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Crime, housing tenure, and urban space: A study of Sheffield

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ABSTRACT

At the heart of how criminology approaches crime in urban space, lies the idea that certain places and social conditions are associated with greater levels of crime, offending, and victimisation. In the UK, social housing is often associated with these issues because of the relative socio-economic deprivation of many of its residents. However, the role housing plays in criminological analysis of urban crime is both limited and neglected. For criminologists, housing is predominantly a tool to situate where crime happens. What this disregards, is a systemic appreciation for how housing relates to the organisation of cities and urban crime patterns. This thesis analyses these issues in the context of Sheffield, the geography and role of housing tenure, and its links to the incidence of crime in the city. Following in the footsteps of Baldwin, Bottoms and Walker's 1976 publication *The Urban Criminal*, which examined the same city, the thesis builds on the idea that Sheffield offers a useful case study of many of the social, political, economic, and housing changes of the past half century. Considering the role that tenure plays in shaping crime problems reveals how these relationships influence our broader understanding of crime in cities today. Focusing on the key institutions in the city and how they organise their work, interact with each other, and define the issues which they address, highlights the disproportionate state power exerted over this tenure and its residents. This thesis argues that a reconsideration of the role of housing in the distribution of crime will greatly improve the knowledge of criminologists with regard to the relationship between crime and place. By bringing together analysis of housing, crime, urban change, and power, it is possible to explain how the definition of urban crime problems and problem areas is influenced by the work of institutions.

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DECLARATION

I, the author, confirm that the Thesis is my own work. I am aware of the University's Guidance on the Use of Unfair Means (www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/unfair-means). This work has not previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, university.

LIST OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	II
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	III
DECLARATION	IV
LIST OF CONTENTS	V
LIST OF TABLES.....	VIII
LIST OF FIGURES.....	X
LIST OF MAPS	XI
1. HOUSING AND URBAN CRIME: AN INTRODUCTION	1
1.2. Urban problem areas: why housing, why now?	1
1.3. Aims and contribution	5
1.4. Structure of the thesis	6
2. CITY, HOUSING AND CRIMINOLOGY	9
2.1. The roots of urban criminology	9
2.2. Housing in criminological analysis	16
2.3. Housing class and Morris: a prelude to the Urban Criminal.....	23
2.4. The Urban Criminal: a study of housing and crime in Sheffield	26
2.4. Situating the research: Urban crime, housing, and <i>The Urban Criminal</i>	34
2.5. Beyond the ecology of crime: key perspectives from housing studies	39
2.6. Housing in the UK in long-term view	54
2.7. Conclusion.....	59
3. METHODOLOGY: RESEARCHING CRIME AND HOUSING IN THE SHEFFIELD CASE STUDY	62
3.1. Theoretical framework	63

3.2.	Conceptual framework	71
3.3.	Research focus	75
3.4.	Research design	79
3.4.1.	Operational framework: Sheffield's Community Safety Partnership	80
3.4.2.	Crime in Sheffield: a qualitative analysis of quantitative data	85
3.4.3.	Qualitative data: a narrative of problems	91
3.5.	Conclusion.....	103
4.	SHEFFIELD TODAY: URBAN CHANGE.....	105
4.1.	The city of Sheffield: an historical overview	105
4.2.	Housing in Sheffield today	120
4.3.	Housing availability, desirability, and reputation.	132
4.4.	Conclusion.....	142
5.	CRIME IN SHEFFIELD	144
5.1.	The data sample.....	145
5.1.1.	Crime data	145
5.1.2.	Incident data.....	148
5.1.3.	Suspect data	149
5.1.4.	Victim data.....	150
5.2.	The geography of crime in Sheffield	151
5.3.	Relating housing tenure to the geography of crime.....	167
5.4.	Conclusion.....	174
6.	UNDERSTANDING SHEFFIELD'S CRIME PROBLEMS	177
6.1.	Nature of problems and the geography of problem areas.....	178
6.2.	Power struggles: who actually decides?	186
6.3.	Problems and problem areas: Operational theories from police and local authority.....	192
6.4.	Housing hierarchies: unequal geographies of tenure.....	206
6.5.	Problems and problem areas: Some preliminary conclusions.....	217
7.	SOCIAL HOUSING: TENURE AND CRIME MANAGEMENT	221
7.1.	Updating the segregation hypothesis.....	222
7.2.	Choice-based-letting in Sheffield today.....	224

7.3.	Housing management: dealing with crime and anti-social behaviour	238
7.4.	Conclusion.....	259
8.	TOWARDS A NEW 'URBAN CRIMINAL'	263
8.1	Crime, housing, and tenure	264
8.2	Research limitations and future directions for urban crime studies	271
8.3	Conclusion.....	276
	REFERENCES.....	279
	APPENDICES	306
	<u>Appendix A</u>	306
	<u>Appendix B</u>	308
	<u>Appendix C</u>	311

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.i: Prevalent tenure by percentage of UK housing stock	56
Table 3.i: Structure of Sheffield’s Safer and Sustainable Community Partnership, May 2015	83
Table 3.ii: Interview Sample.....	94
Table 3.iii: Additional research interactions, observations, informal conversations	94
Table 3.iv: Qualitative analysis themes	98
Table 4.i: Economic activity by Ward.....	117
Table 4.ii: Prevalent tenure by percentage of housing stock, Sheffield v. national averages (1961-2021).....	120
Table 4.iii: Spearman's correlation: 2012-2019 crime deprivation (output-area level).....	125
Table 4.iv: Housing Market Area overview (adapted from Ferrari <i>et al.</i> , 2019)	126
Table 4.v: SCC properties and yearly lettings by Ward (year 2018-2019).....	134
Table 4.vi: Waiting time (years) SCC properties by housing needs bands (SCC properties by Ward, year 2018-2019)	135
Table 4.vii: Percentage of yearly lettings by housing needs bands (SCC properties by Ward, year 2018-2019).....	136
Table 4.viii: Reasons for tenancy terminated by frequency data (March 2012- October 2019)	138
Table 4.ix: Pearson’s correlation of Deprivation scores by SCC properties (waiting time by housing needs bands).	140
Table 4.x: Pearson’s correlation of Deprivation scores by SCC properties (occupancy rates by housing needs bands).	140
Table 5.i: Sheffield crime data 2012-2018 (yearly count)	145
Table 5.ii: Summary of predominant crime sub-types (2012-2018)	146
Table 5.iii: Summary of predominant crime-sub types (2012-2018).....	147
Table 5.iv: Sheffield incident data (2014-2018).....	148
Table 5.v: Summary of anti-social behaviour incidents (2014-2018).....	149
Table 5.vi: Percentage of suspect address data by offence (2014-2018).....	150

Table 5.vii: Percentage of victim address data by offence (2014-2018)	151
Table 5.viii: Highest crime and incident rate ranked by Ward (average rate by 1,000 population).....	151
Table 5.ix: Lowest crime and incident rate ranked by Ward (average rate by 1,000 population)	152
Table 5.x: Neighbourhood priority areas for South Yorkshire Police with numerical references for <i>Map 5.iv</i>	158
Table 5.xi: Highest suspect and victim residence rate ranked by Ward (average rate by 1,000 population).....	162
Table 5.xii: Lowest suspect and victim residence rate ranked by Ward (average rate by 1,000 population).....	162
Table 5.xiii: Spearman's correlation: 2012-2018 crime data by tenure	167
Table 5.xiv: Spearman's correlation: 2012-2018 suspect home address data by tenure of output areas (n=1817)	169
Table 5.xv: Spearman's correlation: 2012-2018 victim home address data by tenure of output areas (n=1817)	170
Table 5.xvi: Distance travelled between suspect residence and crime location (kilometres)	171
Table 5.xvii: Spearman's correlation: 2012-2018 distance travelled from suspect's home address by tenure of output areas (n=1817).....	171
Table 5.xviii: Crime location distance from victim's residence (kilometres).....	173
Table 5.xix: Descriptive analysis of housing data (SCC) and crime data (SYP).....	174
Table 6.i: Summary of themes of Community Partnership priorities identified in documentary evidence.....	184
Table 6.ii: Empirical framework defining problems and problem areas for housing and police practitioners.....	204
Table 6.iii: Overarching framework defining problem and problem areas for housing and police practitioners	218
Table 7.i: Empirical framework defining problems and problem areas for housing and police practitioners.....	233

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 4.i: Map of all social housing providers in Sheffield.....	127
Figure 6.i: Roles of the Sheffield’s Safer Neighbourhood Services Team [i.e., ASB Team].....	193
Figure 7.i: Local Authority’s process for dealing with problems in social housing.....	241
Figure 7.ii: Collection of pictures from visit to Darnall estate (Summer 2019)	249
Figure 7.iii: Collection of pictures from visit to Wensley estate (Summer 2019).....	254
Figure 7.iv: Picture of summary of powers under the 2014 ASB Act	257

LIST OF MAPS

Map 4.i: Sheffield city region's geography	111
Map 4.ii: Housing growth of Sheffield	112
Map 4.iii: Geography of Sheffield industries	113
Map 4.iv: Sheffield's Administrative Wards	114
Map 4.v: Areas of non-white ethnic concentration in Sheffield.....	115
Map 4.vi: Sheffield housing markets	128
Map 4.vii: Percentage of social housing by Census output area.....	129
Map 4.viii: Percentage of private rented sector by 2011 Census output area.....	130
Map 4.ix: Percentage of owner-occupied housing by 2011 Census output area.....	131
Map 5.i: Average crime rate 2012-2018	153
Map 5.ii: Average ASB incidents rate 2014-2018	153
Map 5.iii: Average public safety incident rate 2014-2018.....	154
Map 5.v: Cluster analysis of ASB data	155
Map 5.vi: Cluster analysis of all crime data	155
Map 5.vii: Cluster analysis of all incident data	155
Map 5.viii: Cluster analysis of public safety incident data.....	155
Map 5.ix: Cluster analysis of burglary offences data.....	156
Map 5.x: Cluster analysis of drug offences data.....	156
Map 5.xi: Cluster analysis of sexual offences data	156
Map 5.xii: Cluster analysis of violent offences	156
Map 5.iv: Examples of spatial clustering (numerical references overlaid on Table 5.vii) ..	158
Map 5.xiii: Hotspot analysis of public safety data	160
Map 5.xiv: Hotspot analysis of all incident data	160
Map 5.xv: Hotspot analysis of all crime data	160
Map 5.xvi: Hotspot analysis of ASB data	160
Map 5.xvii: Hotspot analysis of burglary offences	161
Map 5.xviii: Hotspot analysis of drug offences	161
Map 5.xix: Hotspot analysis of sexual offences	161
Map 5.xx: Hotspot analysis of burglary offences	161

Map 5.xxi: Hotspot analysis of victim residence for burglary offences	164
Map 5.xxii: Hotspot analysis of suspect residence for burglary	164
Map 5.xxiii: Hotspot analysis of victim residence for sexual offences	164
Map 5.xxiv: Hotspot analysis of suspect for sexual offences	164
Map 5.xxv: Hotspot analysis of victim residence for violent offences	165
Map 5.xxvi: Hotspot analysis of suspect residence for violent offences.....	165
Map 5.xxviii: Hotspot analysis of suspect residence for drug offences.....	165
Map 5.xxvii: Hotspot analysis of suspect residence for theft offences.....	165

1. HOUSING AND URBAN CRIME: AN INTRODUCTION

This thesis investigates the role that housing plays in studying crime in cities today. Specifically, it is concerned with the gap existing in criminological literature between housing as the background to who, why, and where crime is committed, and how housing shapes city environments. To correct this issue, this thesis puts housing at the forefront of urban crime analysis. It brings issues of housing organisation, urban change, and urban crime together, taking a more holistic view of how these shape our understanding of urban crime. Following in the footsteps of Baldwin, Bottoms and Walker (1976), who advocated for an integrated understanding of housing in analysis of crime in cities, this thesis focuses on a particular city and its distinctive social and economic context. This thesis builds around the possibility that the case study city, Sheffield, can be used to exemplify the kind of housing changes (in terms of policy, geography, tenure, and social change) that have affected many other cities over the past half century.

This introductory chapter has four parts. First, it introduces in more depth Baldwin *et al.*, 1976 work *The Urban Criminal* and the debates it sought to address as the inspiration for this study. Second, broader debates surrounding housing and the issues that this thesis responds to are outlined. Third, an overview of the research questions, methods and contribution of the thesis are provided. Finally, the structure and content of the thesis is summarised.

1.2. Urban problem areas: why housing, why now?

A key term this thesis uses to express the relationship between housing and crime, is that of problem area. This terminology relies on a wealth of theoretical and conceptual premises which are related to the various dimensions of urban crime analysis with which this thesis is concerned. First, the term problem area joins the need to understand both spatial [as in geographical] and place-based [as in contextual] narratives of crime; specifically, where, and how it is thought to manifest itself (Bottoms and Wiles, 1986). Second, the term problem area acknowledges that to discuss and understand crime is to engage with a relational understanding of the city, and how city-level societal processes are linked to how life is

organised within urban areas (Hayward, 2004). Accordingly, it considers how the manifestation of power inequalities is critically unpacked by reflecting on the role played by the State and State institutions with respect to the administration of social life at the city-level (Taylor *et al.*, 1973). Third, it recognises that housing, and more specifically the articulation of housing tenure, captures and reproduces the processes which create the inequalities and disparities which are key to geographically locating crime within cities (Atkinson and Millington, 2019). Furthermore, being mindful of the histories, processes, and empirical concentration of crime, in turn, also reveal how crime problems are constructed and dealt with (Hancock, 2001). Altogether, the concept of urban problem areas, enables to approach to how crime is conditioned and shaped by housing, by placing a greater emphasis on the relational aspect between these two issues. In this sense, what has changed since the writing of *The Urban Criminal* (Baldwin *et al.*, 1976) helps to rationalise and delineate the issues this thesis aims to re-explore.

In re-appraising the relationship between housing and crime in present-day Sheffield, the thesis follows three specific premises which are explored in further detail in Chapter Two and Three. First, on an empirical level, much has changed with respect to housing systems in contemporary cities. The second premise of the thesis is that urban changes occurring within and through housing not only have a direct impact on crime, but also have an effect on issues which are normally related to crime. The third premise is that further attention ought to be directed at how power and the work of state institutions affect how crime and cities are related.

At a glance, national housing policies and the marketisation of housing have significantly re-shaped housing options compared to what was available in 1976. Housing marketisation, expressed as the introduction of market forces to aspects of housing availability, affordability, and management (Taylor, 2017), has been applied to all tenures since neo-liberal practices have been used to govern housing. Initiatives since the implementation of the 1981 Right to Buy policy, have seen the progressive disappearance of large mono-tenurial estates like those featured in studies such as *The Urban Criminal*. The consequent lack of investment in building new affordable housing, and maintaining existing stock, have residualised the amount of

social housing available to those who need it (Hodkinson, 2019). The move to commodify housing as a form of financial wealth and not as a necessary resource integral to society, has also increased the costs of home ownership and rental. This has also made large portions of the market unavailable to those without significant wealth; negating the ability of many to make housing choices and instead forcing them to take only what is available or attainable under the threat of survival (Preece *et al.*, 2020). The generalised lack of regulation, and de-regulation, to protect socio-economically vulnerable tenants, have also meant private renters and homeowners are often unable to maintain or be protected from inhumane housing standards, and precarious living conditions (Stone, 2016; Perraudin, 2017; Wilde, 2017). As a result, social housing residents are not only left to compete for undesirable and residualised properties, but also suffer from the social stigma and increased scrutiny associated with this tenure (Hanley, 2017; Hodkinson, 2019). In turn, this has also influenced the perceptions of vulnerable tenants, especially those who are unable to rely on social housing as an affordable, destigmatised, and available form of housing (Powell and Robinson, 2019). Such factors, ultimately, have important implications for our understanding of crime and social control at the city level.

The second premise of the thesis, aims to reflect on this, highlighting how changes which are occurring within housing have tangible impacts on crime and do not occur in isolation. Whereas criminology has often sought to study the effect of social conditions through areal studies (Bottoms, 2007), housing has functionally been used as a variable to numerically quantify and qualify levels of crime across space. As such, a complex understanding of housing continues to be neglected within criminological approaches. Specifically, area studies in criminology have predominantly focussed on the social composition and spatial configuration of place (Sampson, 2012; Pitner *et al.*, 2022), or the design of the built environment (Brantingham and Brantingham, 1984; Armitage, 2013). In reality, housing plays an important role in connecting these issues (Atkinson and Millington, 2019). Thinking systematically about housing undermines the criminological notion that socio-economic deprivation and social disorganisation in housing consistently causes crime. Instead, it emphasises how within excluded and stigmatised communities organisation and pro-social behaviour can exist (Whyte, 1943). Indeed, spatial, and social exclusionary practices in the UK, embedded within

issues related to social acceptance, also refer to processes of otherisation in which a socio-cultural, ethnic, health, or financially vulnerable minority is excluded and blamed for its condition. In these circumstances, stigmatisation also concerns the over-policing and increased punitive regulations that are applied to these populations for their failure to comply with the imagined ideal of citizenship, and for their being in a disadvantaged condition in the first place (Murie, 1997; Flint 2004, 2006a, 2015; Reiner, 2012). Importantly, however, as life outside the accepted norm is stigmatised and actively punished by the state, the inevitable consequence of social exclusion is the further creation of 'para-functional spaces' in which the trajectories of the excluded can be ignored and politicised (Hayward, 2012b).

The final premise on which this thesis is built is that further attention ought to be directed at how power and the work of state institutions affect how crime and cities are related. Scholars in critical criminology and urban sociology have long critiqued the ways in which the system itself creates inequalities through the ways that knowledge is produced about problems (Walton, 1998; Wacquant, 2009). Criminology, as a discipline, has always had an influential role in setting and shaping the State's punitive responses to crime. It does so by working in close partnership with the State to identify what the problems are, and by proposing solutions which fit the solutions State institutions already seek to implement (Reiner, 2012). As a result, criminological research fails to routinely reflect on the issues associated with State-led definitions and interventions which target specific problem areas and their perceived problems (Walton, 1998; DeKeseredy, 2011; Atkinson, 2015). A more critical approach to the construction of problem areas, therefore, is about addressing the dualistic nature of human agency and choice within the wider structural framework in which [State] agencies of crime and control operate (Elias, 2000 [1939]; Becker, 2009 [1971]). Adopting a constructionist approach in the context of housing and its relation to crime, means reflecting on the complexities of contemporary liquid modernities, and the underlying State powers, which affect urban spaces in a variety of ways (Bauman, 2000). This knowledge, in turn, needs to be reflected in the construction of problems and problem areas. Indeed, as for the symbolic construction of social housing as a problem area, the condition of the urban poor are not necessarily a contributory part of the problem; rather, they are only the subject of institutional focus (Hayward, 2012b; Wacquant, 2004). State actions attempting to limit and

terminate the deviance of these spaces, whether through housing or criminal justice policies, creates the further sense of insecurity as well as a need for control (Young, 2011). In the perception of many, welfare-reliance and social housing residency become synonymous with moral and social deviance, and crime. Thus, criminological analysis needs to critically connect how the practices of criminal justice institutions influence how we understand crime, with the aim of positively influencing change for the benefit of the marginalised, powerless, and stigmatised (Young, 2007).

1.3. Aims and contribution

The purpose of this PhD is to advocate for a more balanced understanding of crime and its relation to urban spaces. Traditionally, criminological approaches have sought to analyse the ecology of cities in an instrumental way, to understand how crime may occur in specific contexts, and conceptualise how to disrupt it. Beyond the effectiveness and intentions of different theories and techniques, what has been forgotten within these approaches are the ways in which they affect our shared understandings of issues of risk, crime, and harm across urban space. This thesis re-addresses this by looking at housing systems and their organisation, to understand what is 'housing' for urban crime, and how crime management and social control operate through the housing system. Taking the work of Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) as a starting point it looks at Sheffield, as the example of a city — much like others in the UK — that has evolved over time to match shifting expectations about the management of risk and harm through its space. By analysing historical data about the changing nature and distribution of crime, and its relationship to current interventions and housing provision, the thesis reflects on the unintended and neglected issues and practices of the contemporary institutions responsible for managing urban spaces. It provides a more apt framework, mindful of the issues surrounding the construction of crime, and the systems that are used to control it. Three key research questions guided the investigation of the Sheffield case study:

1. How are patterns of crime and offending distributed in the city?
2. How are urban problem areas constructed given changing social and tenurial forces?
3. How are changing tenure structures, and their spatial distribution, influencing patterns of crime, disorder, and social harm in the city?

Drawing from *The Urban Criminal*, the first question is designed to unpack the quantitative and geographical aspect of officially recorded offences. This seeks to address the longstanding and dominant ideology that certain housing tenures are also stigmatised as dangerous places which respectable people should avoid. The second question further moves in this direction by seeking to contribute to the nuance of the definition of problem and problem areas. It does so by focusing on unpacking whether and how institutions perceive crime and housing to relate to these. In turn, by delving further into how institutions respond to problem areas, this aims to substantiate how their designation remains an issue requiring further consideration from criminology. The last research question aims to provide an overarching understanding of change in the ecology of crime at the city-level through the Sheffield case study. Reflecting on this thesis findings, as well as on existing research, the question aims to delineate the key learning points and limitations of the present study for the benefit of future interdisciplinary analysis.

The research adopts a mixed-method approach. Conceptually building on the work of the Urban Criminal, the research is focussed on integrating the statistical and geographical exploration of the distribution of crime and its links to housing across the city, alongside the empirical constructions of crime at the hands of institutions participating in the management of crime and housing at the city-level.

1.4. Structure of the thesis

The thesis is structured as follows.

Chapter Two provides an in-depth review and analysis of the relevant criminological literature. Providing a baseline understanding of urban crime issues from a criminological perspective, it outlines the literature associated with the concepts of the ecology of crime and environmental criminology.

Chapter Three addresses issues of methodology. Recognising the need to update the narrative about urban crime constructed by Baldwin *et al.* (1976), as well as the need to reflect on the operationalisation of the three key research questions, it illustrates how the

thesis' inductive mixed-methods bridges the gap in existent research. Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders and ethnographical work with Community Safety Partnership institutions are used to understand how housing, and the management of housing, are related to crime. In return, spatial, and statistical analysis of the correlation between Census (for housing) and Police data (for crime, incidents, offender residences and victim residences), are used to link the geography of crime to that of housing.

Chapter Four presents the case study of Sheffield and focuses on the issue of urban change. The chapter offers a housing-centred view of the city. Informed by publicly available data, it provides an analytical introduction to the city's housing ecology. Using Census Data on housing, ward profiles, and housing reports from the Local Authority it examines how the geography, demography, economic and, social organisation of the city, makes Sheffield a divided and unequal city. Areas with bad reputations where most of the social housing stock is concentrated, are examined as having greater population turnaround rates, with tenancies ending around or within the statutory minimum occupation period set by allocation policies.

Chapter Five begins a more targeted exploration of crime across Sheffield through a quantitative analysis of Sheffield's crime and housing data. Spatial and statistical analysis techniques are employed to explore the incidence and geography of crime across the city. Looking at the incidence of police-recorded data across Sheffield, it finds crime to be unequally distributed, with key residential locations outside the city centre (coinciding with police priority [hot-spot] areas) affected by crime.

Chapter Six addresses institutional definitions of problems and problem areas and questions institutional perspectives and practices around their construction. Social housing here appears to receive a disproportionate amount of scrutiny at the hands of institutions, due to the better-functioning inter-organisational collaboration and oversight of this tenure, which result in greater opportunities to police and problematise this tenure. Here it is shown how it is possible to identify how definitions of problems are harming many of Sheffield's residents and stigmatising the few which institutions have clear access to and knowledge of.

Chapter Seven critically reflects on the management practices within social housing in Sheffield. In response to its apparent criminogeneity, and the greater scrutiny to which this tenure is subjected to, the chapter revisits Baldwin *et al.*'s (1976) 'segregation thesis'. Closely analysing how prospective tenants' applications are prioritised and sorted through the local authority's allocation policy, the extent to which tenants are actually able to express housing preferences is examined. We see here how knowing that perceptions and knowledge about problems are constructed predominantly around social housing leaves tenants vulnerable to practices that reinforce stereotypes and negative reputations, with the local authority (and by proxy the Community Partnership) often failing to recognise, tackle, or reduce these perceptions and patterns.

Chapter Eight concludes the thesis. Drawing together the key themes identified, it reinforces how housing-based conceptualisations of urban crime are significant to future criminological research. It also points to the methodological and theoretical lessons that can be learned from this thesis and applied to future interdisciplinary research.

2. CITY, HOUSING AND CRIMINOLOGY

Criminology as a discipline has long been concerned with understanding crime that takes place in cities. However, theoretical, and empirical generalisations have been concerned with specific social issues, communities, neighbourhoods, and spaces, rather than providing an understanding of crime at the city-level scale. This chapter has four primary goals. First, it reviews the origin and key developments in urban criminological literature, and particular its development under the theoretical concept of social disorganisation. This provides an overview of how crime in cities has traditionally been appraised. Second, the chapter considers the concepts of housing class building from the work of Morris (1957). Focussing on the concept of housing class, it identifies the underlying relationship between housing and crime, which the work of Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) sought to address with their study of crime in Sheffield. The chapter then focuses in on the work of Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) in *The Urban Criminal* to review and appraise their contribution to Sheffield-based urban criminology literature. This section also identifies key aspects which the thesis deals with. Thirdly, the chapter approaches key sociological and urban studies of housing, cities, and crime, to situate the present study within contemporary debates. In particular, this delves into the issue of power, and the administration of cities, specifically the understanding of the social conditions and divisions in cities which relate crime and housing. Finally, the chapter provides a summary of the issues and major historical trends which foreground present-day housing conditions in the UK.

2.1. The roots of urban criminology

Conventionally, the late 18th Century and the advent of Industrialisation across Western Europe have been agreed to be a starting point from which to analyse the issue of crime in cities (McLaughlin and Muncie, 1999). In this period, much social, political, economic, and physical change was taking place, as the effects of industrialisation and economic utilitarianism began to mould cities into urban environments (Mumford, 1966; Krupat, 1985). Scholars started to investigate how change affected social processes, including crime. Some of the earliest examples of how this literature, such as the concepts of *gemeinschaft* [community] and *gesellschaft* [society], sought to understand how new social and economic

orders affected community life, also theorising what impact they were thought to have on the conditions which generated crime (Tönnies, 2002 [1887]). According to Tönnies, for example, different modes of labour tangibly changed how people were organised within urban environments, not only by means of where and how they lived, but also with regard to how they expressed free-will through social interactions. Understanding crime as a social phenomenon, he argued for a study of these conditions so that understanding might be garnered with regard to what caused crime. He also argued for an approach which today we would refer to as 'mixed methods' and 'inter-disciplinary' research; approaches to scientifically analyse social conditions and reveal how crime was related to urban conditions (Deflem, 1999).

By the mid-19th century statisticians Quetelet and Guerry undertook some of the very first documented studies of crime with respect to urban environments, seeking to explore which factors might explain variations in the distribution of crime patterning across space (Beirne, 1987). Relying on public data and social statistics, they found that cities were disproportionately more affected by crime than rural areas. Accordingly, they began to empirically relate crime with the higher recorded incidence of poverty, prostitution, and suicide within urban areas (Quetelet, 1984 [1831]). Being able to relate greater concentrations of crime with traits aligned to contemporary definitions of deprivation, provided them with a scientific way to think about predicting crime patterns based on empirical measures (Beirne, 1987). Very similar work, albeit undertaken in much greater detail also took place in late Victorian London; the works of Booth (1902), and Mayhew (2010 [1851]). Articulating how social conditions related to the character of social spaces, they provided an extremely detailed street-level mapping of social issues across the city, including unemployment, illiteracy, and deviant sexual behaviours (Booth, 1902; Mayhew, 2010 [1851]). These observations, focussed on the context and geography of social traits, integrated spatial analysis with ethnographies to enrich the narratives captured by social data (Weisburd *et al.*, 2012).

These observations did not take place in a socio-political vacuum. Not unproblematically, Booth and Mayhew captured the effects of abject poverty and referred to issues of deviant social behaviours with expressions such as 'vicious underclasses' (Booth, 1902). Whereas the

intended purpose of these terms was to arguably express empirical observations with the aim of identifying and evidencing these conditions for the benefit of social policy, the terminologies used also provide key insights into the understanding and characterisation of normative behaviours as well as the geographies of deviance (Spicker, 1990). These studies also make it clear that one of the implicit mechanisms of the conditions generating crime was choice. Specifically, they associated deviance and criminality with specific economic classes, and directly related these to issues of morality and deprived moral standards, as notoriously implied by many Victorian policies, practices, and language which specifically related the mixed sentiments and attitudes Victorians held with regard to the urban poor (Humphreys, 1995). This highlighted the contrast between the 'deserving poor' who were identified as having earned the rights to charity and support, and the 'underserving poor' who required harsh punitive action to address their poor life choices and idleness. Behind these ideals, were also responses from the public and the state with acts of charity (Dockerill, 2021). Most notably, housing associations were established to provide housing for those deserving of support (Wohl, 1977), as much as to police and discipline those who did not deserve support (Steedman, 2016; Churchill, 2017). Empirically rationalising this connection between choice and measurable conditions situates these studies within utilitarian application of positivism. As the result of scientific and deductive reasoning being applied to the spatial study of areas of cities, crime was appraised as one of these social conditions, which characterised the areas it affected (Beirne, 1987).

The next significant empirical and conceptual steppingstone in the development of urban crime scholarship has been conventionally identified to be the influential work of the 1930s Chicago School of Sociology. Promoting neighbourhood-level studies within the city, Chicago scholars introduced the notion of ecological analysis from the biological study of plants to sociological and criminological analysis (Stark, 1987). At the heart of biological ecology is the analysis of the natural world; this is commonly related to urban environments and their conditions through the metaphor of the forest (Bottoms, 2007). In this analogy the city is compared to a forest where different ecosystems (known as natural areas), are identifiable because of their different characteristics and traits affecting the growth of trees. In cities, natural areas are neighbourhoods. As the building blocks by which to understand the city, they are differentiated based on their different characteristics, features, and the communities

found therein. Derived from the suggestion that knowledge about social conditions can be derived from the systematic empirical observations, human ecology proposes that phenomena such as crime can be studied through analysis of spatial and temporal relationships that produce urban environments (Bottoms, 2000). As otherwise expressed in Morris (1957: 1), a key element of social ecology is the relational aspect of patterns:

...human or social ecology is concerned with the relationship which exists between people who share a common habitat or local territory, and which are distinctly related to the character of the territory itself; it is a study of social structure in relation to the local environment.

Individuals form relationships with one another within natural areas, however, they also form relationship with the local territory, and in part because of it. Applying the concept of human ecology to studies of urban environments, Chicago scholars developed the concentric zone model in which five distinctive areas across the city are identified for their natural social and environmental conditions (Park and Burgess, 2019 [1925]). Of these five areas, the zone in transition however attracted more interest from a criminological perspective. Situated at the centre of the concentric zone model, this area was affected by the highest levels of court-recorded juvenile offending and also by adverse ‘naturally presenting’ conditions—namely high levels of population heterogeneity, low-socio economic status, and high residential density and turnover (Shaw, 1929; Shaw and McKay, 1942).

Formalising the effect of these conditions through the concept of social disorganisation, the hypothesis presented was that these persistent struggles which residents experience, undermined any process of collective social organisation (Bursik, 1988; Sampson and Groves, 1989; Sampson, 2012). At the turn of the 19th Century, cities on the western coast of America were experiencing an influx of migrants who came predominantly from rural areas within Europe in search of jobs in the wake of American industrialisation (Baines, 1991). Due to cultural and language constraints, as well as barriers to securing employment and stable incomes, migrants often resided in close proximity to each other in some of the worse-off areas of cities close to the same industrial areas in which they worked (Dockerill, 2021). The social disorganisation thesis suggested that these complex social conditions and environments undermined their ability to organise as communities or to cohesively deal with issues such as crime. In this way, the concept of disorganisation was intrinsically related to concepts of economic change and competition (Owens, 2012). As migrants’ prospects of

stable sources of income improved through secure employment, residents of the zone in transition sought to move away from the conditions therein towards the outer rings of the concentric-zone model. Park and Burgess, (2019 [1925]) proposed that the further outwards towards sub-urban areas individuals were able to live, the less likely they were to experience disorganised social conditions. As a result of greater wealth, better housing, and community stability the likelihood of individuals committing crime or being tolerant of crime was proportionately reduced as the changes in those persons' circumstances produced greater community investment, and thus a greater ability to organise effectively.

Whereas more complex and holistic ways of thinking about urban crime problems have since been developed — for example, Situational Action Theory which stated that social and cultural context affect morality, and in return the propensity to commit crime (Wikström, 2014)¹—social disorganisation explains crime as the result of persistent negative social and economic conditions (Stark, 1987). However, from the holistic concept of the ecology of crime this focus on the *causes* of crime, has contributed to the theoretical and empirical splintering of criminological explanations of crime (Bruinsma, 2016). From the collective appraisal of the effects and relations naturally presenting in neighbourhoods, explanations of urban crime have since been directed at specific issues or social conditions. In particular criminological studies have disproportionately focussed on who may be causing or be affected by crime, what social conditions contribute to crime, and where crime takes place. These three questions generate a focus on individual behaviour, community-level processes, and the spatial elements of crime.

At the individual level, there are many explanations of why individuals may commit crime, whether through a process of rationalised choice (Clarke and Felson, 2004), impulsive behaviour (Farrington and Welsh, 2007), or external peer influencing (Farrington, 1995). For

¹ Situational Action Theory [SAT] constructs crime as the direct product of moral action. However, these actions are situated within circumstances where individuals are 'pressurised' to act criminally or in deviant ways. So, whilst the criminal action itself it is attributable to individuals perceiving an action (crime) to be acceptable, this decision is influenced by the effects or circumstances in which the individuals find themselves. Circumstances, such as lived environments and their conditioning may directly act as an 'incitement' as well as situating the 'interaction' that originates action.

example, when presented with poverty or social disadvantage individuals may develop the belief that crime is an acceptable solution to coping with those naturally presenting conditions of disadvantage (Merton, 1948). However, social aspects and context to individual-level factors are also thought to have a key role in replicating behaviour. From this perspective, criminal behaviour may also be appraised as a social process, whether through learning or association (Shaw and McKay, 1942; Sutherland, 1947). From this perspective, and as explained through the concept of cultural transmission, criminal behaviour is conceived as a more 'favourable' way to cope with social strain than law-abiding attitudes (Sutherland, 1947). In return, community setting also plays a crucial role in the process of setting both formal and informal mechanisms of social control, as expressed by the concept of collective efficacy (Sampson *et al.*, 1997). Building on the knowledge that disorganisation is the other side of organisation (Reiss, 1986), collective efficacy recognises the concurrent existence of social cohesion and shared expectations for control, and relaxes the expectations that personal ties, cohesion, and arrangements at the individual level are solely responsible for maintaining overt control over disorganisation (Sampson *et al.*, 1997). What this means is that the predisposition of individuals to react to disorganised conditions in an orderly way is based both on formal expectations for lawful social control and also regulated by the development of community trust bonds which define how individuals react to crime and deviance (Carrière, 2016).

Ultimately, however, levels of crime and non-pro-social behaviour are still thought to be highest where conditions such as concentrated disadvantage, immigration concentration, and residential instability are most prevalent (Sampson and Graif, 2009). This, in turn, gives place in the criminological literature to what is known as the neighbourhood effect; namely, the independent causal assumption that living in a given neighbourhood rather than another has an effect on a given social outcome (Oakes, 2004). At a spatial level, the unequal distribution of crime through space emphasises the concern for the geographical and material aspects of crime; referred to as environmental factors of crime (Brantingham and Brantingham, 1981). The emphasis of the latter is characterised by, as Felson and Cohen (1980) note, a focus on the spatial clustering of opportunities which intersect elements of physical design with crime prevention issues (Felson, 2011). The environmental aspects of urban crimes which have therefore focussed on area-level studies seek to identify where

crime takes place, with geographical, statistical, and geo-spatial analysis used to evidence and predict why crime happens (Weisburd *et al.*, 2012).

Altogether, this emphasis on the effects of individual's behaviour, the organisations of communities, and the geographical distribution of crime has created a focus on urban social conditions. Within this framework, denominators such as housing where multiple indicators of crime converge, are considered to be a good measure to establish where crime manifests itself within neighbourhoods, communities, or geographical areas. Within the literature, this concept is discussed using interchangeable terms such as 'area-level studies', 'environmental criminology', and 'socio-spatial criminology'. Significant empirical and theoretical work has gone into the study of urban crime as a by-product of natural urban conditions (Bottoms, 2007). As defined by Bottoms and Wiles (2002:620) the focus of this research is:

...the study of crime, criminality, and victimisation as they relate, first, to particular places, and, secondly, to the way that individuals and organisations shape their activities spatially, and in doing so are in turned influenced by place-based or spatial factors...

In other words, whilst crime and housing are interrelated, housing is not thought to be able to contribute in its own right to who commits crime, why they commit crime, how they commit crime, or where crime happens. Instead, the focus of criminology as demonstrated by disorganisation approaches, places a greater emphasis on individuals and their circumstances, rather than the wider conditions manifested in the social condition surrounding them.

To date, many versions of social disorganisation exist. Some studies have sought to test its factors with respect to its causes and behavioural development. For example, in the case of childhood development where disorganised living conditions and weakened social bonds may be seen to affect the propensity of young people to offend (Van Ijzendoorn *et al.*, 1999; McCrystal *et al.*, 2007; Kingston *et al.*, 2009; Maimon and Browning, 2010). Other studies have, alternatively, explored different dimensions and connections of disorganisation concepts in order to understand how and why disorganised conditions may cause higher rates of crime, and accordingly integrate, develop, or rebut different aspects of social disorganisation theories and conceptualisations (Browning *et al.*, 2004; Steenbeek and Hipp, 2011; Kubrin and Wo, 2015). Other studies have also sought to study the effects of disorganisation on inter-related issues such as public health, policing, and the structure of

neighbourhoods and cities to reduce or prevent crime (Kawachi *et al.*, 1999; Wu *et al.*, 2009; Triplett *et al.*, 2013; White *et al.*, 2015).

However, despite studies of disorganisation intuitively relying on the same concepts and framework of Park and Burgess (2019 [1925])— that to some extent socio-cultural heterogeneity, population turnaround, and deprived socio-economic conditions are likely to affect the rates of crime—no application of formulation of disorganisation has applied its concepts cohesively (Bruinsma *et al.*, 2013). Indeed, whilst disorganisation studies collectively identify issues of social cohesion and concentrated deprivation as key issues, inconsistencies with the ways in which these are measured and operationalised limit their explanatory powers (Wikström, 1991a; Eisner and Wikström, 1999). Conceptualising crime as a normative issue, international studies on violent crime have proposed how context-specific urban-processes affect causal mechanisms, which lead to crime and how they alter the relationship between the characteristics of urban-social environments and rates of crime (Wikström, 1991a; Ceccato and Haining, 2005). What this means is that there is not only one metric to measure and label bad places as bad, nor is there a universally good measure for defining crime. Rather, as a normative issue, what defines crime is context specific.

From this, two questions of relevance emerge: (i) how is housing utilised in this context? (ii) Why is it necessary to review this disorganisation framework, when it has been widely applied to theoretical, conceptual, and empirical studies of urban crime? It is to these questions that this chapter now turns.

2.2. Housing in criminological analysis

The role of housing as set out in disorganisation frameworks Park and Burgess (2019 [1925]), even when considering the limited collection of studies reviewed above is, at best, narrow. These studies immediately identify how housing plays a number of roles with respect to contexts to crime. According to Van Ijzendoorn *et al.*, (1999), and Maimon and Browning (2010), the home is the site where behaviour is shaped, with parenting cultures affecting the learning of children and their socialisation both within and outside the home. In addition, the socio-economic implications of poor/good quality housing can be seen to produce a stable environment for children to develop with or, alternatively, an environment which is further

destabilising. Some studies (such as McCrystal *et al.*, 2007) only highlight how housing—in this case housing estates in England — can be used as the setting of studies looking at the associations that exist between crime and conditions which may cause crime, as well as reiterating how homelessness can be a potential consequence of non-normative behaviour. In many more studies— in the present sample see, for instance Kawachi *et al.*, (1999), Browning *et al.*, (2004), Ceccato and Haining (2005) Kingston *et al.*, (2009), Steenbeek and Hipp (2011), Bruinsma *et al.*, (2013), Triplett *et al.*, (2013), and White *et al.*, (2015)— housing and, more often than not, the type of housing tenancy are used as a variable to measure structural organisation and, from that, determine the extent of the disorganisation of those [given] environments. What this means is that housing collectively serves as a measure of social, cultural, and economic heterogeneity by identifying how different tenancies create more or less diverse communities. At the same time, types of tenure are used as a measure of population turnaround. Finally, as in the case of Wikström (1991a, 1991b), a few studies have used housing in an integral and systematic way. In Wikström (1991a, 1991b) the home is not only an empirical unit of measurement to assess the extent of disorganisations, but it is also used to conceptualise geographical relationships with behavioural patterns of criminal behaviour. Specifically, both the amount of time spent in or around the home, and the quality of relationships developed both within and in proximity of the home, are used to discuss how disorganisation affects crime.

A focal issue which this literature neglects, however, are the implications caused by narrowing the analytical focus of criminological enquiry to appraising how material conditions can cause observed social phenomena. This issue is partially examined by Sampson's (2012) review of the concept of disorganisation in studies of urban crime. Sampson (2012:7) highlights how, an empirical level, the constituent elements of disorganisation are '*straightforward and non-controversial*'; however, at a theoretical level they are not (Sampson, 2012). He argues that studying disorganisation factors and correlating them to crime as an outcome, explores 'risk-factors' rather than explaining the causes of crime. Offering an alternative viewpoint, he proffers that what is causing these conditions, and in return crime as the effect, are community-level mechanisms such as social interaction and the influence of institutional processes (Sampson, 2012). The structure of interactions, and why these come about, can

instead provide an account of how neighbourhood-level phenomena bring about conditions (Sampson, 2012).

Sampson's critique was applied to the Moving to Opportunities initiative in the US, an experiment of neighbourhood-level disorganisation centred around housing-based interventions. The Moving to Opportunities program sought to test the effects of upwards mobility, which proposes that if families have an opportunity to move away from the concentrated deprivation and racial segregation of their original neighbourhood, this might result in better life chances for both adults and children across a number of variables (Leventhal and Brooks-Gunn, 2003). The Moving to Opportunities experiment split participants into one of three groups (Goering *et al.*, 1999). Two of these groups received a housing voucher which gave them the opportunity to relocate (to either a wealthy neighbourhood with less than 10% of residents assessed as poor, or to relocate anywhere with no restriction). The last group, the control group, did not receive any housing re-allocation. After re-location, and subsequent periodic follow-ups, research established that a complex combination of issues only provided limited benefits to some of the participants, with modest improvements in perceived safety, neighbourhood, and housing satisfaction for those able to move to low-poverty neighbourhoods (Popkin *et al.*, 2002). The opportunity to live elsewhere (or lack thereof) was thought to offer the potential to study the extent to which the crime and anti-social behaviour which individuals engaged in, and the possibility of varying crime rates of these across new areas (Sampson, 2012). With inconclusive results for young females, both experimental groups saw a reduction in criminality, and better pro-social outcomes for young males (Sanbonmatsu *et al.*, 2011).

Reviewing the mixed findings of the experiment, Sampson criticised the Moving to Opportunity approach. Promoting the value of collective efficacy, the experiment failed to identify the underlying natural conditions and causes of crime, which relate to unequal conditions to which people are subjected to because of where they live. However, these conditions are not only generative to the trajectory of spaces but also of how disadvantage plays a part in the structural processes of neighbourhoods which ultimately constrain individuals (Sampson, 2012). The Moving to Opportunity project, as with many other criminological studies, treated social circumstances around the creation of criminogenic

environments as background to the material conditions which are thought to lead individuals to behave in a non-normative or criminal way. This ignored how the composition of neighbourhoods, namely who people are, their relations, where they live, and ultimately why they live there, hold important answers as to how social processes translate across the urban landscape. The analytical nuisance of the underlying mechanism of housing choice— or allocation, as in the Moving to Opportunity experiment, as it would be for social housing more generally— can translate information about underlying contexts in ways that analytical criminology neglects. This is especially the case when it comes to establishing the causes of crime, and their presumed effects in isolation from their context. Taking the same view as Sampson, the underlying natural conditions causing crime are explained by, the complex socio-political context in which this study operated. Applying it to a housing perspective, this would consider many aspects of subsidised social housing, including its availability, funding, and reputation of (Shroder and Orr, 2012). It would also raise questions about the true impact of re-location given significant issues, in the US context, of racial-based inequalities and stigma on the integration of treatment groups in their respective neighbourhood contexts (Ludwig *et al.*, 2008).

