been strategic leads and critical 'shakers and movers' at various pinch points throughout, and are due a share of gratitude.

I would also like to personally thank Professor Antonia Bifulco for her involvement in the editing and academic rigour process of this report.

We are deeply indebted to Giulia Pessaro who worked hard to help us to collect and analyse the data, as well as assisting in the coding process.

We are also indebted to the expert members of the independent advisory board. The members of the board were:

- Adrian Rabot (NVPC representative)
- Professor Marion Fitzgerald (Criminologist)
- James Lunn (College of Policing)
- Pete Spindler (Policing)
- Dr. Richard Graham (Adolescent Psychiatrist)
- Ollie Stansfield (former cadet and part of the Youth Advisory Group)

Finally, the team would like to thank their families and friends, who gave us additional support and space to conduct this valuable research.

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Executive Summary

Aims, objectives and methods

This project was funded through the Police Innovation Fund, with three primary features:

- Expansion of the National Volunteer Police Cadets across the 43 police forces in England and Wales;
- The creation of a 'Digital platform' for cadets and leaders to use in the management, operation and data capture of cadet unit functionality and performance;
- Provide a level of research supporting the mechanisms of the cadet programme, and its wider impact on policing, young people and the community.

The research element had three phases:

- A scoping/literature review for relevant theory around youth work and police-youth interactions; theory
- Qualitative phase including 30 focus groups split between adult/police leads and cadets;
- The development and administration of the cadet 'Membership Survey' for data capture on youth involved in the programme and potential longitudinal analysis (long term goal)

One of the final purposes of the research was also to make the case for the National Volunteer Police Cadets as being institutionally cross-cutting—meaning that it transgressed civil society and the state in its use and benefits.

Adult and police perspectives

The following themes emerged from the focus group with adults involved with the programme:

- The cadet programme/units offer a **safe and secure environment** where young people can come together from a range of backgrounds and in which teachable moments can be offered by staff to those in need;

- Involvement offered improvements in the understanding and willingness to benefit from **civic engagement** at a younger age. Activities and involvement can assist with promoting citizenship at the local level, while providing young people with a sense of public duty and care. Additionally, their growing level of engagement may catalyse their own interests and behaviourally ownership and accountability in their neighbourhood;

- Elements of **Foucauldian influence** are apparent when enrolled as a cadet, where the added value can range from the additional support of monitoring and supervision while on site; and the installation of respect and discipline away from more traditional forms (e.g. parents, caregivers, and teachers). It also provides a growing network of high resource adults for cadets to access;

- **Expanding networks of support, friendship and community** are solidified, where the youth are given access to individual, both peer and adult, that they may never have had before.

Scaffolding and proximal development can also be influenced where young people are able to build their skill set on a range of factors due to these expanding, rich networks;

- There is the **opportunity for continuing education**, both formal and informal. Knowledge can be continuously acquired but also having access to different opinions and attitudes outside of the formal school and home setting is useful for critical engagement and debate. It also allows for 'difficult' conversations outside of the family and school around drugs, sex and sexuality (with peers and adult leads);

- Cadet units can be optimised by **taking on a 'public health' approach** in dealing with young people. This means that the unit can expand beyond pure policing and look more at the holistic well-being and opportunities for young people—establishing a system that can benefit all youth of differing risk levels in appropriate ways;

Cadet perspectives

The following themes emerged form the focus groups with the cadets themselves:

- **Social capital and value** increase and improve through participation with the cadets—providing good future prospects for careers and educational achievement and the ability to be more self-aware of additional resources available;

- The **multi-faceted benefits and utility of volunteering** are a prime resource within cadet units, where young people learn the various purposes and use of volunteering for themselves, for the police, and for the wider community. They can see its reciprocity and importance in both their own life trajectories, but also for their communities—this includes seeing the financial incentive for the police force;

- Learning to **manage expectations with authority figures** in their lives is developed. This begins with the police/adult leaders who are not caregivers/parents or teachers, and allows for the softening of prejudices towards coercive authority figures such as the police;

- Cadet's **sense of belongingness and self-worth** can be positively impacted through involvement with a unit. Units provide a medium for the coming together of different values and backgrounds where experiences are shared, and co-operative learning encouraged. Group cohesion occurs through the sharing of tasks and activities, where these different young people are able to share development experiences and grow together. This can in turn impact upon confidence, self-esteem and self-efficacy;

- Cadets are able to **scaffold abilities** and skill acquisition through their interactions with both peers and adults on site. They seemingly are able to develop critical insight and analysis early in their formative development, with critical skills sharpened and tested. This may also provide them with better resilience to adverse life events, and improved mentalisation skills;

- Involvement with police provides the cadets with the sensation of being 'proxy police', where they see their own role as beneficial to the larger policing body, and believe this is reciprocated by operational staff. This in turn could assist with procedural justice and relations between vulnerable groups and the police.

Baseline findings from membership survey

- Demographic risk factors demonstrated that the cohort of cadets included in this research were not highly vulnerable, or at-risk for exclusion and anti-social behaviour. The data does indicate a minority of approximately 25% to 35% who may be at heightened vulnerability, which is similar to previous work done by both DeMarco (2015) and the Volunteer Police Cadets own research;

- Cadets overwhelmingly reported about their involvement, enjoyment and the importance of volunteering as part of the cadet unit. They reported that they enjoyed working in communities, volunteering numerous times, and that it made them feel closer to the communities they lived in. The vast majority also responded that they saw it as part of their civic duty, in giving back to their local area.

- Correlation analysis demonstrated a number of significant associations between factors that cadets can develop and benefit from over the course of their adolescence. There were strong relationships between the understanding and implementation of moral behaviour; understanding the law; building confidence in oneself; self-esteem; social mixing and integration with diverse members of the community and friends; empathy; self-worth; drive and motivations; and the respect of others and authority. Although further research will be needed to understand how these factors influence cadet future development the fact that it is clear these elements are interlinked are important when considering the wider utility of organised youth activities, and cadets in the community.

- Psychological disorder/difficulty rates were lower than in previous work conducted with cadet cohorts. This is unsurprising given the assessment of risk and exclusion of the current cohort. There is suggestion of a heightened hyperactivity/impulsivity but not much outside the normal range in adolescent populations. However, moving forward this assessment of psychological strengths and difficulties will be a valuable tool in highlighting areas of improvement for youth enrolling within the cadet programme, and for indicating problematic areas in which discussions with youth can be structured.

- The level of core, authority and police trust in the cohort was high. This is a simple yet powerful finding for its influence on procedural justice and community engagement by the police. Building trust benefits the youth across multiple areas of their lives, but also serves the police in both reaching young people, reaching families in hard to reach homes, and in the transmission of positive policing messages by the cadets to their non-cadet peers.

- The behavioural intentions/predictive outcomes for engagement of the cohort show again the desire for future behaviour across a series of subscales. Overall, the likelihood of the combined score of these (which is a combination of civic engagement, professional development and criminal justice engagement) is predicted by high levels of overall trust; decreased levels of psychopathological difficulties; and higher levels (overall) of individual and psychological growth. As the Membership survey becomes more embedded within cadet units and across the cadet ‘career’, the information gauged from each of these subscales, as well as the overall score will be crucial in continuing to demonstrate the utility of cadet programmes in the lives of the young people, and across their own developmental needs.

Relevance to policy

Various linkages were made from the findings of this programme to UK policy around young people and criminal justice:

- **Procedural justice:** Police in the UK police is by consent and therefore require the co-operation of the public with on-going investigations. If the police lose the trust and confidence of communities, they cease to be seen as legitimate bodies and can no longer complete their duties adequately. Volunteer Police Cadet units provide the police with a direct conduit to the community, and interactions with young people help in building trust and confidence, and therefore potential police co-operation more widely.

- **Continued holistic development:** The multi-faceted benefits of engagement with the police include VPCs with a higher desire to pursue further educational pathways; remaining invested in their local communities through volunteering; and maintaining a long term relationship with the policing 'family'. These are all important facets of 'big societies' and integrated communities;

- **Combatting adversity and victimisation:** This offers three-fold aid with cadet involvement. Through their structured activities and engagements, they develop additional awareness and improvements in critical thought. This can assist with resilience and in protection from exploitation in threatening situations. Second, learning about the law and policing means that the cadets are better equipped with knowledge around legislation and the criminal justice apparatus. Lastly, having non-judgemental and non-normative friend group peers means that the young people have support networks in place, but are also able to carry the message about vulnerability into wider communities.

Impact, legacy and recommendations

- The finalised VPC Membership survey is a valuable tool moving forward. Although longitudinal information was not available at the time of writing this report, the research team emphasise the importance of its continued use in providing on-going data and information on recruits across their cadet experience. The information gathered from the VPC Membership tool can be useful to local communities, but also to Police and Crime Commissioners and others interested parties in the work of the cadet programme. The Membership survey is a robust long-term resource that has been thoughtfully and critically built. It should be used on an ongoing basis as central to the implementation of a cadet programme.

- The cadet programme, and the work carried out over the course of the Police Innovation Fund demonstrates the importance of partnership in communities—and how bringing citizens into contact with the criminal justice apparatus at a young age can lead to positive outcomes in community engagement. The value of younger generations building relationships with their police forces is invaluable.

- Cadet units are, in essence, low resource but high value to local communities. They do require input from the police force and local government, and future research should demonstrate more specifically the economic benefits of the cadet programme. However, with the positive findings presented in this report, more confidence can be attributed to the success of the cadet

programme. It promotes community cohesion and provides a visible and accessible face to the police force.

Objectives and Methods

Research Objectives and Design

The research presented in this report brings together the National Volunteer Police Cadets (VPC) and the Centre for Abuse and Trauma Studies (CATS), formally partnered with the Devon and Cornwall Police in a three-fold project focused on police cadets and volunteering. Firstly, the project intended to assist with bringing the operations and management of cadet units nationwide online, onto a digital platform. This was done in order to provide a certain degree of innovation and ease in which police forces were able to run units; the youth participants are able to access information (about the cadet programme and additional resources); and the impact of participation is both captured, and available for data analysis moving forward. Secondly, the project aimed to strengthen the cadet brand though this national expansion and roll-out, utilising the digital platform to create a more cost-effective community group for sitting Police and Crime Commissioners and interested forces, as well as developing and tailor-make a peer based training programme; for cadets and adult volunteers alike based on policing pillars of focus such as citizenship in policing, sexual exploitation and radicalisation.

