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Vehicle Crime and Young People in Brighton and Hove

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Executive Summary

1. Introduction

1.1 Each month in Brighton and Hove, during 1999-2000, around 200 vehicles were stolen. The purpose of this research was to complement the Home Office funded, Brighton and Hove Vehicle Crime Reduction initiative by interviewing a core of known and persistent vehicle offenders to elicit information about the factors motivating their vehicle taking practices. Data prepared for the project showed that most vehicle offenders are in their teens with a peak age of 17 years. We were particularly interested to discover how young people first become involved in vehicle taking, how their involvement is sustained and what factors influence their eventual withdrawal from this activity. Unlike most studies of youths and vehicle taking we were also keen to investigate the influence of 'protective factors' – that is: why a majority of young people, often in very similar positions to those becoming involved in car taking, do not to do so.

1.2 The overall objectives of the Vehicle Crime reduction initiative included:

1.2.1 To reduce vehicle crime in Brighton and Hove by 30% over the period 1999 to 2004.

1.2.3 To reduce the rate of vehicle crime per 1000 capita in 'hotspot' wards/beats to that below the national average.

1.2.4 To help develop an effective strategy model for partnership approaches to vehicle crime taking account of the Sussex Policing Strategy and the Problem Analysis Triangle.

1.2.5 To prevent re-offending and to divert offenders (and potential offenders) from vehicle crime; including monitoring and evaluating outcomes.

1.2.6 Subject to analysis of hot spots, set and achieve a target for Secured Car Parks within Brighton and Hove.

1.2.7 To create good practice with which to 'roll-out' the project (or appropriate parts of the project) to the rest of the Sussex Police area over the next

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years and within existing or foreseeable resources.

1.3 The Brighton and Hove Police project specifically aims to reduce vehicle crime in the area amongst young offenders. It is estimated that the pool of 'active' and persistent vehicle takers might number almost 45-50 young people. Focussing upon these young people was seen as critical for as young offenders moved on from more 'hedonistic' motivations for their car crime to



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