Nonetheless, the concept that the natural distribution of environmental and social features of neighbourhoods, and how these relate to housing, have continued to permeate how criminologists reflect on the social ecology of cities and the distribution of crime in them. Despite these limitations, the main thrust of criminological enquiries of urban crime have heavily relied on the connection between disorganisation and crime.

The embedding of variable and location-based understanding of social disorganisation have empirically and methodologically supported the advancement of spatial analysis in which crime is mapped from the neighbourhood level to the micro-level of street segments and individual home addresses (Weisburd *et al.*, 2012; Farrell, 2015; Bernasco and Steenbeek, 2017; Lee *et al.*, 2017). Studies of policing, best summarise the implications of disorganisation to how criminal justice is administered. For example, amongst other practices, police practitioners and scholars have particularly sought to adopt quantitative and spatial interpretations of disorganisation under the umbrella of evidence-based models (Sherman, 1998). Most notably, these include problem-oriented policing practices where interventions

aim to tackle specific offences and local problems (Braga *et al.*, 1999; Iwanski *et al.*, 2011; Felson *et al.*, 2012; Song *et al.*, 2012; Weinborn *et al.*, 2017; Weisburd *et al.*, 2017). Developing concepts like hot-spot and harm-spot has allowed researchers and practitioners to use data to distinguish amongst areas affected by crime, and accordingly prioritise resources and activities. Their use has, however, also unintendedly confirmed the disorganisation-based stigma and stereotyping from the material conditions present in these same areas and defining them as more problematic. As suggested by Sampson (2012), upholding the belief that higher levels of disorganisation are linked to higher crime rates, asserts the need to study the wider ecology of crime outside the disorganisation thesis so as to unpack how social conditions give origin to criminogenic contexts, and not simply how criminogenic contexts are conducive to crime.

To attempt to overcome these shortcomings, this thesis draws on the ramifications of disorganisation which link housing to the notions of spatial social organisation, starting from the notions of natural surveillance (Jacobs, 1961) and defensible spaces (Newman, 1972). Jacobs' (1961) notion of natural surveillance emerged from concerns about processes of urban change, and more specifically on how the changes in the physical design of urban environments impeded the abilities for communities to take part in the policing of crime. Thinking about housing in a physical way, Jacobs codified both the appearance and the design of the environment according to their ability to generate, attract, or repel opportunities for crime to take place where social or environmental vulnerabilities coincide (Felson and Cohen, 1980; Brantingham and Brantingham, 1981). For example, the progressive re-development of low-rise, low-density residential buildings with high-rise and high-density ones removed unobstructed views and low landscaping, which Jacobs thought to have tangible impacts on the perceived and actual levels of crime (Jacobs, 1961). From a housing perspective this is developed further under the notion of defensible spaces and consideration to the architecture of homes. The layout of neighbourhoods can create conditions which are either conducive to or undermine the natural security of an environment (Newman, 1972). The narrative provided is about design choices – such as improved security, through more resistant fixtures and fittings – and how these can minimise risks of victimisation (Armitage and Ekblom, 2018). For example, the apparent physical deterioration of an environment can be thought to be symptomatic of neglect and lack of community organisation and be likely to

generate further deviance or criminal behaviour (Wilson and Kelling, 1982). Designing out crime from an environment, however, only has a temporary and geographically limited effect (Johnson *et al.*, 2014; Cozens and Love, 2017). Similarly, this literature often neglects how risks of crime also originate from inside of the home (Mawby, 1977; Atkinson and Blandy, 2016).

This approach to housing has, nonetheless, had a significant influence over criminological studies in the UK. In particular, this concerned social housing tenures. Coleman (1990) studied features of environmental design in high-rise social housing dwellings in London. She claimed that housing's bad design and layout affected the likelihood of victimisation, as well as interfering with community cohesion, socialisation, and the developmental process of normative behaviour (Coleman, 1990). As a solution she recommended how immediate and inexpensive change to the design of buildings could improve socialisation and normative behaviour (Coleman, 1988). Attributing issues of crime to the design of housing, and suggesting design as the solution to crime, both Coleman's preconception and her recommendations were inherently flawed (Smith, 1986). However, her close association with the UK government, and the politically simple solutions offered to resolve some of the complex issues of housing faced at that time—an issue explored in further detail below—gained her work traction both from an institutional and academic perspective (Spicker 1987; Bottoms, 1988). Consequently, with little to no-evidence exploring the association between crime and social housing, the adverse reputation of this tenure has been consolidated in both popular knowledge, as well as political and academic discourse (Mooney, 1999).

A handful of UK-based studies have since attempted to shed further clarity on the relationship between housing and crime. Amongst these are the work of Foster *et al.*, (1993) which related the effects of disorganisation related issues on crime, but also commented on how the condition and allocation of housing affected the composition of communities. Following an experimental design, the study concerned the evaluation of tenancy management and support interventions on 'difficult-to-let' and run-down estates (Foster *et al.*, 1993). Despite confounding results, wherein the control estates appeared to experience a more marked decline in crime rates (Hope, 2005), the findings of the study emphasised the importance of the housing market (Hancock, 2001). Hancock (2001) argues that the different localities

(London and Hull) where the experiment was conducted, influenced the type of tenant relying on housing, and in turn how crime patterns developed.

The study of Macclesfield by Girling *et al.*, (2000), instead explored the extent and importance of crime talk, with respect to addressing the different narratives that are created around different housing conditions and the roles of urban managers. Following the creation of narratives about criminogeneity, Girling *et al.*, (2000) demonstrated the failure of outcomes of crime prevention measures put in place around a notoriously bad social housing estate. Its redevelopment and gentrification failed, to address the nature and origin of negative outcomes from a crime perspective. Not challenging the construction of crime narratives surrounding a social housing estate, allowed the presumptions of criminogeneity concerning the behaviours of social housing and its residents, to be reproduced (Girling *et al.*, 2000).

Hancock (2001) in her book about neighbourhood change and regeneration, discusses the relationship between local communities, crime patterns, and their institutional governance. Focussing on mixed-tenure neighbourhoods, neighbourhood change is seen as involving a multitude of factors from their historical background, the different types and designs of housing, varying administration practices, as well as the cultures and perceptions of local tenants (Hancock, 2001). When considered together, the result of this multi-factorial analysis emphasises the complexity of conceptualisations and interventions related to the management of crime problems. Specifically, Hancock analyses the issues of implementation of community safety and cohesion objectives, dealing with changes in the composition and narratives of local areas, against the development and perception of problems. The complexities of delivering housing and crime regeneration ultimately questions the notion of disorganisation, demonstrating the underlying tendency to oversimplify the definitions, causes, and solutions to crime problems. The work of Hancock (2001) also draws attention to the array of social, political, and financial changes which have affected how partnerships operate. These indeed continue to shape the concept of community safety and the paradigm of plural-crime prevention strategies in communities (Crawford, 2006b). Far removed from the ideal of community-based approaches which have been advanced as the objectives of Community Safety Partnership, their approach increasingly morphed from the idea of pluralistic and Statutory-duties-focussed solutions, into objective and policing driven

approaches to tackling crime issues (Hancock, 2001). Commenting on the context within which Partnerships operate, Crawford describes this shift of State-managed social control as:

not the State becoming “weaker” or necessarily “smarter”, but rather diverse forms of a more frenetic, volatile, contradictory, and politicized regulation of behaviour (Crawford, 2006b:471)

Noting the ‘post-regulatory frameworks’ that Community Safety Partnership operate in, Crawford defines the network of agencies drawn into the governance of problems at the State level. He describes the State’s apparent diversified and pluralistic regulation of behaviour as only happening in theory, not practice. Instead, by means of widening participation in criminal justice through CSPs the reach of criminal justice agencies has increased. In his work, Crawford also reflects on the material withdrawal of resources from the Welfare State, as a consequence of the implantation of neoliberal policies and how this has had the effect of shifting narratives concerning social order and crime control towards the principles and practices of ‘self-responsibilisation’. Ultimately this progressive shift to increased punitivism and ‘self-realising’ narratives embodies the stigmatisation of those struggles of those who are powerless and unable to cope with the competition for resources (Garland, 2001; Wacquant, 2009). Significantly, these theoretical concepts have been applied, through housing, to understand the unequal experiences of the urban poor, and the effects of social isolation in ways not considered by criminology (Powell and Robinson, 2019). However, with relation to the issue of power relations, and how this contributes to the classificatory struggles of problem and problem areas the influence of housing, and housing governance on the ecology of crime need to be considered first. Doing so aids in moving beyond the criminological notion of disorganisation as a naturally occurring phenomena.

2.3. Housing class and Morris: a prelude to the Urban Criminal

Before looking at the work of Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) and the contributions of their research, one key study on which *The Urban Criminal* draws from is the work of Morris in *The Criminal Area* (1957). Morris (1957) applied the notion of ecology — namely how physical spaces, lived places, and their interaction with wider social systems are fundamental elements to

understanding how observable conditions as they naturally present— to revise how this concept played a role in understanding the effects of housing on crime.

Morris sought to explore whether any relationship could be uncovered between crime patterns and the ecological characteristics of Croydon. Studying the uneven distribution of offences across the town, Morris found that most offenders appeared to reside in close proximity with each other in predominantly working-class social housing estates. Although intimately relying on the same issues discussed by the concept of disorganisation, what distinguishes Morris' analysis to the ecology of crime in US literature, is its grounding within the UK social context, where issues of class are determinant of wider social conditions and stigma. He noted how:

The maintenance of normative structure.... depends as much upon the existence of reference groups as upon local groups for their legitimation... The differences which exist between systems of social control.... [and how these] relate to the context of the cultural norms themselves. In the working-class neighbourhood, because the family is much less of an identifiable social unit, it is the actions of individuals which are judged rather than whole families (Morris, 1957:178)

Recognising the adverse reputation of social housing, Morris did not reject that the greater concentration of offenders could happen because of social selection. However, the conditions behind its presumed criminogeneity, were not exclusive to this tenure. On the contrary, he acknowledged that conditions within private-rented housing were sometimes worse (Morris, 1957). Instead, the distinction which he made emphasised how, outside social housing, residence was conditional to market-driven processes of selection in which issues such as the cost of housing determined where people could afford to live. Residential segregation of problem populations and offenders within social housing was, therefore, to be attributed to processes of social housing allocation and placement, as set in the policies of the local authority (Morris, 1957).

These findings are particularly significant as Morris' theoretical operationalisation of disorganisation, and its connection to social housing, relates to the functioning of the State. The state has the ability to affect the natural organisation of social life in a city. Housing's regulatory cultures and policies can indeed affect the concentration of problematic social groups by altering the natural organisation of cities. Specifically, the management of different types of housing is significant as it affects the lives and activities of inhabitants (Morris, 1957).

Morris therefore placed a strong emphasis on segregation and the marginalisation of social groups as issues which affected the reputations of different housing communities. Bad reputations and the inability of problem populations to move socially and economically 'upwards' (and thus outside social housing), alongside the planned phenomena of social mix in segregated social housing communities, created further frictions (and thus, stigma) between different classes of residents (Morris, 1957). Morris' assessment of social class and housing as relating to the segregation of offender residences across the city aided the development of a systemic understanding of housing as interconnecting the wider socio-economic politics of the urban environment. Specifically, emphasising how these were 'planned' and not 'natural' as otherwise implied by ecological theory, it recognised how the targets of social policy and the management of tenures intersected with issues of crime and class-based struggles (Pahl, 1970).

Rex and Moore's (1967) *Race, community, and conflict*, a study of race relations in an urban zone in transition, further explored the social and racial struggles that took place across Birmingham and how these affected the distribution of different racial groups across the city. It is a work that can be seen to build on the systemic understanding of housing. Through the concept of housing classes, Rex and Moore (1967) explored how housing outcomes, namely the conditions and tenures in which people lived, were the result of social competition. In their work, social competition is defined by the ambitions and aspirations for housing. Starting from processes outside of social groups, such as the bureaucratic allocation of social housing, competition within groups pushes individuals to achieve different outcome. Commenting further, Rex and Moore (1976), provide an overview of the use of the housing class framework to understanding how housing processes affected the organisation of communities and crime, as:

... if there is a correlation between delinquency and being the child of a broken home, the sociologist would go on to show what sort of meaningful connection existed between the perception of social relations of a boy from a broken home and the commission of a delinquent act. The truly sociological interest lies in the model of social relations which is posited at this stage and which may subsequently be tested against these empirical data... The concept of housing classes was intended to pose questions and help the way towards a more precise delineation of the social structure and conflicts of the city (Rex, 1971:294)

In Morris' words, housing classes as a concept to aid the posing of the question of what the relationships between structure and conflicts are. The relevance of this to how problem areas

are constructed is to re-iterate how natural problems lie within their artificial construction. In this sense, criminology is complacent in not questioning the functioning of corporate and public bodies or institutions which are external to the troubled places themselves (Bottoms, 2007). The term housing class, and its development, are not exhaustive in terms of expressing the range of issues and struggles that are experienced by individuals and society (Rex, 1971). Nonetheless, focussing on housing does allow consideration of a wide range of issues which, whilst some remain context specific, relationally reflect the impacts of current political economies upon housing. Housing classes, in this sense, reproduces the key underlying mechanisms which reveal how particular attention should be given to the role of the state in affecting the ecology of cities (Bell, 1977). As this thesis argues, a similar role, is played by housing tenure.

2.4. The Urban Criminal: a study of housing and crime in Sheffield

The Urban Criminal was published as study of crime and the social ecology of crime. It sought to shed light on what the authors described as an area of study '*seriously understated by contemporary criminological research*' (Baldwin *et al.*, 1976: vii). The aims of the book were to stimulate theoretical interest in understanding urban criminality from a social-ecological perspective, and to expand understanding of crime beyond its immediate causes. Conceived to appeal to criminologists, the objectives of the book were two-fold. First, it sought to provide a detailed examination of the spatial distribution of offending through city spaces using official crime statistics and housing data. In other words, it sought to describe patterns and their relationships to city environments in line with existing hypotheses concerning urban crime. At an empirical level, Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) found that crimes across Sheffield were unequally spatially distributed with the most prevalent crime type being acquisitive offences and concentrated in areas in proximity to the city centre and other commercial areas. More significantly, they found that a disproportionate number of offenders resided within social housing tenures, and that most came from poorer—lower social class— and were sited within pre-war estates. From this, secondly, they hoped to apply a sociologically informed understanding of the ecology of crime— akin to the social ecology developed by Morris through the concept of housing class— to both contextualise their initial findings and enhance understanding of urban crime. With no explicit segregation of offender tenants in 'bad'

estates having taking place through the local authority's housing allocation practices, and longer vacancy rates in [bad] pre-war estates than post-war estates, Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) begin to test four theoretical hypotheses.

Of lesser importance to this thesis is their first hypotheses which was concerned with the application of disorganisation and developmental principles to the higher incidence of offender (and offending) rates within social housing. The first hypothesis sought to establish whether causal processes of disorganisation informed the unequal levels of crime across Sheffield. Thereafter, the second hypothesis attempted to verify whether incidences of crime were related to the availability of resources and community activities and, in so doing, focused on promoting pro-social attitudes amongst young people. The hope here, was to be able to show where there was effect on [life-long] patterns of community-based offending (Baldwin *et al.*, 1976). Both of these hypotheses were only partially addressed, and consequently dismissed. Their application of disorganisation perspectives only highlighted how disorganised conditions disproportionately affected areas of private rented housing not social housing, and they failed to reflect on how the latter were empirically more criminogenic. Instead, and with reference to the incidence of youth offending being higher in those estates also affected by high offender residence rates, they were not wholly dismissive of the possibility that greater provision of adequate social services and support structures, coupled with the lack of leadership and social organisation could reduce crime (Baldwin *et al.*, 1976). They concluded that a more thorough and targeted investigation could answer those complex question of behavioural development and crime.

Of much greater importance for the present research were their third and fourth hypotheses which were concerned with exploring concept of selective placement (Morris 1957), and institutional conceptualisations of problems (Wilson, 1963; Pahl, 1970). Through the former Baldwin *et al.* (1976) attempted to investigate whether patterns of offender residence were affected by the management of housing, and specifically the intentional practices of segregating offenders in bad housing estates. In other words, they sought to verify whether the local authority responsible for the allocation of social housing resources, directly concentrated problem individuals across specific housing estates, or whether the authority only indirectly affected this distribution. The latter hypothesis questioned whether

institutional definitions of problems and consequently problem areas were truly aligned to empirical realities of crime and offending or whether the conceptualisations were aligned to the work of criminal justice and housing institutions. In other words, Baldwin *et al.* (1976), attempted to more critically appraise whether institutional understandings of the ecology of crime and the systemic management of housing processes within social housing could affect the distribution of crime across the city; beyond the ability of offenders and socio-economically deprived individuals to choose where to live and whether, how, and where to commit crime.

The starting point for the third hypothesis of Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) was the empirically higher rates of offending and offender residence in social housing (and especially within pre-war estates). Having offered readers an analysis of the social, demographic, and economic history of the city of Sheffield, Baldwin *et al.*, (1976), questioned whether housing allocation practices could really have a discrete effect on the distribution of housing-classes through the city, and thus the ecology of offending and offender rates across Sheffield's natural areas. Defining different housing tenures as the building block of natural areas, they wondered whether housing allocation could be thought to be endemic in the '*natural cultural processes of selection*' which shaped the ecology of crime in Sheffield (Baldwin *et al.*,1976: 155).

Deviating from disorganisation-based conceptions which would have attributed the cause of crime solely to individual's decision making and personal circumstances, their third hypothesis was based on their interpretation of the concept of selective placement (Morris, 1957). Morris had used the concept of selective placement to define the operational policies and practices in social housing which could control the placement of individuals across social housing. Selective placement practices had been observed with problem populations being placed – and concentrated – in dump estates. Given this, Morris (1957) advocated that there was a need to critically question the construction of theoretical frameworks concerning the natural ecology of areas. In simpler terms, he queried whether institutions had the power to either contain problem individuals in problem areas, or to preclude them from accessing housing in respectable areas. If they did, then it would mean that the institutions had an effect on the composition of natural areas. From a crime perspective, if forces beyond the conditions and choices which individuals are accountable for under the disorganisation model

affect where they lived, this can be seen to have a potential effect on crime and, in turn, an effect on the constructions of problem areas. In such a scenario, problem individuals would not be free to choose to live anywhere in the city but rather processes of social selection would define the criminogeneity of an area. Morris' segregation thesis therefore suggested that processes of selective placement could be understood as a tool to focus attention onto the city-level processes taking place at the institutional level.

Revising the social selection framework based on the work of Wilson (1963), Baldwin *et al.* (1976) proposed a different account. Wilson suggested that, as a mechanism, whilst social housing policies could impose restrictions on where people would choose to live, tenants could, at least in theory ultimately decide if or not to live there (Wilson 1963). Wilson therefore reformulates how housing policy could act as a filter to housing allocation. Specifically, how, as a result of individual agency the segregation of problem individuals in concentrated estates could happen irrespective of the practices of institutions.

Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) initially suggested how institutional practices in Sheffield could not explicitly be measured as having intentional effects to segregate offenders in pre-war estates. Specifically, they only briefly acknowledged how 'Choice-Based-Letting' practices adopted by Sheffield Council would 'liberally' allow offenders to be housed across the city, and implied that there was a greater degree of agency in the choice of being allocated housing. However, in response to Wilson (1963), Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) related how Sheffield's housing allocation appeared to limit allocations for low-income tenants (i.e. those with histories of financial difficulties) and how they were precluded access to higher class areas, defined as high-rent areas. Therefore, they suggested how higher rates of offending and offender residence found in areas of social housing could still happen unintentionally – or, naturally, to use ecological terminology. Baldwin *et al.*, however, not only appraised the institutional segregation of problem tenants as unintentional, but also focused on exploring what other ecological processes might have influenced tenants' choices. Drawing a parallel between housing classes and access to housing, two filters were derived in the process: housing reputation and desirability (Baldwin *et al.*, 1976). The reputation of an area, whether positive or negative, was thereby defined as having the ability to shape whether being housed in one specific area

was desirable or not. The perceived reputation of an area would, consequently, affect its perceived desirability.

Seeking to quantify these social processes via housing data concerning the vacancy rates of housing across Sheffield, Baldwin *et al.* (1976) analysed the proportion of known offenders moving to different types of estates [pre- and post- war] through rates and length of property vacancies. Accordingly, they tentatively related pre-war estates—those with higher offender residence—with higher patterns of population turnover as well as longer periods of property vacancies and higher percentages of unlet social housing properties. Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) also cursorily discussed how offenders within lower working-class housing estates as well as private rented sector in working-class rented accommodation not only predominantly committed acquisitive crime, but also how they travelled much further (on average 2.44 miles), comparatively to those in working class-estates (travelling on average only 0.75 miles).

With these findings, Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) expanded their thinking on the ecology of crime across all housing tenures. Suggesting that whilst etiological and explanatory accounts would be necessary to account for crime across different tenure areas (Baldwin *et al.*, 1976), they also stated how the relation of urban processes between crime and housing, and the conceptualisation of natural housing-class areas defined by tenure should be re-asserted. Whereas reasons exploring why Sheffield tenants could still choose to reside in dump estates irrespective of other people's perception of the area, are only explored in Xanthos (1981), Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) reconciled the ecological distribution of crime with the concept of housing classes. Specifically, they highlighted the importance of, and the relationship between institutional housing filters and where people may live across the city, as both having an effect on where individuals may live and also where they commit crime.

With Sheffield City Council not intentionally concentrating difficult tenants within problem estates, but empirical support regarding the presumed criminogeneity of council estates, Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) explore a transactionalist [managerialist] interpretation of the relationship between the operational management of housing and the conceptualisation of problem and problem areas with housing, as their fourth research hypothesis. Suggesting how operational cultures of different institutions could affect how social housing was managed, Baldwin *et al.*, 's (1976) fourth hypothesis attempted to use housing as a tool to

reflect on the ecology of crime in a systemic way: whether the institutional definition of problem estate was based on the empirical findings that problem estates were indeed most affected by higher level of offending; or whether the categorisation was simply based on the association that older pre-war estates were less desirable and had adverse reputations. In the case of the latter defining difficult tenants as those unable to live elsewhere—including offender populations, or those prepared to accept the adverse reputation of these estates—perpetuated organisational bias and stereotype against these estates rather than proving their criminogeneity. However, the issues of housing desirability, homogeneity, and stability are only discussed in the later Sheffield study by Xanthos (1981) when he studies in close detail the conditions of tenurial homogeneity and stability in some of northern Sheffield's 'worst estates'. Noting how only small parts of these areas were of mixed tenure, Xanthos discussed how residents of these localities were unconcerned with the negative reputation attached to these 'bad estates' (Bottoms and Xanthos, 1981).

Through considering the work of transactionalist scholars, Baldwin *et al.*, (1976), considered the question as to whether institutional knowledge and practices surrounding problems may have misconstrued their nature, character, and thus location. They acknowledged that failing to study the knowledge basis for how institutions structure their work would, all else being equal, result in a failure to account for the potentially negative effects of processes which amplify deviance (Armstrong and Wilson 1973, cited by Baldwin *et al.*, 1976:159). Baldwin *et al.*, (1976), however, choose to side-line this issue. Instead, they reported on the aims and limitations of their analysis, and how these impacted their study through the different aspects of their research. Accepting how the knowledge that offender and offending rates may provide an empirically significant [although partial] estimate of problem areas, what Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) failed to address was the implicit definition of estates as problems and problem areas (Taylor *et al.*, 1973). They neglect how the quantitative data used in their analysis, as measures of crime, defined problem and problem areas indirectly, by means of how policing and the work of courts— given data in Baldwin *et al.*, 1976 primarily relied on court-recorded offending — and thus how these institutions conceptualised problems and problem areas.

Failing to challenge this dual role of institutions, that of measuring and defining issues, resulted in a failure to challenge the understanding of what would later be defined as the

governmentality context, namely the complex series of power imbalances linked to the power wielded by institutions to manage civil society (Foucault, 2009). Baldwin *et al.*'s (1976) analysis of how and why offending was distributed across the city and concentrated within social housing portrays a limited account of the wider ecology of crime in Sheffield. Implicitly, much is left beyond the knowledge of criminogeneity and the functioning of social housing. But, as implicitly recommended by Baldwin *et al.*, (1976), a conceptual steppingstone towards overcoming this issue may be to pay closer consideration to the process of knowledge construction taking place where power is situated and administered. From the perspective of city-level appraisals, this is closely related to the work of urban managers (Pahl, 1970). As subsequently considered, in the section below, the concept of managerialism encompasses the issue of the interpretation of internal struggles to organisation and seems to examine the nuances of how problems are articulated. In the context of ecologies of crime and housing, the issue of managerialism is key to exploring the formulation of problems and *problem areas*. This understanding does not neglect, nor contradict the idea that the same processes described by social statistics may not materially affect the choices of urban managers when it comes to making decisions; however, it specifies how their interpretation is key to understanding the actions they take to shape them. Of critical importance to this, is the emphasis that this framework places on the ability to focus and analyse the allocation of resources across the urban space, and how these create inequalities (Merryfield, 2014). Understanding that social life is socially constructed implies that the decisions of urban managers have tangible consequences on the lives of people across the urban landscape. For example, as examined below with reference to Wacquant's (2008) concept of territorial stigmatisation, if an area is designated by instructions as problematic, and dealt with as such, this has systemic effects on the lives of residents, the work of institutions, and ultimately the public's perception of the area.

These understandings go beyond quantitative assessments of whether crime affects one area disproportionately more than others, and instead seeks to assess the same systemic and administrative issues to which Bottoms *et al.*, (1976) refer when discussing the generation and perpetuation of problems. A closer appraisal of the effects and knowledge of institutions with regards to strategies seeking to tackle problems linked to crime, housing, and other social conditions within the city, has a positive effect on widening the purpose and breadth

of ecological enquiries of crime beyond applications like Baldwin *et al.*, (1976). Critically understanding the effects of power inequalities on the social construction of problems and problem areas, this approach also proposes a resolution to issues of interpretation concerning the neglect of social constructions in ecological appraisals of crime. Challenging the idea that empirically observed and measured conditions are not objective, implies that naturally presenting conditions are instead subject to interpretation and construction. This perspective allows Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) to suggest how quantitative empirical findings may be triangulated or integrated with qualitative findings, to highlight differences between these two integral ways to appraise the socially constructivist nature of empirical data. In turn, their analysis of their contemporary social and housing policies, also begins to build on the construction of a more fully social theory of crime (Taylor *et al.*, 1973).

These findings and analysis from *The Urban Criminal* ultimately provide a baseline by which to analyse the role of the organisation of housing with respect to the ecology of crime; it also leaves a number of unaddressed questions. Whilst Baldwin *et al.*, (1976), provide a reflection on how the reputational aspects affecting the narratives around social housing are only worsened through the divestment of funding and resources to support residents, there is no critical analysis and only limited engagement with local housing policies and the knowledge of institutions. Their hypotheses, concerning the quantitative and geographical distribution of crime at the city-level, caters to the attention of criminologists; they present a task-focussed and tasked-limited appraisal of crime analysis and their empirical findings. In this sense, the authors are only concerned with suggesting that policies may indirectly affect the availability of properties. They are not concerned with exploring the mechanism of housing allocation in greater detail, or whether any divides existed between the conceptual and applied realities of these policies. In this sense, they chose to focus on the issue of reputation from the perspective of local residents and how this may translate to the operation of housing choices, before subsequently relating this to the empirical measurement of social class through social and crime statistics. In doing so, they did not seek to question the formulation of problem narratives from an institutional perspective despite having acknowledged how these policies partially prevented a free-allocation strategy. Greater reflection on the systemic functioning of housing tenure would, therefore, be beneficial. It would particularly be so with the acknowledgment of the degree of change which has taken place in cities since

the late 1970s. In particular, this applies to ongoing processes of tenure fragmentation, and the importance of the private-rented sector in providing housing for lower-end earners and those unable to afford their own homes.

Relatedly, it should also be noted that there is little in *The Urban Criminal* that critically reflects on how institutional knowledge of crime and housing processes affect the construction of crime problems or problem areas. As an issue of narrative, this applies to how crime and housing are affected by the allocation of housing resources and housing management. Intuitively, this applies directly to social housing tenures given the intrinsic relation between the work of city-level institutions and the management of public resources. Notwithstanding the generalised lack of further critical appraisals of the ways institutional knowledge may affect the construction and management of crime problems, this also concerns the more general social ecology of crime in relation to tenure and housing conditions. The proposed solution is that how housing may affect crime should be discussed in a systematic way, through housing. With reference to enduring stereotypes and perceived levels of crime, this would raise a challenge to the ways in which housing is perceived to be available and accessed. Focussing on institutional narratives should allow, as in *The Urban Criminal*, a challenging of the notion that all individuals possess the same degree of agency when 'choosing' where to live.

2.4. Situating the research: Urban crime, housing, and *The Urban Criminal*

That crime is unequally spatially concentrated across both space and time and in particular urban areas has long been established within criminological scholarship (Weisburd, 2015). The reality that urban areas seem intrinsically more criminogenic – likely to experience or cause more crime— than other areas as a consequence of the ways in which life is structured within cities (Glaeser and Sacerdote, 1999) has produced widely discordant messages and approaches. Within criminology, researchers have predominantly sought to propose understandings as to why, where, and when crime might happen, as well as who might, in turn, be more likely to commit crime. One of the most prevalent of the approaches adopted, social disorganisation theory, associates the incidence of higher crime levels in urban areas with issues of poverty, social and cultural inequalities, and poor intra-community relationships; supposedly fostered by the alienating architecture of cities and the distancing

qualities of city life (Sampson and Groves, 1989). Emphasising how both the quality of a place as well as the choices of individuals living in individual areas may affect levels of crime, this theory captures many of criminology's primary concerns with respect to the geographical occurrence of crime.

From an academic standpoint, studies of behavioural deviance have sought to understand what kind of conditions are more likely to produce criminality (Eysenck, 1977; Farrington, 2017). Social, cultural, and economic deprivation have been identified as related to crime, and subsequently studied to understand what it is about these kinds of environments that may allow, or even facilitate, crime to take place (Gieryn, 2000; Bottoms, 2007). Outside of academia, and in large measure through the mediums of media and journalism, perceptions about crime across urban spaces have filtered into public discourse, with the social, political, and cultural concerns that already exist within modern societies being translated into concerns and misunderstandings about what causes and exposes people to crime (Jewkes, 2004). Concern about urban crime has, therefore, also been applied to studies of fear of crime (Skogan, 1986); crime detection (Brantingham and Brantingham, 1984); prevention (Evans, 2010), and deterrence and punishment (Gibbs, 1968). The common denominator of such works are cities.

Within the UK context, studies of urban crime have tended to concentrate on class-based disparities and the manifestation of social problems through housing, especially social housing. The emergence of current trends, although subject to debate, have conventionally been traced back to the post-war period, when state-driven urban regeneration efforts sought to tackle the perceived problems of urban slums, a term conventionally used to refer to the poor living standards and conditions of privately rented homes built before the 1930's (Morris, 1957; Dockerill, 2021). Large-scale housing developments, commonly referred to as housing estates, were built in most towns and cities in response to housing shortages and poor-quality housing. These types of building projects were prioritised as a public-health solution. Described in popular and political narratives as 'homes-fit-for-heroes', these homes were intended to make modern commodities available to most in society. State-owned and

managed by local government authorities, estates were seen – under this paradigm - as the opportunity to re-home populations in better homes.

Despite the continued construction of large-scale estates even in the post Second World War period, by the mid-1970s, a social and political rift had emerged in the perception of estates more generally. Higher maintenance costs of old estates associated to poorer design choices, as well as concerns about the structural, aesthetic, design, and cost of new high-rise developments, pairing these concerns with the rise in popularity of owning one's home, meant that wealthier tenants in this period progressively began to move out of these older developments (Coleman, 1990; Baldwin *et al.*, 1976). Politically and socially, this contributed to a further decline in the perceived desirability and popularity of social housing, enabling concerns to be increasingly raised about declining standards and social values, as well as concerns about the safety of these developments and the extent to which they enabled possibilities for crime (Hanley, 2017).

One book in particular, Baldwin *et al.*'s (1976) *The Urban Criminal* sought to capture these national changes in housing, and to shed light on the issue of so-called 'problem housing estates'. Focussing on how housing might impact the distribution of crime within cities, and starting with an empirical exploration of the distribution of crime across Sheffield, Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) sought to relate the distribution of 'offending rates' with 'offenders rates'. The former described the number of offences committed in a given area, whilst the latter described the number of offenders resident in the same areas in which the crimes were committed. This approach illustrated the differences between areas that supposedly facilitated the act of crime or criminal behaviours, and those that facilitated the development of criminals. This approach, plotting offending rates and the living situations of offenders, fundamentally disrupted underlying assumptions of criminologists and the media. Namely, that housing estates are both a breeding ground of criminals, and their chosen 'hunting ground' by showing that there was a disparity between where offenders lived and where they were recorded as having offended.

Contrasting rates of crime with offender residence across Sheffield, their findings highlighted: (i) the prevalence of acquisitive crime across the city, and a greater concentration of offences in the commercial areas of the city, and in proximity to the city centre; (ii) the greater concentration of offenders in social housing compared to other tenures; (iii) a greater concentration of poorer—lower social class—offenders within pre-war estates despite their being no explicit housing segregation by the local authority; (iv) greater and longer vacancy rates in ‘bad’ pre-war estates than post-war estates.

Whilst recognising the limited nature of the sample size of crime selected by Baldwin *et al.*, (1976),² their findings illustrated the importance of the connections that exist between housing and crime. Specifically, not only they showed how more offenders appeared to reside within older estates, but also how these estates were associated with lower social classes – an approach which is discussed below in further detail. This finding further implied that those who could afford to live elsewhere, tended to keep away from older estates. Furthermore, they realised that higher levels of offending and offender residence seemed to contribute to the comparatively worse reputation of older estates as ‘bad estates’, impacting the desirability of housing therein. To explain these processes, their discussion included narratives concerning the creation of estates’ reputations based on their histories and processes of selection. In particular, Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) suggested that ‘indirect’ processes of segregation— based on the concentration of more socio-economically vulnerable individuals, and offenders, in the same areas— were thought to take place, thus contributing to the creation of negative estate’s reputation (a discussion further developed in Xanthos, 1981). Rejecting the notion of ‘intentional’ segregation of offenders in bad housing estates at the hands of local authority housing allocation policies, ‘indirect’ segregation further reinforced the association between desirability of estates and their reputation.

²Baldwin *et al.*, (1976:42) relied on indictable offences – which are more serious offences, such as rape and murder, which are normally only heard by Crown Courts (Elliott and Quinn, 2013)— and on a smaller sample of non-indictable offences, but which excluded prostitution, drug dealing, ‘drunken and disorderly’, and non-indictable assault.

The importance of this approach compared to other existing criminological analyses, was the intent to which it explored the epidemiological spatial distribution of offending through city spaces; it was not limited in scope by concerns pertaining to the direct causes of crime at an individual level. Instead, the novelty of the approach adopted in *The Urban Criminal* (Baldwin *et al.*, 1976) lies in its attempt at understanding urban crime through the housing system and the geography of housing estates in the city. This draws upon the concept of housing classes (Rex, 1968), which connects the distribution of people across the city, through housing, according to their social status, and relative wealth. In this sense, Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) were concerned with making sense of how systemic changes in housing could affect the geography of offender residence and where crimes were being committed. Moreover, the concept of housing classes was developed around an awareness that UK class-based divides are generated by social, economic, cultural, and political processes - conditions which, all else being equal, affect the experiences of individuals residing in different types of housing.

Different from criminological conceptualisations of urban crime based solely on the measurement of the socio-economic disparities that exist between individuals, the concept of housing class placed a greater emphasis on the socio-political context of housing and the processual management of housing. It shows how housing classes map directly onto the class-based social, political, economic, and cultural organisation of lives within the city. Accordingly, the concept acknowledges that there are powers beyond individuals' choices, opportunities, and abilities. For Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) this extends from practices regulating social life and considers how the organisation and management of housing may also affect how crime manifests itself. In particular, these refer to the institutional administration of housing, emphasising the impact of bureaucratic processes which allocate available social housing resources, but can also regulate life within other tenures. This approach is of particular significance as it allows researchers to focus on exploring the construction of problem areas. Recognising how institutions play a tangible role in administering certain tenures—social housing in particular—, it encourages researchers to consider how processes beyond disorganisation and socio-economic deprivation, which may affect crime at the city level. It also aims to focus on how crime and housing management may intersect. This approach

recognises the significance of these processes and the possibility that the administration of housing systems may affect the distribution and occurrence of crime.

Whilst Baldwin and colleagues consider housing beyond its statistical value, their analysis and appraisal of housing is still limited. First, and to cater to criminological interests, their exploration and discussion of research findings is wholly related to quantitative and causal explorations of crime. Thus, the approach neglects more in-depth explorations of how the operational response of institutions may indirectly be linked to how housing markets function. Second, their methodological and conceptual limitation also translates to identifying and defining crime problems. What this omits is an exploration of the definition of problems at the hands of criminal justice institutions; how these may emerge within the community; and how beliefs about housing may materialise even where there is no direct causal links between processes. There is no critical analysis of local housing policies, and with processes of institutional knowledge production. Whilst the authors are concerned with suggesting how policies may 'indirectly' affect the availability of properties, they are not concerned with exploring the mechanisms of housing allocation in greater detail.

However, in their conclusions, Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) also forewarn readers as to the effects of housing policies and practices on the distribution of crime within cities. Specifically, and with reference to housing systems they advised that attention should be paid to the social processes which generated problem estates. Further austerity and a lack of social support towards vulnerable tenants, would only deepen the social, economic, political, ideological, and cultural divides between tenures. In turn, they predict these could only negatively affect the reputation of social housing and increase the perception these areas were more criminogenic because of those relying on social housing, instead of more critically assessing the wider processes highlighted by their findings.

2.5. Beyond the ecology of crime: key perspectives from housing studies

From a sociological perspective, the premise of urban studies is that social life is complex and articulated around not only material conditions, but also around social constructs and

assumptions about collective behaviour. Drawing on the concepts and theoretical insights derived from the analysis of urban social conditions, housing is a gateway to analyse the underlying phenomena and power structures, which shape what we can observe. This thesis conceptually associates housing to the work of Bourdieu (1977) and the concept of fields. As a system, fields allow us to interpret how social interactions connect across different levels of meaning, and subsequent defining notions, such as crime. Housing indeed acts as a filter across macro, meso, and micro social realities. At the micro-level, it recognises how individual struggles, those of agents (individuals) within fields (systems), can be recognised as their ability to express agency; these are dependent on their ability to make the most out of their resources—namely different forms of capital—and their habitus (their lived experience). At the meso-level, housing system also accounts for the contextual characteristics which are beyond the reach of individuals. It relates to their ability to navigate the struggles of competition for life across different fields, but also on how these align to the doxa (the rules regulating those fields) as dictated by other powerful agents. At the macro level, housing is an expression of wider structural and systemic social realities. These refer to historical or contemporary realities, which contextualise why and how individuals to be given varying degree of agency to make decisions in their lives (Doff and Kleinhans, 2011; Slater, 2013).

Drawing from sociological approaches to the study of the urban environment, the most predominant overarching theme this thesis is concerned with is how power is manifested, and how this influences social life. To approach this hard to define construct with respect to the city-level administration of crime and housing, this thesis relies on the framework provided by the work of Pahl (1970). Reflecting on the nature of urban-social processes, Pahl (1970) specifically considers the role of the State, with respect to how this shape the experiences of individuals. Through the concept of urban managerialism Pahl (1970) posits that variations do exist between the amount of power which is held by individuals and organisations at the urban level. Accordingly, he suggested how '[the] *control of access to local resources and facilities is held by the professional officers of the authority concerned*' (Pahl, 1970:270). In other words, a selected few individuals, but most often organisations, are responsible for allocating resources and interventions at the city-level. This implies that professional knowledge and the choices made by these individuals can have tangible effects on the lives and trajectories of cities and urban landscapes, warranting further research into

how these decisions are operated. Pahl (1970:268) suggests that the study of bureaucracies and organisations provides:

...detailed accounts of the use and misuse of rules, the internal struggles, the confusions, decisions, and non-decisions... and, in particular, of their relationship with those outside the organisation.

Returning to the aforementioned definition of delinquency areas from Morris (1957), on which Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) subsequently build on, the definition of crime needs to therefore account for how crime is created and measured. Thus, assuming offenders are concentrated in poorer areas of social housing, forgetting how institutional understandings may shape our understanding of urban crime, would be a reductive way to understand the geography of urban crime. Indeed, in the process of defining and managing crime we also need to account for the degree of power institutions hold in determining the reason why people or areas are criminalised. Similarly, from a housing perspective, assessing housing management needs to account for whether and how individuals may or may not be afforded agency in choosing where to live. Ultimately, the theoretical concept of managerialism, emphasises the connection between individuals and the immediate causes of social conditions, and the underlying systemic processes which generate these conditions. Focussing on the power wielded by institutions, in the specific context of any city, acknowledges that how social conditions are manifested may not coincide with any given 'natural area'. Rather, as also considered by Morris' (1957) conceptualisation of housing class, it presumes the political, social, cultural, and economic contexts, to individuals realities is dependent on the social relations are established between people, as well as with their connection to the work of institutions. It also accounts for why and how State institutions may choose to tackle problem areas in different ways from others.

Revisiting the key aspects of disorganisation, and criminology's way of relating housing to crime, disorganised living conditions—namely, low-socio economic status and, by proxy, welfare dependence, mixed with high flows of population turnover— are traditionally linked to how communities and neighbourhoods are structured, as well as how they change over time. In practical terms, the concepts of communities and neighbourhood both cross disciplinary boundaries, and hold plural, often layered definitions. Defining the term communities, these can be understood as '*complete areas which contain elements of a*

complete social system' (Dennis, 1968:75). Importantly, intrinsic to the social connectiveness and relation which take place amongst communities, they can also be appraised as the locus of '*group activity, of institutional organisation, and development of human personality'* (Dennis, 1968:75). These definitions, identify the community as the site of social analysis. From a crime perspective, a key element of analysis is how communities may be constructed and related to moral and legal definitions of social acceptability, as well as the means to behave pro-socially. However, this understanding brings a new dimension to the idea of disorganisation explored thus far.

The notion of disorganisation, insofar as criminological analysis is concerned, concentrates on the ways in which material presentations of social life, predominantly the financial lack of resources, can help to unpack why individuals commit crime. Through this perspective, assumptions about what conditions generate crime aid in devising ways to understand and tackle these issues. As place and space however also matter to individual's lives and the opportunities available to them, their geographical and material components are key to situating social analysis (Hayward, 2012b). However, the concept of neighbourhood, has been recognisably fluid and both conceptually and operationally inconsistently utilised by academic scholarship (Kearns and Parkinson, 2001). With this research considering the relationship between housing and crime, and updating narratives concerning functioning and organisation of criminal justice institutions, the use of housing tenure system (as explained in further detail in Chapter Three) is chosen as it provides the backbone to analyse some of the key outstanding issues of contemporary criminological knowledge (Atkinson and Kintrea, 2001; Slater, 2013; Atkinson and Millington, 2019).

Contrary to the notion of disorganisation is that of internal organisation (Whyte, 1943). Internal organisation alludes to the reality that within disorganised areas, social organisation does exist. Internal organisation, unlike the wider societal organisation against which the standards of disorganised communities are measured, is based on internally normative, and shared social connections, which aid in organising in-group social relations (Whyte, 1943). Several studies have considered this issue, including the work of Wacquant (2008) which discusses the same process with the concept of parallel institutionalism. For example, the work of Sibley (1995), explore the issues of exclusion, and how this relates to the geography

and social structure of urban environments. Fear, intolerance, and lack of understanding for otherness are framed by Sibley (1995) as perpetuating socio, political, and cultural division, which materialise in exclusionary practices within cities. In spite of cities seemingly becoming more inclusive, and able to accommodate diversity, the othering of imperfect people endures (Sibley, 1995) and continues to be both geographical and social. In particular, the negative portrayal of outsiders (Elias and Scotson, 1994) and the image of threat that they present, emphasizes the rituals of spatial organisation, through which power at the city level is ultimately expressed (Sibley, 1995).