More specifically for the team at CATS and Middlesex University were the development of the membership survey and the analysis of the data captured with its implementation across cadet units nationwide. This included the selection and development of appropriate measures for data capture; the evaluation of cadet, police and adult volunteer involvement with units; and the reliable and valid measurement of factors linked to trust, psychopathology, resilience and risk through the membership survey longitudinally. This included the selection of measures and assessments to place within the digital platform for cadets; questionnaires measuring constructs such as wellbeing, health and psychopathology were all included, but also performance indicators decided upon with NVPC programme team and the College of Policing to investigate youth confidence in policing. The CATS team, through a portion of these measures, are/will be able to demonstrate the successes of the cadet programme as a whole, measuring baseline and follow-up scores on lifestyle risk, social cohesion, intention of future behaviours (i.e. careers, anti-social behaviour, family life) and psychopathology. Although not available in the current report, it is of critical

importance to appreciate the work that has been prepared for future measurement, and the use of longitudinal data sources as are linked to the cadet programme. Ultimately, the data captured with the membership survey will both provide a useful snapshot into its utility, as well as improve cadet involvement with particular units and authority figures continues throughout their cadet experience.

The use of this data presented here can feed directly into concepts of procedural justice, improving youth-police, and public-police relationships. Through improved positive experiences and encounters with the police, through the cadets at public events attitudes and feelings towards the police could be ameliorated (DeMarco, 2013; 2014; Tyler, 2014).

This project provided a real joint-effort in establishing an evidence-based policing approach to working with young people in the community. It allowed policing needs and expectations to be met with a mediating third sector organisation; providing a platform to educate, inform and impress youth into the merits of law adherence, community involvement and criminal justice needs and values. The research element provided a real working explanatory and motivational addition that ensured the deliverables and methods applied in reaching the key objectives were of a robust nature and quality assured. This meant that elements of 'best practice' have been considered in developing the structure and trajectory of the project through research expertise, whilst aiming at meeting an institutional and third sector market. Through bringing the NVPC programme 'online', it has only made the NVPC programme team and the police more accessible. It provided a means for youth to access the police under the considerations of both innovation in business and a techno-ecological environment, whilst sign posting the organisation itself, and its youthful, active demographic to key industry and business partners. This is key in promoting future funding and opportunity in expanding the project.

The project had four primary and interdependent objectives:

1. Provide a good overview of the importance of youth-police relationships through collaborative, shared activities facilitated by the National Volunteer Police Cadet programme;

2. Understand the motivations and decision-making processes of both cadets and adult leaders for their involvement with the National Volunteer Police Cadet programme. This includes including them as strategic stakeholders throughout the research process and digital platform development;

3. Create and test a valid and reliable questionnaire/survey to capture a range of important information on cadet lifestyle, risk and well-being;

4. Implement and track information on cadets using the above-mentioned 'membership survey' to identify positive outcomes and demonstrate potential benefits of cadet participation;

5. Development of 'Best Practice' guidelines for government and police forces in the engaging young people in the community and operating cadet units, with the aim of expansion and increased take-up.

Methodology

The project was built around four primary work strands in order to assure robust methodological processes, due diligence and accountability of deliverables. These included:

- A literature review/scoping of research linked to youth-police interactions, with an emphasis on trust in the police and partnership;
- A series of focus groups divided by participant type:
  - Fifteen focus groups across the pilot forces with police officers and adult volunteers linked to the operation of cadet units
  - Fifteen focus groups across the pilot forces with enrolled cadets
- Development and administration of membership survey for longitudinal data capture and analysis;
- Dissemination and knowledge transfer of on-going and final results

Each of these will be discussed in further detail within this report.

Report structure

This report is structured into three sections, to provide the reader with an understanding of both preliminary findings from the literature and qualitative phases, as well as to conceptualise the purpose of the study for external stakeholders, government and police forces themselves. Firstly, a brief synopsis of the preliminary

findings from the scoping/literature will be presented. Secondly, themes and concepts from the focus groups are presented. This si followed by a presentation and explanation of the pilot membership survey, which is then followed up with the quantitative analysis of the completed membership surveys. The final section of the report sums of the report, and brings together the findings in a series of recommendations moving beyond the completion of this research.

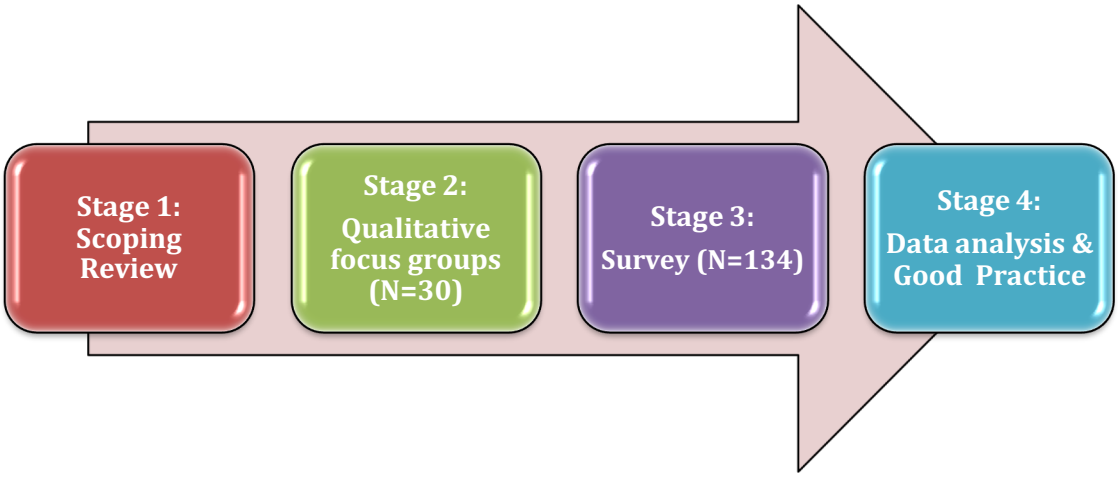


Figure 1: The research process

Stage 1

The literature review and scoping exercise required a considerable amount of time and attention. A large portion of researcher time was taken to construct a document outlining the findings and critical principles supporting (and critiquing) the importance of police-youth contact. In particular, the importance of positive police experience amongst adolescents was considered key to the current evaluation and investigation into the NVPC. A summary document of the themes and concepts pursued can be found in Appendix A.

However, several key themes did emerge from the research considered, including:

- Fostering good relationships between the police and the public is of paramount importance in crime prevention and the provision of support and protection for any community;
- Understanding both the positive and negative experiences of the public in relation to police encounters may assist with formulating better standards of

practice and allowing police forces to adopt a more 'prosocial' and 'approachable' reputation;

- Adolescents and police officers have had a tenuous relationship through the years which is often characterised by reciprocal stereotypes on both sides of any interactions;
- Having any type of social relationship with an authoritative adult is important for the development and learning of children and adolescents;
- Providing neutral and engaging opportunities for adolescents to interact and engage with authority figures, including the police, may assist with reducing stereotypes and improving relations.

The above points should be considered as support for the work that is was carried out by operational units. The research noted here is not linked to cadet units specifically but is believed to lend support to the manner in which they operate and provide organised activity for young people that will both benefit the youth, but also the criminal justice apparatus.

Stage 2

A series of thirty focus groups centred around developing a deeper understanding of the functionality, motivations, strengths and limitations of current cadet units in operation in England and Wales were conducted. Fifteen focus groups were carried out with cadets from each of the five pilot forces whereas the remaining fifteene were carried out with police staff and adult volunteers, again at each of the pilot units. Variations in ethnicity, SES, age, gender and motives for participation were all adequately represented across these groups. The pilot forces include the Metropolitan Police; Devon and Cornwall Police; North Yorkshire Police; South Wales Police; and Greater Manchester Police.

The focus groups varied in the number of individuals involved, ranging from four to twelve participants. Overall, approximately 200 different participants engaged throughout the administration of the focus groups, with an average of nine per group.

All of the focus group sessions were between forty-five and sixty minutes in length and in the location of the common gathering/meeting place for the respective unit. In

accordance with ethics guidance, participants were in the first instance given a briefing introducing the researcher and general background of what the research involved in verbal form. Permission forms had been sent around for the cadets prior to participation to ensure parental permission for engaging with the lead researcher. Informed consent was taken verbally on site with both sets of participants. It was explained to all participants that they could leave at any time if they wished. After the brief introduction and explanation to the participants, they were informed that the length of the conversation would be audio-recorded with the use of a digital voice recorder, transferred onto the computer of the researcher and transcribed verbatim for further qualitative analysis. Additionally, it was explained that all of their identities and responses would remain completely anonymous. In the instances where names were used, they were re-labelled anonymously in the actual written transcriptions.

Topic guides were created to direct the flow of discussion and prompt new leads in the areas of interest. Copies were provided for both the researcher as well as any of the facilitators or professionals sitting in on the session. Prompts were also added to the questions should participant responses have been too narrow. Complete copies of the topic guides for the adult leaders/police and cadets can be located in Appendix B and C respectively.

Following the delivery and collection of information, all participants were debriefed and provided with contact details for the researcher should they have any follow-up questions. Audio recordings were saved onto a hard disk for storage and were password protected. Each session was transcribed verbatim in order for further analysis to be carried out. As individual participant details were not taken, and the general use of the information gathered was to inform study two of the data collection, minimal annotation and labelling of speakers was applied. Participants were simply labelled as JD (researcher), OM (other male) and OF (other female). Once these had been carried out, qualitative analysis was undertaken in the form of thematic analysis and using the NVivo computer software.

Transcribed focus group data was managed and analysed using a structured approach, where key topics emerging from the data are identified through familiarisation with the transcripts. An analytical framework is drawn up and a series of cells set up, each

relating to a different thematic issue. The columns in each matrix represent the key sub-themes or topics and the rows represent individual focus groups. Data is summarised in the appropriate cell, so the data is ordered systematically and grounded in each unique groups accounts.

Stage 3

The third stage involved the development, piloting and administration of the membership survey. This process allowed for the collection of quantitative data investigating a range of associated variables linked to youth engagement, development and procedural justice. The membership survey involved existing standardised measures, informed by the earlier scoping and qualitative phase. In addition, an adaptation of an existing measure evaluating intentions to co-operate with the police was formulated using new scenarios beyond simple criminal justice engagement. The membership survey utilised different scales to capture the measurement of:

- demographics;
- lifestyle and risk;
- psychopathology and behavioural disorder;
- civic engagement;
- police encounters and contact;
- trust;
- behavioural intentions.

The concurrent use of established demographic and psychosocial measures aided with the exploration of associations between the variables under investigation and the ability to see where and how longitudinal work can emerge. A full document representing the construction of the membership survey can be found in Appendix D.

All participants were enrolled cadets across the pilot (and expanded) forces. Those agreeing provided consent (parental where needed) though the digital platform. Participants were asked to take their time and go through and respond to all items on the questionnaire. No names or addresses were required for the questionnaires which were identified by codes held by the Police Innovation and digital platform team.

A pilot phase to test the understandability and usability of the questionnaire, adapting it. All data was inputted into SPSS 21.0 for analysis with basic data cleaning and data checks conducted. Checks were made for outlying values and the normal dispersion of all measures. All items were scored either based on the published procedures.

Stage 4

The fourth and final stage served to review the findings obtained through the different research stages, triangulate the data between datasets and write the final report. The process of triangulation facilitates validation of data through cross verification from more than one source. Furthermore, it tests consistency of findings obtained through different instruments and increases the chance to control and assess, some of the threats influencing the results.

Ethics

All materials were designed by the research team and conformed to ethical guidance of the British Society of Criminology and the British Psychological Society. Each research stage was approved by the Middlesex University ethics processes and by an independent advisory board, convened for this research project.

Before commencing the data collection, for stages two and three, two applications were submitted to the School of Law ethic committee for approval.

Information about the nature of the research was provided to all participants across the qualitative and quantitative phases.

Findings

Police officers and adult leaders

The following section provides an in-depth analysis of the focus groups facilitated with police leaders, officers and staff managing cadet units across the pilot forces. The purpose of these discussions was to allow these responsible adults to discuss in their own words the importance of the cadet programme for themselves, the cadets but importantly for the wider police force and community. Seven sets of thematic groupings emerged from the analysis, each of which is discussed in turn.

Unit as a safe and secure environment

The leaders and police discussed the importance of wanting the cadets to feel safe, comfortable and at ease whilst at the unit. The activities and participation are meant to be enjoyable, with cadets looking forward to participation. Once attendance at the unit is perceived as a burden or a source of anxiety there is a risk of decreasing motivation, interest and attendance. The adults are therefore keen to make the curriculum as interesting, diverse and activity oriented as possible. This also allows the staff to utilise 'teachable moments' when dealing with the cadets.

> *'…coming here, coming [to a unit] let's us work with the young people and gives them a place to call their own…we can do lots of [activities] where [cadets] feel empowered, safe and we can use this to teach and to learn…'* **[Police FG3]**

These teachable moments are critical for the deeper social benefits of the cadet organisation. These moments ideally need to influence to the well-being and prosocial development of the young people as indvididuals and used as opportunities to distil information, knowledge and trust in forging good police-youth relationships in the future. One of the advantages of the cadet programme is its offer of a non-traditional organised activity that the young people find interesting, bringing them into contact with the police in meaningful and interesting scenarios.

> *'…innovation, originality…the [structured] activities need to be fun and enjoyable. That keeps [cadets] engaged, and coming back for more. Means we can always plan what is useful and informative…'* **[Police FG11]**

Supervision and monitoring were deemed important. A minority of the young people involved in the cadet programme come from what would normally be described as 'at-risk' or deprived backgrounds. By being at organised activity, these young people were supervised while their caregivers were at work. This provides a level of protection to those cadets most 'at-risk' of being involved in anti-social behaviour and deviance when spending too much time alone or with peers.

> *'…opportunity to keep an eye on the [cadets]. This is not meant to restrict or keep them from doing what they want to do, you know. We want them to want to come here, but we also think that by being here, they are less likely to get up to no good on the street, or to come into contact with the wrong sorts of crowds. These [cadets] are strong, but sometimes it is just good to have an extra pairs of eyes…'* **[Police FG1]**

Moving forward, there is keen demand that the NVPC programme team evolve their curriculum and individual units operate in a devolved manner where they focus on activities and projects important and relevant to the local community—keeping the vested interest of those key stakeholders—the cadets themselves.

Importance of civic engagement

The focus groups showed the adults involved in cadet programmes wanted to promote community involvement within their local area and assist the youth with developing an understanding of civic engagement and participation. This included directing their voluntary hours and work towards shared interests such as assisting the elderly; improving understanding of under-age drinking; or mental health in communities. The list of charitable causes is open to development, but focusing the human resources of the individual cadet unit in identifying shared and worthy causes is viewed as of critical importance.

> *'…many causes, many interests. We can teach the young people to think about these, about what matters to them individually but also as a group. Gives [cadets] some ownership, but also provides a shared drive and a connection to the [city]…'* **[Police FG14]**

This increased possibility of community interaction and engagement was seen additionally from a policing perspective of improving police-community

relationships. It provides an opportunity for the local force to be more visible, transparent and engaged with their citizens. Having the cadets wear a uniform made visible links at public events with the expanding, and more approachable vision of the police. Individuals not normally engaged in non-forced interactions with the police were believed to be 'slightly disarmed' and as such, provided further opportunities for the police and community to interact. Additionally, the police recognised the multi-faceted purposes of the volunteering across the cadets, the force and the community in need.

> *'…a lot of different people will benefit from the work and activities we do. It is not just about the cadets. It is about the force and our own community engagement. There are no losers when it comes to the work we have the potential of doing…'* **[Police FG5]**

However, focus groups identified one of the limitations of the current cadet process as the cumbersome risk assessment processes. Often the mechanisms for safeguarding were considered overly risk aversive and detrimental to work of the units and in keeping cadets interested, and engaged.

> *'…there is too much red tape…we have to be so careful…mean often we cannot offer [diverse activities]…'* **[Police FG1]**

Foucauldian in nature

This section brings a theoretical element of discipline and surveillance, which was investigated by Michel Foucault in the penal system. Foucault argued that discipline can be instilled by institutions, including but not limited to, prisons, schools and hospitals. This research borrows from his ideas and utilises them with the interactions and supervision of the young people by the adult leaders. The installation of discipline and routine into the lives of the cadets was considered one of the defining features of any programme. Most units applied a form of drill or parade to instil discipline in the cadets. This assisted the adults with managing the cadets, but also provided a level of discipline, to which many cadets were unaccustomed. Learning about police practice, legislation and aspects of criminal law allowed the leaders to be 'high resource adults' in the lives of the youth—resources in which the youth who found interests or wished to gather further understanding could pursue.

> *'...it's like any other organised activity but with a [police] twist. [Police leaders] think that for some, that is the added value. Learning about structure and rank...'* **[Police FG12]**

As discussed in the previous sections, the Foucauldian element (i.e. elements of discipline through supervision and surveillance) of any unit also serves criminal justice purposes. Firstly, there is the added value of monitoring and supervision which often, parents or caregivers cannot provide and without which there is a higher risk of the gravitation towards anti-social or excluded peers, and engagement in anti-social behaviour and deviancy. This is more likely for young people who are the most vulnerable, and can be an important 'buffer' of protection. Associated with this, working with the police (albeit in a civil society capacity) can influence the values and moral code of the young people, and their respect for authority and criminal justice. Many of the young people will never have interacted with the criminal justice system before, or if they had it may have been under negative circumstances. This allows a shift in valence of their understanding.

> *'...[cadets] may start to think differently about [the police]. [The police] have an opportunity to showcase what we really do...'* **[Police FG7]**

Lastly, being in a monitored, disciplined and authoritative medium does grant the youth with access to high resource adults—adults they may not normally have come into contact with outside the VPC. As such, the learning opportunities and benefits for knowledge acquisition, both official and unofficial, are valuable. This links back to the original discussion around discipline and respect, but also illustrates the motivation and added-value to the cadets themselves.

> *'...unit is not just about working together and learning...[several] opportunities to influence and teach...'* **[Police FG3]**

Friendship, support and community

The adult leaders at focus group discussed the manner in which they interacted with the cadets themselves. Delivering firm instructions, with an authoritative demeanour, yet being kind and approachable led to positive interactions. The newer recruits were observed as more cautious and wary of the higher ranking officers. The cadets that

had been involved for longer periods of time showed respect, adherence to the rules but also banter, informal horseplay and camaraderie with the leading officers. The officers demonstrated their concern for the youth. Although hard on them at times when they misbehaved, they shared laughter, smiles and jokes.

> *'…[operating a unit] means more than just that; we can learn, experience, laugh and cry together. We have respect and authority, and the [cadets] can [joke or mock] with us at certain times, and they know when not to and when things are serious…time to be serious, and time to have fun…[cadets] also know they never need to worry about the [consequences] of being told-off…if they "do the crime, they serve the time" and all is forgiven…'* **[Police FG5]**

The group also discussed the development of new experiences and interactions that would not have happened had it not been for the cadet programme. The participants did acknowledge that the same benefit may have occurred in other organised youth work programmes, but believed that utilising the police as a social institution in the community, provided a real opportunity for both police officers, and the next generation youth working in jobs and raising families.

> *'…To be fair I know what [other organisations] do… we are quite proactive with our duties, we encourage [cadets] to experience police officers' duties. We also manage some events… I think this stuff is quite positive…'* **[Police FG7]**

The concept of 'scaffolding' ambiguously came into the discourse of the group. This is an idea taken from developmental psychology, where individuals are best able to develop while interacting with peers or other high resource individuals. These others have additional skills with which they can guide and assist the developing individual in in achieving certain goals and capacities. For example, it may provide opportunities for a young person to learn specific pieces of legislation pertaining to the CJS, may be able to explore the concepts and bounce ideas off older more experienced cadets, and the adult leaders. This is a very important developmental opportunity and can be beneficial in a number of ways to the cadets themselves.

> *'…There's one thing: the age gap between is large between cadets at 13 and*

cadets at 18-19. There's a great social aspect. We think that the 19-year-old should interact with younger cadets and this works well with the differences between 13 and 14's mind…they want to work with who wants to work with the them...makes it better for them, educates them, disciplines them, teaching respect…' **[Police FG5]**

However, the benefits are not exclusively linked to development, or even the CJS, the focus group adult participants discussed the additional growth of values, interests and ideologies while interacting with the young people. This included having discussions outside of the family and formative peer group about sports, politics and current events. This can remove a certain level of 'censorship' from the engrained beliefs that may be reinforced with formative peer groups and family members. As such, the ability to debate and consider alternative perspectives is provided.

'…You can get them to work in groups, to have discussions about plenty of things…connections that make them talk to each other…about a range of issues. They can learn each others' strengths and weakness, get some resilience, and communication skills…' **[Police FG10]**

Continuing education

Adult leaders and police officers saw the agglomeration of young people and high resource adults as educative providing this resource not typical of more formal settings. This is more about skill and acquisition of expertise, outside of the education sector. Learning about police career paths, and specialisms and expertise was perceived to be highly valued and a useful 'carrot' in provision to the youth themselves. Even if learning about issues as diverse as legislation pertaining to dog ownership, or understanding interviewing processes, the adults firmly felt that this information (in varied forms) would be beneficial to the young people.

'…they are inside and see how police works. What the roles are, what the job involves, they are getting involved in some of the events. These are the inside sort of things that you'd never see outside. And it suits on your CV for going to university, it's useful to do some career later on…' **[Police FG1]**

It did also provide the cadets with access to varied attitudes around religion, politics and other ideological and philosophical matters. The adults at focus group believed that they could influence the cadets in ways that would make them think more critically.

> *'…[bringing young people together] is a great thing. You have all these different people from different, you know, places and backgrounds…poor, rich, Catholic, Sikh, Jewish, Muslim…and they can converse and disagree…and learn to back up their thoughts…'* **[Police FG13]**

Public health approach

There was a sense that the cadet units, in their varying capacities, offered a central hub that provided multi-disciplinary, multi-dimensional and multi-directional support to young people. This means that a cadet's engagement with a particular unit could be perceived to positively impact upon their lives in a multitude of ways. Whether it was about their own self-growth, study, employment preparation did not matter—what was of importance was the manner in which this was done, and what the youth could access, and how they would benefit.