The notion of 'problem areas' is central to this debate, holding great significance to how particular areas become problematised. The concept of signal crimes (Innes 2004, 2005) provides a good starting point to criminologically link physical space to notions of urban spaces, as incivilities, deviance and crime are regularly used to justify and encourage punitive responses which create spaces of social and physical exclusion (Sibley, 1995; Wacquant, 2008). Defined as a measure of perception, signal crimes are the implicit codification which takes place at the individual's level, of certain places, people, and events which are commonly identified as risky or insecure (Innes, 2004). Emphasising some of the neglected nuances of concepts such as of the 'fear of crime' and 'broken windows', the notion of signal crimes explores how emotional responses to threats, or the more generic perception of danger, are associated with images of deterioration. This concept allows researchers to identify where individuals make an association between the circumstances they perceive as dangerous, and this allows us to codify what generates a response to the perceived unacceptable level of risk or lack of control over given areas. Signal crimes, therefore, provide an empirically refined definition of what, collectively, individuals perceive to be dangerous by defining the strength of signals based on the proportion and extent to which people react to deviant actions. Two aspects of this research are significant. First, in an empirical way, the study of signal crimes provides an informed way for institutions to organise community-based policing and reassurance (Innes and Fielding, 2002). Secondly, they also provide a measure of what is societally constructed as socially acceptable. Altogether, signal crimes provide ways to distinguish between different incidents, as well as the situational context and social indicators of perceived security, risks and hazards, which in return can be used to understand what shapes community life.

Whilst nuanced, and supportive of social definitions of crime, signal crimes are however only tangentially relevant. Codifying and distinguishing between different uncivil, anti-social, or deviant behaviours or actions which affect communities, their use intentionally shifts the analytical focus away from the institutional and spatial definition of crimes or incidents. Placing a greater perception on the social and societal perceptions of crime and places, this removes the need to understand how and why institutional perceptions of problem areas are formed, and their indirect impacts on communities and neighbourhoods. However, as Hancock (2010) and Wacquant *et al*, (2014) also highlight, the symbolic identities which problem areas acquire over time are also inherently linked to broader dominant political-economic forces and the expression of power and inequality.

As further analysed in the next section, a longstanding history of ignorant and divisive political discourses, the reliance on State resources such as public housing and welfare in particular, have resulted in social housing in the UK becoming an area of 'pathological illegitimacy' where illegitimacy, problems and crime are bred and replicated (Hancock and Mooney, 2013). As Stone (1989) discusses, the existence of these narratives within the social and political sciences worlds, and how they are replicated in every-day political discourse tells us something about the process of knowledge production. In her work, Stone recognises how notions of causation are central to constructivist narratives and how, generally, the political science and social sciences worlds tend to see complex causes as the origins of social problems, whereas real-world politics tends to search for the more immediate and simple causes. At the core of both narratives, however, Stone (1989: 281) also suggests how:

Difficult conditions become problems only when people come to see them as amenable to human action. Until then, difficulties remain embedded in the realm of nature, accident and fate— a realm where there is no choice about what happens to us.

Drawing from this, what is clear is that causation and agency, with respect to human action, clearly situate blame, responsibility, and action [or inaction]. These notions are key to the understanding of complex causes and the narratives provided to explain or examine them. Stone, in particular, discusses how even where complex social problems are affected by historical or structural sources, the notion that individuals are ultimately responsible for action, is central to the act of defining problems. Drawing from this, and applying it to the context of urban scholarship, it becomes clear that concerns with the identification of the

causes to social problems such as high levels of crime or the concentration of poorer individuals in social housing, can be effectively analysed by applying Stone's framework to the influence exerted by political actors on problem configurations. The portrayal of troubled families as the result of multi-generational welfare dependence and lack of pro-social moral values (Ball et al., 2016), or the simplification of youth offending as the lack of social resources and, thus, 'idle hands' contributing to crime (Hancock and Mooney, 2013), are clearly bounded by political conditions and narratives of austerity, which are used to shift the responsabilisation for the causes (and responsibilities) of social problems onto individuals. This is then further strengthened by the causal assumption linking poverty and crime (Atkinson and Millington, 2018). Stone's work examines how, whilst naïve political narratives may attribute the cause of problems to problem populations, these latter may also perceive problems to be unchangeable, and problem populations likely do not possess the means to influence change. Stone also proposes how problems may depend on the material resources for survival provided by the *status quo*. As such, attention should be paid to how political agendas may attempt to solve these problems. Indeed, with reference to how austere urbanist practices undermine the welfare of problem populations, who are dependent on welfare, with reforms aimed at reducing public spending and increasing self-responsibilisation (Peck, 2012), it is harmful to presume that removing any funding or material resources will solve these complex issues. Indeed, politically simplified interpretations of solutions suggest that, without the removal of resources, individuals won't feel motivated to take responsibility for their problems. Instead problem populations are encouraged to solve these issues through means of employment or pro-social behaviours, an approach which neglects the complexity of deeply rooted conditioning, stigmatisation, social isolation, and physical segregation of problem populations, which in turn, affects the lives of problem individuals (Wacquant *et al*, 2014).

Even accounting for the global changes expressed through the diversity of social, racial, cultural and gender identities that are now part of contemporary urban spaces, the material conditions of individuals, and how these develop or decline over time, are still linked to the maintenance of these [mis]conceptions (Powell and Robinson, 2019). The material conditions of individuals, and how these improve or decline over time, shape the trajectories of individuals and places. As extensively discussed by the work of Wacquant with reference to

the US ghetto, urban processes tend to concentrate in *'well-identified, bounded, and increasingly isolated territories viewed by both outsiders and insiders as social purgatories, urban hellholes where only the refuse of society would accept to dwell'* (Wacquant, 1996:125).

With respect to how individuals seek to adapt and integrate within society, detailed ethnographic studies have produced complex narratives of exclusion, and understandings about how individuals cope with stigma, and navigate cities (Briggs and Gamero, 2017). For example, as explored by Wacquant (2006) with respect to the inner-city experience of urban ghettos, the structure of Black communities in inner city enclaves is a reaction to structural inequalities which have been woven into the spatial organisation of the city as it evolved through time, to exclude (or seclude and contain) unwanted populations. As Wacquant and Wilson (1989) argue, what appear as localised patterns of geographical exclusion are instead the result of structural changes in society. The insulation and the otherisation of these diverse places, however, further contributes to the appearance of places and communities as non-normative. Notions of diversity, however, alongside the social and material isolation of the urban poor, attach to places additional stigma. Wacquant (2008) defines this as territorial stigmatisation. Territorial stigmatisation refers, in this sense, to a layered manifestation of power and social inequalities, which further penalises isolated and stigmatised populations for not being able to actively take part in normative society as 'normal' urban citizens (Wacquant 1996, 2008).

Examining the link between exclusion in the UK context, Gough *et al.*, (2006), in their work discuss how excluded communities are most clearly identifiable in the contexts of relative poverty and welfare retrenchment. In this sense, inequalities are disproportionately located within social housing, although the deregulation and marketisation of housing across other tenures have also increased financial and social pressures on individuals Gough *et al.*, (2006). These issues are indeed shown to have a compounded effect on the perception of organisation within communities. Dependent on the norms set from outside, communities commonly identified as disorganised and excluded, are conceptualised as norm-breaking despite often exhibiting high levels of internal cohesion. Thus, the greatest sources of harm for communities, which take the shape of poverty and exploitative social relations, come from the reputation which is established by those othering them (Gough *et al.*, 2006).

Housing, more generally, is seen as shaping patterns of social organisation, in ways that influence our understanding of social processes, including crime. For example, in a physical way, the notions of disorganisation creates places of 'phagic' [encompassing] (Lehtovuori, 2010). Communities, especially when feeling threatened, tend to retreat, and construct new shared senses and understandings of community and like-mindedness (Schelling, 1971). However, different types of homogeneous communities can develop across space, some which may be more harmful than others, particularly where their context is devoid of history and culture from the outside (Lehtovuori, 2010). What we learn from studies of urban conditions is, therefore, more crucial than to understand that housing-based intervention affect cities and public understanding of issues such as crime and safety. Practices of neighbourhood and community stabilization which can take place through housing, contribute to reshaping the narratives and futures of places and spaces, or the contexts attached to them (Taylor, 1999). Through gated enclaves the urban rich attempt to insulate themselves from disorganisation, deviance, and the perceived harms and dangers of life of non-gentrified neighbourhoods (Atkinson, 2004).

However, the notion that mixed tenure and gentrification, can resolve innate fears for dangers outside, only provide initial benefits not effective solutions (Crook et al., 2016). Where subversion and disorder are designed out, there is a consequential increase in their detachment and disdain for unorganised life outside. In this context, security is commodified irrespective of its inaccessibility and short-term benefit, popularising State-led punitive practices such as policing (Minton, 2009). In return, these processes only accentuate the creation of 'emic' [exclusionary] spaces of social exclusion (Lehtovuori, 2010). In these spaces, like for example social housing in the UK, not only are the urban poor concentrated, but over-policing of these communities is legitimised due to beliefs about their decreased levels of responsabilisation. These processes, in turn, translate to undue blame and greater levels of accountability being held over vulnerable populations (Flint 2004, 2006, 2015; Reiner, 2012).

Stigmatisation and shaming for not being able to comply with the idea of ideal '[active] citizenship', and for needing support in the first place, continue to impact on vulnerable communities' claims to cities (Murie, 1997). These thoughts have been situated around the expectations and myths that exist with regard to social housing dwellers and dwellings. In

their study of Glasgow, Atkinson and Flint (2004) consider the relation between disorganised neighbourhoods and issues of organisation. Looking at mechanisms of social control, which as previously mentioned is a common measure of disorganisation, Atkinson and Flint (2004) propose how formal social control measures are more likely to problematise deprived areas than positively affect relationships within communities. Further to this, they also posit how distinct models of control should be conceptually related to how neighbourhoods are structured, to avoid the risk of trivialising the link between social control and community cohesion. How communities are organised is manifested in different forms of organisation. Failing to recognise how the internal organisation of deprived communities may structurally differ from what is expected of 'normal' ones only accentuates the perceived deficiencies from the norm, and ignores their strength and validity (Atkinson and Flint, 2004). Further from the above, their work also co-locates disorganised areas in conjunction with social housing, emphasising the power exerted over these tenures by social housing providers (Atkinson and Flint, 2004).

Urban managerial practices have also been harmful in other ways, as per the example of driving vulnerable populations towards the private rented sector and housing insecurities (Lennartz, 2016). Welfare divestment, and concerns about crime [and disorganisation] as well as the treatment of housing as a marketised good, have certainly been features of housing trajectories in the UK (Powell and Robinson, 2019). The private rented sector, in fact, constitutes both an un-regulated and un-monitored environment —both by the State and academia—, as well as a potentially more insecure and volatile option for vulnerable populations (Stone, 2016; Perraudin, 2017; Wilde, 2017). It follows, that the politics of housing and its management, (particularly at the hands of the State), need to be recognised as having the effect of altering both public perceptions associated to housing, as well as constructing narratives around its presumed criminogeneity. This affects the right that individuals have to access a city and its resources. Whilst the juxtaposition of conceptions of inactivity concerning individuals' ability to solve their own problems fuels the construction of 'otherness' as well as stigma and the concept of shadow citizenry, where punitive solutions only increase disenfranchisement from society (Hayward and Young, 2004; Merrifield, 2014).

From this perspective, the significance of these studies is not only how they seek to uncover the processes that allocate and concentrate people across the urban space but, more importantly, how they examine narratives and constructions about how problems are constructed with respect to places, people, and the wider ecology of cities. Amongst these is an understanding of the effects of power and its articulation across urban environments (Murie, 1997; Pawson and Kintrea, 2002). In the words of Pahl '*cities are simply arenas in which conflicts generated in the wider social structure are played out*' (1970:184). These can occur at local, regional, and national scales, and are inter-related and co-determined by forces and systems that lie beyond, including job markets and social-political structures. The latter may also be seen to affect the presentation and ordering of the relationships that exist between individuals and the environments in which they live.

Whereas disproportionate access to resources may contribute to the position held between individuals and resources to be naturally distributed, as these occur within semi-democratic societies, where democracy implies the greatest benefit for the least social cost (Pahl, 1970: 204), However, bureaucratically defined units of analysis, such as problem areas, still determine in large part both the rules and procedures used to administer social order. Urban managers are, therefore, of great interest to urban sociologists as well as to others involved in the study of urban conditions including criminologists. More generally, this is of particular relevance as punitive solutions continue to be deployed in response to urban others in order 'solve' crime and disorganisation problems. As previously highlighted by Sampson (2012), not only do these fail to often address the problem itself, but also create false narratives which further harm individuals (Wacquant, 1996). Issues with punitive responses, and the lack of reflexivity which apply to them, have been criticised for neglecting the many ways in which the State penal system may also create inequalities through knowledge production (Walton, 1998; Wacquant, 2009).

The boundary which is set in this research is that of exploring the relationship between crime and housing in the work of institutions tasked with the roles of managing crime and housing issues at the city-level. In turn, the approach selected focusses on the conditions and processes which are generative to occurrences of crime across city environments, and how people relate crime and housing to social environments (Baldwin *et al.*, 1976; Young, 2011;

Hayward 2012b, 2012a). What these authors re-iterate is that '*derivative element[s] of urban life and its processes*' (Morris, 1957:11) should already be central to the framework proposed by ecological analysis. Thus, whilst developments of causal analysis have shaped the development of the core ecological model and the way it proposes to approach the issue of urban crime criminology, its limitations should not be lost (Bursik, 1988). Key to this analysis, is to re-address this imbalance by focussing on the definitions of crime problem and problem areas and their relationship to housing contexts.

Drawing from a summary of changing housing policies in the UK, these have related to the withdrawal of State resources to support economically vulnerable populations. This has led public housing stock to be progressively divested from the State portfolio, with control being devolved to non-profit housing associations, tenants' cooperatives, and profit-oriented private landlords (Whitehead and Scanlon, 2007; Stephens and Leishman, 2008). Whilst these organisations have continued to deliver social housing to those in need, how this has taken place has not been uniform across national landscapes; affecting experiences and access to housing accordingly. More generally, the prominence of regeneration processes has seen the rise of gentrification policies and mixed communities as solutions to rectify the criminogeneity of different areas by means of varying the nature of residents. A process that has assumed that that breaking poor mono-tenurial housing areas would improve their outcomes (Mayer and Künkel, 2011; Wacquant *et al.*, 2014; Welsh, 2017). In the UK, these changes have also applied ultimately to a national context affected by a housing crisis where, at the most basic level, resources to securely, affordably and decently house those unable to participate in the market are lacking; with individuals facing the prospects of homelessness or housing precarity (Shelter, 2018).

The decentralisation of State authority from the national level, associated with the rise of neo-liberal practices, has led to the devolution of autonomies to manage social problems at the local level, and created an environment where disparities tend to increase (Gough *et al.*, 2006). To understand this process, the concept of austerity urbanism as a 'new operational matrix for urban politics' draws on the notion that austerity, as a response to market conditions (Peck, 2012:626). Applied to cities in ways that target the most socially and economically vulnerable individuals, Peck argues that austerity is a tool used to justify rather

than resolve budget cuts to essential governmental responsibilities. Antithetically to Glaser's (2012) notion that competition and inequality are catalysts to cities' developments and successes, Peck emphasises how austere urbanist processes tangibly harm the poor, minority, and marginalised populations which rely on public-sector infrastructures as mechanisms to sustain the city. Specifically, he highlights how even the most neoliberally 'essential and skeleton services' of the State, such as policing and public safety, are affected and all of the 'fat' constructs of welfare and social services are made redundant in this process (Peck, 2012:630).

Whilst Peck's work (2012) directly assesses reform and practices which have affected American cities, two particularly significant aspects of his work are useful for understanding austerity with regard to the UK context. First, his analysis of the neo-liberal development of governance at the city level, and specifically, how it relates to the system of downwards 'scalar dumping' (Peck, 2012), which relates to some of the neoliberal processes which have affected city governance in the UK. Secondly, he touches on austerity and its effects on urban governance, as well as how this is spatially and socially tied to cities in the same intrinsic ways as housing.

The relevance of these two considerations lies with the knowledge that the key objective of neo-liberalism, achieved through austerity, is that of offloading costs by [mis]placing the responsibilities for governance away from the public sphere and redistributing them ultimately onto households (Peck, 2012). Taking as an example the link Peck makes between the work of Wacquant (2008, 2012) and the austere expansion of the punitive state (2012:630), this can be seen in many aspects of the governance of safety and policing. For example, Peck's understanding of austerity can be equated to the increased emphasis on self-responsibilisation to minimise the risks of victimisation from acquisitive or violent crimes through [primary and secondary] crime prevention strategies (i.e. target hardening), as these minimise the need for the state to actively intervene or react. However, at a higher conceptual level, neo-liberal approaches to city governance clearly exemplify the trajectories of the last decades of social policy in the UK, which relate in turn to the juxtaposition of devolved governance in the light of the [neo-liberal] nationalised approaches to social problems.

Indeed, with relation to the development of Community Safety Partnerships, analysed as key players in the governance of urban environment by later chapters, as well as the localisation and outsourcing of large portions of the social housing sector to private entities (whether, as discussed in below, housing associations, or private landlords), the progressive retreat of the State from dealing with social problems, and the increased punitivist approach taken to deal with those who deviate from the norm, have been staples of UK policy. One of the clearest examples of this, are the circumstances of *'troubled families'*. On one hand, are the public-service cutbacks and re-structuring which have removed most of the support available to them (Tonkiss, 2013; Hastings *et al.* 2017), while on the other, are the growing narratives about the self-fulfilling origins of anti-social behaviour and deviance that are used to problematise them and free the State of its responsibility to not punitively react (Flint, 2006; Millie, 2008). As troubled families, and those commonly considered the most problematic, are left behind with no support, Peck (2012) draws our attention to the malignant and self-fulfilling consequences of the uneven socio-spatial developments that have originated in this highly localised austerity, whose spatial terms become very relevant to the analysis of the ecology of housing.

Housing has indeed been central to these processes, with policies creating divides based on social class, which have favoured the 'respectable poor' against the 'rough poor', or 'undeserving poor'. Also embedded within this language are issues related to social acceptance, also referred to as processes of otherisation in which a socio-cultural, ethnic, health, or financially vulnerable minority is excluded and blamed for its condition. In these circumstances, stigmatisation also concerns the over-policing and increased punitive regulations that are applied to these populations for their failure to comply with the imagined ideal of citizenship, and for their being in a disadvantaged condition in the first place (Murie, 1997; Flint 2004, 2006, 2015; Reiner, 2012).

Importantly, however, as life outside the accepted norm is stigmatised and actively punished by the state, the inevitable consequence of social exclusion is the further creation of para-functional spaces in which the trajectories of the excluded can be ignored and politicised (Hayward, 2012b). These processes are routinely manifested through housing, with mechanisms concerning the material availability of housing, either through construction or

demolition, as well as the social and spatial displacement of unwanted populations which takes place through regeneration, and gentrification.

From a perspective of social order, in the UK these concern the increased focus on the functioning of communities (Crawford, 1999), and in turn the blame associated with the lack of self-organisation. In housing terms, these emphasise the issues associated to the marketisation of housing and in particular, the decay of social housing stock, an increase regeneration processes, and the start of a 'housing crisis' (Mayer and Künkel, 2011; Wacquant et al., 2014; Welsh, 2017; Shelter, 2018). However, the residualisation of resources available to the most financially vulnerable individuals, have a circular effect on the presumed causes of crime. In this sense, the residualisation of support and opportunities for socio-economically deprived populations have impacted the abilities of the most socio-economically vulnerable to have much agency with respect to where they live (Doff and Kleinhans, 2011; Slater, 2013). In turn, this has further contributed to the concentration of advanced disadvantage and marginality through urban landscapes (Wacquant, 2008; Powell and Robinson, 2019). This knowledge needs to be reflected in the construction of problems and problem areas. Indeed, as for the symbolic construction of social housing as a problem area, the condition of the urban poor are not necessarily a contributory part of the problem; rather, they are only the subject of institutional focus (Hayward, 2012b; Wacquant, 2004).

The reality of policies and social attitudes which stigmatise those with fewer resources, is that the labelling of those who rely on public housing as inactive citizens becomes doubly harmful (Murie, 1997). On the one hand, such people, and areas suffer at the hands of the inequalities created by political attitudes which encourage the devolution of State resources and the politics of self-responsibilisation. However, these labels also mean that such areas and persons suffer at the hands of increasingly punitive and targeted solutions that aim to correct or deter those associated with crime and anti-social behaviour—for example via policing (Crowther, 2000). As suggested in this thesis, these processes reinforce stereotypical associations. It is for this reason that the thesis seeks to move beyond conceptualisation of crime and disorder as expressed by the notion of disorganisation. The next integral step in

this process, as the chapter now considers, is to examine the historical context to the current organisation of housing at the city-level.

2.6. Housing in the UK in long-term view

A major deficiency of much contemporary housing research in the UK is its presentism and lack of historical perspective (Powell and Robinson, 2019). Tracking national changes in the availability of housing over the past one hundred years as a starting point— as represented in the leftmost part of *Table 2.i* — three distinct periods can be identified. From the early nineteenth century to the 1980s, the UK experienced a sharp decrease in the amount of privately rented accommodation that was available compared to the availability of social housing and owner occupation. The Housing Act 1919 devised the need for all local authorities to construct good quality affordable housing, whilst the 1930 Housing Act introduced slum clearance initiatives. The latter gave powers to local authorities to tackle the ‘unhealthy areas’ of cities, and housing not fit for human habitation as, during this time, the provision of housing was seen systematically as a public health problem that must deal with issues of poor housing conditions, housing shortages and overcrowding across the private rented sector (Stewart, 2005). Treating housing as a public health matter, the Government conceived large social housing estates as the solution to the problems associated with slum areas— including crime, ill-health, bad housing, and affordability issues— and responded to these through mass State-land purchase, demolishing and redeveloping them with the aim of creating healthier cities and communities (Hashemi, 2013). From a social, and crime perspective, this public health model of welfare provision was also crucial for the policing of behaviour. Believing that slums were a hot-bed moral deprivation, the provision of better housing was seen to be instrumental in providing its recipients with a way to lift themselves out of crime and depravity (Ravetz, 2001).

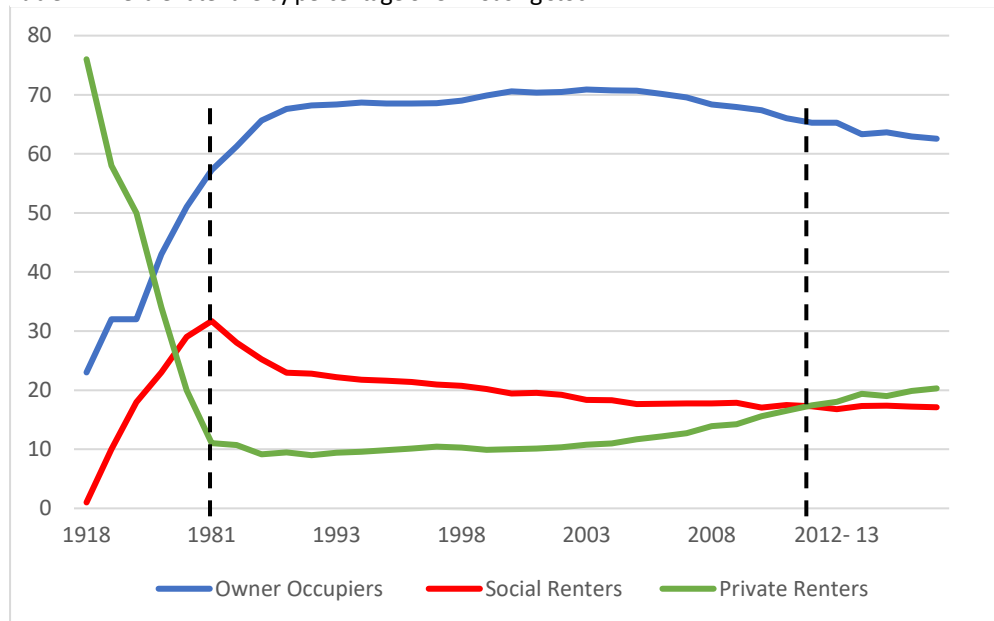
Ultimately leading to the demolition of more than one million of privately rented houses, and the construction of large social housing developments, the Welfare State continued to expand rapidly during the period immediately after the Second World War. The relative ‘golden age’ of post-WW2 economic growth provided additional financial capital and allowed for increases in building and home ownership through low mortgage rates and lower costs. However, the post-war period was also characterised by housing shortages which were, once again, met by

the delivery of social housing, (and especially high-rise and high-density social housing developments) (Broughton,2019). However, the primary aim of housing provision shifted from bettering standards to producing the volume of housing needed. With this change came lower development standards, and lower quality housing developments (Stewart, 2005; Dockerill, 2021).

Around the later 1950's, however, older social housing estates began to be portrayed as more criminogenic than others. Crime rates, however, became an issue as the negative stereotypes and reputations, and ultimately mismanagement, cemented their demonization (Baldwin *et al.*, 1976). Physical problems with the built standards of estates persisted between the 1950s and 1970s which, coupled with increasing maintenance costs, made these developments undesirable places in which to live (Murie 1997; Stewart, 2005). In a market driven by increasing insecurities and fears of economic instability, market-oriented governmentality led to the dismantling of the Welfare State. From a socio-political perspective, and with the rise of neoliberalism, these fears began to draw a thicker line on the matter of deserving and undeserving urban populations which escalated through the allocation and management and regulation of social housing (Flint, 2006b; Farrall, 2017). Increasing competition for access to better social housing estates, coupled with the continued responsibilities of local authorities to deliver affordable housing to all populations—irrespective of whether perceived as deserving or undeserving— at a time of growth for inner-city crime problems, begun to question the relationship between the quality, design, and management of housing and the consequential and exponential emergence of punitive self-responsibilisation (Newman, 1972).

These changes, mark the beginning of the second part of this graph, which interest the period between the early 1980's and early 2000's.

Table 2.i: Prevalent tenure by percentage of UK housing stock



Source: UK data service

The regressive reversal of previous housing trends, as referenced in the middle section of the chart above, saw the progressive growth of the private-rented and owner-occupied sectors at the expense of social housing, and the devolution of housing responsibilities from Local Authorities, back to private enterprise (Malpass, 2011). The 1981 Right-to-Buy following the 1980 Housing Act, strongly emphasised this trend and allowed social tenants to buy previously rented properties from their local authority at a discounted price. From a state perspective, the rationale behind encouraging home ownership and the increased privatisation of social housing were simple; cutting subsidised low-cost renting and the costs associated with the maintenance of social housing properties resulted in a reduction of public spending (Disney and Luo, 2017).

Promoting home ownership through Right-to-buy practices, popularising the adage that '*an Englishman's home is his castle*', associated the pathway for many to acquiring long-term housing security to beliefs it would increase responsabilisation of individuals. Indeed, home ownership was thought of and promoted as a measure to secure resident's investment into local communities, and thus increase the long-term stability of a neighbourhood (Aarland and

Reid, 2019). Conversely, however, by materialising social divides through home ownership – and thereby giving them a physical dimension -these practices ultimately only reinforced divisions and inequalities in what became increasingly socio-economically stratified cities (Atkinson, 2015).

Subject to the same market-driven practices, the private-rented sector was also greatly influenced by changes and policies in social housing. The 1988 Housing Act introduced Assured Shorthold Tenancies, and through so doing established a legal standard on the length of tenancy agreements between six to twelve months. This provided landlords with a legal basis to revise tenancy agreements or evict tenants. Furthering the perspective of housing as a market good, this entrenched the housing instabilities and vulnerabilities of tenants, shifting control[s], choice[s], and freedom [s] into the hands of landlords (Cheung, 2012). The 1996 Buy-to-Let initiative also contributed to the dismantling of the social housing stock, and further increased the marketisation of housing. Whilst its main provision was to enable the sale of council properties to anyone with similar discounts as the Right-to-Buy, the initiative resulted in the upscaling of property portfolios of existing landlords (Murie, 2016). The marketisation of housing has, therefore, mainly benefitted private agencies and existing private landlords who have enjoyed a housing market which not only perpetuates exclusionary practices, but also focusses on extracting value from the people who rely on renting, rather than providing housing securities (Robinson and Attuyer, 2021). On top of this, increased punitive regulation, over-policing, and the stigmatisation of welfare or social housing reliance continue to be deployed to ensure the compliance of social housing tenants (Murie, 1997; Flint 2004, 2006a, 2015; Reiner, 2012).

The third phase of the timeline identified by the graph above, begins with the most recent period, starting from 2011 to the present day. Over this period, a significant distinction can still be drawn, as the processes of housing selection rely on the understanding that individuals do not have the same agency as those in other tenures to choose where they live, based on their wealth and factors relating to their lives (Preece *et al.* 2020). Normally, individuals have the ability to choose where to live based on a number of factors, including which type of dwelling suits their needs and concerns pertaining to their work and social networks. Living in a particular area of a city, or incidentally outside of cities, may depend on the narratives

that are constructed around any particular locality and its history (Baldwin et al., 1976; Girling et al., 2000). As social housing continues to be residualised, choices have become situated within the financial and political realities of neoliberalism in which the marketisation of housing has been accompanied by an increased withdrawal of State resources to support economically vulnerable populations; a process that has, in turn, contributed to the concentration of advanced marginalities through urban landscapes (Wacquant, 2008; Powell and Robinson, 2019). The decay of social housing stocks, an increase in regeneration processes, and the start of a housing crisis have become the common denominators which affect how and whether people decide to live within social housing or not (Mayer and Künkel, 2011; Wacquant *et al.*, 2014; Welsh, 2017; Shelter 2018).

From a management perspective, policies affecting social housing include the progressive devolution of the control of social housing to public-private partnerships, and the rise of Arm's-length Management Organisations. Primarily, this period sees a shift with the establishment of the Decent Homes Programme in 2000 (Morrison, 2013), and plans to subsequently sell a large portion of social housing stock to Housing Associations after the progressive fall of Arm's-length Management Organisations after 2011. Over the past decade, government housing policy has continued to restrict public expenditure, with austerity interventions focussing on the demand and supply of the private renting market, and increasingly the limits homeowners or future homeowners can borrow (Ferrari *et al.*, 2019). In particular, the Help to Buy scheme has, to date, received over £10 billion of government equity loan funding; however, some commentators argue that the Help to Buy scheme has mainly stimulated price increases in the new build sector rather than increased supply (Ferrari *et al.*, 2019). Coupling the sale of social housing to private individuals and companies with the reality that most social housing stock over the past decade has been privately developed, has further residualised remaining stock; often leaving only the most undesirable areas or properties – often older and badly maintained—readily available to social renters (Hanley, 2017). The neo-liberal deregulation and divestment approaches to the regulation of social housing, across Europe, have also translated to the contemporary management and regulation of other tenures; with conditions in the UK's private rented sector being comparatively worse than other countries (Whitehead *et al.*, 2012).

With State-policies abiding to these neo-liberal principles of housing de-regulation through market forces, and regulatory frameworks focussing on compliance to building standards rather than living conditions, housing insecurities have become coupled with the under-protection of tenants, especially vulnerable tenants (Lowe, 2017). For example, only through the 'Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation)' Act in 2018, did the Government start to address the standards of housing particularly at the lower end of the private rented sector. However, the persisting lack of regulation over privately-rented housing, but also owner-occupied housing solutions, mean that not enough focus is placed on the lives of vulnerable individuals hoping to find housing in these tenures instead of social housing (Stone, 2016; Perraudin, 2017; Wilde, 2017). Indeed, the only protection foreseeably provided under the Tenant Fees Act 2019, is that private agencies and landlords have been banned, as part of tenancy agreements, from charging tenants fees other than those related to living costs. Finally, a measure thought of but not yet implemented for the protection of tenants is the government's attempt to end section 21 of the 1988 Housing Act which would prevent landlords from repossessing properties, in the case of assured tenancies, without establishing fault on the part of tenants (Wilson and Barton, 2021). Concerns have also been raised as to how these market-driven aspects of housing are unable to differentiate between 'choice', 'aspirations' and housing 'expectations'. This failure has further harmed the choices and reputations of those with the fewest resources who are unable to participate in the capital-driven competition for [basic] housing resources (Preece *et al.*, 2019; Preece *et al.*, 2020). Amongst these, the promotion of home ownership as a tool to re-shape community trajectories has, in particular, caused significant challenges, through either the creation of mixed tenures (Kearns and Manson, 2007) or gentrified neighbourhoods (Atkinson, 2004), as better forms of neighbourhoods which then continue to stigmatise those who either rely on social housing or are unable to attain their housing choices

2.7. Conclusion

This chapter has considered a number of bodies of literature and concepts of relevance. Starting from how criminology has traditionally appraised the issue of urban crime, it has highlighted how approaches thematically focus on the issue of crime and neglected processes

adjacent to crime causation. Key to traditional criminological approaches is the assumption posed by ecological studies that social life is articulated around naturally presenting conditions which the discipline can study. Social disorganisation, as the main way to reflect about how, where, and why crime happens, has however, isolated ways of thinking about problems and problem areas at the city level. It has disguised the potential of studying causal processes as an opportunity to scientifically study social phenomena such as crime in a systematic way.

Shifting this perception is, initially, the concept of housing class. Returning to the original theoretical assumptions made by Chicago Scholars, namely the ecology of crime, the framework of housing classes proposes that the study of crime through a housing-centred lens aids wider appraisals of social problems and their constructions. This is closely related the organisation of cities to the geographical manifestation of urban crime. Importantly, the chapter also reviewed the key learnings of the study by Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) in their publication *The Urban Criminal* (1976), which empirically applied housing to the study of crime at the city-level. While limited in scope, their findings place great emphasis on the inoperability of social disorganisation to holistically explain how offending residence and offending rates disproportionately focus on social housing estates. This study opened the door to a number of hypotheses which this study explores. Guided by their work, but forty years after their publication, this thesis re-approaches the Sheffield case study to explore in greater depth the understanding of urban crime problems and their generation.

The body of literature reviewed in this chapter also rationalises and encourages a closer analysis of how social processes are linked to housing. Identifying the connections between housing, crime, and urban change, creates a novel understanding of how the spatial organisation of housing at the city level, relates to the ecology of crime, as well as the work of institutions operating at the city level. This generates a new analytical framework that transcends criminological notions of social disorganisation.

As housing and crime have been weakly integrated, and the exploratory power of past quantitative studies is limited by lack of data availability, this study adopts a mixed-method approach, which considers housing and crime from a perspective which is appreciative of power inequalities at and within cities. This thesis' work, accordingly, is concerned with how

processes of urban management are taking place. Flipping the attention from the criminological interest with outcomes, this study approaches the relationship of urban crime and housing from the perspective of institutional definitions of problem. This is used to explore and better understand the role of power inequalities in shaping urban crime landscapes. In particular, looking at how institutions resolve and approach problems and problem areas, answers the key research questions of the construction of the relationship between crime and housing.

3. METHODOLOGY: RESEARCHING CRIME AND HOUSING IN THE SHEFFIELD CASE STUDY

This chapter documents the theoretical framework and the data collection strategies employed in this thesis. It takes a critical stance with respect to the role that criminology plays in defining how institutions manage urban crime problems. This thesis supports the view that housing is a neglected, but central, topic to the development of the social ecology of urban crime. Institutions, for this thesis, are defined as organisations whose operational work relates to the management of crime and housing at the city level. Drawing on interpretivist ontology and a constructionist epistemology the research approached these institutions and aimed to explore the meaning of established facts and knowledge about the relationship between housing and crime. With the purpose of questioning how urban crime problems are constructed with respect to housing, and specifically tenure, this research is concerned with updating narratives concerning the distribution of crime, offenders, and victims across the space and housing. Grounded in the empirical work of *The Urban Criminal* (Baldwin *et al.*, 1976) the work adopted a 'first-stage' research approach to examine how housing and crime were spatially concentrated across the city. As defined by Baldwin *et al.*, (1976), first-stage research reflects the need of research to accept the limited ability of empirical work to conclusively answer any empirical question, without raising further questions as to what is empirically found. Accordingly, and in contrast to the assumption that causal analysis conclusively addresses the relationship between constructed variables, this thesis delves deeper into the constructions of problems, with the aim of critically consider their potential relationship.

To achieve this goal, the thesis builds on the strengths of an embedded mixed methods design to investigate how questions of social order and control in Sheffield are affected by institutional power, knowledge, and practices. Building on the urban managerialism thesis (Pahl, 1970), it asserts that the role of the state is to exercise power over the city to maintain social order and law. The mixed method design of the thesis is, therefore, used to begin unpacking who is involved in the management of urban crime problems, and how these may define and affect the understanding of problems. In particular, this study argues for better

consideration of housing in criminology to critically analyse the effects and shortcomings of criminological theorisation of urban crime, and the work of key institutions across the city.

3.1. Theoretical framework

The previous chapter proposed that the main obstacle to appraisals of urban crime in criminology stemmed from the discipline's way of understanding and explaining urban crime as the product of causal relationships which take place as a result of conditions found within cities. The approach taken by most ecological theories of crime, of which the social disorganisation thesis is a prime example, refers to the ability to draw conclusions based on empirical data and seemingly objective facts. In line with positivist constructions of crime, these approaches propose that the objects being are detached from the researcher; a scenario which enables the latter to draw conclusions on the phenomena and situations (Carson *et al.*, 2001). Under this paradigm, crime is the product of cause and effect. The actions of an offender and victim directly relate to the conditions they exist within. In some circumstances, their consequence is crime, and the reactions of society link to the work of criminal justice institutions, for example, policing and punishment.

Positivist epistemologies specifically suggest that rigorous and scientifically driven research is able to test the relationships which might exist between variables, and that it produces factual and impartial knowledge about these relationships and their effects (House, 1991). In turn, positivist methodologies focus on techniques which are aimed at identifying and measuring variables whose extents and effects are quantified. These are then used to causally explain the condition subject to the research and their outcomes (Scotland, 2012). Accordingly, positivist appraisals of crime argue that it is possible, rational, and justifiable for the [punitive] State to deal with those causes of crime that can be empirically measured (Weisburd and Piquero, 2008).

However, the assertion that empirical data can categorically identify the origins of problems such as crime, and allow institutions to objectively take action to prevent, deter, or eliminate these conditions, has also been referred to as administrative realism (Young, 2002). On the surface, the term administrative realism is meant to highlight the intrinsic relationship that exists between the State and academic research (Mayhew, 2016). Applying the positivist

paradigm to research concerning crime, means that research is able to discover the causes of crime, and provide immediately applicable solutions to institutions so that they may operationally resolve crime problems. More significantly, this implies that empirical generalisations derived from the analysis of social conditions can be used to re-shape the causes of crime in a detached fashion from the social processes which shape urban experiences. Such a view is inherently harmful to the [powerless] subjects of criminological study (Young 1998, 2007). This perspective not only neglects a critical understanding of the problematic role and relationship between State and the role of criminology, but also supports the notion that there are objectively wrong, and thus unhelpful ways to conceptualise and understand crime, both issues are ontologically, epistemologically, and methodologically contested by critical criminologies (Taylor *et al.*, 1973).

Critical criminologies pose as a bridge between the processes and politics of criminal justice management, and the empirical realities that these claims to be grounded in (Young, 2011). Defining the concept of constructionism—also interchangeably referred to as interpretivism or social constructionism— Taylor *et al.*, (1973) posit that the realities of social phenomena are not self-evident, but a reflection of underlying social conditions and processes which can themselves shift with respect to social processes and constructions about problems. For example, crime is a social construct. As best exemplified by the work of Durkheim (1973) different interpretations of what is the norm may, over time, change, and in turn construct actions to be deviant or ultimately criminal. Durkheim thus implies that the definition of normality, and thus deviance, are not static. Norm breaking is, therefore, not only inevitable, but also intrinsic for the functioning of societies. Indeed, societies operate on consensus and commonly shared values and understandings. How the abject conditions which constitute norm-breaking are interpreted thus defines what crime is.

Most commonly, crime is defined through the laws which are used to codify which actions are, and are not, considered acceptable in society. From a legalistic perspective, the latter constitute crimes. However, as suggested in Hillyard and Tombs (2007), enacting laws is also subject to this interpretation, and this means that they are also neither objective nor straightforward. Commenting further, the authors suggest:

In the absence of any intrinsic quality of an event or incident to differentiate them, the criminal law uses a number of complex texts and rules to determine whether or not a crime has been committed (Hillyard and Tombs 2007:13).

If we understand crime as an issue of social construction, it is not possible to produce a 'standard' understanding of knowledge. Rather, it is essential to understand crime within its context; failing to do so would void analysis of meaning (Maruna, 2003; Young 2011). What this means is that the operation and administration of criminal justice are central to understanding the construction, identification, and sanctioning of criminal behaviours. This is not only because these institutions exercise the powers and duties inferred on the State by the public, but also because their interpretation of crime is influenced by their knowledge (Young, 2002). Schematic visions of social order, as enacted through the rule of law, impose a narrative of social order which is disruptive of pluralism (Scott, 2008). Consequently, what this suggests, is that constructions of crime need to be critically appraised, and that definitions of crime also form part of what needs to be explained by criminology.

Instead of producing generalisations about the 'actual act' of crime, theoretical formulations of constructionist approaches in criminology suggest that the discipline should re-focus towards a social theory of crime. Critical criminologies argue that the scope of criminological theory is to critically evaluate the causes of crime within their social, political economic, and cultural constructions which relate to the production of knowledge about crime and its structural context (Taylor *et al.*, 1973:270). Taylor *et al.*'s (1973:270) social-constructionist epistemology specifically argues for a two-fold extension of criminological analysis with respect to the 'immediate' and 'wider' causes of crime.³ It recommends that the conditions and circumstances considered by positivist enquires must be considered within the wider *social dynamics* that surround the criminal (or deviant) act and public/societal reactions to it. In this sense why, how, and where offences are committed foregrounds the origins of criminal

³ Taylor *et al* (1973) articulate this as a seven-step process, describing how each substantive step contributes to the overall framework, also providing an appraisal of the empirical and conceptual boundaries around each of these terms. This is concisely outlined in their conclusion chapter, pages 285-300. This chapter focusses on their contribution, for its overarching stake in the production of knowledge of crime and does so specifically with reference to the posit of utilising housing to extend the criminological gaze, deviating from their original formulation.

'actions', as well as influencing 'reactions' to crime. Looking at the 'wider origins of the criminal act' includes analysis of how opportunities, power, and wealth are distributed with respect to an individual, and the extent to which these constantly evolve within society. However, and importantly, whilst these considerations extend the breadth of criminological analysis, promoting systemic analysis, Taylor *et al.* (1973) also suggest that theoretical understandings of crime must therefore be able to dialectically relate factors across these conceptual levels of analysis. Specifically, considering that individuals are not detached atoms but rather part of a more complex organism, this reminds the reader of the deviant process as a whole and how this is subject to the moods of that system, including changes in social arrangements and their inherent systemic contradictions.

These theoretical debates relate to the overarching theoretical framework of this research. As seen in Chapter Two, disorganisation-based approaches have applied this empirical knowledge to the systematic study and experimentation of what may cause crime. Most clearly, these have contributed to the understanding that crime is a highly spatially concentrated phenomena that affects a minority of individuals in society and places in urban spaces (Weisburd, 2015). These positivist conceptualisations of crime place an emphasis on [socially constructed] criminogenic circumstances by treating conditions and their results as, respectively, cause and effect. These causal processes, linking conditions to crime, have informed what is seen to be best to affect crime reduction, solution, and prevention (Eck and Spelman, 1987). The issue here is that these positivist [also known as functionalist] perspectives are concerned with the adoption of scientific approaches to social issues and are concerned with the principles of measurement. These approaches have produced empirical generalisations, which are likely to provide a limited understanding of the contexts which they were trying to summarise (Fletcher, 1998).

From this perspective, the predominant concern here lies with the application and use of the scientific quantification of social issues, such as crime. Critical criminologies have shown that it is not possible to claim factual understanding of the causes for crime, as issues of definition and measurement are subject to constructions. Constructions of social problems, such as crime, are derived from social processes; however, these are also dependant on the practices of institutions which affect the constructions (Young, 2011; Maruna and Barber, 2012).

Encouraging criminology to accept constructionist [plural] perspectives, the suggestion which follows, is one that challenges the inherent power held in the hands of the punitive State. Collectively, individual and community circumstances, particularly power inequalities, are part of the formation of definitionally criminal circumstances. Following this understanding, even the most fervent supporters of apparently more scientific approaches to the measurement of crime may recognise that research failing to acknowledge and measure these effects, or research contesting the lack of recognition for these variables, will not be redundant (Schwartz and Hatty, 2014). What this refers to, is the idea that quantitative [numerical] understandings of crime cannot capture the holistic nature of human experiences (Young, 2011; Sampson, 2012). In this sense, questioning how facts about crime are constructed, not only contributes to a more holistic understanding of problems (as defined by the State), but also a more intrinsic understanding of power and the inequalities perpetuated by the State. Suggesting that the actions of the State and their construction of crime need to be critically analysed, the underlying question behind what constitutes urban crime problems and problem areas, is understanding how these narratives are constructed, and how they define the subject of crime research (Moran, 2014).

Constructionist approaches, applied specifically to questions of knowledge production, provide the '*theoretical foundation to extend the parameters of academic enquiry*' (Jacobs and Manzi 2000: 41). Using several practical examples, Jacobs and Manzi (2000) specifically comment on the validity of constructivism as a method to answer these kinds of research questions; with direct application to housing research. Most relevant to the present study, and in line with the previous assessment of functionalist research practices, they assert that the role of constructionism is to draw on the social context within which action takes place, and further highlight the need for this context to be constitutive of policy discourses and conflict. This resonates with the conception of crime as a social construct, where the actions of individuals are considered against their 'immediate' and 'wider' causes and reactions, which are situated against public and institutional discourse (Taylor *et al.*, 1973). Furthermore, it is also supported by the work of Atkinson and Millington (2019) who suggest that the conditions which affect our understanding of social phenomena are situated within the city context and reflected within [and by] housing.

Returning to the theorisation of housing classes as adopted by Morris (1957), it can be seen that its overarching narrative is one where the narrative concerning the lived realities of individuals, and their social problems, is manifested through the inequalities to which they are subjected. As disproportionate degrees of social controls are exerted towards the most materially [socio-economically] deprived individuals, social control expresses underlying assumptions and operationalisations of power and social order (see, for example, Powell and Robinson, 2019).

Social conditions and processes linked to housing reflect on the wider social ecologies of cities, and in particular their relationship to the geography and the administration of crime. Building towards a social theory of crime, housing can therefore be deployed to emphasise how conditions appraised by criminologists as criminogenic—namely the unequal experiences of people living in cities— are linked to factors external to an individual's conditioning and have a more tangible effect on their ability to overcome problems (Carson *et al*, 2001). Importantly, it demonstrates housing's interrelation with power frameworks; specifically, how institutional power [such as the State or criminal justice system] and systemic powers [global and local socio-economic processes] define, create, shape, and reproduce contemporary constructions of urban crime problems. These perspectives share the same socio-ecological concern as traditional urban criminological studies and shape the scope and direction of research towards unpacking these perceived constructions to understand their effects on social life.

With issues of criminalisation emerging from both legalistic and/or moralistic assessments of social life, the core assumption to consider is that of urban managerialism frameworks by which the lives of many are affected by the decisions of the few (Pahl, 1970). With the concept of urban managerialism Pahl argues that '*social constraints on access to scarce urban resources and facilities*' (Pahl, 1970:201), are dependant both on the geography of resources comparatively to urban populations⁴ as well as, and more importantly, on the bureaucratic

⁴For Pahl, these constraints are relative to the time/cost distance between urban populations in need of these resources, as the relative proximity and distance to opportunities structures socio-ecological (or socio-spatial)

rules and processes of those gatekeeping institutions which distribute control and social resources. He argues that analysis of housing is best carried out at the city level and should involve social, economic, and political structures as these issues appear to be both interrelated and non-randomly distributed. Subsequently, Pahl also argues that the role of the urban sociologist is to question these structures [or constructions], not only to appraise their tangible impact on the powerless, but also to reveal '*how the basic decision affecting life chances in urban areas are made*' (Pahl, 1970:208). Housing and housing policy therefore become a tool for understanding and unpacking issues such as power distribution and the creation of social problems and social competition as crime and crime management practices.

Whilst this literature supports the adoption of housing policy as the focus of criminological analysis, this does not negate the need to acknowledge caveats such as that the focus of housing policies and housing management practices may not be primarily concerned with crime, or crime management. The work of Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) was the first to address this via their conceptualisation and operationalisation of housing systems. The materialisation of these through different tenorial conditions, and tenorial-management practices supports this nuanced understanding of crime problems at the city-level as the by-product of context and inter-related issues. Research, therefore, must be cognisant of the connections, between the subject issue and its context. For instance, this concern how building a constructionist perspective of how housing, is essential to building a criminological understanding of the geography of crime, and vice versa. This is demonstrated by Girling *et al.*, (2000) as references to housing are used to express the same social conditions which affect crime, and in turn the authors also reflect on how crime may determine [in some part] the social conditions and reactions taking place within different types and tenures of housing. Flint (2006b) also demonstrates how housing and neighbourhood management practices also affect the perception and management of housing and neighbourhoods more generally and are shaped

structures. Resulting from this differential distribution, for Pahl is [social] conflict and relationally social understandings of different issues (Pahl 1970:201-202).

by the socio-political contexts linked with policies which define crime and anti-social behaviour management.

Most importantly, these literatures encourage readers to see a connection between the practices of institutions, and implicit assumptions about the legislative management of crime and control. Constructionist frameworks not only supply alternative ways to appraise crime as the product of social experiences and contexts, but also produce an understanding that power imbalances are embedded within the administration of criminal and social justice in ways which are neither objective nor acknowledged within positivist –or functionalist– theoretical conceptualisations of crime (Meier, 1976). Albeit with reservations towards ‘substantial’ offences [defined by Meier, as violent and sexual crimes], Meier summarises the power of [institutional] elites as being central to the definition of ‘*criminal definition process[es]*’ (Meier, 1976:463). As argued below, this is of particular relevance when appraising both crime and morality issues, as materialism is put in function of power. What this means, is that the assumptions taken by positivist epistemologies, such as that socio-economical inequalities cause crime, could be resolved by those with power. Modern societies are based on inequalities which are harmful to the powerless (Bauman, 2000). Adopting a constructionist approach in the context of housing and its relation to crime, means reflecting on the complexities of contemporary liquid modernities, and the underlying State powers, which affect urban spaces in a variety of different ways (Bauman, 2000). Such reflection needs to acknowledge how wider structural and systemic realities are situated in the financial and political realities of neo-liberalism. Specifically, these concern the withdrawal of State resources to support economically vulnerable populations, along with the aforementioned promotion of self-responsibilisation, and personal accountability.

However, functionally, the work of the State can also be perceived as making order, whereas constructionist perspective perpetuate a more dangerous and fluid classifications of knowledge (Sibley, 1995). Nonetheless, as otherwise stated by Hayward and Young (2004:269), the State remains central to this understanding, and therefore must be subjected to critical analysis:

If, by questioning established definitions, focusing on subjective emotions, countering the heartless numeric abstractions of positivistic criminology, and generally adding a human dimension to the late modern crime problem we ‘make a mess of the field’ of criminological

'knowledge' (as currently perceived by rational choice theorists, crime 'mappers' and other practitioners of social control criminology), then let it be stated here without reservation; we make no apology for our actions.

As otherwise emphasised by Sherman (2013), it is an intrinsic part of the scientific process, as promoted by positivist perspectives, to challenge knowledge, by developing and testing alternative hypotheses from data before drawing conclusions on the observed phenomena. It therefore seems plausible to challenge institutional understandings of urban crime problems and problem areas, by turning the attention on the definitions and work of institutions even when, by doing so, no direct answers as to the 'immediate' causes of crime emerge.

3.2. Conceptual framework

This research adopts the work of Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) as a starting point for its conceptual framework, based on idea of 'second-stage research'. Notionally, Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) considered their work as 'first-stage research' and implied how by empirically researching crime at the city-level they broke new theory-building grounds with reference to the issue of urban crime in criminology. This current project recognises how the work in *The Urban Criminal* made significant headway in the empirical and conceptual exploration of how the ecology of urban crime could relate to processes outside the reach of individuals and the formulation of crime as a disorganisation issue. However, as second-stage research it revisits those findings, assumptions, and conclusions to explore how they can be validated or expanded in the present context, including its key concepts.

Summarising the narrative presented by Baldwin *et al.*, 's (1976) quantitative investigation of crime levels across the city, they related how greater proportions of offenders resided in older social housing estates. Concerned with how the relationship between offender rates and offending rates contributed to the understanding of the ecology of crime, they suggested that explanations should extend beyond how these normally contributed to notions about the formation of difficult housing estates. Focussing on the operationalisation of reputation and desirability, they proposed, but did not investigate in greater detail, the extent to which unintentional segregation by the hands of the local authority's letting policies could have affected housing patterns and, thus, the ecology of crime at the city level. This was achieved

through a reflection on the concept of housing class. Through this undertaking, Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) connected the effects of the ecology of housing— namely the distribution of people across space at the hands of social and housing policies— with levels of criminality. However, the breadth and manner by which these notions were explored by Baldwin *et al.*,’s (1976) work, is rather limited. This is particularly true with respect to how they related to housing processes and the work of institutions. These concepts, nevertheless, still provide a significant starting point by which to define the terms and aims of the present study of the ecology of crime in Sheffield.

The first shift that this research takes with respect to the above, is concerned with the definition of problem and problem area. Considering issues of housing and crime jointly, this research adopts an inductive approach to defining both terms. This approach draws on a number of concepts. The first is that of governing through crime proposed by Simon (2007). Simon (2001, 2007) argues how political discourses about crime shape social policy. Idealising vulnerability, attributes of victimhood are set as standards against any offending or normatively deviant behaviours. In turn, the ideal victim becomes a standard against which political and legal powers are set. As the interest of communities are aligned to those of victims, the State is able to wield and exercise political reasoning and regulatory power to turn issues of crime into governable matters. More specifically, the right not to be victimised or fear crime, are not only contextualised within the circumstances which create crime to stigmatise them, but also to justify any further action taken by the State to neutralise them. In this sense, as applied by Crawford and Flint (2009) with reference to the study of anti-social behaviour, this approach not only acknowledges how pervasive issues of crime in organising narratives and interventions are across city spaces (Girling *et al.*, 2000), but also how crime management incorporates elements of housing policies and practices (Crawford and Flint, 2009).

The definition of problem and problem areas, however, also closely related to this construction of housing classes (Morris, 1957), and to urban managerialism (Pahl, 1970). This thesis is indeed concerned with the ecology of crime and the effects housing has on the geography of crime at the urban level. These are joined in this thesis by the concept problem places. For Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) housing is illustrative of political, social, cultural, and

economic contexts; all of which are relevant to understanding the context to crime. More precisely however, housing system plays a greater role in differentiating the organisation of social structures at a city level and reproduce and shape urban inequalities and structures (Atkinson and Millington, 2019). By recognising the systemisation of housing this thesis connects how institutions are involved in the organisation of social spaces and resources, and in turn where and why we perceive crime to be associated to given social conditions, individuals, and tenures.

In exploring and responding to the segregation hypothesis Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) limited their analysis of the role of institutions in perpetuating and concentrating urban inequalities with respect to social housing. Wanting to explore whether the unequal spatial concentration of offenders in older social housing estates could be linked to urban selection processes, including the practice of housing institutions, the authors suggest that institutions may still have an indirect role in the organisation of social housing (Baldwin *et al.*, 1976). Understanding of housing as a system can be influenced by the role of institutions, and this has a tangible effect on the construction of the ecology of crime. With reference to crime taking place in social housing tenures, where people choose to live and whether they offend are not regulated by choice. Rather, choice is organised by the ecology of crime and housing, and how these are regulated at the city-level. Morris (1975) recognises this as he discusses issues of deliberate segregation, but the idea is disputed by Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) when considering the hypothesis that processes of social selections may also impact upon where people live. Nonetheless the distinction which exists between tenures, not least in their reputation and availability, is therefore significant to understand problems and problem areas.

Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) began to reflect on this through the concept of housing tenure. Macro-level distinctions of conditions across housing are specifically expressed through housing tenure, with three core tenures being defined: social housing, private-rented sector housing, and owner-occupied housing. Tenures, in this context display some of the very same class-based distinctions highlighted by Morris (1957), but also reinforce the ability to encompass and express the multitude of issues pertaining to the social ecology of crime at the urban level (Pahl, 1970). The concept of housing systems appraises how tenures are collectively organised

and managed at the city-level processes. Especially if, as emphasised by existing criminological literature (discussed in Chapter Two), social housing tenures continue to be disproportionately affected by crime. With regard to how the organisation of housing affects crime, there is an underlying assumption within existent literature that places a greater emphasis on a grounded understanding and analysis of how housing systems and housing tenure are defined and operationalised, allowing the extension of the understanding of problems and their relation to housing. By association, problem areas are those affected by these practices; and in return, the urban manager becomes involved in the processes which dictate the definition and approaches to problems.

This approach aims to shift knowledge and practices about housing at the centre of analysis, to question whether issues relating to housing and housing management can be used to evidence their effect on the ecology of crime at the city-level. Ultimately, however, this relies on the understanding that the definition of problems and problem areas needs to be inductive and critical. What this means is that these concepts need to be operationalised through the practices and knowledge of institutions. Doing so recognises how problems and problem areas are an issue of social harm and power inequalities in ways that have otherwise been neglected in criminology (Hillyard and Tombs, 2018). Shifting focus towards the work and understanding of institutions, extends criminological thinking through housing towards a social ecology of crime, mindful of constructions, knowledge, and power (Taylor *et al.*, 1973).

This thesis emphasises the importance of unpacking the institutional constructions of problems with relation to housing in ways not considered by *The Urban Criminal*. Tenure, from this perspective, not only becomes a tool by which to understand the geographical and temporal overlapping of victims, offenders, and opportunities. It also allows to explore the definition of problems and problem areas. Consequently, this work's Sheffield case study becomes an example of how criminological thought can explain the ways in which urban crime is manifested as a systemic issue, that explores the hypothetical influences that institutions play in this.

3.3. Research focus

The research in this thesis uses Sheffield as an exemplifying case study to explore the proposition that housing systems can be utilised to expand criminological knowledge about urban crime. Concerned with the analysis of how local conditions and circumstances can be examples of ‘commonplace situations’ (Bryman, 2016), this research proposes that, through a focus on housing, it is possible to examine how the management of housing and the definition of crime problems are intertwined. Taking the seminal work of Baldwin *et al.* (1976) as a starting point, the Sheffield case study constitutes a unique opportunity to address these issues with reference to a relatively ‘ordinary’ city, and with respect to the issues of social and institutional change.

Compared to other cities in the North of England, Sheffield appears as a relatively safe city, with low levels of crime, and moderate instances of anti-social behaviour (Robinson, 2018). Comparatively, whilst cities such as Manchester, Nottingham, and Newcastle regularly recorded above-average violent and serious crimes rates, Sheffield data only flagged a higher-than-average rate of Anti-Social-Behaviour incidents, with an estimate of 536 incidents per 10,000 people each year,⁵ As a city, Sheffield has also long been described as a socio-politically stable city (Hunt, 1956; Baldwin *et al.*, 1976; Ferrari and Powell, 2013), with few changes to its permanent resident populations.⁶ Nonetheless the city has been shaped by a number of significant events, amongst which have been the rapid de-industrialisation of the city in the last decades of the last century, and the rise of socio-economical inequalities across the North of England. These have impacted the social, demographical, and economic growth of the city in ways that have accentuated place-based inequalities and social divisions (Robinson, 2018).

⁵ The Robinson (2018) study compared the cities of Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, and Nottingham, due to their relative population sizes and geographical locations. The ASB sample included ASB and public order offences, whereas alongside violence other crimes included were burglary, theft from person, sexual assaults, drug offences and possession of weapons. (Robinson, 2018)

⁶ A notable exception to this, not addressed in great depth for the analysis of this thesis is the growing student population, with an estimated population of the university of Sheffield to be approximately 60,000 students (more information is available on The University of Sheffield (2016) *Living in Sheffield: All you need to know about our city and accommodation*, Essential guides 2016. Sheffield: The University of Sheffield).

With respect to these geographies of social changes, Sheffield has also been subjected to a wealth of national policies that regulate crime and housing. As crime and social policies continue to exert pressures on matters of self-responsibilisation and policing of non-normative behaviour, through the introduction of Community Safety Partnerships, this study values these circumstances as an opportunity approach the relationship between criminal and social justice institutions in the administration of social life at the city-level. With an overarching focus on crime control, it concerns how housing is operationalised and related to crime, and how institutions involved with the management of crime and housing define problems and problem areas. Specifically, the thesis is concerned with whether existing changes in the availability of social, private-rented, and owner-occupied housing tenures, have affected the geography and of crime. Re-assessing and re-studying the effects of housing on crime to update Baldwin *et al.*'s (1976) perspectives on the ecology of urban crime, this research takes a unique approach on the relationship between housing and crime. By focussing on institutional definitions, processes, and actions, concerning the definition of crime problems, and problem areas, the research uses Sheffield's context to construct a narrative understanding of crime at the city level (Flyvbjerg, 2006), and seeks to answer what role criminal and social justice institutions play in the administration of social life at the city-level.

Three overarching research questions are addressed in this work

1. How are patterns of crime and offending distributed in the city?
2. How are urban problem areas constructed given changing social and tenurial forces?
3. How are changing tenure structures, and their spatial distribution, influencing patterns of crime, disorder, and social harm in the city?

In answering the first research question, the thesis explores where crime in Sheffield seems to take place, and how offences are clustered across the city landscape. As with many other criminological studies, these questions are designed to unpack the quantitative and geographical aspects of officially recorded crime. On the surface, police-recorded data is used to portray a picture of whether crime does cluster in any parts of the city. However, for this research, this focus is more targeted to examine whether and how patterns of crime relate

to housing tenure. Here, tenurial and geographical aspects of crime are used to question the clustering of offences more critically against longstanding beliefs that certain areas—namely social housing tenures— are expected to be disproportionately more affected by crime than others. Whilst Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) addressed this issue by operationalising the extent to which tenures are affected by offending and offender rates for predominantly acquisitive crimes, this study more closely examines the differences between different offence types and different types of locations. In the first instance, acquisitive, violent, and sexual offences are considered against the wealth of police incident data. Secondly, the relationship between tenure and crime is deeply examined by considering the differences between where crime and incidents take place, where the suspects of these offences are thought to reside, and finally where victims reside.

This quantitative analysis of crime takes these issues into consideration with reference to tenure. As both a unit of measurement commonly used in criminological research, and a concept onto which narratives linked to the work and understanding of crime and social control institutions the objective of use is two-fold. First, it aims to update a tenure-based understanding of crime from the work of Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) to investigate whether any significant tenurial-based differences have emerged or not. Secondly, by using official data also utilised by police, local authority, and their partner agencies within the local Community Safety Partnership, the research triangulates qualitative data about their knowledge, assumptions, and actions with respect to crime and housing in Sheffield. Through so doing, it constructs a baseline against which official narratives can be more critically analysed with respect to what these institutions know and how they know it.

The second research question explores the issue of knowledge production with respect to institutional beliefs concerning the causes of crime. Having established, through quantitative analysis, which crimes and incidents are more likely to affect some areas of the city than others, this question turns to those working with or within Community Safety Partnerships—namely police, local authorities, housing managers, third sector organisations, and local communities—to understand what they perceive to be problems and problem areas in Sheffield. As discussed, existing empirical research has long established that socio-economically deprived socio-economic conditions, lack of social cohesion, and

neighbourhood heterogeneity contribute to greater proportions of crime (Weisburd, 2012). Research has also empirically connected these conditions to areas of social housing in the UK (Hancock, 2010). This question does not seek to refute this empirical evidence. Rather it seeks to question whether this may or may not be a tautology.

As an issue of stigma, and whether residents of social housing may be unduly singled out against those living in other conditions, disorganised and deprived conditions also exist in areas where social housing is not the predominant tenure type. Similarly, conditions of poverty and reduced community cohesion do not mean that residents of social housing are necessarily more likely than others to be committing or victimised by more crime. However, if and how institutions believe this, may contribute to making it so. This research question delves more deeply into the beliefs and practices of Community Safety Partnership, and through so doing seeks to understand how their work is organised at the city-level. It aims to establish whether they believe, or act, on any perceived links between housing and tenure. Critically analysing any links between tenure and crime in their work, is particularly important as the work of public institutions is notoriously disproportionately linked with social housing. Questioning whether this is a limiting factor to their knowledge of urban crime, the thesis questions how — and potentially why — the role that institutions play shape the ecology of crime at the city level.

The third research question addresses the relationship between housing and crime from the perspective of tenure-related structures and their operation. Building on empirical data derived from the previous questions, it explores how housing systems can affect crime. Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) introduced the concept of segregation to explain how social housing can be more criminogenic than other tenure types. However, their analysis of housing management practices — namely of Sheffield's choice-based allocation policies— proposed no measure of intentional segregation. With this assertion they imply that individuals retained agency over where they lived. For Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) this meant that the relationship between housing and crime, returned to predominantly affected by individual-level aspects relating to crime and disorganisation, and the perceived reputation and desirability of social housing. Contemporary social housing, despite being residualised, remains a tenure whose purpose is to home those problem individuals. What remains

outstanding from criminological analysis, is how current social policies, for example, the Housing Act 1996, create mechanism binding institutions to the management of community-level issues. From this perspective, this third research question provides an opportunity to deconstruct the meaning of tenure structures and their relations to crime, disorder, and social harm, to uncover any further constructed links between issues at the city level.

3.4. Research design

Analytically and from a perspective of data collection, this research follows a mixed-method design. This method was chosen to recognise the primacy of exploring the constructions of problems and problem areas in Sheffield as the primary area of research, and to enable these to be critically complimented by quantitative analysis and interpretation of crime and incident data (Creswell *et al.*, 2003). With a wealth of previous research concerning the criminology of place and its relation to policing of behaviours in the city, the research adopted a research design which allowed data collection to build and shape the definitions of problems and the relationships between housing and crime inductively, as portrayed by the statutory organisations working in Sheffield (Robson, 2002; Creswell, 2003). Having chosen to adopt constructionist ontology and epistemology, the primary strengths of this method rely on its ability to address the issues of completeness and offset as described by Bryman (2016). Combining qualitative and quantitative research methodologies enables the author to provide a fuller picture of the issues under study, whilst ensuring that participants' perspectives are captured alongside the numerical realities generated by official data.

The chosen research method possesses a good fit with the overarching research question, as well as clearly relating to the stages of data collection and analysis (Heap and Waters, 2019). As discussed by Jacobs and Manzi (2000), with reference to constructionist conceptualisation of issues of housing, constructionism is concerned with issues of reflexivity in research and a focus on relational processes. Allowing qualitatively abstracted perspectives from practitioners to integrate quantitative data realities, allowed the author to construct a more integrated narrative, wherein taken-for-granted understandings and assumptions about housing and crime were unpacked further.

The study followed a sequential Qualitative→ Quantitative data collection approach (Kroll and Neri, 2009). However, leaning on qualitative research paradigm, the integration of quantitative and qualitative findings recurred to the originally intended Qualitative→ Quantitative ordering, as otherwise supported in mixed-method analysis (Bryman, 2016). This meant that quantitative data was intended to play a supportive role to qualitative analysis. In this way, the quantitative data was designed to both collect and analyse contextual information about the Sheffield case study, contextualising analysis by providing a geographical exploration and therefore complimenting qualitative interpretations of crime and housing at the city-level. Qualitative data instead meant to explore and question the existence of narratives and relations between the issues of housing and crime as articulated by research participants and reflect on the construction of housing and crime problems based on the knowledge presented by the research participants.

To analyse how this research design operated, four discrete elements of this approach were examined. First the operational framework in which this study is situated. Second, the quantitative data collection and analysis techniques which were employed as part of this research. Third, the main qualitative data collection and analysis strategies. Finally, the integrative data collection techniques employed during the course of the research to deal with emerging shortcomings and gaps in the data.

3.4.1. Operational framework: Sheffield's Community Safety Partnership

A number of significant legislative developments have changed the housing and social control regulatory framework since the writing of Baldwin *et al.*'s 1976 *The Urban Criminal*. Exploring their effects and application to the Sheffield case study is crucial for defining the operational context analysed by this thesis.

The first of these changes, under the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, brought into legislation the creation of Community Safety Partnership. Under Sections 5-7 of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act local authorities held Statutory Responsibilities to form local multi-agency partnerships which comprised a mixture of statutory services, local and national charities, and private organisations that would act in a multi-agency partnership. Placed at the heart of the

city-level governance, these were then tasked to identify and coordinate local responses to crime disorder, including issues of crime and community safety, and specifically anti-social behaviour, drugs, and alcohol misuse (Crawford 1999, 2001). The underlying rationale for joint working within the urban management framework was to extend the reach of traditional criminal justice institutions across the city landscape; an approach that recognised that solutions to crime issues would be best achieved via a partnership-based holistic approach to the many dimensions of crime (Crawford and Jones, 1995). Their inception however, arguably, only reinforced the importance of the police and local authorities, with the duties required resulting in only a nominal and tokenistic engagement with third-sector, private, and community partners (Crawford, 1999). Whilst consultation with, and the involvement of, communities was not absent from the government's thinking the consensus is that communities were expected to benefit through the improvements that they brought to the administration of criminal justice at the local level rather than through more direct involvement (Hancock, 2001).

Alongside Community Safety Partnerships, other government initiatives between 1994 and 2010 sought to reform approaches to crime, deviance, and social control; for example, the introduction of the New Deal for Communities initiative, followed by Anti-Social Behaviour Orders and Parenting Orders (Card, 2006; Nixon and Parr, 2006). The New deal for Communities initiative sought to tackle socio-economically deprived areas with high levels of crime and unemployment, with more of the same 'regulated-self-regulation' attitude (Hancock, 2001). This program was formulated with the belief that, to change the prospect of each community, regeneration needed to take place from the bottom-up. This operationalised individuals within communities at the centre of regeneration and saw their [expected] active involvement and participation as crucial elements to the re—shaping of communities. Incidentally, this also meant that those not engaging, or participating to the expected extent, would be labelled as anti-social, and thought to undermine the institutionally led regulatory framework.

Not unlike the proposed benefits of the Right-to-Buy scheme, this would have affected not only neighbourhood renewal, but also the attitude of local residents to partaking in community development, and the extent to which they were prepared to do so. Whilst this

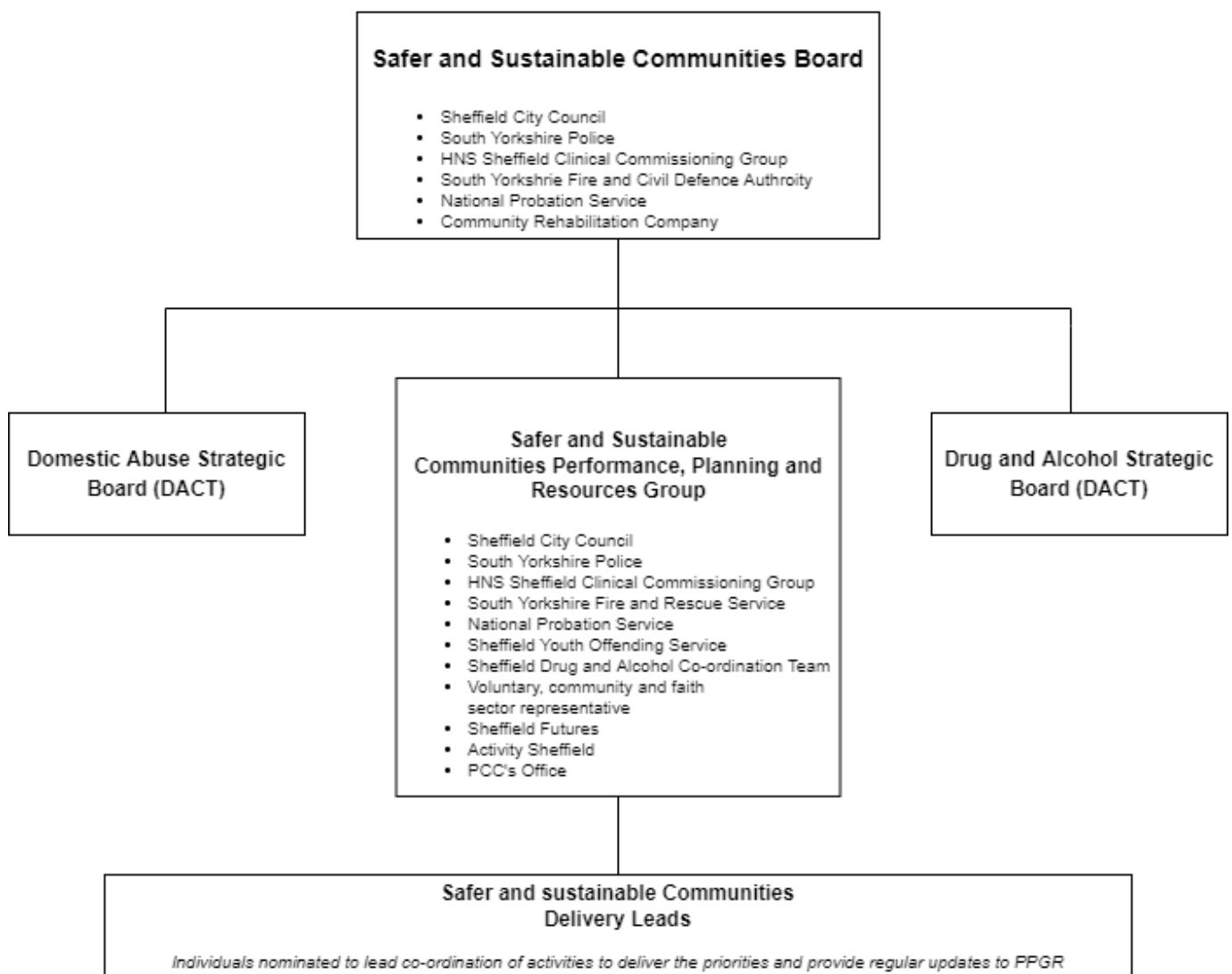
approach, reportedly, had measurable and tangible effects in bettering some of the communities chosen for participation in the funded program, criticisms of their failure to adopt more holistic and critical understandings of the potential causes of urban crime have been made of this administrative approach to solving urban crime. Specifically, these referred to the failure to measure how the punitive regulation of crime and deviant behaviour also had detrimental effects on the labelling and stigmatisation of marginalised and vulnerable communities (Batty *et al.*, 2010).

The introduction of Anti-Social Behaviour legislation, such as the 2003 Anti-Social Behaviour Act, furthered the stigmatisation and targeting of deviance, and in particular of those living in social housing. Furthering the perception of lawlessness and deviancy as criminality, alongside narratives concerning the extent to which welfare recipients are deserving of support, negatively affected social housing tenants (Flint, 2006b). These policies introduced the idea of active citizenship and expanded the powers of local authorities to regulate tenants' behaviour. Flourishing in the context of short-term, performance-indicator-based programs, these policies promoted punitivism solutions for inactive and semi-criminal citizens along the neo-liberal ideology of self-help (Crawford, 2006a). As proposed by Flint (2006b), with reference to the [un]ambiguous way in which these powers allowed the state to regulate behaviours in public spaces, these practices blurred the boundaries between crime and housing management, between public and private spaces, and between the civil and criminal justice systems. Examples of these, as amended by the Anti-Social Behaviour and Policing Act 2014, include '*conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person...or nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person's occupation of residential premises, or... causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person.*' (ASB Crime and Policing Act 2014, s.2). Legal provisions have therefore formalised a series of toolkits for Local Authorities, Police, and Community Safety Partnerships, to deal with these problems, including the use of Civil Injunctions, Criminal Behaviour Orders, Dispersal Orders, Community Protection Notices, Public Space Protection Orders and Closure Orders (Heap, 2016).

From the perspective of Community Safety Partnership, Sheffield was no different than expected with Sheffield's Safer and Sustainable Community Safety Partnership [SSCP]

including a hierarchically organised series of agencies that encompassed statutory institutions, private bodies, and third-sector organisations. Politically resonant with the aim to ‘*enhance feelings of safety, [and] increase community cohesion*’ (SSCP, 2018:5) the three-tiered organisation of the partnership – summarised in *Table 3.i*— sought to deliver strategic planning and operational management for its member organisations. Given this, the Partnership’s board was set up to account to senior managers within the local authority and police service, with other statutory and third-sector organisations playing supporting roles in co-ordinating agenda-setting for all matters of crime, anti-social-behaviour, and drug and alcohol misuse. In this context, the partners’ role was that of jointly liaise to tackle identified problems.

Table 3.i: Structure of Sheffield’s Safer and Sustainable Community Partnership, May 2015



Source: SSCP, 2018

From a crime and community safety perspective, the partnership held strategic responsibilities towards assessing, setting and, prioritising targets. This was immediately significant with respect to identifying key research participants, (as discussed below, and Chapter Six). Ultimately, this structure, also allowed the prompt identification of the partnership's crime targets, which at the time of research were: (i) Gang and youth violence, including knife crime; (ii) Hate crime against the most vulnerable; (iii) Modern slavery and human trafficking; (iv) Domestic abuse and violence against women and girls (including FGM, honour-based violence and forced marriage) (SSCP, 2018:5).

Ultimately, the involvement of the local authority as both a leading agency in this framework, and as a regulator and accountable agency with respect to the administration of social housing – as discussed in Chapter Two and Chapter Seven – provided some insights into issues of crime and housing management, and their likely relationship. Dependant on the actual administrative structuring of these duties within the local authority, these different interrelated roles and duties could create a conceptual framework wherein the causes and effects of housing or crime management strategies may mischaracterise the perception and knowledge of the relationship between the two related issues. In other words, the local authority could be thought to need to carefully balance its involvement in crime and housing management practices as a social landlord, against its role as a key stakeholder within the community partnership, due to the likely disproportionate power of affecting the narratives surrounding problems and problem areas.

This kind of reflexive thinking as to the context of research and the relationship between empirical and administrative realities is of significant importance when considering the work and aims of Baldwin *et al.*, (1976), and the potential contributions of this research to conceptualisations of urban crime. Replicating the same analysis as *The Urban Criminal* without reflecting on the contexts around the administration of criminal justice, would likely neglect how, why, and by whom, crime problems are defined and how, why, where, and by whom, they are tackled. The work of Community Safety Partnerships appeared to be a constituent element of the relationship between housing and crime management at the city level.

3.4.2. Crime in Sheffield: a qualitative analysis of quantitative data

Principally seeking to address the first research question— *how are patterns of crime and offending distributed in cities?* — the research relied on secondary sources of data on crime, as provided by police-recorded data, and housing by integrating Census and local authority data. Police data provided by South Yorkshire Police was chosen as the main source of information for crime data. This decision was based on a utilitarian rationale. Police-recorded crime data, irrespective of concerns regarding the completeness and accuracy of these data – commonly referred to as the dark figure of crime (Penney, 2014), and the grey figure of crime (Hope, 2010; Aplin, 2019)— remained the most suitable complete and readily accessible dataset by which to analyse city-level crime patterns, and intra-city level differences. On the whole, police data provided three sets of baseline information that were key to the chosen analysis: the date when recorded offences took place, the location where offences were committed, and the type of offence committed. However, the process of requesting access to the data refined how these initial generic variables were shaped.

Access to data was originally requested through the N8 Policing Research Partnership (<https://www.n8research.org.uk/>) but only granted after in-person discussion with South Yorkshire Police’s nominated Chief Inspector for Neighbourhood policing in Sheffield, and oversight from the constabulary’s Corporate Information and Information Security departments. During this process, the exact details of the data requested were defined and agreed so as to allow as much information to be shared without breaching any concerns regarding the use of personal data under the Data Protection Act 2018. The first guiding criteria was the provision of the most extensive and comparable time series dataset that the police could supply. The second, was the provision of anonymised micro-level data.

Starting with the issues of timeframes, data was captured for the city of Sheffield between the dates of January 2012 and October 2018. The starting date was defined around South Yorkshire’s first implementation of the new Home Office Counting Rules (Home Office, 2013). The cut-off date was dictated by when the request to access data was forwarded to South Yorkshire Police – i.e., at the start of this study’s empirical research. Home Office counting rules defined the type of data that was made available. The basis of Home-Office categorisation of police data also supplied the anonymisation required for all data; each

recorded offence was logged with a unique alphanumeric identifier. Further data sharing precautions concerning the process of removing further detail from each dataset prior to fulfilling data-sharing requirements set by the researcher's institution and funding body, persuaded South Yorkshire Police to share data micro-level data as required for this study's analysis. Every recorded offence was supplied as point-data. Point-data, referring to the geographical and spatial qualities of the data, allowed the identification of the precise location where each offence was recorded to have taken place. When these data was plotted against a map of Sheffield, these points identified unique addresses where each offence was committed not street centroids—the central point of a street— as otherwise commonly reported on publicly available datasets.

The resulting database provided a log of uniquely identified data, timestamped with the date and time when the offences were first recorded on police systems, categorised according to offence 'type' and 'group', and geo-localised through Easting and Northing coordinates. The crime data provided by South Yorkshire police was also integrated with three additional subsets. The first of these was incident data, a term conceptualised to reflect how Home-Office recording standards only included recorded instance of a crimes, but not data concerning non-criminal offences. From this perspective, reflecting on the role of Community Safety Partnership to regulate disputes and altercation within neighbourhoods, incident data was operationalised to include instances of anti-social behaviour. Anti-social behaviour in particular was thought to constitute an important measure of both perceived community cohesion (SSCP, 2018:5). It also provided a discrete measure of the likely perceived character of different areas. Incident data was therefore extracted from South Yorkshire Police's log of all 'call-for-service' data, therefore provided a record of records across six discrete categories defined by South Yorkshire police: (i) administration; (ii) anti-social behaviour; (iii) crime-related; (iv) not an incident; (v) public safety; (vi) transport.

The second subset, inclusive of suspect data was conceptualised to resemble the offender residence data in Baldwin *et al.*, (1976). Different from Baldwin *et al.*'s (1976) offender data, suspect data was operationalised as including the residence address for individuals who South Yorkshire Police suspected of crimes committed in Sheffield. Despite 'offender-only' residence addresses being available on police databases, during preliminary data sharing

discussions, South Yorkshire Police expressed their unwillingness to provide residence data for convicted offenders.⁷ The solution to this was found by selecting a more liberally defined kind of data, suspect data, in which the home addresses of convicted offenders were provided undifferentiated from those of non-convicted offenders. Ultimately, this operationalisation, provided two key advantages. First, this definition provided access to a wider dataset of residence addresses, and thus a greater analysis base for the research. Second, the inclusion of non-convicted offender data was constructive for police-based ecologies of crime in Sheffield. Even in cases where the non-differentiation of offender and non-offender data could be thought of as a limitation—keeping the research from being able to analyse these groups separately—this choice could also be thought as beneficial; integrating the two allowed a determination of presumed suspect rates, not unlike Baldwin *et al.*'s (1976) offender rates, with the presumption that the former would provide a better idea of underlying police assumptions about each area. Indeed, irrespective of whether a suspect was arrested, charged, and convicted, officers likely allowed their assumptions about problem areas to be informed by their encounters with individuals committing offences.

Lastly, a victim data subset was also provided by South Yorkshire police, it, provided police-recorded home addresses for victims of crime. This dataset also contained no clear distinction between victims of convicted and non-convicted offenders. Nevertheless, the dataset not only allowed the crime, incident, suspect, and victim data subsets to be compared, and also enabled geographical data to be matched across the other datasets. Unlike previous criminological studies this triple-location approach allowed the present study to take a further step in highlighting the plurality of problem areas based on whether they could be defined by the proportion of offences/incidents taking place in a given location, areas' offender rates, and the proportion of victims residing in individual areas.

Census data extracted from the 2011 Census (Office for National Statistics, 2017), was selected to provide both GIS boundaries as well as aggregate-level descriptive variables on

⁷ The reason for this reluctance were never clearly articulated to the researcher. This was generically explained as an issue of operationalisation, related to how the term 'offender' had been coded into South Yorkshire Police Systems.

the socio-ethnographic and housing characteristics of different spatial geographies. Census data was specifically selected because it allowed –when accessed via the InFuse service of the UK Data Service– the author to select and download relevant aggregate data at different operational levels of measurement. Selecting the ‘administrative boundaries’ category, two geographical unit of analysis were employed. First, for macro-level analysis, electoral ward level-data and boundaries were chosen to provide a generalised geographical impression of data, representing the electoral district of Sheffield (Office for National Statistics, 2011). Second, and for micro-level analysis, output areas were chosen as the smallest aggregate unit of analysis, as they presented ‘*similar population sizes and be as socially homogeneous as possible based on tenure of household and dwelling type*’ (Office for National Statistics, 2022).

Two key issues were taken into consideration when selecting these two geographies. First, analytical scale. Specifically, as highlighted by Robinson, (2009 [1950]), the concept of the ecological fallacy. What Robinson emphasised was that it is not possible to draw inferences about individual behaviour from aggregate measures of social life; even in the most socially homogeneous conditions, there is likely to be a degree of heterogeneity which is masked by aggregate-level data. In simpler terms, what may be true for an area –high rates of violence and crime–, may not fail to fairly reflect all other individuals living in that area. It is therefore not only important not to assume that what is valid for an area will be valid for all individuals, but also relevant not to mix the different types of data when studying social conditions. Acknowledging that micro-level differences would exist, homogeneous in this sense, referred to a best-fit estimation of the predominant characteristics of each area. Upscaling, namely making generalisations about the condition of an area/group with aggregated area/group-level data with adequate cautions is therefore thought to be acceptable (Goodchild, 2011). From this perspective, especially as the analysis within this research relied on exploratory non-causal analysis of data, not seeking to draw individual-level generalisations from aggregate data, no significant issues emerged with respect to the intended data, analysis, and their use.

The second issue with selecting these data, was the stability and reliability of boundaries over time. Any boundaries, whether across time, space, or origin, are subject to change; this means that, to at least some extent, boundary choices are arbitrary (Wang and Hall, 1996).

Furthermore, considering ongoing debates concerning the validity of abstract geographical boundaries such as those of neighbourhoods (Clapp and Wang, 2006; Campbell *et al.*, 2009; Davidson, 2019), Census data provided a universal standard for data analysis, and meant that the data from different sources could be reliably measured and compared against the same standards.

Selecting boundaries from the 2011 Census, meant that the relevant Output Areas (n=1817), and administrative wards (n=28), contained relevant information regarding the tenure type, ethnicity, and socio-economic status of households, as well as dwelling characteristics. All of these variables, tenure data—whose characteristics are explored in further detail in Chapters Four and Five—referred to the overall number of households in Sheffield. Households were chosen as the operative unit of measurement as they also coincided with the last dataset utilised in this research. A dataset containing information pertaining to social housing which was provided by the local authority's Department of Housing was also collected, and analysed, alongside housing data from the Census. These data was comprised of two categories of data. First, a geographically accurate map –in shapefile format⁸– of social housing, which included a breakdown by each [social] housing provider. Second, geo-located data detailing a number of the characteristics of the local-authority managed tenancies. Amongst these were data on duration of tenancy, how long properties had been unoccupied for, and number of properties advertised in each patch every year. These data were originally provided in a form approximated to 'housing patches', a unit of measurement used by the local authority to divide housing geographies of approximately 100-300 property sizes. Operationally, housing patches identified areas assigned to individual housing officers. However, to harmonise the analysis, the spatial location of housing areas was aggregated to Census ward and output area geographies; this prevented inconsistencies generated by the

⁸ Shapefile format is a term used to describe a type of Geographical Information System [GIS] files, which is formally defined as a '*nontopological format for storing the geometric location and attribute information of geographic features*'. In simpler terms, it refers to a file, not dissimilar to a physical or digital map, which displays a number of points or polygons across space (Environmental Systems Research Institute [ESRI], 2016). In this case, the aforementioned shapefile, simply represented each social housing home recorded by the Local Authority. When opened in GIS software and overlaid onto a map of Sheffield, this helped identifying the location of all social housing in Sheffield, accurate to the date the file was shared.

scaling of different arbitrary geographical boundaries, and the lack of housing measures for areas across Sheffield where no data existed for social housing managed or previously owned by the local authority.

A number of quantitative and spatial data analyses were carried out on these data. SPSS, software was used for most statistical analysis, and ArcGIS for spatial and geographical analysis. The results are explored in Chapters Four and Five, with analysis including a number of descriptive statistics concerning the frequency, and variability of data across time, being followed by correlation analysis between crime and housing variables. The choice not to involve causal analysis was undertaken so as to respect the qualitative, and constructionist paradigm adopted by this thesis. Rather than presuming to be able to test the predictive strength of causal relationships—given the complexity of naturally presenting social and ecological conditions— correlation analysis was selected as an exercise of restraint (Hirschi and Gottfredson, 1990). By ‘limiting’ analysis to observing the quality of relationships between data, statistical analysis sought not to impose an apparent order out of empirical chaos. On the contrary, this information was used to conceptualise what is in common between crime and housing data and seek to further unpack and triangulate the research findings (Heap and Waters, 2019).

Spatial analysis focussed on the mapping of geographical patterns in order to explore which areas of Sheffield were most affected by different offences, and to uncover whether there were any spatial relationships between crime, incident, offender, and victim data. To achieve this a mixture of spatial descriptive statistics, hot-spot analysis, and journey-to-crime analysis was undertaken. Firstly, housing and crime data was utilised to visualise the clustering of offences and social housing with relation to inequalities in Sheffield. Of particular interest was the analysis of crime clusters. Specifically, this entailed visualising where different crime types clustered, and comparing these data to the predominant tenure type of those areas. With tenure rates computed utilising the number of households present in any one given area, against the number of total households in the same output areas this provided a visualisation of which areas of Sheffield were most affected by crime.