> *'…unit works very well and I think that's very positive. I think one of the other positive elements is the growth of self-confidence for young people, they sort of grow networks and they get a sense of belonging because they are all together…'* **[Police FG15]**

The reference to a 'public health' approach, implies the VPC offers a national and wide ranging influence towards positive health and wellbeing and growth. Units were not necessarily a one-size fits all operation, but found ways of spending resource and attention on holistic influence with the cadets. Careful consideration was needed to subject matter and delivery of information and activities that would benefit a wide range of different young people with different needs, in different ways in addition to a standard level of engagement, empowerment and interest for all.

> *'…young people want to join. Lots of differences, lots of diversity but it potentially interests all of them. So that's why we need support to get deliver a program everyone could benefit from it…'* **[Police FG9]**

Thinking of a cadet unit and its functionality in this way also provides a baseline for information delivery to the youth including community building, social relations, resilience and democratic engagement.

Having the 'difficult' conversations

An unexpected benefit of cadet interactions with the adult leaders and police was the opportunity to have difficult conversations about a range of topics linked to adolescent risk and development. Where elements of shame, guilt or embarrassment usually accompany topics about sexuality, puberty, alcohol or drug consumption, sexuality and internet use, and these are often avoided both by young people and parents/caregivers or teachers, it was believed that after a period of rapport building, the youth within VPC would trust the adults on site to have these more sensitive conversations.

> *'…We always ask [how cadets are doing] so they get more comfortable with [police and adults]…it is like them having power on their own and if they are struggling we find a way, with the support and the help they might require. We see Cadets since they are 13 so they see others grown up and they say like I want to be like them…'* **[Police FG4]**

The unit and its organised activities provided the opportunity for discussions that complement those of parents and caregivers; teachers; and other professionals in the community. The adults involved did not claim they were a preferred or more appropriate alternative, but being on site, with good rapport, authority, and longevity of relationship, they were a useful additional support mechanism for the youth involved.

Need for support

The focus group participants did spend a great deal of time discussing the need for more direction, support and assistance from the NVPC programme team. This was e a request to aid in achieving the goals set by individual units in responding to the cadets.

> *'...we all volunteer all the time...need more structure, more finance...more support and help...[senior management] used to come and be involved, but now we are often left to [get on with it]...'* **[Police FG7]**

However, there was a common concern in the focus groups that working with cadets was seen as a 'soft' job, not meriting the time or attention of more pressing matters in young people, such as radicalisation, sexual exploitation, knife crime and drug use. This report finds that the cadet programme can be utilised in building more general resources and awareness which can aid with other social problems. Thinking of the cadet programme as not 'real' policing meant that those working in cadet units were constantly struggling for resources (financial and human) and in ensuring the constant growth and diversity of the programme.

Buy-in from senior leadership and those with access to resources and finances was deemed to be important. Without endorsement, many in the focus groups perceived the sustainability of units to be under threat. There was also a disproportionate belief that those already in non-police constable roles (e.g. Police Volunteers, Police and Community Support Officers) were often left to carry units, and were not necessarily seen to be working in high priority or important roles.

Cadets

This section provides the thematic analysis of the group discussions facilitated with the cadets themselves in focus groups. The cadets were asked about their experiences with police forces and operational units. The project sought to explore the strengths and motivations of their involvement, while also identifying the challenges or difficulties both with the police, but also more generally in their lives. Six key areas of findings are outlined:

Social capital and value

The cadets themselves discussed the various benefits they received from participating with their specific units. The development of new social networks with peers and adults was considered highly valuable, as well as developing an understanding of trust, reciprocity and cooperation with a diverse group of like-minded peers. They saw the benefit not just to themselves, but also to the individuals that they were regularly interacting with. They listed several of the resource-based advantages they received through participation, such as access to festivals, community work, 'special lessons' from other branches of the police system (firearms and first aid training emerged several times) but also the resource of having access to the various police and adult staff and how that influenced many of their decisions in their day to day life outside the cadet unit.

> *'...It's not like school: you learn things that are interesting, but you are not pressured to do anything…it's not the same as school because you are making new friends, and seeing things you may not have ever seen or tried before…useful things...'* **[Cadets FG3]**

Enhancing diversity was an important resource that cadets were able to both experience and benefit from. This was determined by interacting with other young people not usually included in their school or normative peer group. This meant experiencing new cultures, religions and politics. It also meant that they were able to experience new and different discussions around identity, gender, sexuality and other issues that they influenced their concept and view of 'other' groups and people. This was a benefit as it assisted the youth with a perceived reduction in stereotypes,

prejudices and discriminatory or negative attitudes, improving their interactions with other groups and appreciating the benefit to their own social network.

> *'…You are going to see very interesting things and make friends with people very different to you…and you learn a lot about them, and things you never knew…'* **[Cadets FG7]**

The cadets were also fully aware of the benefit that participation in organised youth work would have on their confidence and interpersonal skills; improving their curriculum vitae; and in providing them with an advantage for both academic and career prospects in the long term. This last point demonstrates the development of forward, abstract thinking in a group of young people who are generally quite goal-oriented in the short term. Young people who were more 'at risk' whether it be due to family composition, school exclusion, or other lifestyle risk factors were the most vocal about the importance of these advantages within the cadet unit as those they would normally have no access to.

> *'…It opens up many opportunities. So if I'm coming to a time when 'what do I want to do as a career?' and I will change my mind. Even if I'm not going to be a police officer, it's not a waste of opportunities. It's not a waste of time me coming here, learning different skills, laws, listening to interesting cases…. It has opened many opportunities and I think, for many people here, is a way to get an advantage on jobs and my CV; colleges and universities…'* **[Cadets FG13]**

Importance of volunteering

The importance of both volunteering was seen as important in the focus group discussions, as well as advancing their profiles for universities and employers in the future. The importance of having volunteer experience on their curriculum vitae, and the advantage they may benefit from having worked with police was held in high regard by the cadets themselves.

> *'…[by volunteering] you gain a life experience and you write it on your CV. Because that you have been doing volunteering in the community and in many*

situations, for many people, including me and my mates, that is really important…' **[Cadets FG9]**

However, the cadets also echoed the multi-dimensional value of volunteering discussed by the adults. They acknowledged that it assisted them with a variety of their own interpersonal needs but that the benefit from engagement could permeate multiple interactions within the community. They were aware of national austerity measures and financial difficulties experienced by the police, and saw how their use could be put to the overall well-being of the police in their local area without undue cost.

Volunteering also had effects on the young people's own psychological growth and maturity. The cadets identified that many adolescents see the utilitarian purpose of volunteering for personal gain, but also that many cadets acknowledged added benefits. It removed them from their comfort zone at times and forced them into engaging with different people, places or causes. They saw the value of working with strangers as a means of counteracting their own insecurities, low self-esteem and efficacy and thought that volunteering was an excellent use of time when compared to alternative other hobbies (i.e. video games, social media).

'… so many [new] experiences…things that I never thought about before…public speaking, talking to other adults like [elderly people] and businesses and people in the community…I feel good, it helps…I think [the police] and [the community] like it too…' **[Cadets FG4]**

Belongingness and self-worth

Importantly the cadets felt like they 'belonged' in their unit. They argued, debated,) and were annoyed with each other on occasion but at the same time they were sharing experiences that created a stronger bond between them and the adults that they interacted with. This created and strengthened new friendships outside of their neighbourhood, family and school that they may have never had. They talked about the diversity of their interactions and friends on site at the units and how these experiences were rich for their own growth and continued identity formation. As

such, the developed an internal set of norms, values and morals and conformed to the hierarchy and structure of their unit and social relationships.

> *'…You are going to see very interesting things and make friends with people very similar to you…and you do become friends and learn to get along and disagree and that stuff, and its important…we are like a little family and it is different than my friends at school or at home…'* **[Cadets FG2]**

This is interesting as many discussed how these latter elements of hierarchy and structure were important in the development of dealing with their own impulsivity and discipline. They liked having a particular level of structure in their lives and learnt to appreciate it and see the value in it for their own personal and professional growth.

> *'…I think that if you told [friends and leaders] something to them they believe you and they trust you. They respect you and what you say, when you are upset, you can trust them. They trust you and they have respect for you…and this makes you respect and understand the importance of working together…'* **[Cadets FG6]**

There was also the importance of 'group growth' where the cadets could develop, learn and experience together. This shared comradery was perceived to be strong—sharing both positive and challenging situations together that at times, the adults involved may not be able to relate to. As the adults discussed the issue of scaffolding with the cadets, the cadets themselves also saw the importance of peer-based learning and co-development, where they could co-operate and co-enquire together, using each other as both mentors and mentees. This was especially pertinent with the cadets who had been together longer and developed stronger ties and bonds but, even with new recruits, integration was often very quick.

> *'…You do a lot of things that you wouldn't do if you are not coming here and it makes you think a lot about life…you come all together kind of thing, make a lot of friends and lots of the activities make you work together and do things that you need to do together. It's really good, learning to work with people that aren't your family or [school or home] friends…'* **[Cadets FG13]**

Youth-authority relationships

The cadets also discussed the importance of having positive experiences with authoritative figures—specifically the staff in which they interacted with while involved at cadet sessions. This provided them with insight into the more complex elements of policing and the criminal justice system which, according to the participants, made the police seem less powerful, fearful and anxiety-inducing. Many had never known a police officer before, or an individual in a position of power as such as thus the experience allowed them to de-mystify many of the stereotypes and prejudices they held.

> *'…When I was younger a lot of my friends used to speak negatively about the police. So I was not like quite sure about it, because I did not know a lot. Just they come around when you need them, basically. So I did not have my opinion. But now I do see how much police change people life. They do work the hardest to help everyone…'* **[Cadets FG9]**

The cadets also stated that although they still fell weary of the police not involved in their unit, they had a newfound understanding of the role and issues police face on a daily basis. There is also evidence of moral development and the influence of their experiences on the youth's capacity to engage in mentalization. Taking the perspective of others from a very adult-oriented and significant social institution allowed the cadets to consider some wider 'life' complexities that they may not have considered as youth before. Events like considering drug-taking from a policing perspective; extremism; sexual exploitation; general crime; and more intimate issues such as domestic and sexual violence provide the cadets with troves of information influencing their own emotional and mental intelligence.

> *'…we learn so much about [crime], different types and ways they work and its important. For example, all the [sex offenders] working on the internet, I now know more and can think more about being safe, and I share that with my friends and tell them the good and the bad about it and what the police have taught us…'* **[Cadets FG14]**

Linking interactions back to the adult's perceptions of procedural justice, the cadets did differentiate between working with police on site versus police on the street. They admitted that they did not see the adult leaders they had regular contact with as police officers 'per se' but more as friends—versus the police on the street. They did discuss that they may be reluctant to approach and trust random police representing the larger force, but were certainly more aware of the difficult job police officers have, and would be more willing to enter an encounter neutrally, or without prejudice, than before.

> *'…I used to walk down the street and I was like 'Oh, there's a cop there…' but now I see them in a different way, I realised they are just police officers. They are like friends [at the unit], but the rest of [the police], they are always there to help you when you need. For me it changed a lot. Coming here it changed my mind a lot and I think they are much better…'* **[Cadets FG8]**

This also transferred outside of policing to other authoritative adults in professional capacities that cadets would come into contact with. The primary example used was 'teachers' (many of who the cadets ranked as lower than general police officers in terms of positive interactions). The young people did discuss the underlying value of these individuals in their lives and the importance of engaging and learning with them in a mix of situations. Besides the value of knowledge acquisition, these other adults offered the cadets new perspectives and skills that could (albeit not always) be useful to them in their own daily lives and future development.

> *'…I think that lessons we learn from [the police] are quite fun to do, cause you don't get that opportunity…but now I see why [learning] is so important, and how hard [teachers at school] have it sometimes, so maybe we [cadets and young people] need to be a bit more open [and understanding]…'* **[Cadets FG13]**

Differentiating between authority figures as being high-resource, fair and beneficial was alluded to throughout the discussions. This again was an interesting finding from the cadets, in that they could be seen to actively seek out and utilise resources for their own growth and development. Acknowledgment of one's own areas of improvement demonstrates how the cadets may be more resilient than previously perceived. They

are self-critical of what they need, want and can offer and these are immensely important skills to develop as they navigate adolescence and early adulthood. The overt demonstration of this is a powerful finding, as it shows that the youth are empowered and actively cognisant of their work with the cadets, and the social interactions they engage with. This ability to develop their skills, with (some) vulnerabilities but a good level of awareness is worth further research in the future.

> *'...The more and more that you do [engage with the police] and come to the [cadet unit], you get more confident…with lots of things…'* **[Cadets FG1]**

Proxy policing

The cadets in the focus group took pride in their symbolic role within the police—they saw themselves as governed by policing structure and protocol. When they did positive things in the community they shared policing pride—and when negative events occurred within their police force, they felt defensive. Again, the conformity of their roles within the cadet unit is an interesting element of their experience. All of this contributed to their apparent desire to present themselves outwardly to their communities as being of 'good character', which links back to the importance of developing good morals and shared norms and values with their unit and leaders.

> *'...the police have it hard. When they do something bad as a cop a lot of attention. But not every person represents the whole group. We [cadets] can help with that, be part of the [police] family and show that we care and that we are good…'* **[Cadets FG14]**

As discussed in the section on volunteering, the cadets also had the introspection of seeing their own utilitarian benefit to the larger police force. This was discussed in terms of human and financial resources, but also visibility and accessibility. The cadets saw their presence in the community as representative of any other police officer, across rank—but also saw themselves as more disarming and approachable by community members. This was particularly evident in their discussions with regards to peers and non-cadet classmates.

> *'...[community members] they ask us what we're doing as [cadets] and we tell them and they find it interesting and ask questions [about the police]…'* **[Cadets FG15]**

Baseline findings of membership survey

This section looks at the quantitative findings of the Membership Survey. Given that this survey structure will remain open to subsequent cohorts of cadets, and will enable future examination of change in characteristics over time, this section will illustrate what is shown about the cadets at baseline measurement.

Demographic characteristics of the 134 cadets are examined in terms of their gender and age, social class, family composition and ethnicity (see table 1). Only percentages are given in the following analysis for simplicity – these similar to the numbers involved**.**

Table1. Demographic characteristics of sample

Demographic Factor	Total (%)
Gender-Male	51
Age	15.07 (2.21 S.D.)
Ethnicity-White British	97
Single mother household	26
Parent/caregiver unemployment	21
3+ encounters with police	46
Negative contact with police	32

NB: Parental and caregiver unemployment examines whether there is at least one unemployed caregiver in the home.

The majority of the sample are defined as White British with a fairly even split between genders. It is noteworthy that almost as many girls volunteered as boys. Just less than half the sample has reported negative previous experiences with the police (not at cadet units) and approximately one-fifth have parental unemployment in the home. These indicate low ethnic diversity, but some level of potential deprivation and problem police relationships which are suggestive of more vulnerable or high-risk youth involved in the programme.

Social environmental variables of risk that were experienced by cadets were then examined. Figure 2 below illustrates the overall score of lifestyle risk included asking cadets about 7 items: the frequency of seeing or experiencing: noisy neighbours, teenage anti-social behaviour, homelessness, drug use in neighbourhood, harassment

on street in neighbourhood, public drunkenness and disorder, decay, and begging. These scores were analysed for the accumulated total for each cadet. It can be seen that whilst 43% showed no or only one risk factor, the remainder showed at least two risks there were 32% showing 3-4 risks.

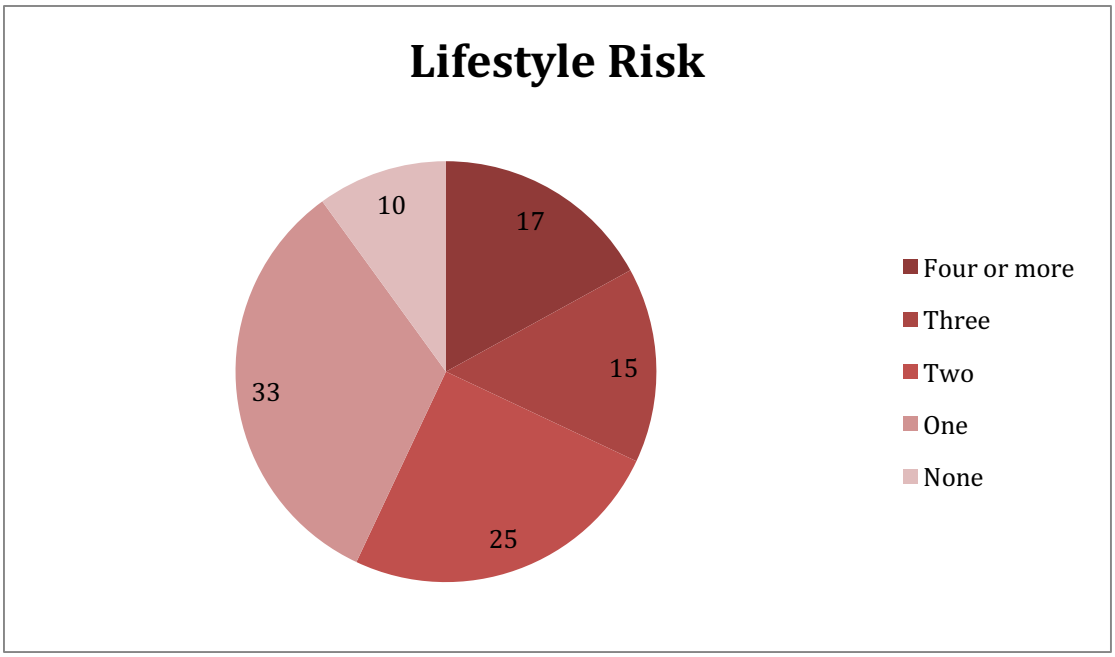


Figure 2: Lifesytle risk as indicated by cadets. Approximately 1/3 indicated three or more risks compared to the larger sample. Scores included seven different variables.

This analysis suggests a positive picture of the lives experienced by nearly half the cadets, with around a third having a greater combination of risk factors. This supports previous work done by DeMarco (2015) and internal research carried out by the VPC.

Cadet's relationships with their parents were next examined, as an indicator of more general relating to authority figures. This explores the potential for problematic engagement with caregivers and other authority figures, such as the police in their lives. Table 2 illustrates that 24% of the sample experienced at least one negative parental factor involving lack of praise, attention or unfair treatment, with individual risks experienced by 5%-19%.

Table 2 Parental/caregiver relationships

Family Relationship Risk (Yes/No responses)	Participants (%)
Lack of praise (parents)	15
Inattentive parents	19
Unfair treatment	19
Unaware of activities/location	5
Any one of above	24

Conduct issues in the young people studied were examined in terms of running away, school exclusion and truancy (see table 3). More than half of the youth (54%) had experienced at least one such conduct problem with a range of 3%-19% for each behaviour.

Table 3 Behavioural issues linked to conduct and school

Conduct Problems (Yes/No responses)	Participants (%)
Run away from home	3
Suspended (school)	3
Excluded (school)	3
High frequency truancy	19
Any one of above	54

The cadets were asked a series of questions about their volunteering work, and their overall opinion about volunteering and the benefits (or challenges) involved. An overwhelming majority (75% to 97%) responded that they enjoyed volunteering; that it made them feel like they were a part of their wider community; and that they saw it as part of their own civic duty and participation in civil society. Interestingly, the lowest score (75%) was in response to whether or not they volunteered in the last year—given the VPC is volunteering, it appears many interpreted this in relation to other types of volunteering. It would be worth further investigation to see

descriptively where cadets delineated volunteer work from their obligations as a volunteer police cadet.

A series of correlations were undertaken around elements of psychological wellbeing. These can be used in future analysis to see additional elements of cognitive, developmental and moral growth in the cadets. In the future, these analyses would be undertaken longitudinally, but also across categories of volunteering in order to determine whether there are links between the perception and benefit of volunteering and peripheral benefits. However, as the vast majority of cadets in this cohort responded positively about their involvement and experience of volunteering, this was not undertaken in the current investigation. Table 4 below highlights the links on a number of scales.

Table 4 Associations between psychological well-being and growth factors

	Belief	Community	Right thing	Drive	Empathy	Law	Role Model
Confidence	.66**	.51**	.22**	.33**	.30**	.27**	.36**
Belief	-	.52**	.35**	.48**	.38**	.36**	.40**
Community	.52**	-	.33**	.46**	.50**	.28**	.56**
Right thing	.35**	.33**	-	.53**	.44**	.45**	.44**
Drive	.48**	.46**	.53**	-	.54**	.46**	.63**
Empathy	.38**	.50**	.44**	.54**	-	.30**	.52**
Law	.36**	.28**	.45**	.46**	.30**	-	.47**
Role Model	.40**	.56**	.44**	.63**	.52**	.47**	-

NB: (**) denotes a significant association at p<0.01.

Each pairing is significantly associated—the items were drafted and selected for the Membership survey to reflect issues of moral development, self-esteem, confidence, empathy and respect for authority, as well as community engagement. Each of these factors, which are important for adolescents to develop are inter-related. That means that as growth and positive development in one area progresses, additional benefits may also occur in other areas. Moving forward, more work should be done to explore each of these characteristics across time, especially with those cadets who arrive for orientation and who come from the most vulnerable backgrounds.

The rates of psychological difficulties were also examined. This is an important measure for the on-going use of the Membership survey; to identify both strengths and difficulties across formative development given these difficulties are common in young people in the community. It also provides two key measures linked to anti-social behaviour—notably, impulsivity (hyperactivity) and conduct disorder, both of which are linked to youth offending and exclusion. Table 5 shows the subclinical (borderline) and case (abnormal) levels and both combined into 'total disorder'.