Cluster modelling through hot-spot mapping was used to provide a measure of spatial concentration (Anselin et al., 2008). As a spatial statistical tool to compute clustering, hot-

spot mapping was employed to provide a measure of where and how different offences concentrated across space. Interpreted through degrees of standard deviation, the mapping was used to triangulate the findings concerning the statistical correlation between housing and crime. This method sought to overcome concerns lined with the use of irregular geographical boundaries, such as those of Output Areas, with resident population data used to normalise the findings of hot-spot analysis (Chainey et al., 2008; Andersen and Mallesons, 2013). Hotspot analysis would therefore not only represent statistically significant areas where crime clustered (hot-spots) or not (cold-spot); but further, normalising these results through resident population, would also then provide a measure of how disproportionately likely (high, positive measures of standard deviation) or unlikely (low or negative measures of standard deviation) residents of different Output Areas would be to be affected by crime. Finally, utilising a combination of GIS software and statistical analysis, a journey-to- crime analysis was undertaken over the selected crime, suspect, and victim sample. These were computed taking the distances between suspect residence addresses and the location where offences took place, and then the distance between victims residence and crime places. Spatial correlation analysis was employed to discuss how the differences in tenure type could affect the offence-specific distance travelled by suspects and victims in line with existing literature (Wikström, 1991a; Livingston *et al.*, 2014).

3.4.3. Qualitative data: a narrative of problems

At the core of the qualitative investigation of the relationship between housing and crime were forty-two semi-structured interviews with a range of housing and police practitioners, as well as local Sheffield residents (see *Table 3.ii*). Initially, access to police and local authority practitioners was negotiated through the N8 policing network with respective service managers, and in liaison with organisation's human resources and the data protection staff responsible for scrutinising and approving aspects of research. Importantly, this process set clear boundaries for the research, and established set points of contact within the respective institutions. This reflected the conditions of an 'outsider-outsider' relationship between institutions and researcher and set bureaucratically driven and risk-averse conditions to negotiating access to resources and data (Breen, 2007). However, this relationship changed subtly shortly before the beginning of fieldwork (spring-summer 2019), after the author

independently contacted Sheffield's council Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Community Safety. This contact, initially envisaged as that of a few elite [power-holding] research participants (Aberbach and Rockman, 2002), resulted in the author being able to establish a closer relationship with key managers within the local authority's Safer Neighbourhood Services Team, (in which most of the research was situated, and contacts established). As a result of this interaction, the researcher was introduced to the manager of the Safer Neighbourhood Services Team— a team situated within the local authority but comprised of both council and police employees.

With South Yorkshire Police also agreeing to defer the management of any research activity to the Police manager within the team (a police sergeant), the Safer Neighbourhood Services team became the de-facto setting of the research. Other than becoming a convenient and easily accessible source of data, the council's Safer Neighbourhood Services team was also instrumental in carrying out most of the research interviews. Their role at the core of the Community Partnership meant that, as discussed in Chapter Six in greater detail, many other functions and departments of the local authority, police, and third-sector organisations were connected to this department. Initially, contacts and research interviews were carried out through snowballing and other non-probability sampling techniques. These entailed building from the initial contacts to draw out the basic inter-organisational structure on the Community Safety Partnership and to identify key gatekeepers. Once identified, introductions, recommendations, and referrals to these contacts relied on professional's relationship to other members of the Community Safety Partnership to secure interviews.

This approach also improved the degree of access and trust within the department and meant that it developed into one that was more akin to the position of an 'outsider-insider' (Breen, 2007). Indeed, and at least with respect to the team's gatekeepers (the local authority's service manager, and the police sergeant allocated to the team), the researcher was allowed to work and interact with a degree of freedom [mainly, less supervision] when spending time in the team's office spaces. This allowed him to observe and interact with practitioners during their normal day-to-day tasks; of crucial importance to establishing each team-member's role and also enabled him to have a number of informal conversations which directed subsequent sampling of participants for interviews.

The ability to cultivate more personal relationships with research participants and, being a present and observant participant to daily social interactions in the office environment, likely had a positive effect on the atmosphere of the interviews. This was noticeable as, over the course of a few weeks, participants sought to volunteer professional opinions and comments regarding their work, and how it was shaped by their experiences rather than solely referring the researcher to policies, documents, and formal processes. This environment was particularly beneficial to addressing the core of the research's aims; seeking to uncover institutional practices and knowledge through the narratives of practitioners, including where practice deviated from policy and experience-informed action. On a more pragmatic level, the improved social relationship with research participants also meant that the researcher began to be recommended/introduced to other colleagues and invited to key meetings and events organised by the team as an observer.

These relationships also supported the process of contacting local housing associations. With these being separate, and private entities from the Community Partnership, contact with them was initially reliant on the author being able to establish contacts with housing associations through their public facing channels. At the beginning of the research, this yielded limited success, as initial contact with housing associations took place via planned personalised phone calls and emails. The first obstacle to successful interactions, defined as those where an organisation responded, appeared to depend on the extent to which organisations had kept up-to-date logs of key organisational contacts on their websites. Subsequently, the next most significant obstacle was the extent to which employees were able to refer those initial enquiries to relevant colleagues across relevant team. This appeared to rely on good intra-organisation knowledge and networks, but likely indirectly relied on the ability of organisation to effectively handle generic inquiries from the public through either email or phone. In practice, researcher-initiated interactions, translated to seven housing associations operating in Sheffield (out of a total of twenty), responding or forwarding initial request for collaboration with three of these being positive. Four additional organisations were engaged, at a later date, through professional referrals and recommendations initiated by research participants from the local authority.

Table 3.ii: Interview Sample

Local Authority (n=14)	Police (n=10)	Housing Providers (n=5)	Community representatives (n=10)	Other Participant (n=3)
Cabinet member Housing & Neighbourhood manager SNS senior manager SNS operational manager SNS Community Partnership lead PRS lead SNS Fortify lead Housing services lead Housing manager (East) Housing manager (North) Council's TARA coordinator SNS Housing Officer SNS officer SNS officer	Chief Inspector (Neighbourhood policing) Inspector (North) Inspector (East) Inspector (South-East) Sergeant (North) Sergeant (Central P.C. (East) PCSO (North) ASB Officer (SNS) Data analyst (SNS)	South Yorkshire Housing Great Places Housing Places for People Housing Arches Housing ACIS Housing	Bramhall TARA Badger TARA Broad Lane TARA Darnall TARA Flower TARA Longley TARA Norfolk Park TARA Park Hill TARA Richmond TARA Wensley TARA	Voluntary Action Sheffield Manor & Castle Development Trust Community Organisation (Children's activities)

Table 3.iii: Additional research interactions, observations, informal conversations

Local Authority (n=5)	Police (n=2)	Housing Providers (n=1)	Community representatives (n=5)	Other Participant (n=1)
Housing officer (North) Housing officer (North) Housing officer (East) Data analyst Manor & Castle community meeting (housing providers + local authority)	PCSO (North) PCSO (East)	Sanctuary Housing	Wensley TARA community meeting (Local Authority+ Police+ TARA) Lansdowne TARA Stannington TARA Stradbroke TARA Dore & Totley TARA	Private Rented Sector Activist Group Private homeowner renting their property

One of the key obstacles quoted by most were, allegedly, concerns created by institutions coming to terms with [at the time] newly introduced GDPR regulations. Specifically, these concerned organisational uncertainties about the process of organising research interviews, and the implications regarding data sharing and research agreements under the revised GDPR requirements. However, after receiving limited engagement, service managers within the Safer Neighbourhood Services team aided in arranging three interviews with local housing associations which had previously refused to participate. In a similar fashion, the local authority also provided a list of contacts for local Tenants and Residents Associations [TARAS].

With respect to ethical considerations and informed, consensual, participation in the research, at the time of contact research participants outside the local authority and the Police—who already had been provided briefing documents and consent forms— were provided a researcher-written note about the scope and aims of the research, with attached participant information sheets and consent forms, see *Appendix B*. After establishing a point of contact within each group or organisation, initial conversations were aimed at enabling reciprocal introductions and creating an opportunity for prospective interviewees to ask any question regarding the research, and its scope. Normally these conversations began via email and, thereafter, resulted in phone conversations to discuss any matters in more detail or agree a mutually convenient time to meet.

With the exception of two interviews—one with a homeowner renting their home privately who invited the researcher to meet in a café in the city centre, and one police officer who met the researcher in a University of Sheffield building—, all research interactions took place within the workplace of the research participants. With the exception of observations carried out in the field, workplace settings involved one-to-one interviews in participants' offices. At the beginning of each interview, and ahead of beginning any recording, interviewees were offered a printed copy of the participant information sheets and consent form to ensure that they understood the aim of the research and the nature of the processing of their data (GDPR, R.32). A number of interviewees presented concerns over internal confidentiality given the strong likelihood of the research to be made publicly available. Where this was the case, further verbal consent was sought.

Interviewees were specifically asked whether they would consent to having their data used anonymously and without reference to their organisation, to prevent their personal or professional opinions being identified. For the purpose of maintaining anonymity, interviews were assigned a unique alphanumeric identifier which associated each participant to their research data without any personal identifiers. This allowed participants to maintain confidentiality and to anonymously withdraw from the study if they chose to. Two thirds of research participants consented to the research interactions being audio recorded, with 20% (n=9) of research interactions agreeing to this because of the research's context, or due to environmental noise from the individual participant's workspace. For both recorded and non-recorded conversations and interviews, simultaneous notetaking took place, whilst extemporaneous and reflective notetaking was employed in the case of ethnographic observations—as, for example, when visiting properties with housing officers.

Interviews with research participants across different organisations followed ad-hoc semi-structured interview prompts—with templates available in *Appendix A*. This approach allowed the research to capture information around the wider themes of housing and crime whilst also independently tailoring questions to suit the individual perspectives of participants (Bachman and Schutt, 2014; Westby, 1990). A primary set of questions was used to investigate understandings and perceptions of housing and crime with respect to the work or lives of research participants. This was followed by a more in-depth and targeted exploration of beliefs and knowledge of problems and issues with respect to both housing and crime. Irrespective of the role and position of the research participant, this included asking about examples, practices, and reflections of how their knowledge may have developed over time with regard to what they believed they knew. Allowing their answers to guide the pace of the interview, research participants were ultimately asked to reflect on what they understood about the connection between crime and housing.

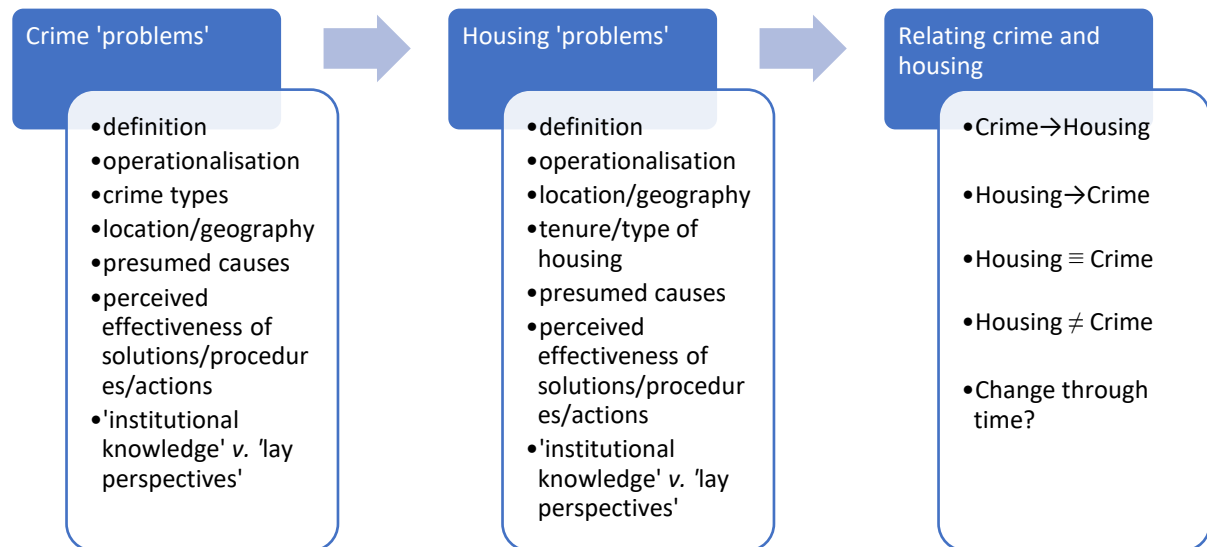
Overall, institutional stakeholder interviews focussed on participants' perceptions of the issue of crime and housing problems at the city-level, their role in identifying, managing, and addressing instances of crime or housing-related problems, and whether they thought the two were related. In contrast, interviews with community representatives sought to understand their local knowledge of existing problems, and also sought to gather their impressions of interacting with institutions and their responses. Templates were prepared for

interviews to ensure that this process was uniformly captured for the five overarching participants' grouping as outlined above. Each interview schedule included a series of broad prompts which were intentionally broad in their aim so as to allow flexibility to tailor participant responses. In most instances, this concerned the relationship between housing and crime and their links to abject conditions, with interviews then seeking to further probe this understanding by eliciting further examples or experiences.

Audio-recorded material was transcribed with the aid of transcription software. Otter.ai, was used to aid data transcription and provided an automatically generated transcript of conversations. This reduced the amount of time spent transcribing each interview which, in turn, offset the strain of this activity and enabled greater time and concentration to be directed at data analysis (Matheson, 2007). Each interview script was corrected ahead of analysis, with the researcher listening to the recording and simultaneously reading the script and correcting any mistaken transcriptions and incongruences. Most data management and analysis were carried out on paper, manually. Despite electronic means of coding been appraised as being less time consuming and reportedly enabling greater consistency in the application of coding to interview data, the inclination of the researcher and familiarity with the datasets by the end of transcribing allowed to easily allow for a timelier analysis of the data collected. As explored by Basit (2003), this was believed to be a rational justification for this approach.

Thematic data analysis was undertaken over a number of stratified, targeted readings of the interview data in accordance with the approach advanced by Braun and Clarke (2006). Whilst thematic analysis approaches provide a way of thinking to analyse data, they do not provide a framework to identify themes, which instead emerge from recurring ideas and topics in the data (Bryman, 2008). Data analysis sought to focus on the overarching research themes and questions, rather than utilising interview questions to code data, to begin unpacking some of the latent processes and content (Clarke and Braun, 2013). These overarching themes were operationalised as elements of conversation where discussions would present: (i) a practitioner's positionality and understanding of crime and housing; (ii) conceptualisations of the relationship between crime and housing; (iii) their conceptualisation of problems and problem areas.

Table 3.iv: Qualitative analysis themes



Thematic analysis across all qualitative data was carried out using five overall steps mirroring Clarke and Braun's (2006) approach to thematic analysis. Preliminarily, a first reading of data—carried out when checking the accuracy of automatically generated transcripts— was used to enable the researcher to become familiar with the data, and a second reading was used to generate the initial codes. Two further readings were focussed on identifying and reviewing themes. The final reading was dedicated to defining these themes. As also explored in Clarke and Braun (2006), a key difference was also considered between semantic and latent themes.

On the surface, a large portion of the transcripts concerned the operational structuring of organisations and provided a practitioner-centred perspective on how policies and practices applied to their working life. Focussing on these key semantic aspects of narratives, and themes explicitly summarised by what the participant had stated (Clarke and Braun, 2006) aided the author in producing the overarching framework summarised in Table 3.iv.⁹

⁹ This structure summarises what themes emerged across all conversations, and how these were broadly organised across the three overarching research questions

However, contributing to the constructivist paradigm chosen for this thesis, and focussing on elements of repetition, theory-related material, similarities, differences and missing data, began to uncover some of the more latent themes— approaches discussed by Ryan and Bernard (2003) as well as Braun and Clarke, 2006. These concerned the assumptions, conceptualisations, and ideology, informing those semantic organisations of data, and were communicated through key examples, narratives and anecdotes emerging throughout each interview (Maguire and Delahunt, 2017). These narratives, explored through Chapters Five and Six, provide a bottom-up interpretation of the functioning and organisation of institutions. Identifying perception and opinions, and contrasting them against official structures, policies, and procedures had a great impact on the understanding, construction, and administration of problems and problem areas. However, in many cases, not only were further readings required, but also recourse to other qualitative data collected, or experiences and observations carried out around the formal interviewing process. Supplemental data was derived from four main sources.

First, two more extended periods of time were spent interacting with practitioners from the local authority, particularly within the Safer Neighbourhood Services and the local council's housing offices. Approximately twenty normal working days were spent alongside the Safer Neighbourhood Services, whilst interviews and fieldwork in this department were ongoing. Periods of time between meetings and interviews were spent alongside the team to observe how the team was internally managed and how local authority and policing activities were coordinated. Discussions, in those settings, occurred very informally with the researcher 'hanging out' in the same workspaces, and free to interact as situations developed (Rhodes, 2018). An additional six days of similar observations were spent in local housing offices in the north and east of Sheffield shadowing a housing officer in their work within their allocated housing patches [neighbourhoods]. Different from the experiences noted above, these days were spent following housing officers as they carried out annual home visits (discussed in Chapter Seven). These out-of-office contexts prompted more informal conversations to take place with research participants feeling able to discuss their work and personal beliefs, and conversations also serving as less formal opportunities to ask for clarifications, triangulate findings, and pursue other areas of enquires from material covered in interviews; all, in keeping, with the opinions previously opined by Mason, (2002).

Second, and particularly when conducting interviews with members of communities, a few hours of time were spent walking around neighbourhoods unaccompanied. As discussed by Yi'En (2014) these kinds of exploration of neighbourhoods were most beneficial albeit often unstructured—because of the spontaneous, unplanned nature— and given the anti-social time when they were conducted—mainly during the normal working day, most often late morning. However, although far from flâneur-ian experiences (Nuvolati, 2014), the action of walking provided an opportunity to experience some immersion in the local area and relate some of the issues discussed in different conversation with material and physical conditions (Edensor, 2010). Two of these walks around housing estates developed in a more formal way than others, one in the north of Sheffield – around the Wensley Estate—, and one in the East of Sheffield – around the Darnall estate— mainly as interviews with communities in these two areas were more strongly related to the other aspects of fieldwork carried out with the local authority and the police.

Third, given the inability of the author to negotiate access to frontline officers during the research— due to more senior managers not believing their contribution to be of use to the research, as well as interviews not being a productive use of their time— an online survey was designed to reach officers to gather their practice-informed perspectives on crime across Sheffield and its relationship to housing. The first part of this data-collection strategy was based on the concept of cognitive maps and was utilised to see whether officers' perceptions of crime locations coincided with any other data (Kitchin, 1994; Downs and Stea, 2011). Adding to this, a selected number of questions directly asked officers to reflect on the meaning of tenure for crime through a selection of questions as highlighted in the script attached in *Appendix A*. The rationale behind this sampling technique was based on a cost-benefit evaluation of the limited time available to the author and the likelihood of officers responding—this was based on their limited engagement with the research up to that point, and discussions with senior police managers to mitigate against a lack of responses. Thirty-two respondents took part in the online questionnaire; it had been made available to officers working in Neighbourhood teams for one month. Responses were recorded using Qualtrics, and results were manually mapped on a geographical map of Sheffield showing the 'hottest' areas where officers believed different offences most commonly took place. More importantly, this survey also captured officers' opinions of the causes of crime, and how these

related to their understanding of housing; the resulting narratives and map are explored in Chapter Six.

Finally, a number of documents and business plans for different organisations were collated through the research to guide sampling or other fieldwork (Brookman *et al.*, 1999). For example, a summary of police neighbourhood teams, operationalised problem areas from a policing perspective and identified the teams meant to deal with them, helping the sampling of research participants. Other police-only documents were often behind additional curtains of confidentiality or controlled access¹⁰, meaning that they could only be consulted whilst on a police station, but not copy or share their content. An example of this latter were the different 'neighbourhood' profiles which police had developed using call-for-service data, and demographical research commissioned to external agencies. Overall, these documents were not without faults, especially as they came with several limitations and drawbacks, including addressing issues of authenticity, credibility and representativeness (May, 2001 in Noaks and Wincup, 2004). As such, information derived from these sources was carefully included in the analysis of the thesis, where data could be triangulated through other sources of data. Nonetheless, applying a selective extrapolation of all information relevant to housing practices, structures, policies, and codes of practice, the same thematic approach of research interviews allowed these data to contribute to the overall research framework and findings (Brookman *et al.*, 1999; Creswell, 2003).

Summarising the overarching elements of how qualitative and quantitative data were related and utilised for analysis— an issue explored in further detail in the chapters five (quantitative data) and six (qualitative data)— data analysis followed three main phases. First, after the delayed provision of crime and housing data during the core period of qualitative data collection, a set of preliminary quantitative data screening (sample selection and descriptive

¹⁰ Over the course of the research, the candidate was allowed to consult, but forbidden from sharing the content of a few key documents which South Yorkshire Police and Sheffield City Council used to inform their work. Most notably, these were intelligence reports or internally-collected data about specific neighbourhoods each organisation had compiled. For example, this included primary data analysis of crime and geographical data, as well as secondary analysis of census and government data, similar to those carried out in this thesis. At the same time, the candidate was granted some oversight of other contextual information used by these agencies, such as demographical and market-data research on neighbourhoods commissioned to external agencies.

analysis) took place. This was limited to a basic suitability assessment of the data provided by South Yorkshire Police. Relating to the overarching constructionist methodological paradigm of the thesis, the researcher believed it to be important not to sway the relative neutral position adopted as part of the qualitative data collection strategy by developing an intimate knowledge with quantitative data.

During phase two, the core spatial and statistical quantitative data analysis instead took place during the initial transcription and coding of qualitative data. Taking both a practically and conceptually constructive rationale, this was believed to be the best approach for identifying the relevant threads and themes from the two sets of data, and thus, also triangulating the exploration and findings of the datasets utilised. As a result, from the more conventional quantitative sample utilised by most criminological studies of urban crime (acquisitive, violent, and sexual offences), anti-social behaviour, and drug offences emerged as relevant, given their recurrent mention in most interviews with practitioners. However, at the same time, this also allowed for more careful consideration of the role of qualitative themes and their relationship to youth offending, especially given the inability to differentiate between offences and incidents involving young offenders or adult offenders amongst police-recorded data.

The final stage of data analysis coincided with the sequential coding and re-analysis of qualitative findings. During this phase more specific priorities relating to the Community Partnership and its objectives to tackle hate crime, human trafficking, and gendered violence emerged as substantive themes. As part of the data analysis process, quantitative datasets were re-explored to establish the extent to which these priorities actually featured amongst police-recorded data. As ultimately noted in chapter six, their relative absence, alongside key interviews emphasising issues with power-dynamics and ways of working with the Community Partnership, supported and allowed the development of more a critical interpretation of the findings.

3.5. Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the key methodological perspective and research methods strategy. As an update from the work of Baldwin *et al.*, (1976), this thesis addresses the role of Institutional knowledge in shaping narratives around crime problems at the urban level. In response to their quantitative study of crime problems in 1970's Sheffield, this thesis adopts a mixed-methods constructionist approach to answer: (i) where crime takes place in modern day Sheffield; (ii) how institutions relate crime and housing problems to the definition of problem areas; (iii) how systematic change taking place across the city over the past decades has affected our knowledge and understanding of urban crime.

The chosen methodological and research method approach allows for a critical deconstruction of taken-for-granted assumptions about how institutions work and understand crime and housing. As a result, the first stage of this study is concerned with the analysis of contemporary police-recorded crime figures, and their relation to patterns of housing tenure. The geography of tenure is used to understand how offences cluster, in a similar but nuanced way compared to Baldwin *et al.*, (1976). Indeed, official data contributes to the official understanding of crime and housing problems and of problem areas and is later applied to the development of longstanding beliefs about certain areas as more criminogenic than others. This is then translated to institutional practices.

The second stage of this research, which addresses the second and third research questions, rejects the positivist thesis that quantitative data provides an 'objective' and 'factual' assessment of social conditions, and instead examines institutional knowledge and practices more closely. From a methods perspective, the proposed approach critiques the work and beliefs of agencies within the local Community Safety Partnership and deconstructs how official narratives develop. Exploring what these institutions know and how they know it through semi-structured interviews will challenge the acceptance that disorganised and deprived conditions are the only causes of crime. Instead, it proves the underlying tautology between institutions defining problems and problem areas through these concepts. Finally, moving beyond Baldwin *et al.*'s (1976) partial appraisal of housing practices as 'knowingly' or 'unknowingly' affecting housing choices for people relying on social housing, this thesis

analyses housing allocation and management practices to understand how they play a role in shaping the ecology of crime at the city level.

Ultimately this housing-focussed study of the ecology of crime in Sheffield tests an empirical and theoretical framework to expand the uncritically quantitative, disorganisation-based, and predominantly American-centred perspective of the ecology of urban crime. The theoretical, conceptual, and methods framework adopted brings housing, crime and urban change together, going beyond existing criminological accounts. Recentring narratives about urban problems and problem areas on issues of power, it also promotes both a historically and spatially situated analysis which enhances present-focussed quantitative understandings of where crime takes place and why. In its place, it promotes a contextual analysis of the urban realities of crime which challenge criminological perspectives with regard to recognising crime as the product of power imbalances and social constructions. To this avail, the next chapter begins by outlining the empirical data collected and provides a discussion and analysis of city of Sheffield as the context of this research.

4. SHEFFIELD TODAY: URBAN CHANGE

This chapter provides an empirical analysis of the Sheffield case study that follows the appraisal provided in Baldwin *et al.*, (1976). Utilising data from the 2011 Census and from the local authority, the chapter paints a picture of the city's ecology looking at the most significant geographical, demographical, economic, and social organisation of Sheffield from the perspective of urban change. Focussing on housing in particular, the chapter considers how the national policy changes explored in Chapter Two have materialised in Sheffield and provides an empirical update on three key concepts from the work of Baldwin *et al.*, (1976); namely, social housing's availability, desirability, and reputation. These updates, identify crucial information that address the wider themes of the thesis, and also help in constructing a better understanding of the misnomer of problem areas across Sheffield. Indeed, with significant variations across the availability of Sheffield's housing tenures, this chapter begins to unpack how some key social phenomena are likely to affect crime. In this sense, the majority of social housing properties appear to be geographically co-located in areas of disproportionate socio-economic disadvantage and deprivation. With more social housing resources available in these parts of the city, housing data concerning turnaround and tenancy length also reveals how some of these properties could be thought of as a 'tenure of last resort'. With most tenancies ending with notices and or transfers within two to six years from when they were first occupied, this work also begins to question the presumed reputation of social housing properties. A superficial, criminological, reading of these findings paves the way to assumptions about these areas and their criminogeneity; elaborated upon in Chapter Five. However, a deeper reading of these finding also begins to question how the availability of social housing is linked to its accessibility and stigma, emphasising the systemic role played by tenure in sorting those with fewest resources across some of the 'worse' areas of the city.

4.1. The city of Sheffield: an historical overview

Modern Sheffield, a flourishing industrial city with over half a million inhabitants and a world-wide reputation, still retains many of the essential characteristics of the small market town of about five-thousands people, from which it has grown in the space of two and a half centuries... (Hunt, 1956).

This quote constitutes one of the few generalised statements drawn from *The Urban Criminal*, which Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) use to introduce the reader to their Sheffield study. Forewarned not to repeat the same error in judging the character of the city as Mannheim's (1948) delinquency study describing Cambridge as 'typical middle-England town', Baldwin and colleagues were brief in their analysis and generalised assessment of the city. Instead, they offered a limited number of key remarks surmising Sheffield as a relatively safe, 'city-sized-village' whose economic development and topography had had notable impacts on its ecology as a city.

In their introduction to Sheffield Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) draw from Hunt's (1956) analysis, remarking how from a geographical perspective the growth of the city has historically been geographically bounded on all sides. The Peak District to its west and south, Rotherham to the north and, to the east, the M1 motorway and the city's green belt—as illustrated by the *Map 4.i*. Topographically, the authors also remarked on how its hills are thought to have contributed to creating strong internal borders between different areas of the city, with the general effect of creating naturally isolated communities of local residents, and contributing to the formation of tightly knit and stable community feelings over time (Hunt, 1956; Baldwin *et al.*, 1976). This assessment leads them to a more focussed exploration of the city's housing classes, where these remarks about its geographical and topographical profile are used to substantiate the city's relative population and economic homogeneity. Reproducing a map of Sheffield's housing development—updated in *Map 4.ii*¹¹— they propose how the development of its' industries contrasted with the more desirable housing locations in south-western Sheffield, and led to neighbouring areas of the city being '*less sharply differentiated from one another... hence resulting in lower correlation on some variables than... in other urban analysis*' (Baldwin *et al.*, 1976:49). Relating the distribution of offenders to housing, Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) began to consider how the relative homogeneity between neighbourhoods and their respective housing classes—their socio-economical and demographical profile— could have implications for the geographical study of offences'

¹¹ The map below, illustrates in red the extent of housing sprawl beyond the original City boundaries utilised by Census geographies in the *Urban Criminal*'s analysis of crime in Sheffield.

patterning. Specifically, they argued how greater emphasis should be placed on housing arrangements— namely tenure-related distribution— from which they began their discussion of housing reputations, and the influences of the social rented sector’s housing management practices (Baldwin *et al.*, 1976).

Forty-six years on from 1976, and with the exception of its unchanged geographical and topological morphology, Sheffield is a rather different city from that described in *The Urban Criminal*. With a growing population of approximately 580,000 people Sheffield is one of the most populous cities in England (ONS, 2017). This growth, however, has been contracted by a declining city-region economy, and the widening of uneven patterns of social inequalities (Robinson, 2018). Situated in the economic North of the Country, Sheffield had been, since the middle of the eighteenth century, the centre of a prolific region where people’s livelihoods depended first on coalmining, then on the production and manufacturing of iron and steel. Following the expansion of the steel industry, particularly through the period between the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, until the late 1970’s Sheffield manufacturing across three trades [steelmaking; lighter trades; engineering] constituted the primary source of employment in the city (Tweedale, 1995; Hey, 2010).

Significantly, Sheffield’s economy, particularly with regards to light trades, developed as a highly specialised cutlery making industry, and was based on the co-existence of hundreds of small family-led businesses which were cumulatively able to satisfy the demands of the most demanding sectors of the market (Hayter and Patchell, 1993; Tweedale, 2013). However, during the post-war period and until the early 1960’s, Sheffield’s heavy steel-making industry thrived, through the commitment of the Government’s capital investments in the modernisation and expansion of steel manufacturing (Hargreaves, 1956). Ultimately, despite the high degree of specialisation and subsidising of different steel trades and the symbiotic bond with the coal mining industry, the relation that developed between these industries created a self-supporting bond between the different trades in the city which allowed the Sheffield-city-region economy to thrive. With hindsight, however, it can also be seen to have created a vulnerable set of conditions as proven through its decline (Townsend, 1956).

The changing political landscape of British politics with the Thatcher Government, post 1979, and the rise of neoliberal economic policies, brought rapid de-industrialisation to the region

which affected the steel industries and led to an estimated ten-thousand jobs being lost across the city (Deans, 2016). The over-production of steel and the introduction of cash limits to control the deflation of price, in the context of a globalised market economy, led to the inevitable closure of most manufacturing plants and small family-led businesses (Taylor *et al.*, 1996; Hayter and Patchell, 1993). At one point in 1982, this accounted for up to two-thirds of all unemployment in Sheffield (Taylor *et al.*, 1996). The defunding and collapse of coal mining across the North of England, subsequently led to widespread protesting and rioting, Sheffield saw the emergence of counter-Thatcher, anti-neoliberalist initiatives with the rise of the political left in local government during the 1980s (Payling, 2014). With unemployment disproportionately affecting the east of the city, more than its affluent south-west, a number of initiatives were introduced by successive Labour administrations in Sheffield City Council. Funding educational, financial, and transport regeneration activities, amongst these were also the redevelopment of the City Centre and the opening of the Meadowhall Shopping Centre, the expansion of the tramlines network, and the prospect of rebranding Sheffield as a ‘City of Sport’, exploited its connection to the Peak District (Watts, 2004). In 1998 this led to the creation of the Sheffield Development Corporation as a public-private enterprise funded by the government. This organisation supported the development of a new sustainable economy that would cater to the needs of local populations in Sheffield (Payling, 2014)— the organisation is now known as the Sheffield City Partnership.

In more recent years, some of the ways in which the city’s economy has dealt with the divestment from heavy industries have involved major capital investments and the development of the third sector. Much of Sheffield’s jobs growth is attributed to the growth in the public sector— with 52% of all jobs being created between 1995-2008 being in public administration, education, and health (Bolton *et al.*, 2011). Geographically, most commercial premises are circumscribed within the city’s centre ring-road and are supported through the Sheffield Business Improvement District as a private-public enterprise.¹² Beyond the city’s centre, stretching northwards towards the Meadowhall Shopping Centre and eastwards towards the M1 motorway along the A630 [the Sheffield ‘Parkway’], are the modern

¹²Sheffield BID, information available online at: <https://www.sheffieldbid.com/what-we-do>

commercial and industrial hearts of Sheffield. Importantly, investments in advanced manufacturing including the recent development of Sheffield University's Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre¹³, whilst providing only a relatively small amount of total employment, have not only continued on the lines of engineering and development excellence which promoted the City of Steel at the height of its industrial past.¹⁴ However, it has otherwise substantiated the need to reflect on the relationship between education and other industries and how these affect the financial future of the city (Bolton *et al.*, 2011). Altogether, developing into what has since been referred to as a perpetual economy of transition¹⁵, economies in the city and its businesses have continued to grow and impact the identity of the city of Sheffield and its residents. However, this has by no means been a sustainable and inclusive growth, nor has it been equal for other aspects or areas of Sheffield (Robinson, 2018).

At its core, present-day Sheffield remains unequal and divided. As hinted at in *The Urban Criminal*, such divisions can be attributed to the city's historical roots as the 'City of Steel'; Sheffield's industrial development and the geography of the city-region itself has arguably contributed to the development of unequal social geographies across the city (Watts, 2004). Tracking the organisation of the city through the 19th Century, the flat topography of the of Lower Don Valley to the north-east of the city – broadly coinciding with the Darnall, Shiregreen and Brightside wards— provided the ideal development site for the city's industrial sites as represented in *Map 4.iv*. Watts also argues that the neighbouring hills also played a key role, both as a containment barrier keeping industries from expanding southwards, and in providing the primary site for housing their workforce. Ultimately, with the south-west of the city already benefitting from an elevated geography, access to the countryside, and dominant south-westerly winds keeping factories' pollution away, social divisions across the city were entrenched by factory owners and the wealthier residents of Sheffield choosing to reside in these areas (Watts, 2004). This historical divide between the

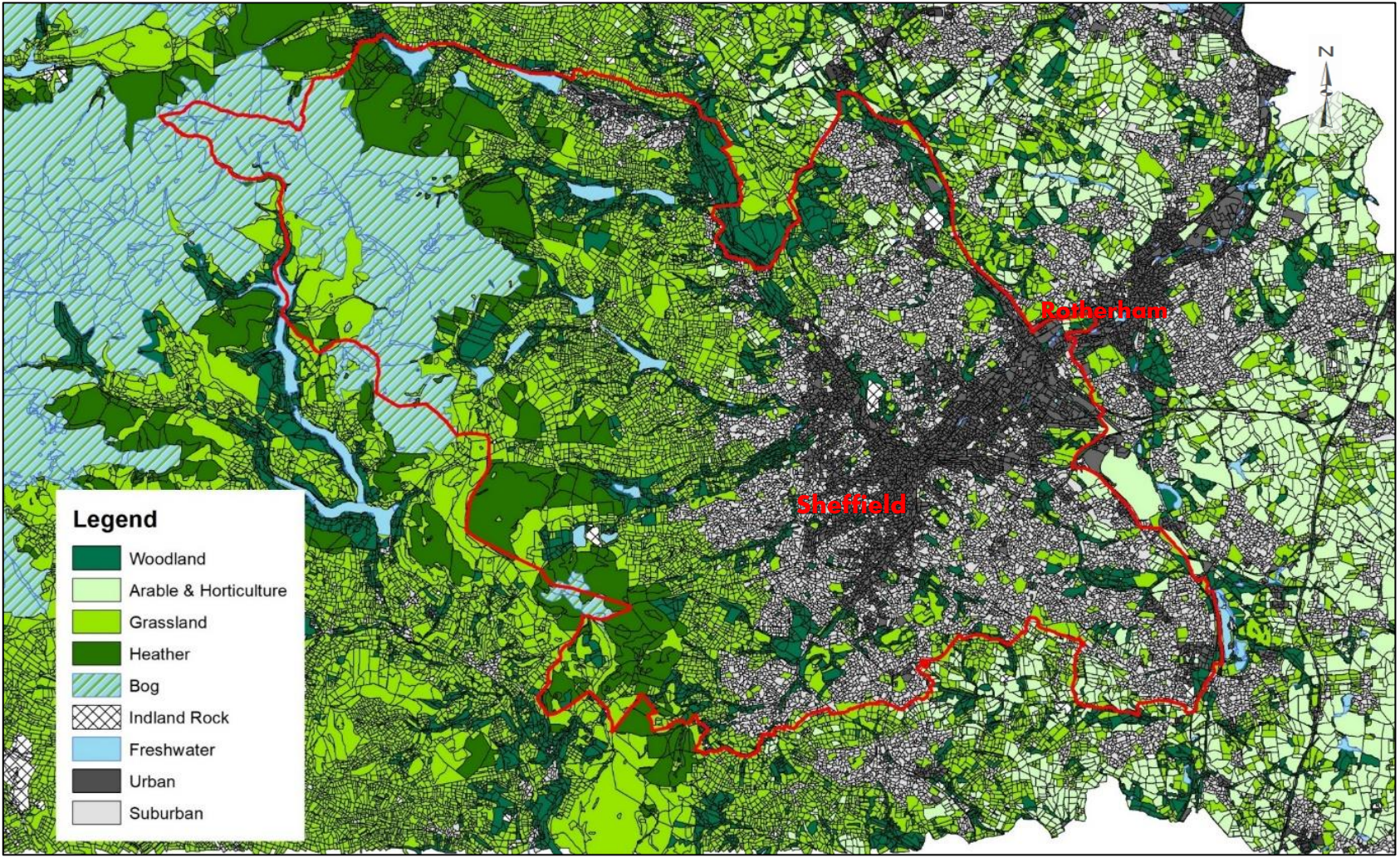
¹³ More information on the AMRC available at: <https://www.amrc.co.uk/> (accessed 16/04/2022).

¹⁴ Reference to some of the industries and businesses settled in Sheffield available at: <http://www.welcometosheffield.co.uk/invest> (accessed 16/04/2022).

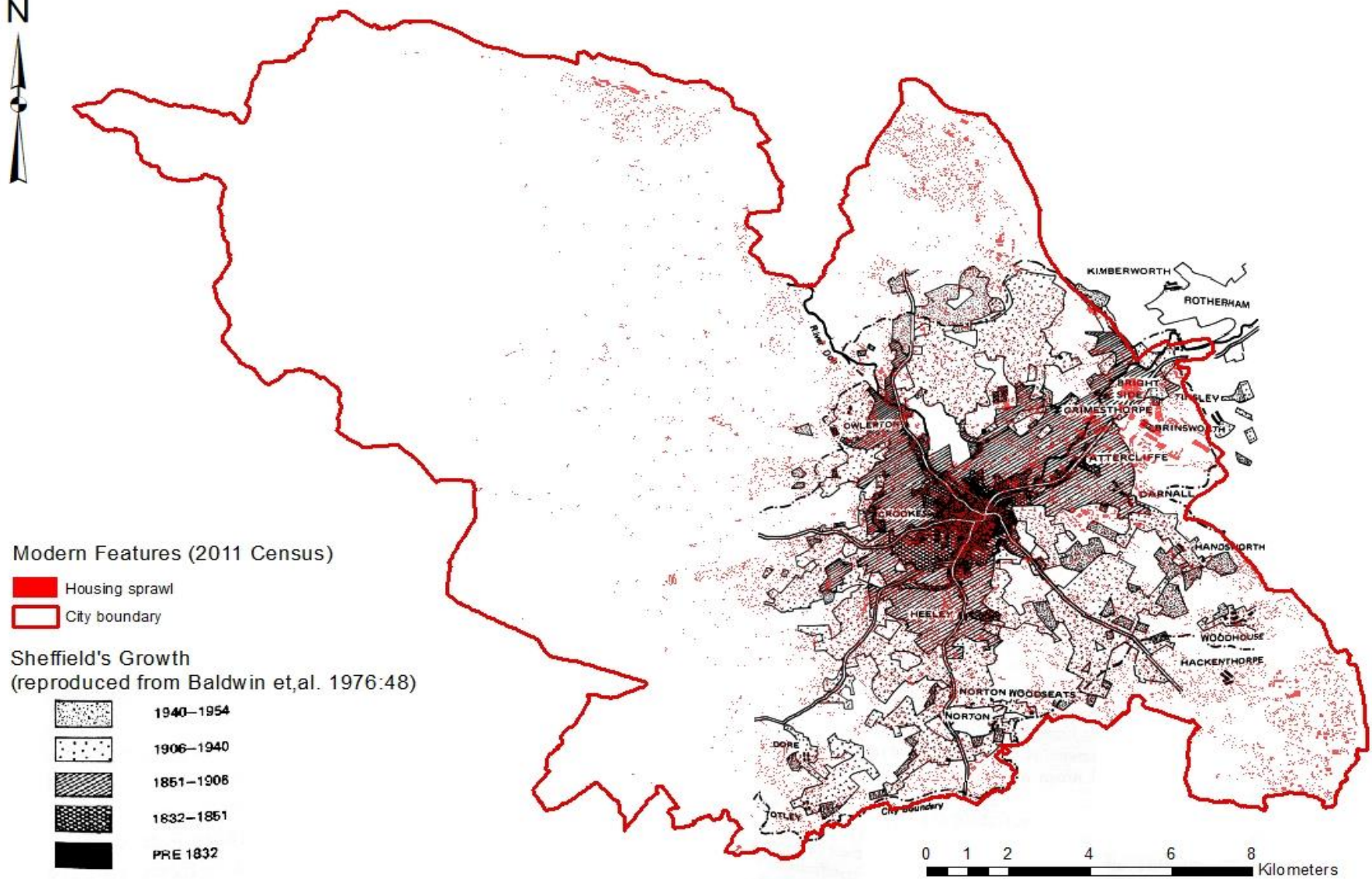
¹⁵ State of Sheffield 2019 report available at: <https://www.sheffieldcitypartnership.org/scp-reports> (accessed 16/04/2022).

north-east —poorer, with fewer employment prospects and lower educational attainment— and the wealthier south-west of the city, translates and persists across economic and social variables today.

Whilst a macro level geographical characterisation of Sheffield may follow this north-east v. south-west divide, to delve more deeply into the character of the city a finer level of analysis is needed. As such, to facilitate the discussions and present data across the wider city, ward administrative geographies are utilised. Whilst varying in population size (as for other wards across the UK) and subject to yearly change in their geographical size, electoral wards are selected as an appropriate unit of measurement to appraise city-level areal conditions, not least for their strong links to their comparability across the data sources used in this chapter. Overall, the city of Sheffield is divided in twenty-eight electoral wards (as represented in *Map 4.iv*) (ONS, 2011).