Table 5 Case and Subclinical Disorder (SDQ 17+)

Disorder	Subclinical level %	Case level %	Total disorder
Emotional	13	3	**16%**
Conduct	11	4	**15%**
Hyperactivity	11	11	**22%**
Any disorder	**19**	**14**	**33%**

NB: Percentage for 'Any disorder' combines both subclinical and case scores; several participants had multiple disorders, the overall number of participants having at least one borderline or case score is tabulated.

Fourteen percent of the sample experienced a probable case level psychological disorder. This rose to 33% if the lower subclinical threshold was also incorporated. On the measures of conduct disorder and hyperactivity, we see lower numbers than previous research (DeMarco, 2015) with cadets, with one-fifth of cadets demonstrating a subclinical or case level of hyperactivity.

The findings from the SDQ17+ should also be considered in relation to the other factors available in the Membership survey. For the purpose of this report, further divisions by group have not been presented as the cohort is considered relatively well-integrated and low-risk however moving forward, and with the national roll-out of the digital platform, and the standard implementation of the Membership survey, more work can be done in considering the intersectionality of these factors.

Trust across three areas was assessed using the Trust in Authority Questionnaire (TAQ), developed with cadets and other young people across London in 2013 (DeMarco, 2015; DeMarco, *forthcoming*). The TAQ is a 15-item instrument that gives a global level of trust for the individual responding. Within the instrument are

three subscale: core trust—linked to trust in their families and friends; authority trust—associated with trust in coaches, teachers and other non-familial and non-police adults in their lives; and police trust—which focuses on trust in the police. Descriptive analysis of the levels of trust across the subscales of the TAQ, as well as the overall score highlighted means high levels of trust amongst the cadet cohort. For context, table 6 illustrates the mean cohort trust levels on each subscale and overall, as well as the maximum score for each.

Table 6 TAQ subscale and overall averages

TAQ scale	Cohort average	Maximum score
Core	36.6	**42**
Authority	23.3	**28**
Police	31.0	**35**
Overall	**90.0**	**105**

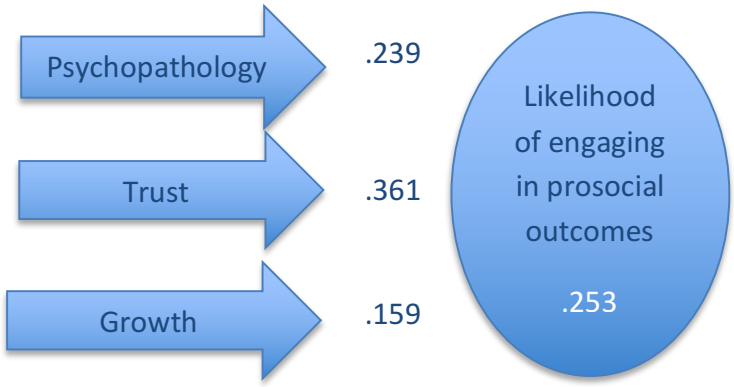
Table 6. Mean scores across the sample for trust on subscales and overall trust of the TAQ. Maximum scores on each scale are 42, 28, 35 and 105 respectively.

The above table clearly demonstrates the high levels of trust *overall* that the participants reported. Each subscale illustrates a mean within one standard deviation from the maximum score. This means these young participants trust—they trust their parents and friends; they trust the authority figures in their lives; and they trust the police. This is a positive and important finding, and will only be reinforced when time series information can demonstrate changing levels of trust as the cadet develops within the unit.

The last series of analyses brought many of the factors already discussed in predicting future outcomes for the cadets. Four separate measures explored areas of the cadets lives in which they were asked to think about how they would behave, and the likelihood of behaving that way in a future event. This included continued civic engagement and volunteering; pursuing Further or Higher Education; and engaging with the police to aid in an event involving criminal behaviour. Figure 2 below illustrates the power of different measures in predicting the likelihood of these

engagement behaviour outcomes with growth the lowest (.159) and trust the highest (.361).

Figure 2 Predictive models of behaviour



The above demonstrates the combination of the factors measured in across the Membership survey and their impact on a combined score of behavioural intentions—which has been labelled as the likelihood of engaging in prosocial outcomes. This figure shows that the level of psychological disorder (hyperactivity, conduct) at lower levels; higher levels of trust overall; and a combined positive score on psychological growth all help explain ones likelihood of engaging in the futures behaviours. In the future, this element of analysis will be of great value in understanding motivations, interests and sensitivities to their own well-being, and their own engagement with various institutions such as the police.

Discussion and conclusion

This section provides an overview of the findings across the phases of research, and draws links with current policy and socio-cultural issues in the UK. It is important to view the digital platform and survey created as a foundation for future monitoring of benefits of the VPC for young people longer term as well as to policing and forging more cohesive communities

The State and CJS policy

For central policy makers and politicians, tackling youth crime, disorder and encouraging desistence from antisocial behaviour has often be a centrepiece to criminal justice policy. With populist movements across Europe and the Western world, the public often endorse punitive measures for combatting the breakdown of social cohesion, and the 'youth' problem. This can result in damaging and exclusionary measures being adapted when dealing with young people which lead to relationship breakdown and mistrust. The work presented in this report tackles pre-conceptions linked to exclusion and muscular liberalism, embracing a more social welfarist approach in dealing with young people and wider communities. The qualitative findings support the added value of the cadet initiative to both the criminal justice apparatus, but also to wider societal institutions; while the quantitative findings show that young people are willing to engage with the democratic (albeit policing) process—meaning engaging in co-operative interactions with the larger policing bodies, such as calling the police or providing information when requested. The State (meaning the government) needs to engage more with the cadet programme—seeing the value in criminal justice reform; community engagement; and the longer-term outcomes and successes of citizens in such programmes in England and Wales.

Civil Society

Civil society has played a crucial role in bringing about change across societies and movement– often agents in civil society are seen as the only viable option for the State to advocate change. As such, bringing together different groups (e.g. across race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality) can be facilitated through mediums of interest that transgress culture and ethnicity such as sport, music and knowledge or, in the case of the NVPC, cadet units. However, civil society organisations and agents must strike a

delicate balance in working with the State and advocating for their societal groups, as aligning with the state on issues such as anti-racism or youth violence in which further deterioration occurs can lead to civil society losing credibility.

Partnership

However, the best way forward is for civil society and the State to interact, working together for mutual gain, and exclusive benefit. Best practice in terms of police work with communities and civil society, includes community organisations and the criminal justice apparatus working together. Here the police are visible to the community and the community is disarmed, engaged and visible to the police—this in its most basic essence is the National Volunteer Police Cadet programme. Having this platform can allow different groups (in this case young people and the police, but also minority representatives across both sides of the divide) to develop close relationships, and as such empower decision makers, such as senior police and Police and Crime Commissioners, to access funding and implement priorities. As discussed in the findings, procedural justice is a critical process to 'get right' and its failures can be far-reaching and lasting. Working with 'grass-roots' units within the force can assist with integrating the cadet unit locally and ensuring that police-public interactions are undertaken from the ground up. Community engagement with the public is also a pillar of British policing, and central to ensuring equality and diversity across our communities. The cadet programme, if considered appropriately, provides a great deal of benefit to the State in its capacity and ability to police.

Recommendations

The following sets of recommendations advocating good practice within the police cadet movement have been identified from the research process and findings. These are believed to be important in both the continuing management of cadet units, but also for policy makers and stakeholder's working in crime, policing, community safety and cohesion.

1. **Partnership and diverse needs**

   The police at the operational and political level need to see the importance of managing and operating cadet units within their local communities for a number of reasons. The VPC is not simply about earlier trajectories into policing. The more community and individual based benefits of a cadet unit have been made clear throughout this report—its existence provides rewards to the police, the young people and the wider community. Local authorities need to reflect on how a cadet unit can benefit them and the local area.

2. **Understanding the importance of volunteering**

   The qualitative findings show the multi-faceted utility of volunteering—to individuals, to the community and to the police force. In a time of austerity and increasingly neo-liberal policies within the State, appreciating the use of low-cost assistance and support, and the reward across social agents is critical. Decision makers should conduct further, more complicated economic analysis to clearly illustrate the financial benefits of cadet volunteer work, while resting assured of the individual benefits these activities offer the young people themselves

3. **Continued expansion**

   The end of the Police Innovation Fund project, and the findings presented in this report should highlight the value of continuing with the expansion of the Volunteer Police Cadet programme. As already stated, its existence is not just a pathway into policing. There are a range of benefits for all parties, and continuing to push its growth can reap serious advantages for police forces nationwide in community engagement. As PCSOs once were believed to provide the police with an accessible, transparent and engaged conduit, as should the cadets across England and Wales, in their own particular capacity.

4. **'Public-health' approach**

   A cadet unit needs to be seen as a 'one size fits all' service, but which reaches across boundaries of risk and resilience. Many of the findings discussed throughout this report focus on the well-being of cadets, and the benefits they may draw from involvement. Units cannot simply tackle the minority that are considered to be the most at risk to social exclusion, deviancy and anti-social behaviour. It is perceived the findings here support holistic growth and advantage to youth across the spectrum of resilience. In the least, those most at

risk receive structured engagement, and opportunities for further support and assistance in times of crisis. Those most resilient will still benefit from the knowledge, activities and youth-youth and youth-adult relationships and interactions.

5. Endorsement

The research presented here is testament to the wide ranging achievements and utility of the cadet programme. However, cadet units straddle the space between the State and civil society. They rely, to an extent, on civil society standards, budgets and human resources, while serving the State function of procedural justice and police legitimacy. We believe that through the qualitative findings of adults, and the cadets; and the demonstrable baseline findings of the membership survey, that key leaders in the police from senior management, including Chief Constables and Police and Crime Commissioners responsible for Crime Action Plans seriously consider the findings embedded here. The financial sustainability of any civil society organisation is always a question, but with State involvement, and funding, several positive outcomes are possible within a units remit.

6. On-going analysis

The construction and embedding of the VPC Membership Survey onto the digital platform was a challenging process. However, this has now been successfully installed, and baseline figures are presented here. Information continues to be input through the system. As more units and cadets come 'online', the data will only become more useful at both the local, force, and national level for understanding trends and benefits. As cadet units continue to evolve and develop, we believe embedding the use of the platform and the membership survey into common practice is key. This should become standard practice across any new unit, and any new recruit where the survey and platform may be currently in operation. Ensuring the rigorous collection of data will only benefit on-going analysis, and assist in highlighting successes to the force, and individual cadets. This includes embedding a 'follow-up' period, where data is collected at a second (and additional) time, demonstrating change where possible across the instruments implemented. This will only make the survey resource richer, if used appropriately.