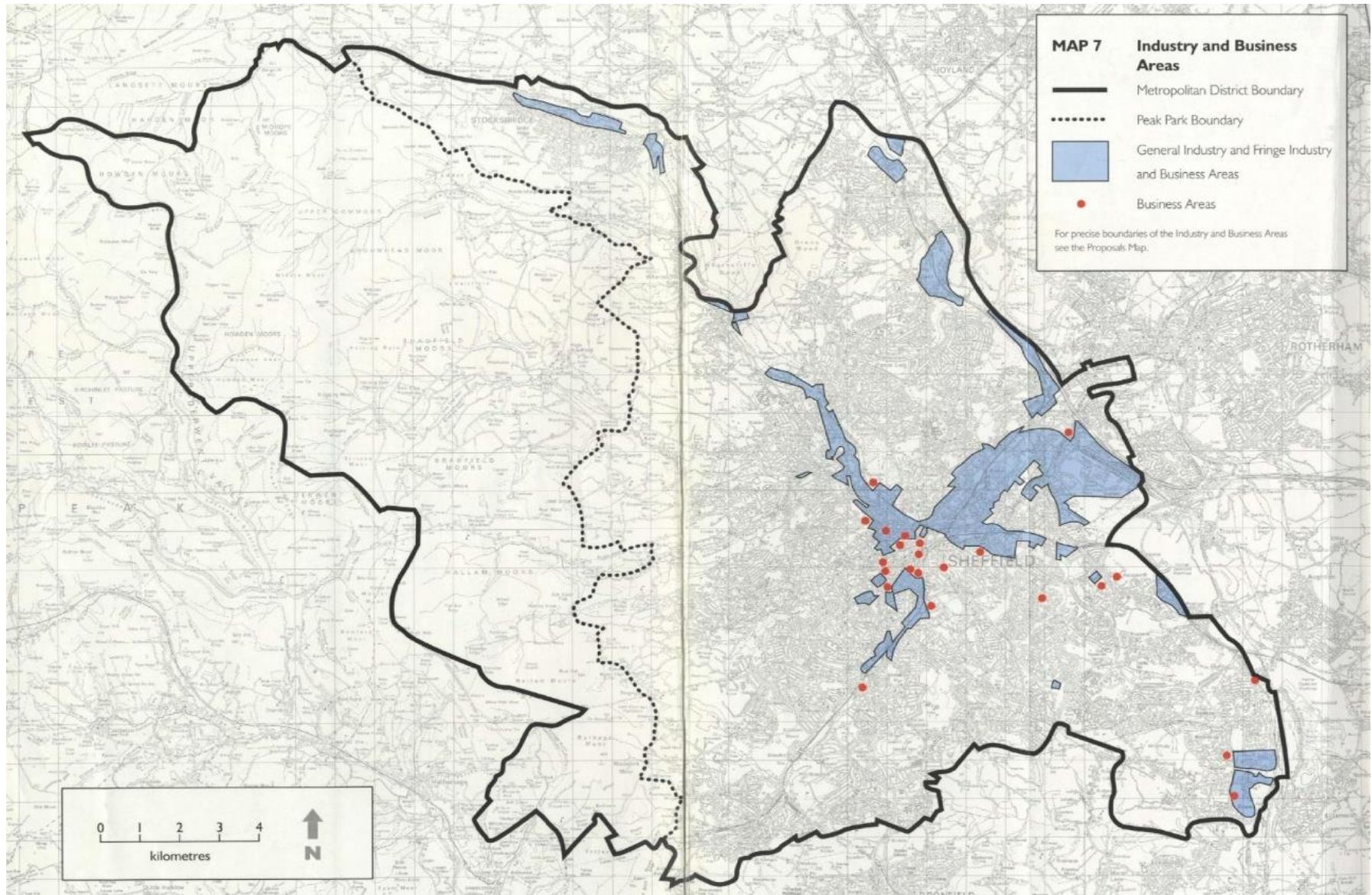


Map 4.i: Sheffield city region's geography Source: Ordnance Survey (2022)

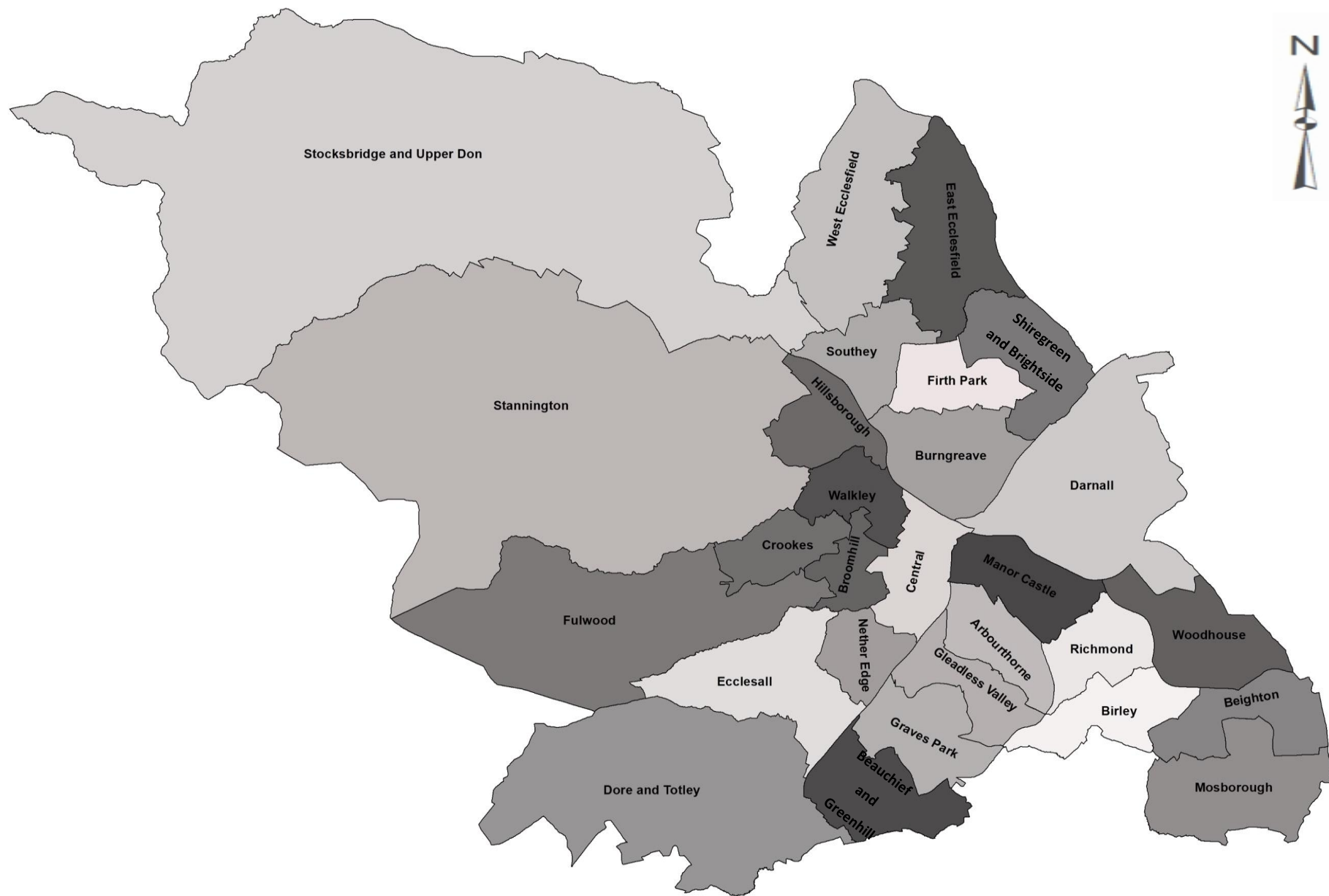


Map 4.ii: Housing growth of Sheffield

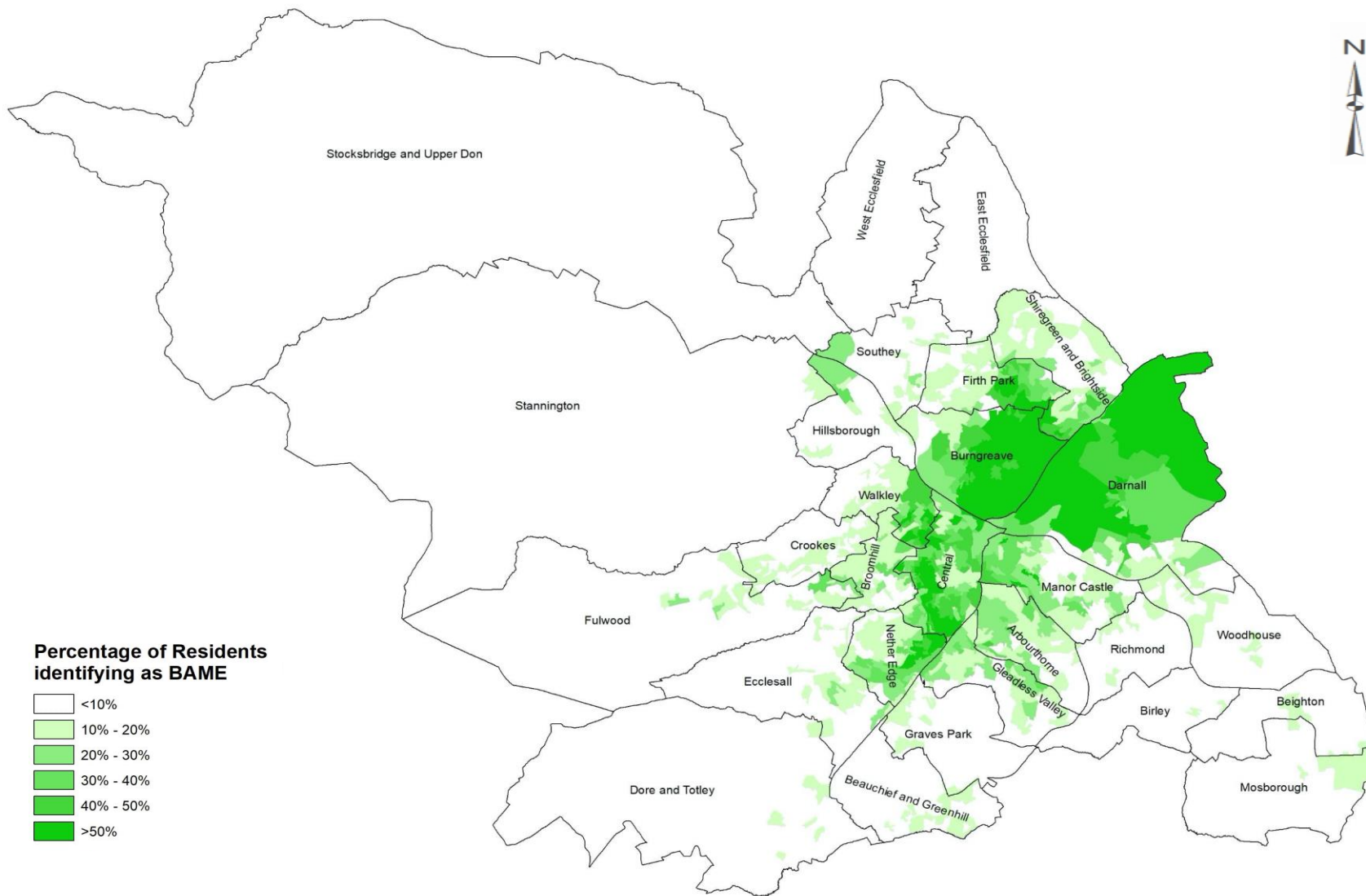
Source: Adapted from Baldwin et al.,(1976), with Census (2011) data



Map 4.iii: Geography of Sheffield industries Source: Bajaria (1998)



Map 4.iv: Sheffield's Administrative Wards Source: ONS (2011)



Map 4.v: Areas of non-white ethnic concentration in Sheffield Source: Census (2011)

Starting the analysis of Sheffield from the unequal distribution of wealth across the city, the median annual income per household across Sheffield was £26,464 (Census, 2017). As summarised in *Table 4.i*, with the exclusion of the City Centre Ward ¹⁶, median incomes ranged from £19,434 in the Manor & Castle Ward (east of the city centre) to £46,088 in Ecclesall (south of the city centre). Further emphasising the north-east/south-west economic divide across the city, across the same two wards respectively 61% and 10% of all households earned less than £25,000 per year. Comprehensively, with the exception of the Gleadless Valley Ward to the east of the city, the eight wards where 50% or more of the resident population earned less than the median household income were all found within the same geographical area; adjacent to the Lower Don Valley bowl and the de-industrialised districts of the City of Steel.

Along the same north-east/south-west divide, a similar result was repeated with regard to levels of educational attainment. Dividing and highlighting lower attendance and results in primary and secondary schools for the north-east of Sheffield, these results predicted that children living in these areas had the lowest likelihood of staying in secondary education and continuing onto further education (Sheffield City Council [SSC], 2022). These differences also translated across levels and grades of employment, supporting the hypothesis that more educationally adept students were able to remain in education longer, and consequently aspire to earning higher wages once employed (SSC, 2022). Other than relating to wealth, educational emancipation was also related to health inequalities, as best highlighted by the *'Fairness on the 83 Project'* (Opus Independents, 2014). Realised as a series of short video interviews centred along the bus routes 83 and 83a (which traverse the city from Ecclesall to Ecclesfield), a mere four-mile gap was highlighted as being synonymous with significant health and social inequalities. Children born at opposite ends of the bus routes were expected

¹⁶ This analysis excluded the lower-scoring City Ward (at £15,520), because within its boundaries were the majority of non-earning student populations in Sheffield, along with a significant proportion of businesses and commercial premises. Therefore, the analysis considered only the lower and upper limits across residential areas, with results from the city centre thought not to be directly comparable.

to have very different life expectations, with those born in the northern end potentially living a life up to ten years less than those born at the southern end of the bus route.

Table 4.i: Economic activity by Ward

Ward Name	Economically active residents (%)	Median household income (£)	Households earning less than £15,000 (%)	Households earning less than £25,000 (%)
Beauchief and Greenhill	58.1	23,444	19.7	23.2
Beighton	67.1	30,200	11.3	15.9
Birley	61.8	24,129	14.8	23.3
Broomhill & Sharrow	53.5	20,313	20.0	13.5
Burngreave	53.3	20,721	17.9	38.5
City	49.5	15,520	26.7	20.9
Crookes and Crosspool	59.9	31,683	14.0	9.7
Darnall	54.7	21,741	23.3	36.7
Dore & Totley	58.9	45,463	5.9	5.3
East Ecclesfield	64.0	29,169	11.6	15.8
Ecclesall	66.6	46,088	6.3	4.0
Firth Park	51.0	19,571	28.1	21.7
Fulwood	52.4	33,007	6.8	6.2
Gleadless Valley	64.6	22,479	23.5	27.4
Greaves Park	67.2	30,413	10.5	13.6
Hillsborough	69.2	26,862	13.8	20.4
Manor & Castle	58.2	19,434	29.0	32.3
Mosborough	66.5	29,533	11.5	16.9
Nether Edge and Sharrow	66.3	26,416	21.2	21.8
Park and Arbourthorne	57.7	21,407	22.8	15.5
Richmond	61.5	23,724	17.2	25.4
Shiregreen and Brightside	62.9	21,840	22.8	30.9
Southey	59.1	20,425	26.4	30.6
Stannington	62.7	31,510	11.4	14.6
Stocksbridge and Upper Don	62.2	28,926	14.4	20.7
Walkley	52.8	22,620	22.3	21.5
West Ecclesfield	62.2	30,223	12.4	14.6
Woodhouse	60.9	24,152	19.0	25.1

Source: Sheffield City Council, 2022

From a systemic perspective, these public health challenges can also be seen to relate to Sheffield lagging behind the England average in terms of quality of life and life expectancies, with families struggling to support ill children, young people, and adults (ONS, 2020). Reports

from the Clinical Commissioning Group for Sheffield note how, from city-level to neighbourhood level, health inequalities accounted for levels of engagement, support and levels of care received, the context of material deprivation, and other macro-societal elements such as ethnicity and culture, as well as individual levels of mental health and disabilities (ONS, 2020).¹⁷

Demographically, Sheffield remains a broadly homogeneous city compared to the rest of the UK. Its residents predominantly identify as ‘white’ (80% compared to a national average of 79.8%), and ‘British-born’ (88% against a national average of 87%) (ONS, 2017). Only a negligible proportion of its resident population is estimated to migrate outwards towards other cities (both domestically and internationally); the same is true for internal migration flows across the city, confirming Sheffield’s reputation as ‘stable city’ over time (Ferrari and Powell, 2013). Areas surrounding the Don Valley Bowl were amongst the most ethnically diverse of the city. Data from the 2011 Census reported how approximately 91% self-identified as being from a Black Asian Minority Ethnic background (the vast majority of whom were UK born), resided across five wards, namely City, Darnall, Nether Edge, Sharrow, and Walkley. Once again, this divide indicated a relatively clear-cut divide across the same boundaries identified above. As visually summarised by *Map 4.v*, communities in these wards can also be appraised as being substantially homogeneous. Across all Sheffield wards the predominant minority, particularly in Darnall, Burngreave, and Nether Edge where their proportion rises above 50%, is British-Pakistani communities. However, British-Chinese communities also show a tendency to congregate and form large communities across the city’s centre and Walkley where they are spatially concentrated as the larger minority group (Census, 2011; Sheffield City Council, 2022).

Whilst this could be interpreted as an expression of homophily with patterns of ‘ethnic segregation’ strongly relating to other neighbourhood selection processes, other factors

¹⁷ Whilst seemingly straightforward, attempting to infer a positive relationship between healthcare and socio-economic deprivation would be at best tentative due to the several confounding factors keeping people from accessing primary and social care. This is best exemplified by secondary health inequalities data, demonstrating the variability between geographically adjacent area, based on the rating of care provided, and the level of local engagement with healthcare (Office for National Statistics, 2020).

including housing and community cohesion seemed more relevant (Galster and Sharkey, 2017). Amongst these are issues of nationalism, stigmatisation, and spatial segregation. Whilst some minorities could be appraised as ‘established’ communities – as exemplified by how relations have developed, over time, between resident British populations and Indian-Pakistani minorities—, the same did not apply to more recent ones. Since the late 2010s, the influx of a small Roma-Slovakian community in the Page Hall and Firth Park areas, (who have since started settling in Sheffield’s north-eastern private rented sector) best exemplified this (Gill, 2009). Migrating from Eastern Europe with hopes of better futures, particularly for younger generations, this group has been met with hostilities, with their culture being perceived to be diverging from traditional outlooks on community making and normative integration pathways with local residents (Pidd, 2018).

Likely exacerbated by populist discourses especially in the wake of the 2016 Brexit vote— as the city voted narrowly in favour of the ‘leave campaign’ (51:49) with a 67.4% turnout (Electoral Commission, 2022) — othering narratives have associated higher-levels of gathering along street corners and within the neighbourhoods in which they settled, and raise in noise and rubbish pollution, with the lack of commitment from Roma-Slovak migrants to integrate and assimilate ‘the British-way-of-living’ (Pidd, 2013). Dubbing them as anti-social, these hostile relations coupled with other measures of isolation and deprivation, are thought to relate to outcomes measured in other aspects relating to the ecology of the city. As discussed so far, these include the availability and patterning of opportunities for education, employment, and health, which altogether prevent immigrants to break away from a self-fulfilling condition (Powell and Lever, 2017; Payne, 2016). The further lack of commitment by local authorities to support and expand participation, also limited the benefits of any regeneration initiatives, instead solidifying divisions, blaming narratives, and stereotyping (Dinham, 2005; Dargan, 2007). However, as discussed in subsequent chapters, these institutional practices also relate to specific institutional and procedural injustices which problematize deviance from an imagined norm more generally (Powell, 2014; Powell and Robinson, 2019).

4.2. Housing in Sheffield today

Looking at the growth of the Sheffield metropolitan district area, in *Map 4.ii* integrating data from Hunt (1956) and the 2011 Census provides a ‘two-dimensional’ geography of the city’s growth from the early 1800s to the present day. However, translating narratives about the historical social organisation of Sheffield to the issue of housing, begins to provide a more rounded understanding of the importance of Sheffield’s housing developments and their impact on the ecology of housing.

Looking at Sheffield’s housing data over time, the same national trends discussed in Chapter Two are visible in the snapshot provided in *Table 4.ii*. The division of housing tenure in Sheffield (continuous lines within the Table) evidence the effects of the residualisation of social housing at the hands of austerity policies from 1981 onwards, with the sharp decrease across this type of tenure being mirrored by increases across owner-occupied housing and private-rented homes. When compared to national trends (segmented lines), however, Sheffield appears to retain a greater proportion of social housing than the national average; data from the 2011 Census suggests an approximate 8% gap.

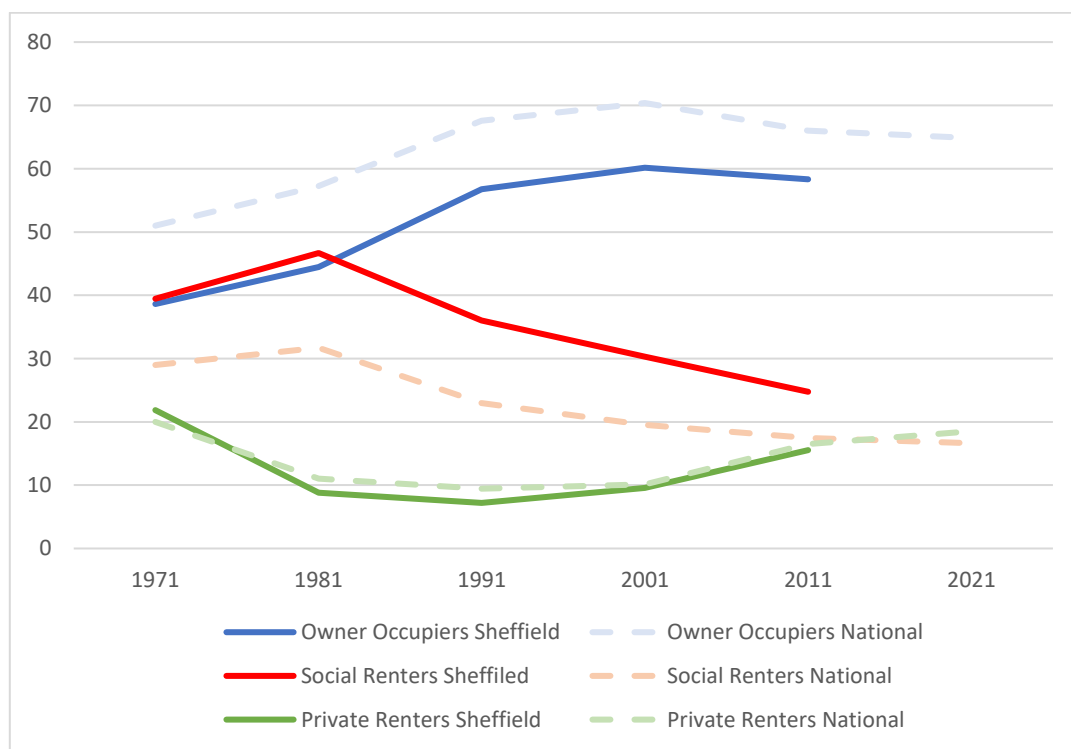


Table 4.ii: Prevalent tenure by percentage of housing stock, Sheffield v. national averages (1961-2021)
Source: UK data service (1971-2021 Census data)

However, these statistics fail to reflect some of the significance of these data at an intra-city level, or to reflect inter-tenurial differences in the geographical distribution of housing. A closer look at the condition of housing, data from latest Sheffield's Strategic Housing Market Assessment (Ferrari *et al.*, 2019)¹⁸, and the 2011 Census data helps capture some of the challenges pertaining to the inequality of housing across the city.

When considering the types and affordability of homes in Sheffield, the most likely home type available to Sheffield residents are terraced and semi-detached buildings. These two types of homes comprise 63% of the overall stock of housing in Sheffield (greater than the national average of 52%) (Census, 2017). Most of these properties, approximately 40%, are concentrated in the north (Hillsborough) and the east of Sheffield (Gleadless Valley); areas known for possessing older homes and larger proportions of social housing. Towards the city centre, and specifically around Sheffield University (the Crookes Ward and the Crookesmoor Wards), it was found that the majority of properties in the area (n=63%) are flats, with the area being known for housing a higher proportion of students than elsewhere in the city. The majority of detached homes in Sheffield— approximately 14% of overall housing stock, compared to the national average of 18% — were found in the wealthier, south-western areas of the city with the highest concentration being in the Dore and Totley Ward (n=45%).

Data from the 2011 Census suggested a similarly divided picture from the perspective of occupancy rates and the cost of housing. Approximately 10% of all households had at least 1 fewer room than they needed, with 5% having fewer bedrooms than needed. With an average household size in the city of 2.3 people per dwelling, some of the most overcrowded households were those living in private-rented flats around the city-centre, with Bromhill recording the highest figure of 2.9. A similar picture emerged for areas with higher

¹⁸As an important note, data from Ferrari *et al.* (2019) utilises a different macro-level unit of measurement than administrative Wards: Housing Market Areas [HMA]. HMAs, which are an aggregate administrative geography, are a 'functional area' used in strategic housing market assessments, which is derived from the balancing of journey-to-work distance calculations, area migration patterns, and the price of housing. Geographically HMAs larger than administrative Wards, however they seek to fulfil the same purpose of providing an analytically homogeneous unit of analysis.

concentrations of social housing, with Burngreave recording the highest average of 2.7 people per dwelling. The cost of housing also reflected socio-spatial divisions. The highest occupational rates were recorded in the south of Sheffield (in Ecclesall, n=87%), and the lowest occupational rate (n=18%) in the city centre; the average charge for a privately rented property between January and March 2018 was £575 per month (Sheffield City Council, 2022). According to the same north-east/south-west economic disparity highlighted so far, this means that residents of Firth Park would spend a disproportionately larger percentage of their income on renting (30% of their average annual salary, n= £6,036, N= £19,517), compared to the wealthier residents of Ecclesall who only spent 18% of their average annual salary on housing (n= £8,520, N= £46,088).

When considering the implications of the availability and affordability of housing on different tenures, each tenure was impacted differently. Given the implicit greater focus of this research on social housing, the residualisation of affordable housing—consistent with national policies, namely the 1980 Housing Act and the subsequent 1981 Right to Buy and 1996 Buy-to -let policies— resulted in a reduction of available stock to early 1950’s levels: a total of approximately 42,000 dwellings across the city. The current deficit in social housing properties, of approximately 902 properties annually (Ferrari *et al.*, 2019).

The residualisation of social housing has also geographically segregated most properties to the north-eastern parts of the city.¹⁹ However, even where social housing constitutes the predominant tenure, such as the Firth Park ward where this figure is around half of all households, the agglomeration of social housing has greatly diminished from that of the large mono-tenorial estates that still existed in 1976. On an empirical level, therefore, even as Output areas represent the smallest aggregate administrative geography available in Census data, highlighting high levels of local variability across different tenures, doubts emerge as to the extent to which these factually represent micro-level housing heterogeneity within aggregate geographies.

¹⁹ These areas, looking at Sheffield’s wards are predominantly: Firth Park, Shiregreen, Southey, Burngreave, Manor & Castle, Gleadless, Richmond, Birley, Woodhouse, and Beauchief & Greenhill Wards

The heterogeneity of previously large social housing estates further complicates the management of social housing, especially as, after the disbanding of ‘Sheffield Homes’ in 2011 as the Arm’s-Length Management Organisation set up by the local authority in 2004, a large portion of social housing is now owned and managed by one of several housing associations (see *Figure 4.i*, below) (Brown, 2011). This is a scenario which likely increases the complexity of appraising the effect of tenures on issues such as crime (as discussed in subsequent chapters). However, the historical roots of social housing across Sheffield also contribute to this picture. Indeed, from a historical perspective, slum clearance projects began in Sheffield in the 1920s, with plots of land around the industrial core of Sheffield—namely in the Manor, Wisewood and Parson Cross areas. This, however, meant that the more substantial redevelopments and modernisations of those areas only took place in the early 1950s (Harman and Minnis, 2004). Varying in quality across the city, some of the most challenging social housing developments, were the Gleadless Valley, Park Hill, and the Manor housing estates due to their geographical locations, as well as the poor building standards and materials used to cope with the pressures of housing shortages (Hey, 2010).

Considering these circumstances and balancing the increased need for affordable housing against a reduction in support from the State and the reduction in the overall availability of social housing resources, larger proportions of social housing tenants are therefore more likely be forced to seek housing within other tenures (Ferrari *et al.*, 2019). However, not many solutions came from these. Indeed, despite approximately 58% of all dwellings across the city being owner-occupied homes, the sharp increase of this tenure over the past decade – 28% between 2013 and 2018 — and the decrease in the number of empty properties—2.5% of the overall housing stock in Sheffield and Rotherham— estimates suggest that 88 per cent of newly formed households in Sheffield cannot afford lower quartile purchase prices (Ferrari *et al.*, 2019). Considering the increased costs of housing and deposit requirements, a large proportion of non-owners (61% in Sheffield) are unable to afford market housing to resolve their housing needs (Ferrari *et al.*, 2019). More importantly, even where new housing supply is being driven by the private sector, this is not sufficient to address the extent of affordability problems, especially as a third of all households in Sheffield are priced out of the private rented sector if they are seeking a 2-bed property (Ferrari *et al.*, 2019). Such data contributes to the building of housing market area profiles as summarised in *Table 4.x*. As can be seen,

the most stark issue is actually expressed in terms of the geographical distribution of housing in Sheffield, as represented in *Maps 4.v, 4.vi, and 4.vii*; they express the true extent of splintering and inequalities across the city.

Tentatively exploring the direction, strength, and statistical significance of the relationship between different housing tenures and official measures of combined deprivation and economic activity appeared to confirm, as shown in *Table 4.iii*, some of the trends introduced above. Starting with owner-occupied housing, it can be seen that across Sheffield a moderate negative association exists across all types of aggregate deprivation. This can be contrasted with the moderately strong positive relationship that exists with regard to 'economically active' households, and the very strong positive correlation that is evidenced between areas of owner-occupied housing and lack of deprivation. Conversely the opposite narrative can be applied to social housing. This tenure correlated moderately positively with measures of aggregated deprivation, and negatively with measures of employment and lack of deprivation. More interestingly, a varying degree of relationships between private-rented housing and measures of deprivation can be observed albeit ranging from weak to non-statistically significant. This is because of the overall agglomerated clustering and lack of extensive housing available within this tenure type.

Overall, whilst statistical analysis does confirm the generic trends explored above, they do not explain the reasons behind these ecologies. Instead, the implied relationship between deprivation and social housing suggests that careful attention should be paid to a number of underlying potential reasons. Amongst these are the mechanism which allocates people through space—examined in Chapter Seven— and the presumed reputation of areas of social housing throughout Sheffield. As subsequently examined, these may also affect the 'kinds' of people who are housed within them.

Table 4.iii: Spearman's correlation: 2012-2019 crime deprivation (output-area level)

		Owner occupied	Social Housing	Private Rented Sector
Non-deprived	rs	.722**	-.728**	.168**
	p	.000	.000	.000
Deprived (1 measure)	rs	0	.203**	.146**
	p	.546	.000	.000
Deprived (2 measures)	rs	-.396**	0.077	-.186**
	p	.000	.000	.000
Deprived (3 measures)	rs	-.536**	.817**	-.041
	p	.000	.000	.112
Deprived (4 measures)	rs	-.400**	.519**	0.032
	p	.000	.000	.169
Economically active	rs	.550**	-.405**	.365**
	p	.000	.000	.169
Economically inactive	rs	-.408**	.502**	.375**
	p	.000	.000	.000

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

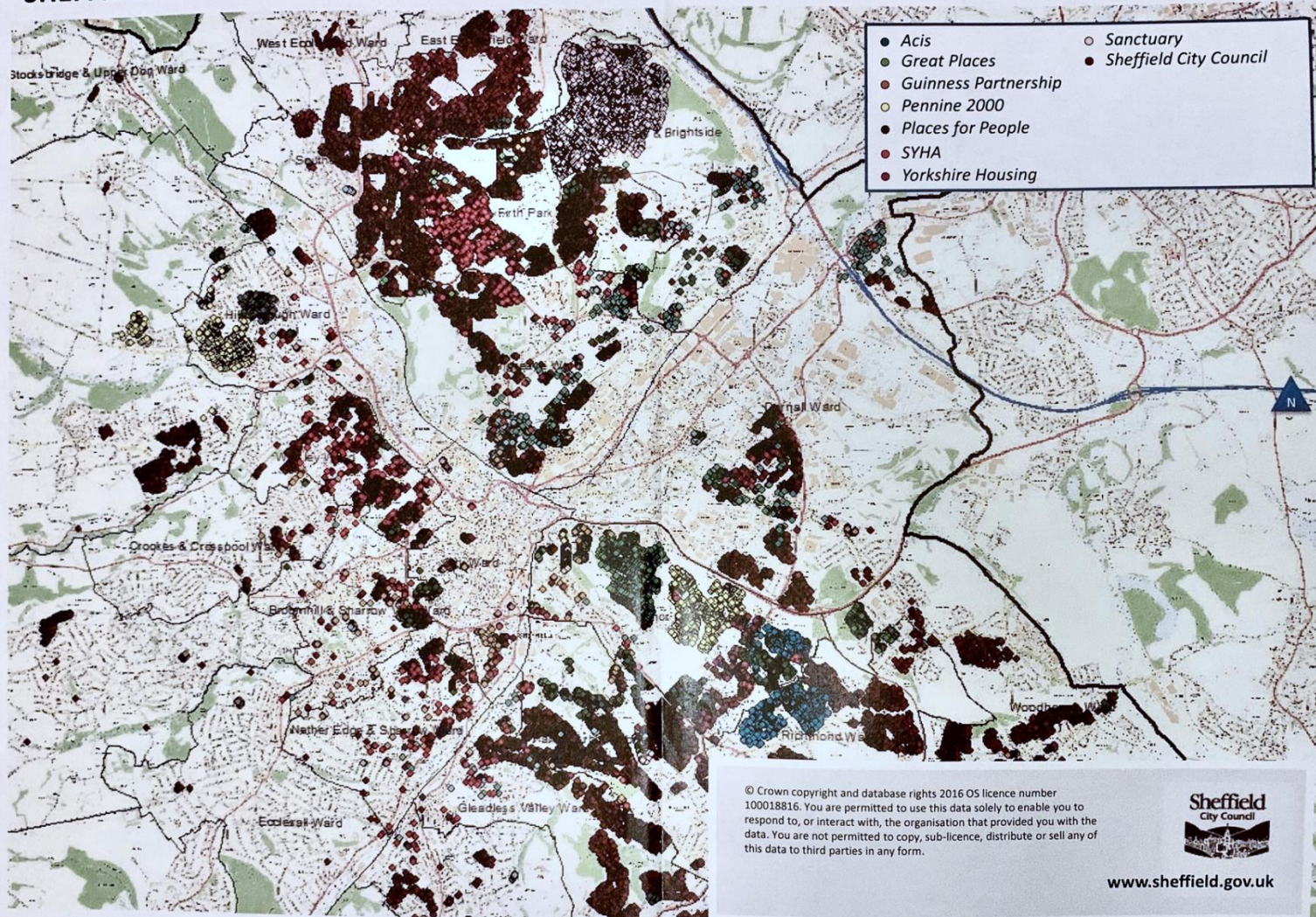
Source: Census 2011; Consumer Data Research Centre (2022)

Table 4.iv: Housing Market Area overview (adapted from Ferrari et al., 2019)

HMA	Key housing market characteristics
Sheffield City Centre	Significant new build in the last two decades, dominated by apartments, both converted and purpose-built, including significant regeneration in areas like Park Hill and Kelham Island. Significant purpose-built student market. Very few families, although some low-rise Housing Association estates on western fringe.
Sheffield Urban West	Dominated by Victorian and inter-war terraced and semi-detached housing. Popular neighbourhoods benefitting from proximity to major universities and hospitals. Significant Private Rented Sector for students and young professionals.
Stocksbridge and Deepcar	Separate self-contained settlement on rural fringe. Enjoys good access to trunk road network but commuting links with Sheffield are congested and public transport can be slow. Some recent new build development, with more expected.
Chapelton/ Ecclesfield	Popular separate self-contained settlement close to motorways and north Sheffield employment zones.
Northeast Sheffield	Area dominated by very large inter-war council housing estates, with some new build properties in recent years for owner occupation and social rent.
Northwest Sheffield	Mix of housing types, broadly suburban in character. More affordable than the other parts of west Sheffield, especially popular with families.
Rural Upper Don Valley	Small HMA comprising relatively sought-after villages with a semi-rural character.
Peak District Fringe	Very little of the SRHM housing is found in the Peak District Fringe. What housing there is exists in small villages and hamlets, within which development is very tightly restricted. Prices reflect the popularity of the rural lifestyle and the constraints on supply. Housing planning largely the responsibility of the Park Authority, although the HMA also includes parts of the neighbourhoods of Stannington, Lodge Moor and Dore.
East Sheffield	Formerly the location of much of Sheffield's heavy industries, the East HMA is dominated by cheaper, often terraced housing and a more demographically and ethnically mixed population than many other parts of the city.
Southeast Sheffield	Several large suburbs from a variety of eras, home especially to families moving from more central parts of south and east Sheffield. Very significant expansion since the 1970s of private suburban estates in the Mosborough Townships, centred on the Crystal Peaks district shopping centre. Although quite distant from the city centre, the HMA benefits from good transport links to the city centre and good access to motorways.
Southwest Sheffield	Large areas of very low density detached housing from a range of eras, almost all in owner occupation. These suburbs are popular among households with above average incomes and property prices are the highest in the city. The Southwest HMA has excellent access to the Peak District and a reputation as having the best schools in the city, both of which are considered to influence the market considerably. There are very few socially rented properties in this HMA.
South Sheffield	Slightly more affordable range of housing than the Southwest Sheffield HMA but sharing some of its characteristics. Also includes major peripheral council housing estates on the boundary with Northeast Derbyshire.
Manor/ Arbourthorne / Gleadless	Large area dominated by several distinctive social housing estates, including the large inter-war estates on the Manor and Arbourthorne, and developments in Norfolk Park and Gleadless which command impressive views over the city. These areas have been subject to significant market restructuring and tenure mixing in recent years although the social rented sector is still dominant.

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL AND HOUSING ASSOCIATION STOCK

Information correct as of 28 November 2016



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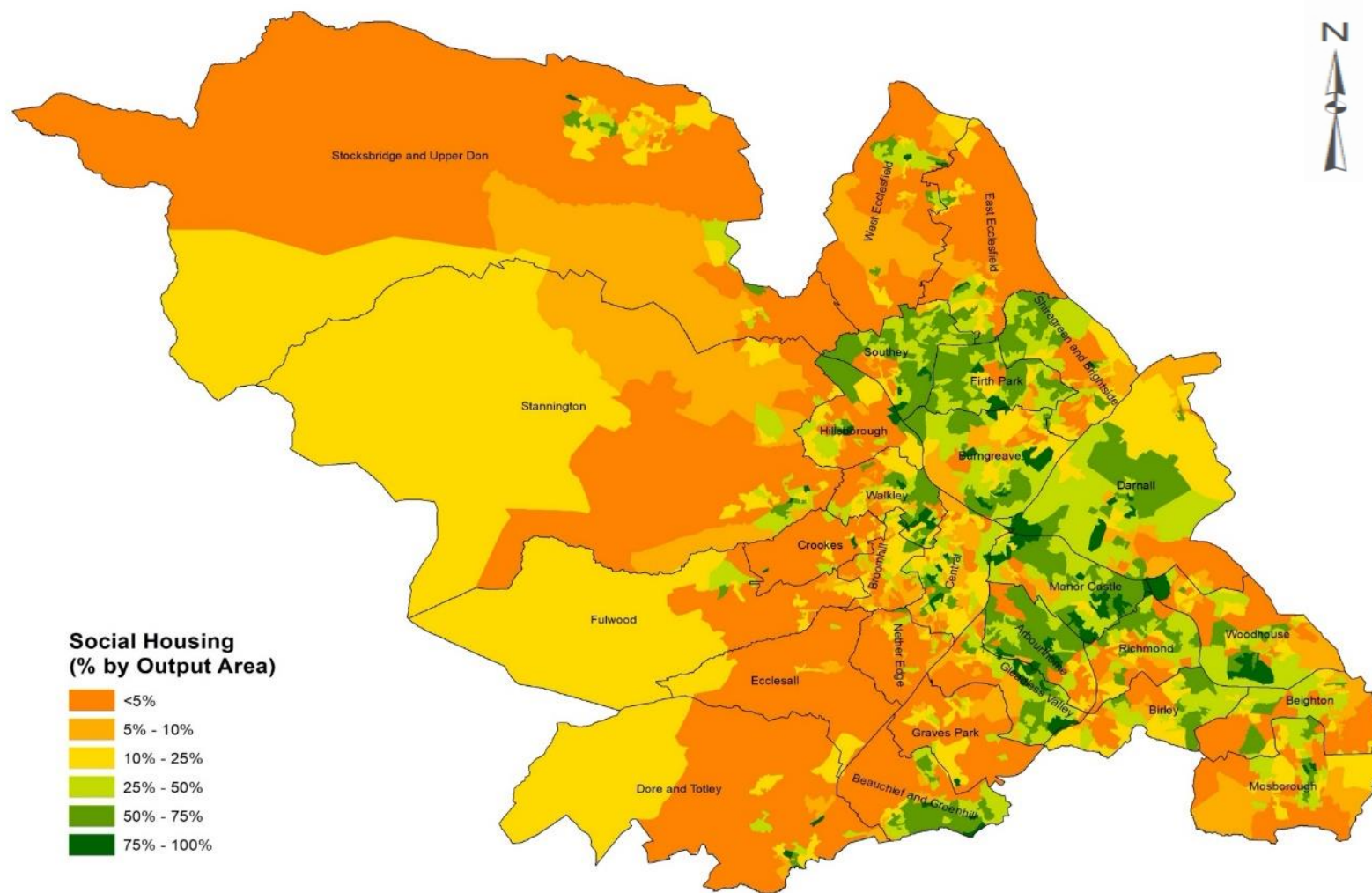


www.sheffield.gov.uk

Figure 4.i: Map of all social housing providers in Sheffield Source: Sheffield City Council, 2019

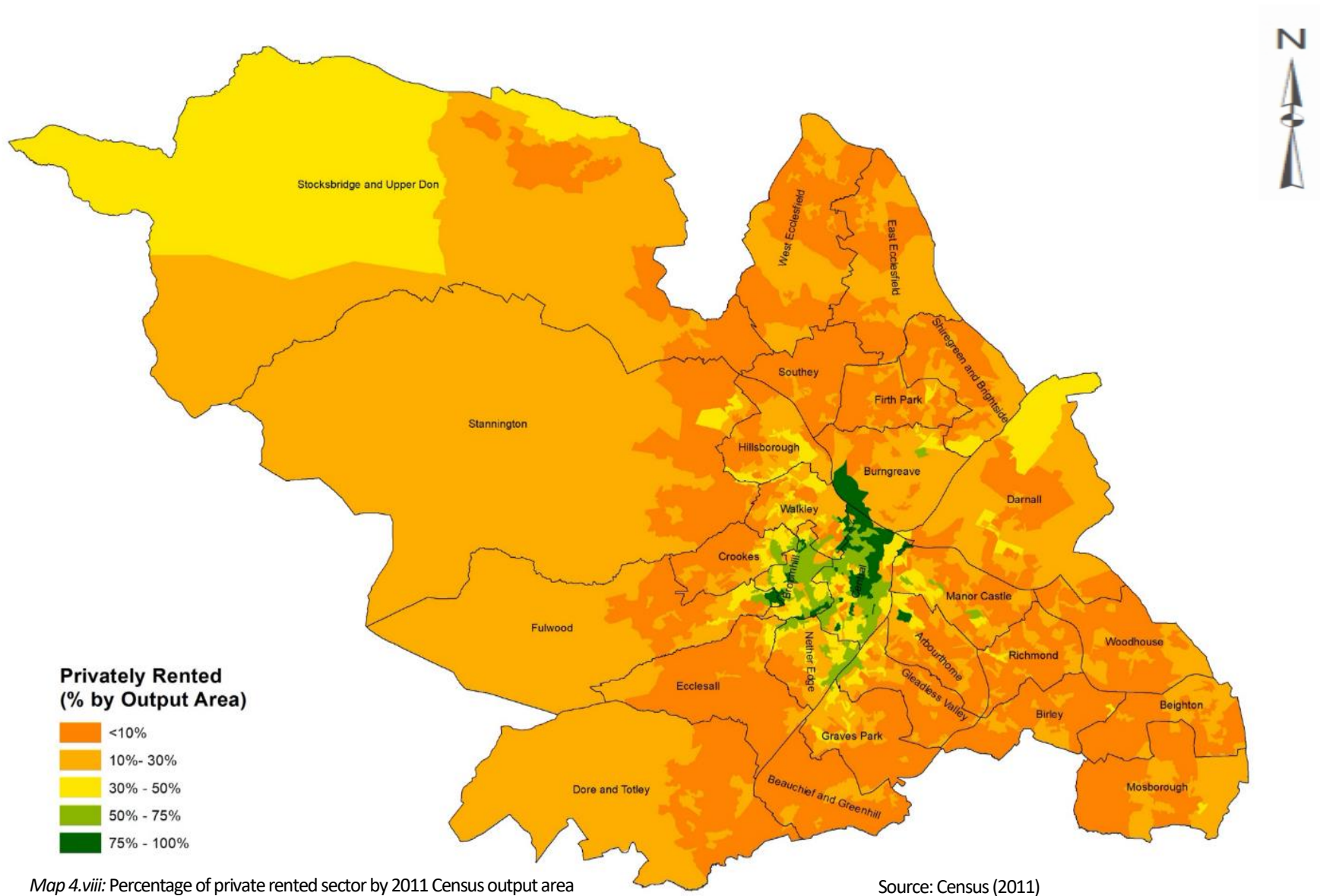


Map 4.vi: Sheffield housing markets Source: adapted from Ferrari *et al.*, (2019)



Map 4.vii: Percentage of social housing by Census output area

Source: Census (2011)



4.3. Housing availability, desirability, and reputation.

Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) conceptualised the reputation and desirability of housing as impacting the presumed segregation of offenders across the city, irrespective of housing availability. Even if this hypothesis remained not conclusively proven by *The Urban Criminal*, more recent studies have reconsidered this hypothesis by empirically testing, observing and theorising as to how more socio-economically vulnerable individuals may indeed suffer as a result of allocation policies (Wilson, 2022), gentrification and regeneration (Atkinson, 2004), as well as wider urban and inequalities (Powell and Robinson, 2019). From this literature, the most relevant underlying assumptions with respect to the geography of problem areas are due to marketised housing practices: undesirable areas may be the only affordable places within cities for households with the fewest resources (e.g., asylum dispersal areas); and that the same areas often receive the least amount of funding and resources because of existing stigma. With available data for Sheffield only providing details as to the portion of social housing managed by the local authority, data for Sheffield appeared to confirm some of these notions.