7. Symbolic representation

Cadet units offer an unprecedented level of access to the larger criminal justice apparatus in reaching communities, including those most vulnerable to anti-social behaviour and exclusion. Establishing powerful, positive bonds with community youth allows the police to engage and influence opinion and attitudes, much of which will be brought back into families and other peer groups. This does not mean that public-police relationships will be immediately repaired (if damaged) but it does mean that there is a continued level of inoculation, contact and engagement in reaching young people in their formative years in a non-coercive, meaningful ways—and it also provides the chance for the police to reach more troubled, and at-risk families in a neutral, non-threatening manner.

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Appendix A. Literature summary

Bradford, Jackson and Stanko (2009) have researched public-police encounters and how these contact experiences can have a lasting effect on the manner in which the police are perceived by the public. The investigators highlight that according to the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC), many neighbourhood policing strategies across England and Wales are aiming at increasing the frequency and improving the quality in police and public interactions. It is believed that by improving the quality of particular police interactions, citizens feel more secure and have more confidence in their police officers. Looking at survey data administered in the London Metropolitan Police Service's Public Attitude Survey, and similar to findings in the United States (Schuck and Rosenbaum, 2005), there seems to be some initial indication that contact experiences judged as satisfactory by the public can have small, yet significant influences on the public's general attitudes towards the police. The preliminary findings seem to indicate that if contact can be improved between the police and the public, attitudes and behaviours of the public will improve. Although this research looks at the adult population, there are certainly associations with the wider youth and adolescent community.

The research tends to support that those youth who report having had positive previous police encounters manifest more positive feeling and attitudes in general towards the police, and those with more negative past encounters report the opposite (Bayley and Mendelsohn, 1969;Wattenberg and Bufe, 1963; Winfree and Griffiths, 1977). This research provides an early rationale into the purpose and rationale behind putting young people and police officers into shared group activity for developmental experience. Hopkins (1994) looked at school children in Scotland across three different schools, asking the youth about their previous police experience. Unsurprisingly, most of the impressions the youth had of the police force were based on negative experiences held either personally or through that of friends or peers. Hopkins argues that in order to improve relations between the youth and the police, each side must actively appreciate the role that the other plays in society and not generalise from limited experiences. It was believed that providing youth groups and the police with the opportunity to interact together in a proactive manner would allow

youth to appreciate and comprehend the role of police, and the police to respect the needs and motivations of youth culture.

Griffiths and Winfree (1982) compared positive and negative encounters between adolescents and the police. Overall, it was found that polarisation of the police interaction, whether it be reported by the youth as negative or positive statistically explained a large portion of the young people's attitudes towards the police in general. This is impressive in supporting the importance of police contact in improving (or worsening) youth-police relationships.

Moretz Jr. (1980) identified that whilst adolescents held positive views of the police the they also found it difficult to understand the purpose, function and behaviour of police officers. This lack of understanding may contribute to youth-police conflict and incongruent expectations by both. Work such as that presented by Moretz Jr. may assist in future strategies to improve youth-police relationships.

In terms of relationships with the police, strong levels of dislike and distrust are often verbalised by youth who have been in adversarial, negative and confrontational encounters with the police. There are feelings of unfair treatment amongst many adolescents, and an overall sense of injustice, in that they believe they are targeted because they are young as opposed to having done anything wrong. Working on improving the police-youth relationship and developing trust between young people and the police could assist with curbing some of these registered misgivings; or in the least improve opinions and collaboration moving forward.

Relationships with authority figures (both police and non-police) are important for developing adolescents and their overall interactions with other adults. Gregory and Ripski (2008) discussed how those school students found their teachers to be trustworthy and authoritative were more likely to be co-operative in activities, engage in lesson plans and curriculum and less likely to engage in defiant behaviour. This model provides an insight into the utility of establishing trusting, authoritative relationships between youth and the figures in authority with power over them.

Mentoring programmes applied in countries such as Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom provide interesting examples of CJS links in which the construct of trust can be examined in relation to youth.

Becker (1994) describes mentoring programmes as a constructive relationship between youth with adult volunteers who foster development on a large range of factors; from personal growth to career/skills development, learning novel sports and engaging in activities that were never available to them to begin with. The idea is to allow the youth to create a meaningful, reciprocal relationship with an adult in which friendship, productive authority and respect can be maintained.

Grossman and Garry (1997) discussed the importance in providing young mentees with a strong, positive, trusting relationship. As as a result of engaging in a mentoring programme, the quality of relationships between the mentees and their parents/caregivers improved compared to youth who did not engage in the trusting, authoritative 'stranger' relationship.

Combining the information summarised here in relation to police-public interactions, with a focus on adolescent's reference to the United States initiative known as Citizens Police Academy (CPA) is highlighted as a criminal justice attempt to improve public-police relations (Cohn, 1996). In essence, CPA's are classroom-type sessions in which the police attempt to educate and inform the public about their policing aims and objectives. They provide a medium for citizens and the police to communicate and educate the public about police policies and procedures. It also allows the public to interact with law enforcement officials in a non-threatening and co-operative manner. The aim is for these sessions to increase the quality and quantity of contact between the public and police. Brewster, Stoloff and Sanders (2005) found that those that engaged in CPA's demonstrated significant increases in positive attitudes, positive beliefs and greater intentions to co-operate in an on-going police investigation. This research needs repeating in the UK to see if improved youth-police and public-police relations can be replicated however the importance of initiatives such as that described here should not be missed when considering the merit and worth of the NVPC programme.

From a policy perspective, the Home Office's National Reassurance Policing Programme (NRPP) identified increasing satisfaction and confidence in police forces around England and Wales as one of its primary objectives.

This included a community-involved approach where crimes seen as important to the neighbourhood are tackled and the community is involved in the process of identifying problems and targeting them. With reference to youth activities, in particular the NVPC the importance of having a situation in our communities where the police are visible, accessible, prompt and efficient can lead to positive popular perceptions of the police as a consequence (Hough et al., 2010). Organised cadet work can assist with this.

Lastly, the current Howard League 'U R BOSS' initiative has sought to include youth through participation into all aspects of the criminal justice process, from legal support through to policy development. Youth from across England and Wales with a range of previous experiences with the police have been consulted. The aim, through the 'U R BOSS' programme is to improve how youth and police officers perceive each other and work together in the prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour (U R Boss, 2012). With the election of the Police and Crime Commissioners, the intention was for adolescent representatives to make their voices heard and acknowledged at the managerial level. By engaging in discussion with the heads of each police authority, adolescents could have their concerns voiced and made public. This would provide a mechanism for improving relations between youth and the police, in particular through the identification of key concerns on both sides. Interim evaluations have shown positive developments in selected pilot locations of youth involvement in the CJS and participation with Police and Crime Commissioners (U R Boss, 2014a; 2014b).

Hohl, Bradford and Stanko (2010) argue that the trust of the public helps legitimise the CJS to the community as an authoritative organisation that must be adhered to. They go on to claim that not only does trust contribute to the increased legitimisation of police forces in the public's view, but it also facilitates both support and co-operation from the public in general, fostering a better service and more adequate

'protection' and presence. The Home Office (2008) has emphasised the importance of retaining and enhancing the trust that exists in the CJS by the public.

Summing up, several key themes emerge from the general research considered:

- Fostering good relationships between the police and the public is of paramount importance in crime prevention and the provision of support and protection for any community;
- Understanding both the positive and negative experiences of the public in relation to police encounters may assist with formulating better standards of practice and allowing police forces to adopt a more 'prosocial' and 'approachable' reputation;
- Adolescents and police officers have had a tenuous relationship through the years which is often characterised by reciprocal stereotypes on both sides of any interactions;
- Having any type of social relationship with an authoritative adult is important for the development and learning of children and adolescents;
- Providing neutral and engaging opportunities for adolescents to interact and engage with authority figures, including the police, may assist with reducing stereotypes and improving relations.

The above points should be taken as support for elements of the work that is being carried out by operation units. The research noted here is not linked to cadet units specifically but is believed to lend support to the manner in which they operate and provide organised activity for young people that will both benefit the youth, but also the criminal justice apparatus.

Appendix B. Adult topic guide

Topic Guide: Cadet Management and Contributors

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1. **Strengths of service provision**

   - Please discuss some of the positive elements of your cadet programme
   - What does your unit/force offer that other groups do not?
   - Why is your unit/force able to provide the above?

2. **Limitations of service provision**

   - Where do your particular unit and/or force need to improve in the delivery of their cadet programme?
   - Discuss the top three 'missing' elements of your unit in service provision.

3. **Benefits for young people**

   - Highlight the top three benefits cadets participating in your unit gain from involvement
   - What are the short-term benefits?
   - What are the long-term benefits?

4. **Benefits for policing (geared towards local and national policing)**

   - What short term effects/influences does your unit have on policing specifically? Generally?
   - What long term effects/influences does your unit have on policing specifically? Generally?

5. **Resource necessity**

   - What would assist you with improving your ability to lead? What would make you a better leader or help with improving the service you offer?
     - Training
     - Support
   - Discuss the need within the unit/force for:
     - Sustainability

    - Growth (internal)
    - Expansion (external)
- Could you provide any recommendations for making the management and delivery of the cadet programme more efficient and effective?
- What is the top priority for your unit in facilitating the delivery of the cadet programme?

Appendix C. Young person topic guide

Topic Guide: Cadet and young person

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1. **Motivations**

   - Discuss your reasons for joining
   - Lifestyle context (e.g. parents worried of exclusion; interested in policing)
   - Situational elements of pre-cadet lifestyle
   - Familial opinion of cadet participation
   - External peer group view

2. **Interests and benefits**

   - What are the primary reasons for your continued participation?
   - How do you see your cadet involvement changing in the next 6 months? 12 months? 2 years?
   - What are the primary benefits of your cadet experience?
   - How do you see the cadet programme influencing you in the long term (i.e. university; employment)

3. **Room for improvement**

   - How could the cadet programme change for the better?
   - What would make your participation more worthwhile?
   - Discuss negative aspects or times where you felt like you no longer wanted to participate. What made you reconsider?
   - How would the cadet programme be able to attract more of your friends outside of the unit?

4. **Outcomes**

   - How have your relationships with family members changed since your involvement with the cadets?
   - How have your friendships inside of the cadets changed? Outside the cadets changed?

- Have you seen improvements in any areas of your life since you started participating? (e.g. school; sports; risky behaviour)
- What would you say is the best thing that has happened to you since you joined the cadets?

5. Relationship with police

- What were your general opinions of the police prior to joining your cadet unit?
- Have these changed in any way?
- What are the most important factors of your relationships with police at the unit?
- How can the police benefit from you and your peer's involvement in the cadets?
- What would be your primary message to police external to the unit about working with young people?

6. Community participation

- Discuss some of the wider social events you have been a part of since you joined the cadets.
- What did you learn from these events?
- How did participation in these events affect your opinion of your community/neighbourhood/local area?
- How did these make you feel? Why did these make you feel that way?
- What would you expect to do in the future?