Looking at the overall distribution of socially rented homes, the data summarised in *Table 4.v* (below) provides two important insights. First, confirming what was discussed above, a large proportion of the overall number of properties managed and let by Sheffield City Council are concentrated across electoral wards which are known to be affected by disproportionate levels of socio-economic deprivation and inequalities. However, some of the wards with the greatest individual concentrations of social housing—and accordingly yearly re-lets—were in the south-east of Sheffield. Second, when considering the proportion of housing re-lets per year, the greatest amount of re-lets also took place in the most socio-economic deprived and unequal wards. On the surface, the relationships between these two trends would appear to confirm that these areas are less desirable to live in, and that, despite the need for housing, they are areas which, potentially, are only perceived as stop-gaps for social housing residents looking for homes within the city.

However, other than the general availability of properties across different areas, another variable affecting where people relying on social housing might choose to live in Sheffield, was related to the administration of housing resources. Empirically, this is expressed by

waiting lists and associated waiting times – both discussed in greater detail in Chapter Seven – but operationally defined in Sheffield by needs bands. Summarily however, in Sheffield, applications for social housing were prioritised on a band-based system which comprised of five categories (SCC Housing Services, 2020). Applicants in bands ‘A-C’ received priority allocation, meaning that individuals would qualify for expedite housing allocation. ‘Band D’ applicants, classed as the ‘general population’, received no expressed priority other than via seniority based on waiting time since first registering for housing. Finally, band E applicants would be the last to receive housing, because of existing criminal behaviour issues or previous breaches of tenancy.²⁰

Taking these categorisations into account, *Table 4.vi* (below) provides an overview of waiting times for allocations, across the same neighbourhoods shown above. Unsurprisingly, waiting times vary greatly both across different ‘needs bands’, and across different Sheffield neighbourhoods.

Implicitly, this confirmed the reality that should a property be made available for bidding on the housing register, the higher the priority the speedier the allocation. Likewise, despite the table reporting only on the year between December 2018 and December 2019 –and therefore not containing data for the more sought-after housing in the Ecclesall ward—, the longer the wait for individuals in ‘band D’, the more popular an area could be assumed to be. Accordingly, areas like Gleadless valley (1.6 years wait for ‘band D’ applications) and Shiregreen (1.8 years wait) could be directly contrasted with Beighton, East Ecclesfield, Crookes and Crosspool which all had waiting periods in excess of 8 years. Challenging this generalisation, however, were the findings of the analysis for ‘band E’ applicants. Where received, these seemed to be fulfilled in a longer timeframe than priority applications [bands A-C], but still in a speedier fashion than non-priority applicants— as clear from the average waiting time, as well as for specific examples, like that of Richmond where the average wait for ‘band D’ applicants was 6.8 years, compared to 2.2 years for ‘Band E’ applicants.

²⁰ As explained in Chapter Seven, an exception to the rule above applied to people suffering from homelessness or convicted offenders.

Table 4.v: SCC properties and yearly lettings by Ward (year 2018-2019)

Ward name	Number of properties	Properties let yearly (average)	Percentage of properties let per year
Southey	3,726*	244	0.8*
Beauchief & Greenhill	3,252*	359	1.1*
Gleadless Valley	2,766*	311	1.0*
Arbourthorne	2,655*	173	0.6*
Burngreave	2,635*	207	0.7*
Walkley	2,115*	142	0.5*
Woodhouse	1,682*	138	0.4*
Birley	1,411*	117	0.4*
Mosborough	1,383*	139	0.4*
Stannington	1,178*	88	0.3
Stocksbridge & Upper Don	1,015	80	0.3
East Ecclesfield	972	51	0.2
West Ecclesfield	970	65	0.2
Beighton	941	47	0.2
Sharrow & Nether Edge	936	61	0.2
Manor Castle	602	36	0.1
Broomhill & Sharrow Vale	565	44	0.1
Dore & Totley	444	30	0.1
Graves Park	368	10	0.0
Hillsborough	335	35	0.1
Shiregreen & Brightside	317	30	0.1
Crookes & Crosspool	271	18	0.1
Fulwood	240	18	0.1
Darnall	153	115	0.4
City	139	5	0.0
Richmond	126	96	0.3
Firth Park	39	243	0.8*
Ecclesall	30	1	0.0

*Emphasis added to highlight the ten wards with the largest number of social housing stock, and the ten wards with the greatest percentage of average housing re-lets per each year.

Source: Sheffield City Council, 2019

Table 4.vi: Waiting time (years) SCC properties by housing needs bands (SCC properties by Ward, year 2018-2019)

Ward	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E
Arbourthorne	0.1	0.3	0.7	5.7	0.3
Beauchief & Greenhill	0.1	0.1	0.1	2	0.7
Beighton	0.1	0.3	0.2	9.8	-
Birley	0.1	0.3	0.3	7	0.4
Broomhill & Sharrow Vale	-	0.2	0.3	3.3	-
Burngreave	0.2	0.2	0.2	3.6	-
City	-	0.1	0.2	3.6	-
Crookes & Crosspool	0.2	0.4	0.2	8.1	-
Darnall	0.1	0.2	0.3	4	-
Dore & Totley	0.2	1.9	0.1	6.2	-
East Ecclesfield	0.2	0.3	0.1	8.7	-
Ecclesall	-	0.3	-	-	-
Firth Park	0.2	0.2	0.2	3.8	-
Fulwood	0.3	0.2	-	5.8	-
Gleadless Valley	0.3	0.1	0.2	1.6	1
Graves Park	-	0.3	0.1	4.1	0.2
Hillsborough	0.1	0.5	0.1	2.2	0.1
Manor Castle	-	0.3	0.1	3.8	-
Mosborough	-	0.1	0.2	3.7	-
Richmond	0.1	0.2	0.2	6.8	2.2
Sharrow & Nether Edge	0.1	0.2	0.2	3.7	-
Shiregreen & Brightside	-	0.2	0.1	1.8	-
Southey	0.3	0.2	0.1	3.9	1.1
Stannington	0.2	0.2	0.2	3.8	2.5
Stocksbridge & Upper Don	0.2	0.2	0.3	3.6	0.3
Walkley	0.1	0.3	0.3	5.6	-
West Ecclesfield	-	0.3	0.1	4.1	-
Woodhouse	0.1	0.2	0.1	3.5	2.1
Average Waiting Time	0.2	0.3	0.2	4.6	1.1

Source: Sheffield City Council, 2019

Table 4.vii: Percentage of yearly lettings by housing needs bands (SCC properties by Ward, year 2018-2019)

Ward	Total lets	Priority re-housing (Bands 'A' to 'C')	General Needs population (Band 'D')	Band 'E' applications
Arbourthorne	173	59.5	38.7	1.7
Beauchief & Greenhill	359	39.6	53.5	7.0
Beighton	47	66.0	34.0	0.0
Birley	117	59.0	40.2	0.9
Broomhill & Sharrow Vale	44	59.1	40.9	0.0
Burngreave	207	48.8	51.2	0.0
City	5	60.0	40.0	0.0
Crookes & Crosspool	18	38.9	61.1	0.0
Darnall	115	55.7	44.3	0.0
Dore & Totley	30	36.7	63.3	0.0
East Ecclesfield	51	68.6	31.4	0.0
Ecclesall	1	100.0	0.0	0.0
Firth Park	243	52.7	47.3	0.0
Fulwood	18	44.4	50.0	0.0
Gleadless Valley	311	38.9	55.9	5.1
Graves Park	10	40.0	50.0	10.0
Hillsborough	35	34.3	48.6	17.1
Manor Castle	36	58.3	41.7	0.0
Mosborough	139	51.1	48.9	0.0
Richmond	96	65.6	31.3	3.1
Sharrow & Nether Edge	61	54.1	45.9	0.0
Shiregreen & Brightside	30	56.7	43.3	0.0
Southey	244	51.6	46.7	1.6
Stannington	88	42.0	56.8	1.1
Stocksbridge & Upper Don	80	55.0	43.8	1.3
Walkley	142	51.4	48.6	0.0
West Ecclesfield	65	61.5	38.5	0.0
Woodhouse	138	56.5	42.0	1.4

Source: Sheffield City Council, 2019

Although the limited data available did not allow verification of whether this happened consistently across a longer period of time, most of these lettings took place in wards to the south-east of Sheffield. This observation is significant. As examined in further detail in Chapter Seven, according to housing allocation polices, 'band E' applicants would have several restrictions. These included being subjected to undetermined waiting times, and potentially also to have the least degree of choice with respect to housing allocation. The findings meant a new issue about the desirability of housing emerged, concerning the timeliness and speed

and geography of housing allocation. Indeed, whilst the majority of applications for priority applicants were fulfilled, as expected, in the timelier manner 'band E' applications were also being fulfilled in a very timely fashion. A key difference between the two kinds of applicants was that priority ('band A-C') applicants were allocated properties in the most deprived areas in the north of the city, whereas 'band E' applicants, were instead regularly allocated tenancies to properties in deprived areas in the south-east of Sheffield. This issue is however partially addressed by the housing data summarised in *Table 4.vii* (above) indicating how the number and proportion of re-lettings for 'band A-D' applications took place in exponentially larger number compared to 'band E' applications. This only confirmed, however, how housing allocations followed banding prioritisation. Notwithstanding that other policy mechanisms could apply, because fewer 'band E' applications were fulfilled in a more expedited way, it suggested how housing availability and need could be affected by the perceived reputation and desirability of housing.

Indeed, even when accounting for conditions of being 'adequately' housed in a 'suitable' property, these data does not express whether or not tenants were satisfied with their living conditions of 'choice'. Supporting the idea that not all social housing was desirable in equal measures was also the existence of a 'first-come-first-served' initiative (Sheffield City Council, 2020). With the purpose of allocating those properties otherwise advertised on the system but not receiving eligible bids, properties— often one-bedroom flats, within age-banded areas— the council would seek to offer such properties to the first person who met the minimum criteria for the same even if they exceeded the normal housing need (e.g. larger properties— even where these would mean a prospective tenant would not be eligible to receive support for). A more in-depth look into a different dataset provided by the council that reported on the duration of tenancies and the 'reasons for leaving' revealed detailed information about housing moves, and relatedly, about different areas' 'desirability'.

Of all the tenancies that terminated between March 2012 and October 2019, 60% (n=30.558), lasted 6 years or less, and whilst a limited number of tenancies lasted up to 46 years (n=48) the mean length that a tenant remained in a property was 8.2 years. Approximately 56% of these (n=11.871, approximately 38% of the total applications) ended within two year from the start of a contract. Looking at the period between contracts first being signed and year

six, *Table 4.viii*, reports on the motivations of why tenancies were terminated. Grouping all motivations into four macro-groups, makes it easier to reflect on how these different motivations related to issues of housing availability, management, and desirability.

Table 4.viii: Reasons for tenancy terminated by frequency data (March 2012- October 2019)

Breach of Tenancy	Eviction*	1,381
	Possession served	9
Tenant-related	Notice given by Tenant	5,818
	Property abandoned without notice	382
Changes of tenancy	New tenancies [unspecified] granted	278
	Transfer to council property	2,697
	Transfer to Housing Association	18
	Transfer to Residential Home	200
	Mutual exchanges	405
Other	Death of tenant	655
	Other reason/reason not listed	622

*1,338 due to rent arrears, with remaining ones unspecified (i.e., other breach of tenancy)

Source: Sheffield City Council (2019)

Starting from the ‘changes of tenancy’ and ‘other’ categories, it is appropriate to presume that these categories were linked to matters of housing availability, with internal administrative processes making it possible for those housed by Sheffield City Council to be re-housed. Furthermore, it is also important to highlight how, amongst the ‘changes of tenancy’, all different outcomes can be presumed to relate to priority or urgent cases, as these would warrant an exception from the two-year cooldown period.

Amongst ‘tenant-related’ changes, instances of property abandonment and where existing tenants notified the Council of their intention to exit their lease agreements, could tentatively be utilised to partially understand housing desirability. Indeed, only 29% (n=8.970) of all notifications for leaving a tenancy were because ‘changes in tenancy’ took place after the two-year cooldown period, with the majority taking place within the first two years. Evictions related to the practice of tenure management and where tenancy conditions were breached constituted another significant macro-grouping which affected the availability and desirability of housing stock. Eviction and the issuing of Notices Seeking Possession were a common

practice—as seen below— in instances where a tenancy was breached. The clearest, reported concern for this, accounting for 1,338 instances over the first two years (96% of all evictions) were linked to the issue and accumulation of rent arrears.

No further detail was provided as to the reason for notices-seeking possessions being served to tenants. However, with all notice-seeking possessions recorded on the database only applying to the period after January 2018, the question as to whether these were outstanding at the time that the data was shared with the researcher highlights the need to address the potential implication of the minority (n= 100) of these over the 2012-19 period who were served for other breaches of tenancy, including crime and anti-social behaviour. These data would have consequential impacts on the reputation of housing. If behind the causes for leaving were greater proportions of crime or anti-social behaviour, causing the local authority to respond with evictions, this would not only mean that those areas would be affected by greater levels of offending, but that the reputation of housing would be affected by their occurrence. At that stage a key, but unexplorable consideration, would need to consider whether eviction for anti-social behaviour occurred because of crime or anti-social behaviour or civil issues. If, for example, evictions related to rent arrears [as a civil issue], the presumed impact of these would reflect on the extent to which different actions are punished by institutions, not the perceptions of tenants. However, an alternative explanation for some phenomena could apply, if the number of reasons to leave a tenure exceeded the number of actual evictions in the area. In such a scenario, the impact of eviction would perhaps more closely reflect the impact on the 'reputation' of an area, as those not subjected to them would feel compelled to leave—more closely resembling the effects of offender residence discussed in Baldwin *et al.*, (1976).

Tentatively exploring correlations between disorganisation, housing waiting times and housing occupancy rates, somewhat similar to the issue of reputation as in Baldwin *et al.*, (1976), did not to produce statistically significant relationships. This is reported in the results of *Tables 4.ix* and *4.x*, where deprivation indexes are respectively correlated to waiting times and tenancy occupancy rates. In these the power of this prediction appears to depend on the definition of deprivation adopted. Two measures of deprivation are adopted; the first, derived

directly from the Index of Multiple Deprivation [IoMD] (Consumer Data Research Centre, 2022), and the other from Sheffield’s Council (SCC, 2021).

Table 4.ix: Pearson’s correlation of Deprivation scores by SCC properties (waiting time by housing needs bands).

		Waiting time Band 'A'	Waiting time Band 'B'	Waiting time Band 'C'	Waiting time Band 'D'	Waiting time Band 'E'
TOT Let	<i>r</i>	.402*	-0.276	0.218	-0.239	0.294
	<i>p</i>	0.034	0.155	0.266	0.222	0.13
IoMD (2019)	<i>r</i>	0.053	-0.327	0.2	-0.354	0.036
	<i>p</i>	0.79	0.09	0.306	0.065	0.858
SCC IoMD score	<i>r</i>	0.031	-0.331	0.308	-0.171	0.136
	<i>p</i>	0.875	0.085	0.111	0.383	0.489

*. Correlation is significant at $p=0.05$

Source: Sheffield City Council (2019); Consumer Data Research Centre, (2022)

Table 4.x: Pearson’s correlation of Deprivation scores by SCC properties (occupancy rates by housing needs bands).

		Total lets Band 'A'	Total lets Band 'B'	Total lets Band 'C'	Total lets Band 'D'	Total lets Band 'E'
TOT Let	<i>r</i>	.670**	.925**	.942**	.988**	.702**
	<i>p</i>	0	0	0	0	0
IoMD (2019)	<i>r</i>	0.165	.484**	.448*	.508**	0.301
	<i>p</i>	0.402	0.009	0.017	0.006	0.12
SCC IoMD score	<i>r</i>	.398*	.696**	.549**	.551**	0.239
	<i>p</i>	0.036	0	0.002	0.002	0.221

Correlation is significant at $p=0.05$ **. Correlation is significant at $p=0.01$

Source: Sheffield City Council (2019); Consumer Data Research Centre, (2022)

The findings of the association between the number of re-lets and their overall waiting time by housing band seem to suggest that there are longer waiting times with ‘band A’ applications compared to others, and that there is also an overall lack of association across both deprivation scores. This analysis, chosen for how it shows how Institutions appeared to measure problems, supports this thesis’ view as to the inadequacy of deprivation scores as a mechanism by which to measure micro-level phenomena. Indicatively this finding does not undermine the previous observations, but rather supports the highly socio-economic inequalities that have been measured within wards across Sheffield. A more surprising finding comes from the interpretation of the relationship between housing data and deprivation with regard to the overall number of lettings across Sheffield and suggest that whilst more relets

do occur in lower housing needs bands, higher incidence of deprivation seem to occur between bands 'A' and 'D', and not 'E'. With regard why individuals may be awarded a higher priority need, financial circumstances (which partially affect the scoring of deprivation) would only partially account for a positive correlation between these variables, with un-measured social factors around the home (i.e., intra-neighbourhood relations) playing a bigger role.

Moreover, these findings suggest that when people do move, they tend to do so across more deprived locations; this is consistent with the geography of council-owned stock previously outlined. However, the absence of a stronger association between increasing or decreasing levels of priority need banding and deprivation does seem to suggest that, irrespective of housing need, prospective problem tenants (namely those in band 'E') may have the same ability as others to be housed across different areas of the city. These processes would mean that housing choices as enacted by the 'Choice-Based-Letting' framework adopted by Sheffield City Council – explored in further detail in Chapter Seven— were more dependent on the actual availability of housing, rather than the reputation of an area. The same may also happen for tenants with higher priority needs, further undermining the selective occurrence of polarisation of some Council-owned housing stock, even if this does not address the issues that still remain within problem areas. However, as previously highlighted, the small sample sizes of the data available, and the need to analyse this with respect to ward-level geographies and data severely limited the ability to draw conclusive conclusions from the quantitative analysis carried out in this chapter.

Drawing a link between these data and the work of Baldwin *et al.*, (1976), the overall argument is that social housing availability continues to relate to some of the most diverse and deprived areas of the city. Similarly, how desirable housing in the more deprived areas of Sheffield could be, the less likely would be for existing tenants to hold a tenancy for longer than the mandatory two-year minimum 'cool-down' period. However, with large numbers of tenancies ending with notices and or transfers, and both priority and non-priority housing allocation being fulfilled by housing at similar rates, the impacts of desirability and suitability could not be fully addressed.

Nonetheless, the data in this chapter emphasises how the issue of housing choices with respect to social housing allocation has a greater dependence on the functional

administration of housing than what examined and suggested by the work of Baldwin *et al.*, (1976). For instance, the question of how the local authority chooses between the allocation of housing of someone in 'band-E' in an area in the south-east of Sheffield instead of in the north-east, and the property to someone in bands 'A-D', remains unanswered. Similarly, whether these practices happen with or without the active knowledge of the local authority, or whether a greater degree of agency is to be attributed to individuals, is unclear. Nevertheless, these findings provide an empirically grounded basis to investigate the patterns of housing allocation explored above, with reference to both the geography and spatial concentration of crime, as well as with respect to housing management practices.

4.4. Conclusion

This chapter has provided a statistical overview of Sheffield's housing system. We can see from these data that the city today shows limited continuities with the city detailed in the 1970's account of *The Urban Criminal*. Sheffield has changed in line with national shifts. Despite this, the key headline for both the city analysed in the 1976 *The Urban Criminal* and the present study remains that of a city divided along class and ethnic lines. Concerning the study of the social ecology of the city, Sheffield's stark material divisions are conceptually significant to the construction of city-level narratives. As has been discussed, inequalities are split and experienced to their greatest extent, irrespective of whether they refer to specific social, economic, ethnic, or housing trends.

Placing inequalities alongside changing crime and crime management practices highlights the significant role of city-level institutions. These changes raise important questions about how the socio-ecological understanding of crime in Sheffield may be advanced. To this analysis, the chapter also added some preliminary answers concerning the geography of housing availability and allocations. With data confirming aforementioned assumptions regarding the greater numbers of available social housing in the north-east of Sheffield, the 'reasons for leaving data' emphasised how the more deprived an area is, the less likely it is for existing tenants to hold a tenancy for longer than the mandatory two-year minimum 'cool-down' period. However, limitations in the data that differentiates between the allocations of different needs 'bands', and the reasons why tenancies were terminated, do not allow such issues to be explored in further detail.

This chapter has set the scene for wider discussions about the relationship between the social and housing ecology of the city and crime. The analysis of crime cannot be undertaken in isolation from the social and historical ecology of the city. To do otherwise would fail to reflect on how material struggles continue to define understandings of inequalities. Subsequent chapters reflect on Sheffield as a spatially diverse and divided city by entwining narratives about inequalities and crime and perspectives which appraise these together. This reflection is undertaken in conjunction with comments as to the roles and understandings of the institutions which manage the city.

5. CRIME IN SHEFFIELD

This chapter provides a quantitative and spatial analysis of police-recorded data for Sheffield between 2012 and 2018. Addressing the first research question, this analysis focuses on the spatial relationship between crime and housing tenure. Specifically with respect to what kinds of offences are taking place in Sheffield, and where they take place. Acknowledging the findings of Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) with respect to the qualities and limitations of the data available, it explores whether patterns of crime and incident data relate to social housing in greater proportion than other tenures, and whether the same also applies with respect to suspect and victim residence rates. This chapter is, accordingly, structured around three key sections. First it provides a descriptive overview of the overall sample of crime, incidents, suspect, and victim data used in the analysis. Second, it provides a spatial and statistical overview of where and how these data clustered across the city. Third, it explores the relationship between varying levels of crime and tenure, through a statistical correlation of police recorded data and tenure, as well as analysis of victim and suspect residence data distance-from-crime analysis.

In keeping with the opinions voiced by Baldwin *et al.*, (1976), present-day Sheffield appears to be a relatively safe city, where the majority of offences are acquisitive crime, or related to public safety and anti-social behaviour incidents rather than being serious offences. Similarly, whilst some offences also appear to be disproportionately clustered across the city centre, the unequal spatial distribution of crime appears to affect some key residential areas in the north-east of Sheffield in the same way as social inequalities considered in the previous chapter. A closer examination of how these are related to housing confirms three key findings. The tenure of social housing most strongly positively correlates to higher proportions of crime, incidents, suspect residence, and victim residence. The opposite is true with regard to owner-occupied dwellings, where police-recorded data correlates negatively with tenure. More mixed results emerge for private-rented tenures with burglary being notably positively related.

5.1. The data sample

5.1.1. Crime data

Between 2012 and 2018 a total of 295,462 crimes (excluding duplicates) were recorded, across nine 'crime types' (summarised in *Table 5.i*). Despite an overall increase in the number of recorded crimes of approximately 27%, the overall sample expressed a greater degree of variability across each offence type. For example, there was net decrease across drug offences (-39%), burglaries (-25%), theft (-13%) and, criminal damage and arson (-12%), and increases in 'robbery' (+56%), 'sexual offences' (+250%), and 'violent crime' (+204%) offences.

Table 5.i: Sheffield crime data 2012-2018 (yearly count)

Crime type	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Burglary	6,913	6,199	6,018	4,705	4,894	5,177	5,319
Criminal damage and arson	7,283	6,178	6,326	6,476	6,956	7,243	6,356
Drugs	1.62	1,378	1,286	954	92	808	976
Fraud and forgery	420	72	22	7	21	37	0
Other crime	380	385	503	571	769	1,080	5,996
Robbery	560	808	611	527	651	834	830
Sexual offences	327	350	559	705	836	903	1,146
Theft	18,440	16,773	15,893	15,760	16,443	17,137	15,980
Violent	4,832	4,585	6,562	8,061	10,542	15,297	15,549
TOTAL	40,779	36,728	37,780	37,766	42,041	48,516	51,852

Source: South Yorkshire Police (2019)

Theft (29%), violent offences (26%), and criminal damage and arson (18%) accounted for more than two thirds of all crime recorded by the police in Sheffield. However, within these three macro-groupings – and utilising as a guideline the tariff set for each offence by Sentencing Guidelines for England and Wales (<https://www.sentencingcouncil.org.uk>) – minor offences were found to be the most prevalent (see *Table 5.ii*, below).

Informed by these preliminary findings, two different subsets of the original data were selected for spatial and statistical analysis. The first included theft offences, the other excluded them. Theft offences were excluded from the database used to explore the geographical patterning of different clusters of crime. Indeed, these offences would be unsuitable for spatial clustering analysis of non-suspect data, as most instances of theft offence are expected to be spatially clustering in the proximity of the City Centre and other

commercial premises (Bowers, 2014). This would only emphasise the relation between opportunities and crime (Felson and Cohen, 1980), namely between the presence of commercial premises, detracting from analysis of crime relating to residential areas. Theft offences were, however, included in the analysis of distance-from-crime analysis, and when attempting to explore suspect rates, in order to differentiate patterns among different ‘types’ of suspects.

Table 5.ii: Summary of predominant crime sub-types (2012-2018)

Crime type	Crime sub-type	Percent
Theft	Shoplifting	25.8
	Other theft or unauthorised taking	20.8
	Theft from motor vehicle	17.2
Violent	Assault without injury	23.1
	Harassment	12.9
	Public fear alarm or distress (POA 1986 secs 4,4a & 5)	10.1
Criminal Damage and Arson	Criminal damage - to vehicles	33.2
	Criminal damage- to dwellings	27.2
	Criminal damage - other	12.3

Source: South Yorkshire Police (2019)

In a similar fashion, instances of criminal damage were excluded from the overall data sample analysed in the thesis because of data quality and relevancy issues. Preliminary spatial analysis indeed confirmed that most instances of criminal damage took place in the city centre. With most offences likely taking place against commercial and business premises, and a substantial portion of these data already lacking matching references across suspect databases, this kind of offending did not seem relevant to the central research questions investigating the link between housing and crime.

As a result, the main sample of crime data for spatial and statistical analysis was set to include burglary offences, drug offences, sexual offences, and violent crime. Burglary offences, as reported in *Table 5.iii*, referred to offences directly relating to residential addresses, and the preliminary data analysis highlighted how they were predominantly concentrated spatially in residential areas. In contrast, drug offences took place across both residential and non-residential areas, and also related to a significant number of suspect dataset entries. Sexual offences, although accounting for one of the most limited categories of data, were selected to capture victimisation patterns across the city, and specifically to see whether most offences

took place in residential areas of the city, or towards the centre of the city. Finally, violent crime although under-reported when occurring in domestic settings over violence taking place in public settings, were still included as a consequence of the overall sample-size of the crime type, and the varied nature of the sub-types of each offence (as seen in *Table 5.ii*). These difference across the dataset, in turn, particularly emphasised the need and importance to study the distance-from-crime data, alongside the discrete statistical and spatial concentration of offences across space.

The sub-samples of crime data utilised for analysis in the following sections were subdivided summarised in *Table 5.iii*. As each crime type recorded in the police databases was constituted as a 'group' [referred in this analysis as 'crime type'] and a 'class description' [referred in this analysis as 'crime sub-type'], the reporting of data herein refers to discretionarily set aggregate categorisations, as different kinds of offence sub-types do not provide readily intelligible categorisations which benefit clarity.

Table 5.iii: Summary of predominant crime-sub types (2012-2018)

Crime type	Crime sub-type	Frequency	Percent
Burglary	Burglary in a dwelling	24,610	63
	Burglary in other building	14,615	37
Drugs	Possession of controlled drugs (ex. Cannabis)	1,118	14
	Possession of controlled drugs (Cannabis)	4,706	59
	Trafficking of drugs	2,096	26
	Other drug offences	35	0.5
Sexual offences*	Sexual offences against a child (under 13 y/o)	1,292	27
	Adult rape	141	3
	All other sexual offences	3,391	70.2
Violent	Assault without injury	14,941	23
	Harassment	8,333	13
	Public fear alarm or distress (POA 1986 secs 4,4a & 5)	6524	10

* Sub-categories were selected amongst the most predominant categorisations, following of Home Office Counting Rules for Recorded Crime (2022). Other sub-categories were not selected due to accounting (individually) for 3% or less.
Source: South Yorkshire Police (2019)

Looking at the crime data over the sampled period (2012-18) one issue regarding offence trends was noted; there were changes in the ways in which some offences were recorded. For example, from 'possession of weapon' offences were recorded separately from 'violent crime' from 2017 onwards (a practice not replicated by this research), and there was a sharp

increase in ‘other crime’ offences (+1,477% between 2012 and 2018, and +445% in 2018 – when the latter is taken as a standalone year). Such changes could, hypothetically, be attributed to changes in national police practices as per the example of counting rules for crimes.

The Police did, in fact, not only normally record the most serious offence for each crime where multiple offences had been committed by one offender (see Home Office, 2021: section F); but, also, recording practices were subject to changes in the Counting Rules for Recorded Crimes, meaning how crime was recorded by police would be subject to periodical review. Whilst alternative explanations could be thought of to explain changes in recording practices, these issues re-iterated the importance to carefully examine crime data, with the knowledge that reported trends did not necessarily reflect an accurate picture of crime across Sheffield.

5.1.2. Incident data

A total of 510,879 incidents were initially selected from the overall period of 2014-2018 as reported in *Table 5.iv*. The data excluded ‘crime incidents’ as these constituted incidents that went on to be recorded as crimes, and therefore counting them (here), would cause consistency issues with the crime data. There was an overall 34% decrease in the number of incidents recorded in Sheffield over this period.

From the original dataset, two further selections of data were imposed. For practical operational reasons, ‘administration’ and ‘crime related’ incidents were excluded as these relate to South Yorkshire’s police records of actions associated to incidents or crimes, rather than being new instances of recorded incidents.

Table 5.iv: Sheffield incident data (2014-2018)

Incident type	2014	2016	2017	2018
Administration	17,373	15,173	13,545	9,950
Anti-Social Behaviour	36,436	33,330	26,877	15,581
Crime related	1,534	1,226	1,681	1,385
Not an incident	85	94	176	473
Public Safety	80,240	73,404	73,083	60,056
Transport	12,451	14,391	12,759	9,576
TOTAL	148,119	137,618	128,121	97,021

Source: South Yorkshire Police (2019)

The second data cleansing was operated on a conceptual basis. ‘Not an incident’ and ‘transport’ data, aside for not being clearly defined by South Yorkshire Police did not align to any definition of incivilities (Brown *et al.*, 2004), sub-criminal behaviour (Heap, 2018), or anti-social behaviour and their relation to the policing of behaviour (Flint, 2006b). Therefore, with ‘anti-social behaviour’ (22%) and ‘public safety’ (56%) constituting the majority of the incident data provided, these were used for further analysis— as summarised in *Table 5.v*.

Table 5.v: Summary of anti-social behaviour incidents (2014-2018)

Incident type	Incident sub-type	Percent of incident type
Anti-Social-Behaviour	Nuisance	67
	Personal	25
Public Safety	Civil dispute	3
	Domestic non-crime	10
	Hoax call	0.7
	Licensing	0.1
	Special- false call	0.4

Source: South Yorkshire Police (2019)

One last significant issue with the incident databases was their compatibility with other research data. Although also identified through unique alphanumeric codes, these did not match those of crime, suspect or victim databases. This meant that it was not possible to match incident data to crime, suspect, and victim databases therefore only allowing a more generalised analysis of clustering across space, and aggregate Output-area level analysis.

5.1.3. Suspect data

Suspect data was obtained by South Yorkshire Police as a collection of ‘offender data’ where the addresses of presumed suspects of crime were collated alongside the presumed addresses of convicted offenders. As with the previous data, only a subset was selected for analysis. The first determining criteria for including data was the suspect residing in Sheffield. This decision was made so as to maintain internal consistency with crime data and enable analysis that was tailored to offending across Sheffield. From a total of 70,737, a sub-total of 54,974 (77.7%) was derived.²¹

²¹ Exclusion of data was based on the 2011 Census boundary data. The excluded sub-set included: 10,293 (14.5%) instances where no location data was present; 5,470 (8%) records from areas adjacent to Sheffield, of which

Of the remaining sample—outlined in *Table 5.iv* — suspect data was selected to match the crime sample; accordingly, excluding the ‘other crime’ and ‘fraud and forgery’ categories from analysis. Two further exceptions are noted with respect to this dataset. The first, due to an unconfirmed error, relates to the fact that the for the year 2015 was not provided by South Yorkshire Police. Secondly, as suggested by the drug offences-subset, it was not possible to differentiate between ‘suspect’ and ‘victim’ data. Where recorded, addresses of individuals associated with ‘drug crimes’ were, as per the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, recorded as offenders.

Table 5.vi: Percentage of suspect address data by offence (2014-2018)

Suspect’s crime type	Percent of total
Burglary	5.2
Criminal damage and arson	9.1
Drugs	8
Fraud and forgery	0.8
Other crime	9.7
Robbery	2.2
Sexual offences	2.7
Theft	26.7
Violent	35.7

Source: South Yorkshire Police (2019)

5.1.4. Victim data

The victim address residence data consisted of a record of the point-level coordinates pin-pointing the presumed residence location of a victim, alongside a unique crime identifier which matched them to crime and offender data. Overall, victim residence addresses provided 89,017 entries (93% of N=95,5597), of victims residing within the Sheffield administrative boundary. Of the remaining sample—outlined in *Table 5.vii* — victim data was selected to match the crime and suspect sample; accordingly, excluding the ‘other crime’ and ‘fraud and forgery’ categories from analysis.

1,571 (28%) were addresses being prisons within the South Yorkshire area (HMP Doncaster, HMP Moorland and HMP Hatfield).

Table 5.vii: Percentage of victim address data by offence (2014-2018)

Victim's crime type	Percent of total
Burglary	10.2
Criminal damage and arson	14
Fraud and forgery	0.02
Other crime	1.3
Robbery	3.4
Sexual offences	3.2
Theft	22.2
Violent	45.5

Source: South Yorkshire Police (2019)

5.2. The geography of crime in Sheffield

Examining the spatial distribution and occurrence of crime and incidents across Sheffield at a macro level— as reported in *Maps 5.i, 5.ii and 5.iii* —revealed a seemingly consistent picture as that drawn from Chapter Four's characterisation of the socio-spatial profile of the city. As otherwise reported in Tables 5.viii and 5.ix, it suggested that the highest crime and incident rates were recorded in the north-eastern parts of the city, and that the lowest rates were reported in the south-west of the city. Preliminarily, this suggested that areas of the city historically associated with its industrial development and housing most of its 'working-class' residents might be more criminogenic than the city's south-eastern areas which are historically more affluent and less densely populated.

Table 5.viii: Highest crime and incident rate ranked by Ward (average rate by 1,000 population)

Ward Name	Crime Rate	Incident Rate
Central	253 (1)	636 (1)
Darnall	126 (2)	360 (6)
Burngreave	105 (3)	484 (2)
Southey	98 (4)	406 (3)
Firth Park	89 (5)	381 (4)
Manor & Castle	86 (7)	363 (5)

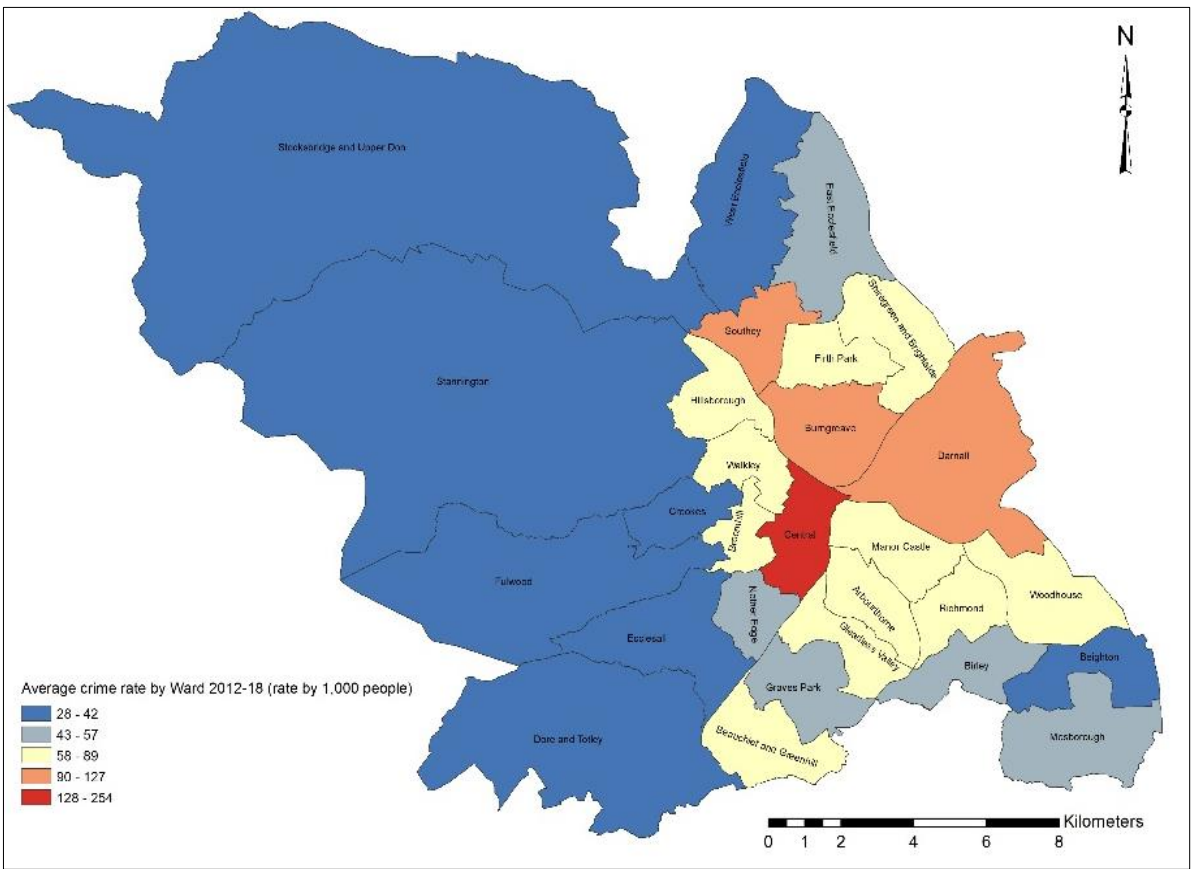
Source: South Yorkshire Police (2019); Census (2011)

Table 5.ix: Lowest crime and incident rate ranked by Ward (average rate by 1,000 population)

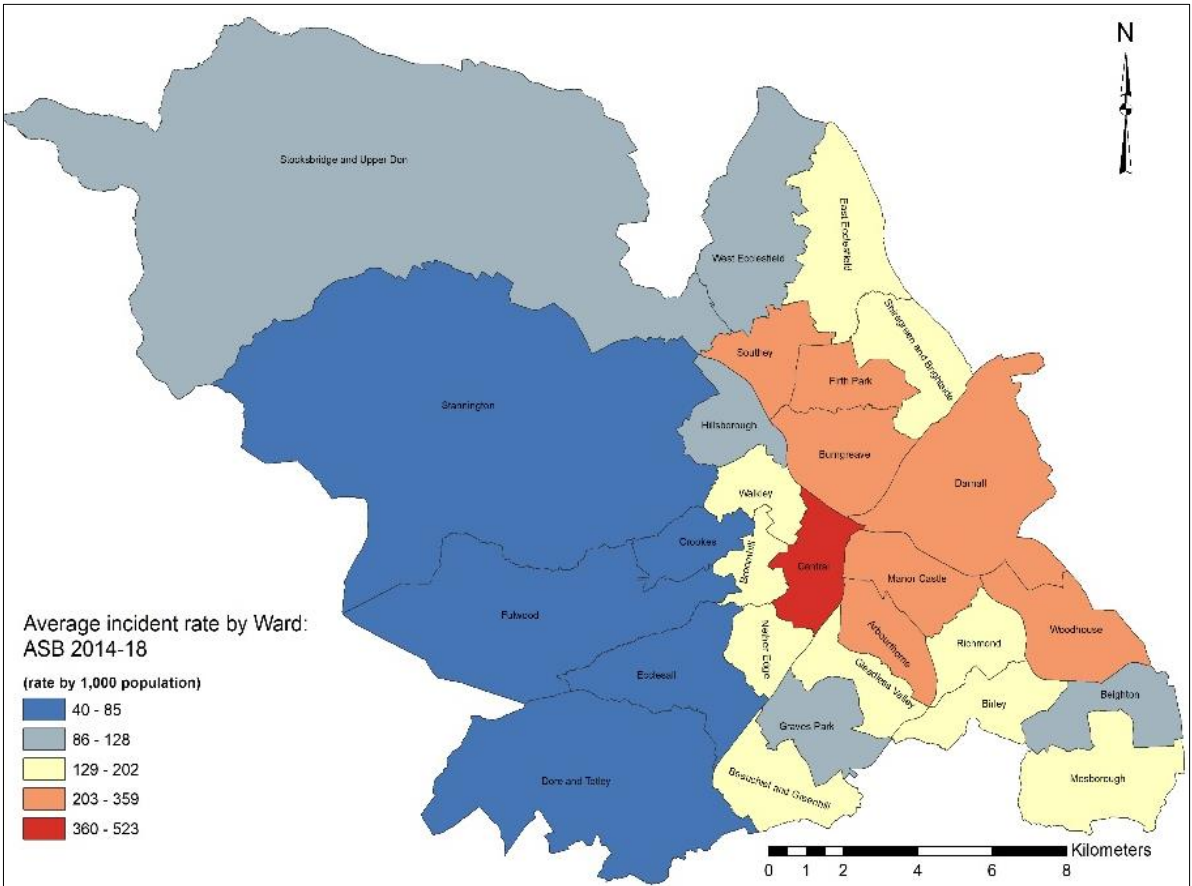
Ward Name	Crime Rate	Incident Rate
Fulwood	28 (1)	58 (1)
Dore and Totley	30 (2)	95 (4)
Crookes	34 (3)	72 (2)
Ecclesall	45 (4)	74 (3)
Stocksbridge & Upper Don	37 (5)	156 (8)
Stannington	40 (23)	125 (5)

Source: South Yorkshire Police (2019); Census (2011)

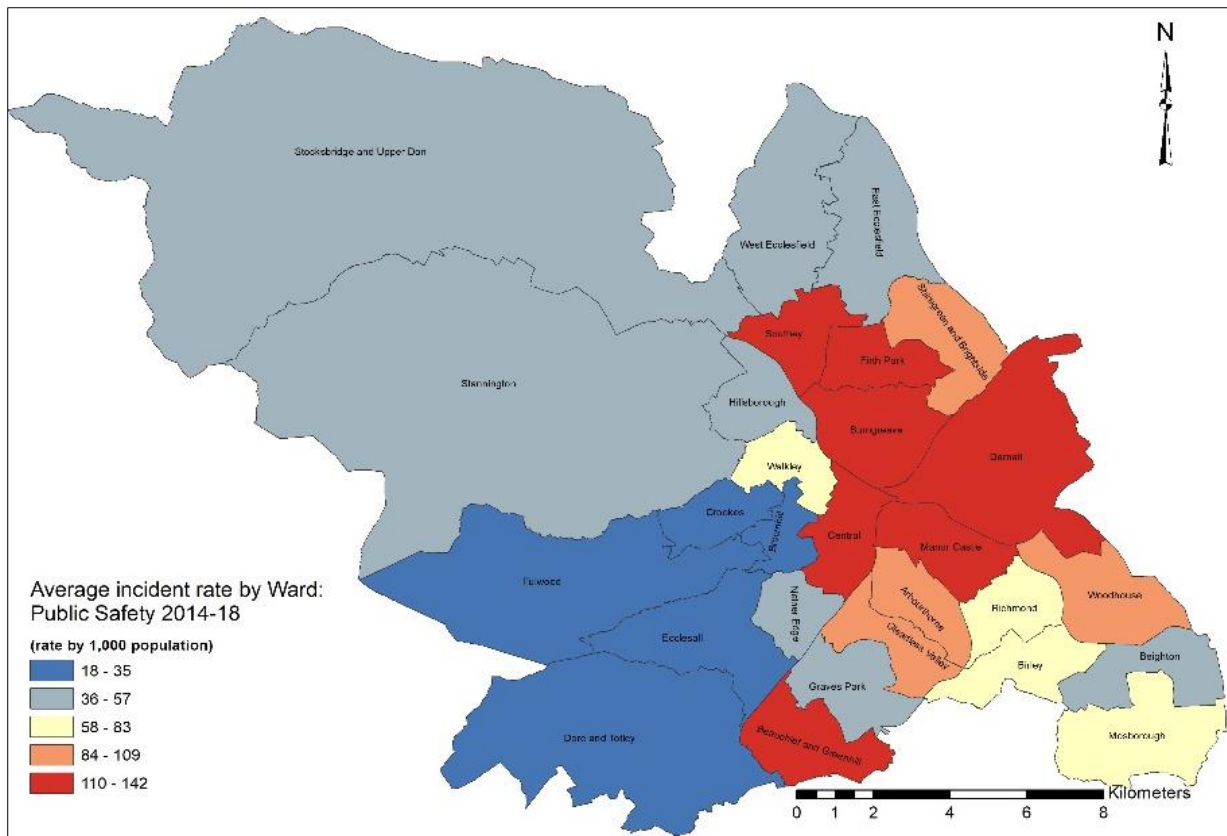
The city centre—labelled in *Table 5.viii* listed as Central Ward— constituted an exception to the analysis based on the socio-economic history of Sheffield, an exception which has also long been noted in other studies of urban crime (Wikström, 1991b). Indeed, the spatial and social geographies of city centres are known to act as attractors and/or generators of interpersonal crime, suggesting that the disproportionate concentration of commercial and entertainment premises within city-centre areas, alongside the high volumes of people converging in these areas create greater opportunities for acquisitive and interpersonal crime to take place (Brantingham and Brantingham, 1995; McCord et al., 2007). It follows, that a further unequal spatial distribution of crime at the micro level should be expected (Weisburd, 2015), given the degrees of spatial variability for different crime and incident patterns across space dependant on the crime ‘type’ analysed (Kinney *et al.*, 2008). Beginning to differentiate the inter-ward pattens of crime and incidents, the highest rates recorded appeared (outside of those within the city centre) to disproportionately affect areas in the north-east of Sheffield, and in particular the same wards identified in Chapter Four as having a high concentration of social housing.