Appendix D. Instrument validation paper

Instrument validation and recommendations

The following documentation provides a rationale for the components of the membership survey to be administered to all new cadets. The sections are ordered in the sequence that it is recommended to be administered to participants. Each section is to be accepted as a whole—there is no ability to edit/alter components of particular sections as the validity measures of these instruments are based on the holistic tools. We iterate that although this forms part of the PIF fund, the research collected and analysed for evaluation is independent at this point and should be treated as such in order to assure the reliability, validity, quality and utility of the final product. If a section is deemed 'difficult', we will re-circulate this to the Academic Advisory Board for further comments and recommendations.

1. ***Disclosure/Voluntary participation***

The first screen/landing page should include an explanation of what the membership survey entails; why it is important; asking for consent (depending on age this will be by parents of the youth themselves, which will need to be discussed) and specific items linked to voluntary participation; right to withdrawal; and ethical considerations of anonymity and confidentiality. The membership survey should work so that if the participant does not agree to participate, they are not able to access the rest of the survey. We recommend a dual 'tick' box system at the end of the information. A box for 'Yes' and they continue with the survey; and a box for 'No' where they are removed from the page.

2. **Demographics and ethnicity**

It is vitally important to the data analysis process that this data is captured as it becomes more longitudinal (more data is collected with time).

- We suggest asking either for their post code; or city; or police force; or cadet unit as a means of indicating comparison. We would recommend that the list be input standardly by the programme team or local unit leader so the youth do not make errors here. We suggest against post code, as this may violate anonymity. We recommend simply indicating the police force or the name of the cadet unit;

- Asking for gender through tick boxes is recommended: Male, Female, Other;

- Age (open ended where the cadet is able to simply put a number into the box);

- Religion or faith (optional)—if yes, utilise superordinate denominations (e.g. Catholicism, Judaisim, Islam);

- Ethnicity is important and as already discussed with the project team in Devon & Cornwall Police, we suggest either using the categories applied by the Metropolitan Police Attitude Survey);

- A question on parental/caregiver involvement with their lives; something as simple as:

PLEASE CLICK THE MOST APPROPRIATE RESPONSE REGARDING THE ADULTS YOU LIVE WITH:

  - I live with my birth parents
  - I live with my birth mother only
  - I live with my birth father only
  - I live with other family members (e.g. grandparents, uncle and aunts, older siblings)
  - I live in a foster home
  - I live with friends/friends family
  - I am a young person in care (i.e. by the local authority)
  - Other

This will be helpful in analysis with psychological factors; lifestyle factors; and trust in authority

- We also suggest as an indicator of socio-economic status a question asking whether their parents or caregivers are in employment:

Father/Male caregiver in employment

  - YES
  - NO

Mother/Female caregiver in employment

  - YES
  - NO

This would be followed up by questions linked to both educational levels of the parents or guardians and type of work. The pilot survey will have this information presented for comment but any recommendations are welcome.

3. Family and lifestyle data

- We want to capture information across 3 key areas here: family, school and neighbourhood. A fourth area, drug and substance use, would be useful in the future in mapping success/failure rates or remaining/exiting the programme but suggest at this point that the information is not necessary;

- The ***neighbourhood*** section will ask a series of yes/no questions starting with the opening statement *'In the neighbourhood where you live, have you experienced any of the following over the past year'*:
  - Difficult/troublesome neighbours YES/NO
  - Anti-social behaviour YES/NO
  - Homelessness/rough-sleeping on the street YES/NO
  - Using and/or selling of illegal drugs YES/NO
  - People being harassed on the street YES/NO
  - Public drunkenness and disorder YES/NO
  - General decay (i.e. of buildings; rubbish on streets) YES/NO
  - Begging YES/NO

- The ***family relationships*** section will ask a series of yes/no questions starting with the opening statement *'At least one parent or guardian will'*:

  - Praise me when I have done well YES/NO
  - Listen to me when I speak YES/NO
  - Treat me fairly when I misbehave YES/NO
  - Like to know where I am when I am not home YES/NO

- Additionally, this section will ask:
  - I have run away before YES/NO
  - I fight with my family often YES/NO
  - There is drug and alcohol use in my home YES/NO
  - There has been violence in my home YES/NO

- The ***School*** section will ask a series of yes/no questions:

- Have you ever been suspended from school YES/NO
- Have you ever been excluded from school YES/NO
- Have you frequently not attended school YES/NO

The combined information can be utilised for multiple correspondence analysis or alternatively, changing reporting from dichotomous to ordinal (1-4 categories: Never—rarely—Sometimes—Often) may provide additional information for various regression analysis.

4. Social engagement, participation and competencies

We appreciate that it may be important to understand the level of cohesiveness and belongingness a young person feels to their community. We propose:

- Morality/moral development
- Social inclusion
- Confidence and self-esteem
- Social capital

5. The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire 17+ Extension (SDQ17+)

Assessing behavioural or emotional difficulties in VPC recruits will help to establish the risk status of these youth, and test whether this improves over time whilst in the project. It is not a clinical assessment per se, but the scores do enable us to establish whether there is possibility of Hyperactivity (problems concentrating; overactivity); emotional disorder (depression or anxiety symptoms) or conduct problems (aggression, rule breaking). The measure selected is because it is tested as reliable and valid and is used nationally in social and clinical services with young people and considered a UK 'gold standard'. For example there are national norms for the levels scored. The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (Goodman, 2001) is a 22 item questionnaire which establishes level of risk for the three disorders outlined (normal, subthreshold and case level), as well as peer difficulties and a positive characteristic of prosocial behaviour. It is easy to complete, tested on thousands of children and young people in the UK and internationally, and adapted for the 21+ age population. Please see appendix 1.

6. Trust in Authority Questionnaire (TAQ)

Understanding adolescent levels of trust across a range of variables and theoretical frameworks is crucial to this study. Not only will it be useful in understanding how young people forge relationships amongst themselves and the cadet leaders; there is also the opportunity to collect data relevant to wider policing (i.e. procedural justice; youth confidence in the police). The new TAQ

scale shows good levels of both reliability and validity in measuring trust amongst youth in three areas: generally, with authority figures in their lives, and with the police. It is also associated, with future behavioural intentions of co-operating with the police. A peer-reviewed publication has been produced, which strengthens this measure as a standard self-report questionnaire of trust in authority through reliability and validity estimates in contrasting groups of youth. The TAQ provides a new assessment of trust and trust in the police which has the potential for use in services working with young people aiming to improve youth-police attitudes and behaviour. Please see appendix 2.

7. Predictive outcomes

We feel it is important to develop a set of questions linked to future intentions/thoughts; to map potential behaviours and see if we can predict good and questionable behaviour. We propose 6 questions here, all measured in the same way (1 to 7 Likert scale; response of 1 means unlikely; response of 7 means very likely). The questions will include information about their future; their engagement with the cadet unit; and their engagement with the police in general. We suggest the following wording, but are open to suggestions. Please note that these have been developed through a consideration of the focus groups run with cadet groups from the pilot forces:

- How likely are you to volunteer in your community outside of cadets in the next year?
- How likely are you to pursue higher education following school?
- How likely are you to report a crime or offer information that you witness to the police?
- How likely are you to interact with the police if a member of your family was the victim of crime?

We would also be willing to add additional items if deemed useful. The latter two questions are important to wider implications within policing and the role of the cadets. We also feel that an inventory of 'attitudes' towards police based on semantic differentials may be useful—again, in understanding how the new cadets feel about the police generally and seeing if we can map change at follow-up.

Section 4: My strengths and difficulties

Please take the time to carefully read through each of the statements over the next two pages. Select the box/option that you feel is most similar to your own behaviour and life.

	Not True	Somewhat True	Certainly True
I try to be nice to other people. I care about their feelings	☐	☐	☐
I am restless, I find it hard to sit down for long	☐	☐	☐
I get a lot of headaches, stomach-aches or sickness	☐	☐	☐
I usually share with others, for example food or drink	☐	☐	☐
I get very angry and often lose my temper	☐	☐	☐
I would rather be alone than with other people	☐	☐	☐
I am generally willing to do what other people want	☐	☐	☐
I worry a lot	☐	☐	☐
I am helpful if someone is hurt, upset or feeling ill	☐	☐	☐
I am constantly fidgeting or squirming	☐	☐	☐
I have at least one good friend	☐	☐	☐
I fight a lot. I can make other people do what I want	☐	☐	☐
I am often unhappy, depressed or tearful	☐	☐	☐
Other people generally like me	☐	☐	☐
I am easily distracted, I find it difficult to concentrate	☐	☐	☐
I am nervous in new situations. I easily lose confidence	☐	☐	☐
I am kind to children	☐	☐	☐
I am often accused of lying or cheating	☐	☐	☐
Other people pick on me or bully me	☐	☐	☐
I often offer to help others (family members, friends, colleagues)	☐	☐	☐
I think before I do things	☐	☐	☐
I take things that are not mine from home, work or elsewhere	☐	☐	☐
I get along better with older people than with people of my own age	☐	☐	☐
I have many fears, I am easily scared	☐	☐	☐
I finish the work I'm doing. My attention is good	☐	☐	☐

Do you have any other comments or concerns?

How I define trust

Trust involves having confidence in others

STRONGLY AGREE 1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6----------7 STRONGLY DISAGREE

Respect is needed in a trusting relationship

STRONGLY AGREE 1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6----------7 STRONGLY DISAGREE

Consistency in behaviour is needed for trust

STRONGLY AGREE 1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6----------7 STRONGLY DISAGREE

In order for me to trust someone, they must trust me back

STRONGLY AGREE 1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6----------7 STRONGLY DISAGREE

I have learnt to trust others because of my family

STRONGLY AGREE 1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6----------7 STRONGLY DISAGREE

My friends have had no part in developing my trust

STRONGLY AGREE 1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6----------7 STRONGLY DISAGREE

My trust in authority

I trust the adults here at this organisation (eg Oasis)

STRONGLY AGREE 1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6----------7 STRONGLY DISAGREE

Working with a few specific adults here has helped my trust in authority

STRONGLY AGREE 1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6----------7 STRONGLY DISAGREE

This organization permits me to improve relationships with other figures of authority

STRONGLY AGREE 1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6----------7 STRONGLY DISAGREE

Treating young people like me fairly helps increase my trust in authority

STRONGLY AGREE 1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6----------7 STRONGLY DISAGREE

My trust in the police

I trust the Metropolitan Police

STRONGLY AGREE 1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6----------7 STRONGLY DISAGREE

Developing trust with the Metropolitan police is not at all important to me

STRONGLY AGREE 1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6----------7 STRONGLY DISAGREE

Interactions with a few police officers has increased my trust in the police

STRONGLY AGREE 1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6----------7 STRONGLY DISAGREE

Interacting with non-police adults has helped me improve my trust in the police

STRONGLY AGREE 1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6----------7 STRONGLY DISAGREE

If the police treat me fairly, that will help increase my trust in the police overall

STRONGLY AGREE 1----------2----------3----------4----------5----------6----------7 STRONGLY DISAGREE