Map 5.i: Average crime rate 2012-2018 Source: SYP (2019); Census (2011)



Map 5.ii: Average ASB incidents rate 2014-2018 Source: SYP (2019); Census (2011)

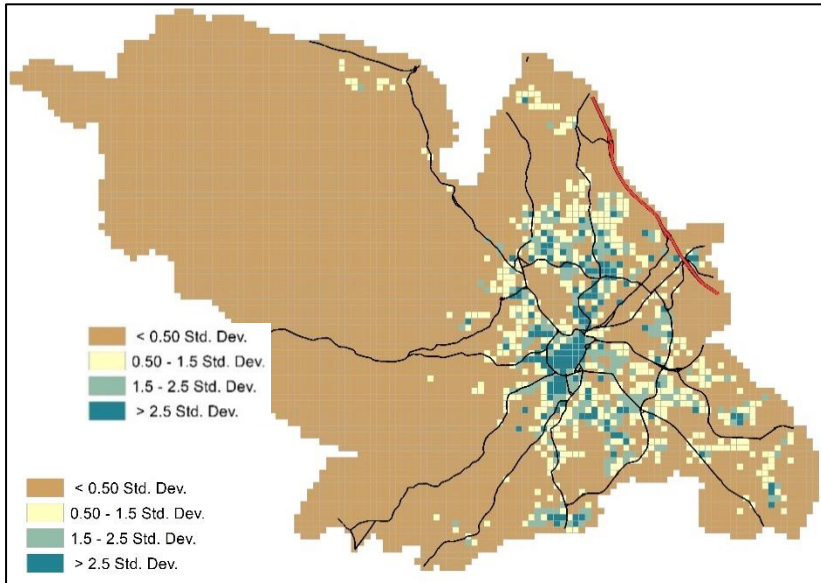


Map 5.iii : Average public safety incident rate 2014-2018

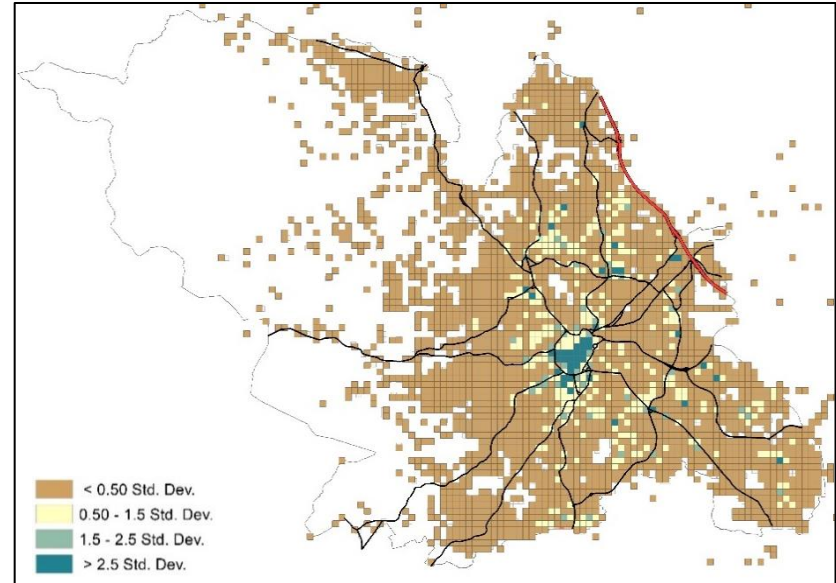
Source: SYP (2019); Census (2011)

Further examination of intra-ward data confirmed these observations. From a statistical perspective, 7.6% of crime locations across Sheffield ($n=7,702$, $N=100,280$) accounting for 50% of all crime recorded between 2012 and 2018, and 8.5% of incident locations ($n=2,121$, $N=24,952$) accounting for 50% of all incidents recorded between 2014 and 2018. However, these results deviated in excess of the expected 5% concentration adopted as the standard to define highly unequal spatial distributions of crime (Weisburd, 2015). Nonetheless, at a geographical level, these results were also clearly visible as reported in *Maps 5.v to 5.xii*, with both unequal spatial distribution of all crime and incidents across Sheffield, and further heterogeneous differences in the patterning of individual crimes and incident types.

These maps provide a picture of the distribution of police-recorded crime across the city. All offences, albeit displaying noticeably different trends, exhibited a high degree of spatial clustering within the city centre; reinforcing the criminogeneity of this area. In other words, crime in the city centre could empirically be explained using the underlying principles of routine-activities theory (Felson, 2011), and their relation to the thesis that city centres act as crime ‘generators’ and ‘attractors’ (Brantingham and Brantingham, 1981).

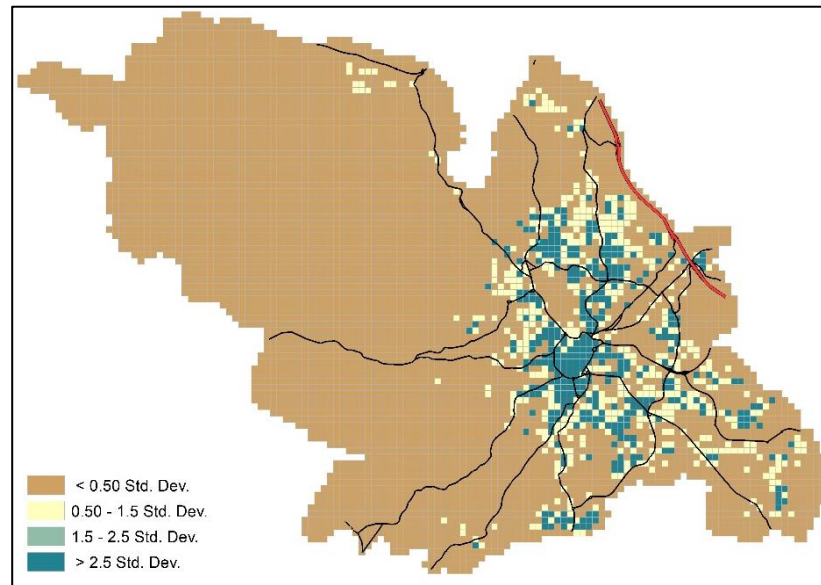


Map 5.v: Cluster analysis of ASB data (above)

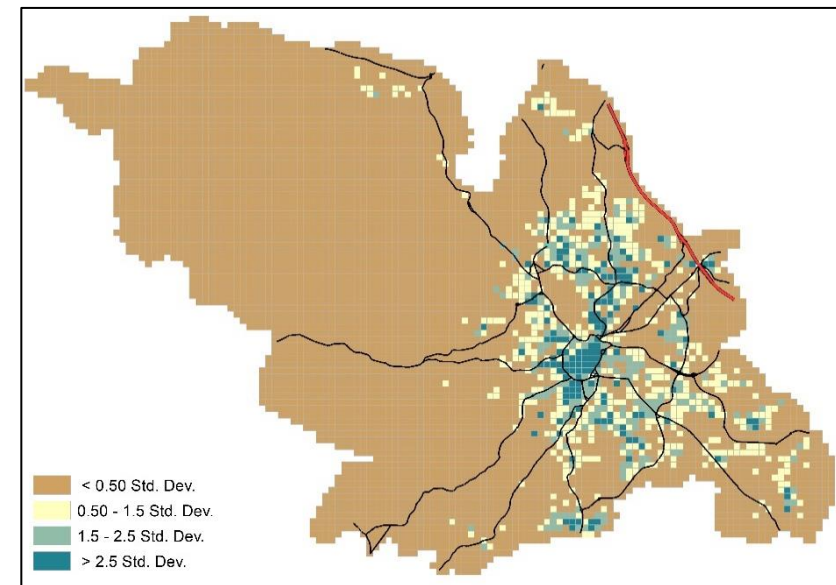


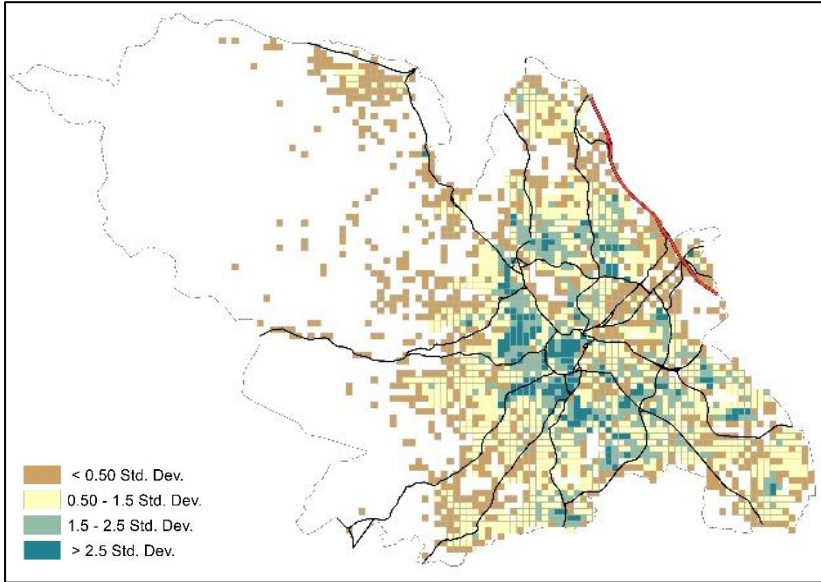
Map 5.viii: Cluster analysis of all crime data (above)

Map 5.iv: Cluster analysis of all incident data (below)



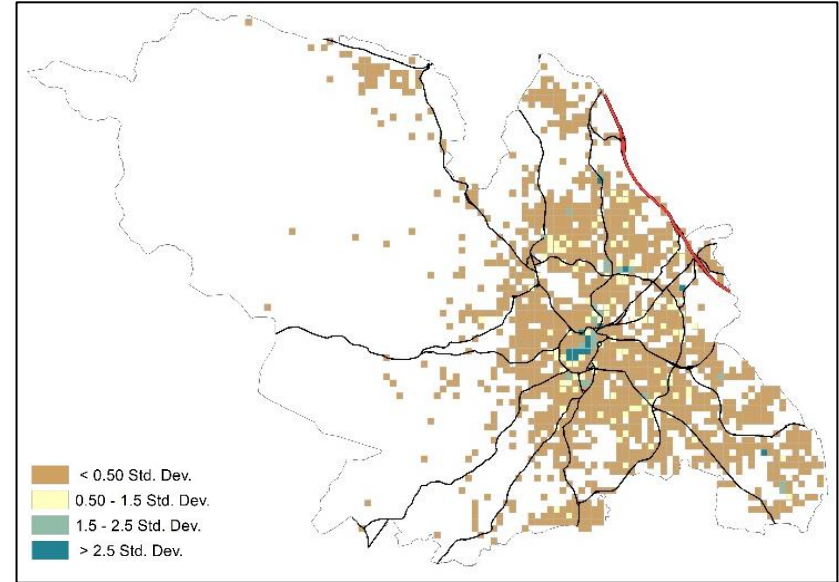
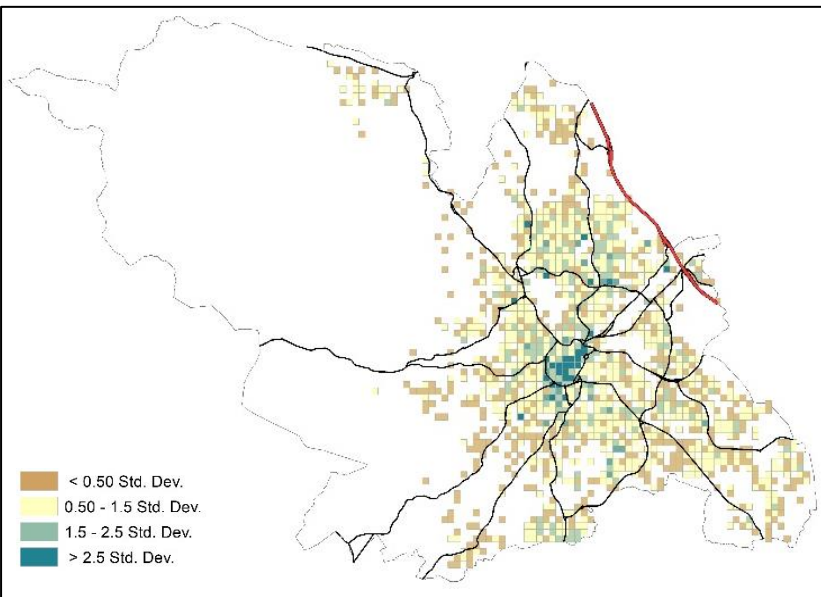
Map 5.vii: Cluster analysis of public safety incident data (below)





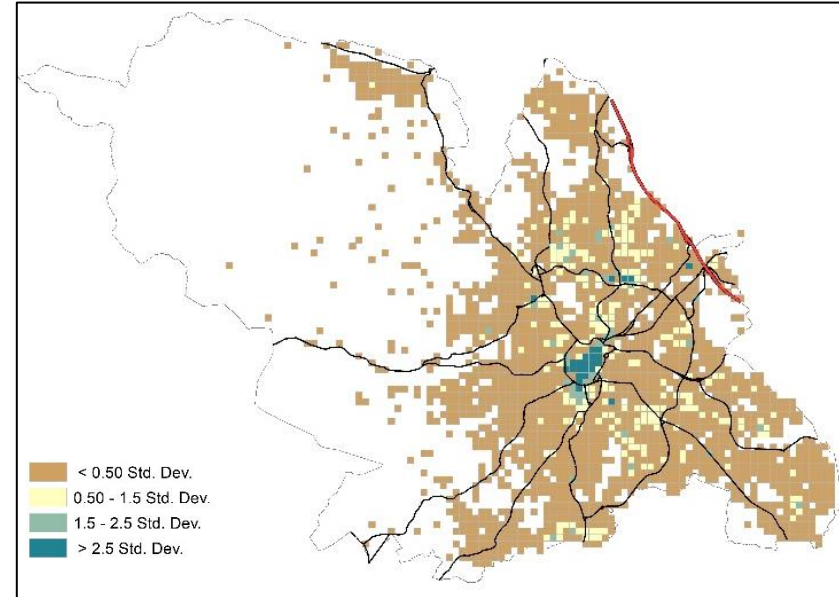
Map 5.xx: Cluster analysis of burglary offences data (above)

Map 5.xix: Cluster analysis of sexual offences data (below)



Map 5.xix: Cluster analysis of drug offences data (above)

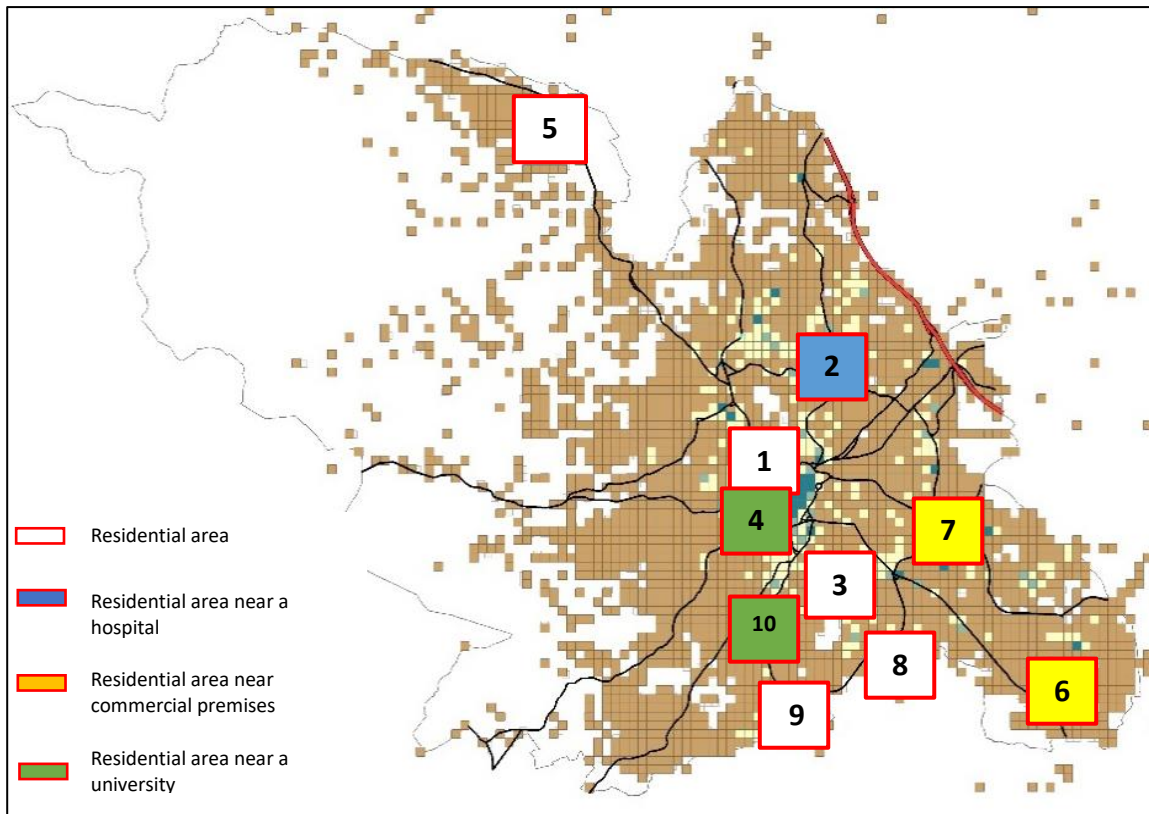
Map 5.viii: Cluster analysis of violent offences (below)



Indeed, residents in this area were approximately three times more likely to be exposed to crime; with violent crime at 3.6 times more than the average, sexual offences (up to 3.8 times more than the average)— and whilst outside the sample, theft (4.1 times more than the average), and robbery (6.2 times more than the city's average). This trend was mirrored across incidents rates and indicated an average of being 2.5 times higher than other places in Sheffield. The higher proportion of non-resident persons visiting and spending time in these areas, and the increased proportion of offences taking place during weekends, as well as in the summer months between June and October, reinforced the hypothesis that most offences committed in the area were constituted by 'opportunistic' criminals; in keeping with the findings of Ceccato *et al.*, (2013), and Song *et al.*, (2012). Outside the city centre, crime and incident data seemed to follow one of three patterns. Overall incidents, but also instances of anti-social behaviour and public safety, seemed to disproportionately affect the northern parts of the city as well as several key locations in the south-east. In contrast, sexual offences and burglaries clustered to a greater extent across other parts of the city, specifically across the eastern part of Sheffield.

Looking at patterns outside the city centre, 10 specific point-locations appeared to attract the highest concentrations ($n > 2.5$ standard deviation = 95% hotspot) of crime and incidents. As displayed in *Map 5.iv* (the map is enlarged version of *Map 5.viii*), crime distribution across the city coincided with residential addresses ($n=5$), residential areas in close proximity to commercial premises ($n=2$), residential areas near universities ($n=2$), and residential areas near a major trauma centre ($n=1$).

Finding crime and incidents recorded at the Northern General Hospital was significant in two ways. First, with the detail of police activities being discussed in the following chapter—where the geography of police activities in Sheffield is used to produce knowledge concerning institutional understandings of crime— information about police 'priority-demand areas' contributed to a better understanding of the distribution of recorded offences across residential areas in Sheffield. Overlapping the combined list of police priority areas in *Table 5.x* onto *Map 5.iv* identified the need to consider how the unequal distribution of crime and policing activities could be related. Policing activities, as mapped hotspots, appeared to be organised around police priority areas.



Map 5.iv: Examples of spatial clustering (numerical references overlaid on Table 5.vii) Source: SYP (2019); Census (2011)

Table 5.x: Neighbourhood priority areas for South Yorkshire Police with numerical references for Map 5.iv

Area	Neighbourhood	Reference in map 5.8.1
North-east	Parson Cross/Fox hill	1
	Fir Vale	2
	Burngreave	3
Central	Broomhall/Upperthorpe	4
	Deepcar *	5
South-east	Woodhouse/Westfield	6
	Darnall/Tinsley	7
	Manor/Arbourthorne	8
South-west	Gleadless Valley	9
	Sharrow	10

Source: South Yorkshire Police 2019a

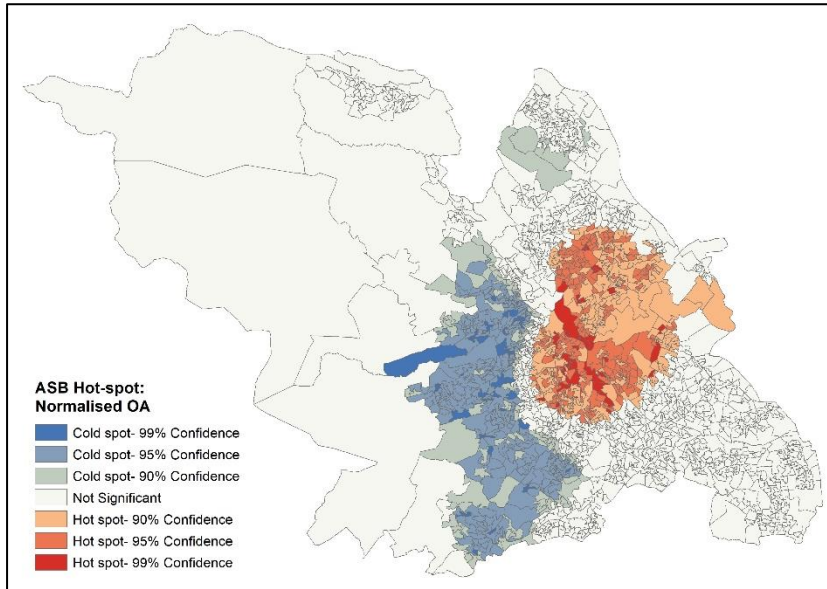
*the present study does not identify Deepcar as a host-spot.

Nonetheless, SYP identified this locality as a priority, likely due to its relative geographic isolation to the rest of the city.

However, secondly, whilst relating demand to policing activities could represent an instance of evidence-based policing, it could also reflect that crime-recording in Sheffield may be impacted by the proportion of time police spent in different areas. Indeed, the effects of localised police activities have been appraised as having different impacts on the recording of

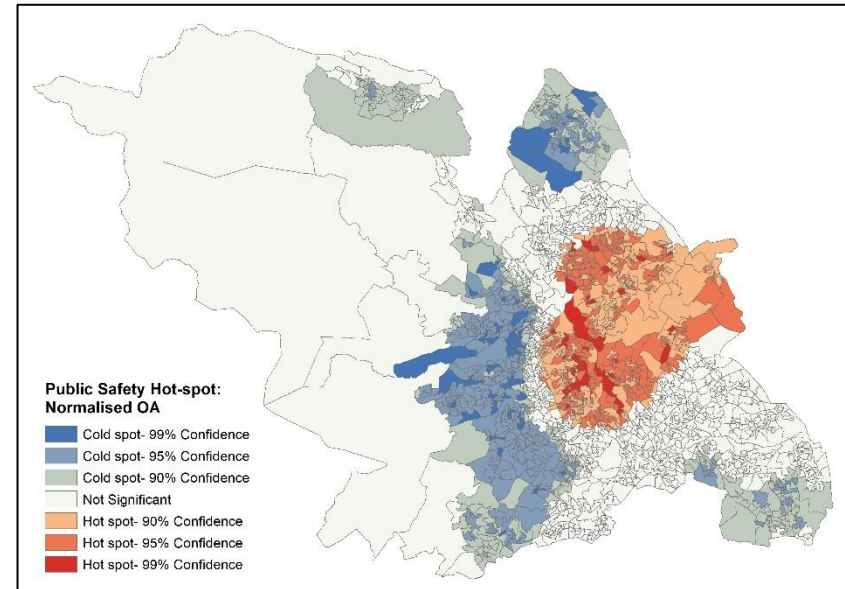
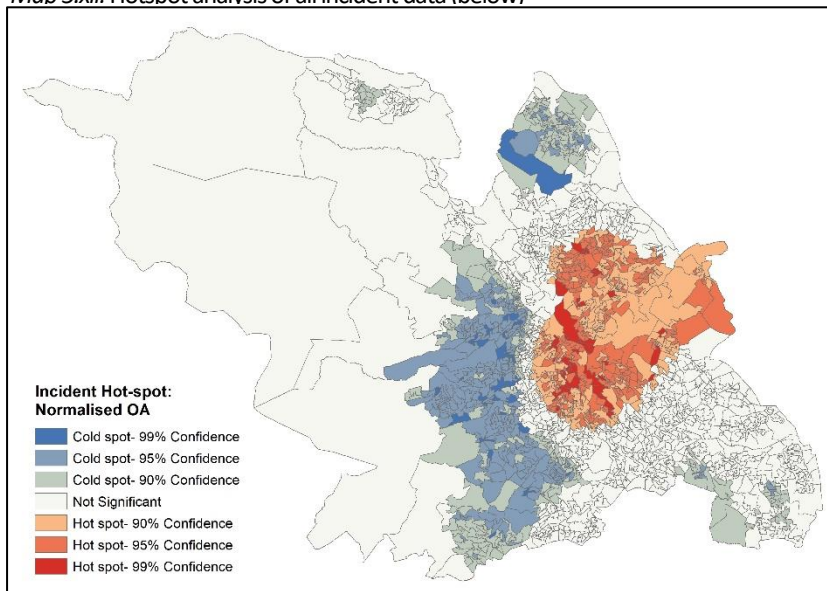
crime, with studies confirming changes in the overall number of recorded crime with the effect of detection, deterrence, and displacement of crime (Jacob and Rich, 1980; Barr and Pease, 1990; Eck, 1993; Vollaard and Hamed, 2012). That the majority of hotspots coincided with police priority areas, also emphasised the need to further explore the relationship between housing and crime so as to establish whether any particular relationship between different housing tenures existed. Overall, however, despite these findings highlighting some significant characteristics of crime patterns, they did not directly represent rates of victims or offenders residence in each area. Instead, they simply provided a measure of possible victimisation. Therefore, whilst the importance of micro-level analysis cannot be understated, especially in light of growing evidence supporting point-level analysis over other larger levels of data aggregation (Steenbeek and Weisburd, 2016), point data could not provide any comparative measure of crime with respect to geographical matching housing data. This is because no data for individual home addresses' tenure was available. Therefore, drawing micro-level conclusions from area-level effects, would constitute an ecological fallacy (Robinson, 1950).

Acknowledging, therefore, the practical and conceptual difficulties with empirically establishing small-area geographies, similar to 'neighbourhood level', Census Output Areas were selected. As the smallest aggregate administrative geography of Census data to which housing data accessible, Output Areas provided an operationally adequate unit of analysis, as socio-demographic data measured within each boundary was 'homogeneous' (Gale *et al.*, 2016). Having resolved that a degree of spatial clustering for all interpersonal offences should be expected around the centre of the city, studying the spatial distribution and occurrence of crime and incident data through Sheffield employing normalised [by resident population] hotspots analysis, furthered the observations above. As illustrated in in *Maps 5.xiii-5.xx* (below), this supports the hypothesis the distribution of Crime in Sheffield is unequal, and that trends concentrate in the areas to the north-east of Sheffield, and the Don-Valley Bowl such as Burngreave, as well as the longstanding sites of problem estates, namely the Manor, Castle, and Gleadless Valley areas.



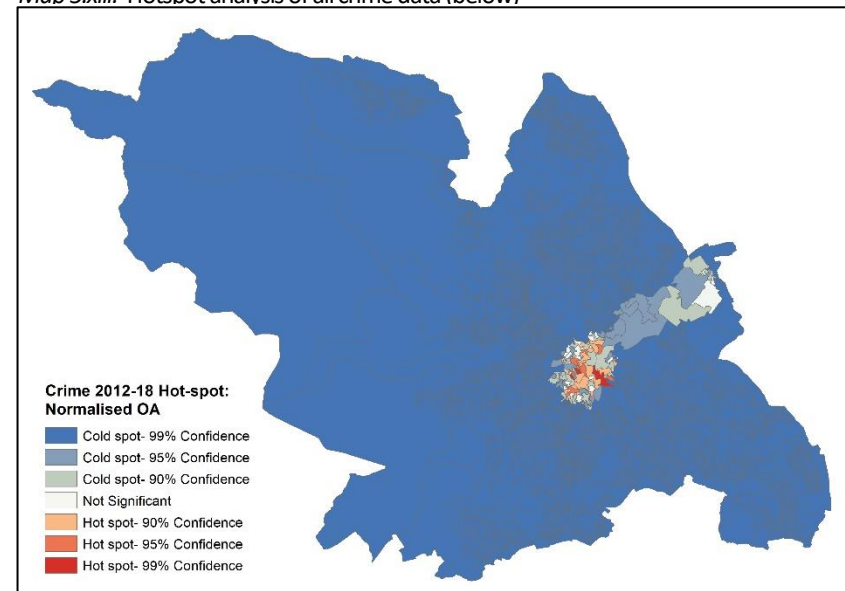
Map 5.xv: Hotspot analysis of ASB data (above)

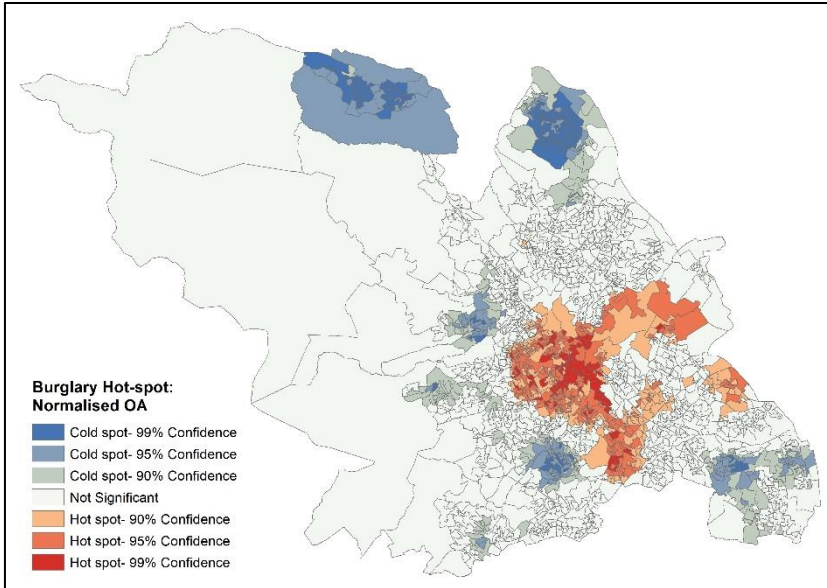
Map 5.xii: Hotspot analysis of all incident data (below)



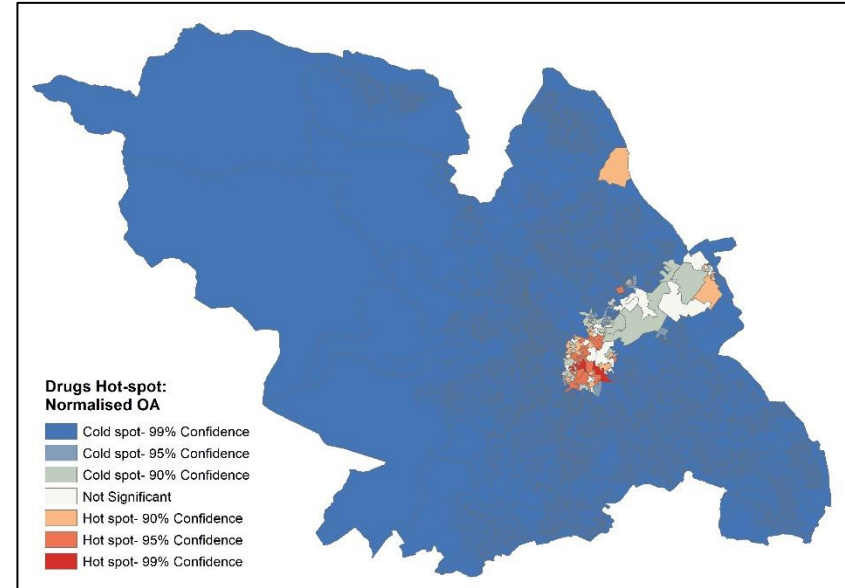
Map 5.xiv: Hotspot analysis of public safety data (above)

Map 5.xiii: Hotspot analysis of all crime data (below)



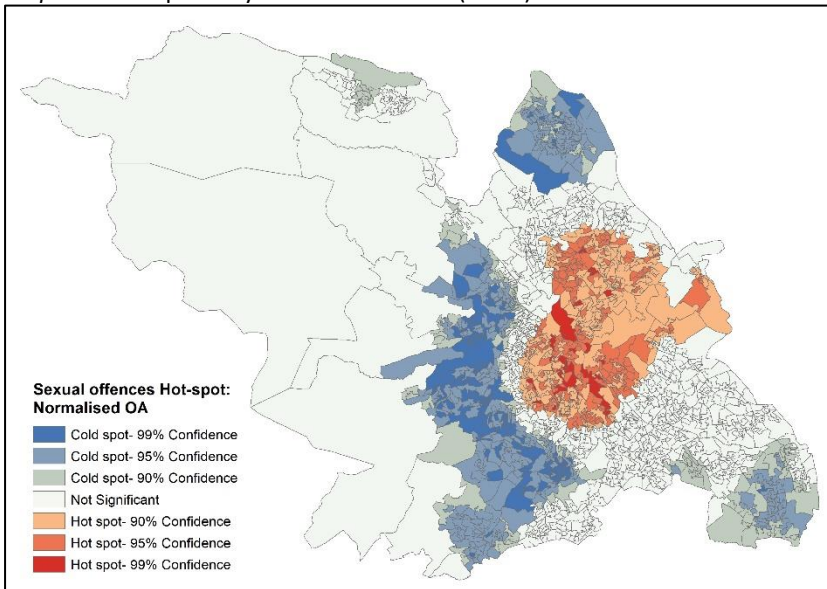


Map 5.xvii: Hotspot analysis of burglary offences (above)

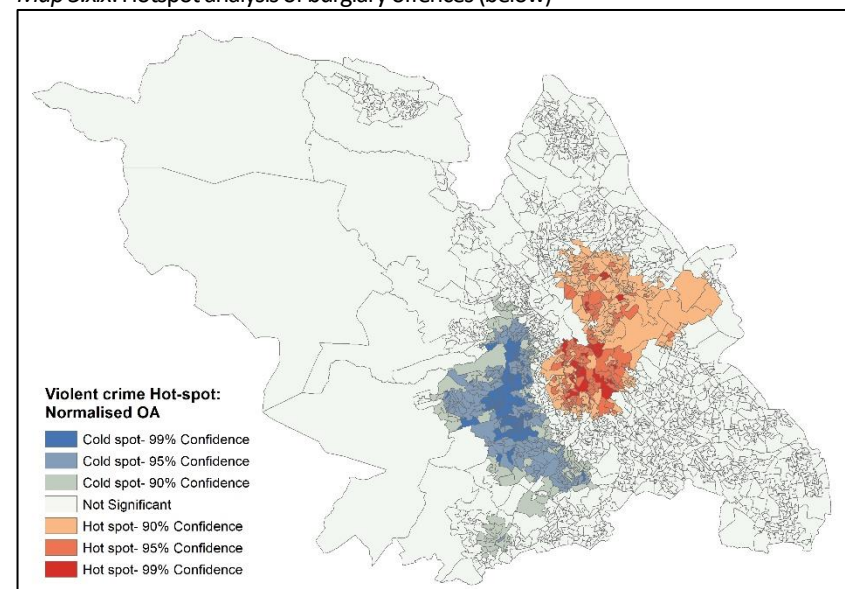


Map 5.xvi: Hotspot analysis of drug offences (above)

Map 5.xviii: Hotspot analysis of sexual offences (below)



Map 5.xix: Hotspot analysis of burglary offences (below)



Integrating these data with the geography of suspect and victim data across Sheffield, began to address the update concerning the conceptualisation of ‘offender rates’ from Baldwin *et al.*, (1976). Starting from a macro-level overview, *Tables 5.xi and 5.xii*, report the highest and lowest wards-level rates of suspect and victim residence in Sheffield.

Table 5.xi: Highest suspect and victim residence rate ranked by Ward (average rate by 1,000 population)

Ward name	Housing characteristics	Victim rate	Suspect rate
Firth Park	Very large inter-war council housing estates	43 (1)	39.4 (2)
Southey	Very large inter-war council housing estates	42.4 (2)	36.9 (3)
Burngreave	Cheaper mixed-tenure housing high levels of demographically and ethnically mixed population	41 (3)	39.7 (1)
Gleadless Valley	Very large and dominant inter-war council housing estates, with small pockets of tenure mixing	36.9 (4)	35.5 (4)
Arbourthorne	Very large and dominant inter-war council housing estates, with small pockets of tenure mixing	35.6 (5)	34.9 (6)
Manor & Castle	Very large and dominant inter-war council housing estates, with small pockets of tenure mixing	34.8 (6)	28.2 (5)

Source: Adapted from Ferrari *et al.*, (2019) with data from South Yorkshire Police (2019) and Census (2011)

Table 5.xii: Lowest suspect and victim residence rate ranked by Ward (average rate by 1,000 population)

Ward name	Housing characteristics	Victim rate	Suspect rate
Fulwood	Very low density detached housing from a range of eras, almost all in owner occupation.	10.6 (1)	3.3 (1)
Dore and Totley	Very low density detached housing from a range of eras, almost all in owner occupation.	12.3 (2)	3.5 (4)
Ecclesall	Very low density detached housing from a range of eras, almost all in owner occupation.	13.1 (3)	3.5 (2)
Crookes	Significant Private Rented Sector for students and young professionals.	14.4 (4)	3.6 (3)
Beighton	Suburb with variety of dwelling types and mixed tenures, home to families moving away from more urban areas.	17 (5)	12.5 (11)
Bromhill	Significant Private Rented Sector for students and young professionals.	24.2 (14)	6.2 (5)

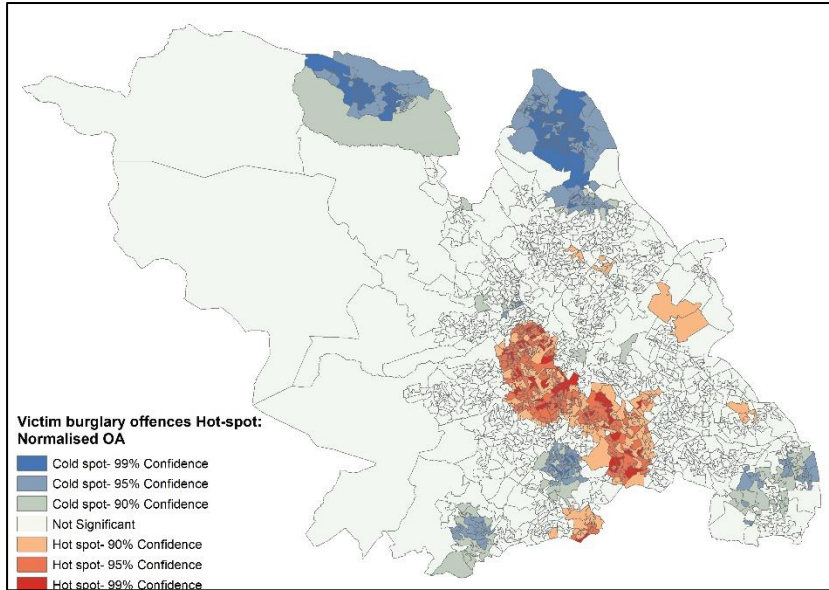
Source: Adapted from Ferrari *et al.*, (2019) with data from South Yorkshire Police (2019) and Census (2011)

Averages of the concentration of victims across all 28 Sheffield wards were consistently higher than suspects. For instance, an 8% divide within the six wards scoring the highest victim and suspect resident rates (with a 24% variability for victim data, and 32% for suspect), and a 16% difference between the lowest-scoring wards (with a 50% variability for victim data, and 66% for suspect data). Despite some consideration as to how these findings could be the result of a larger sample size in the victim’s database, and the limited sample size of both datasets, the lack of inconsistencies between the highest and lowest ranking wards was still significant. Specifically, the Burngreave, Firth Park, and Manor and Castle areas shared the top ranks across rates for all four sets of data. Similarly, the Fulwood, Dore and Totley, Crookes, and

Ecclesall reported the lowest proportion of crime per resident population. These findings mirrored the spatial distribution of social housing, beginning to suggest a correlation between rates of crime, victimisation and offending, and housing.

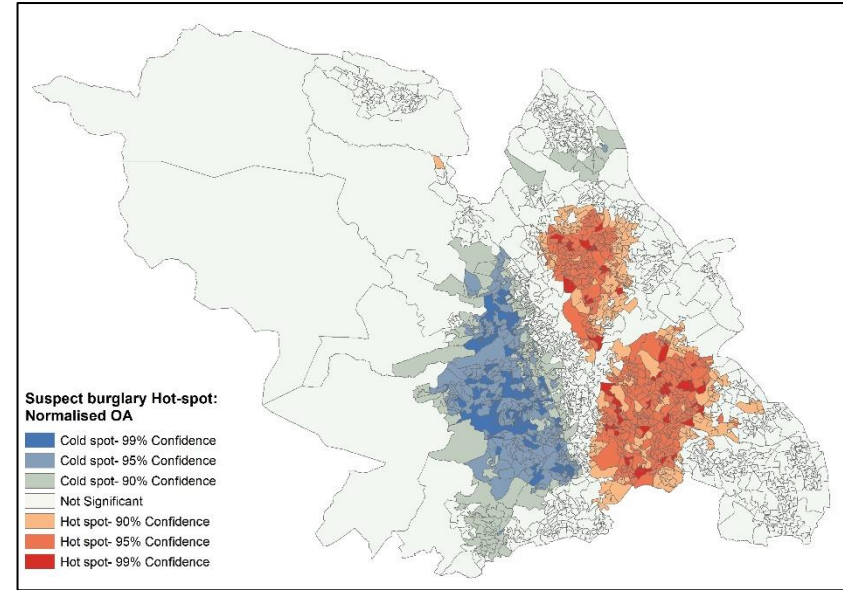
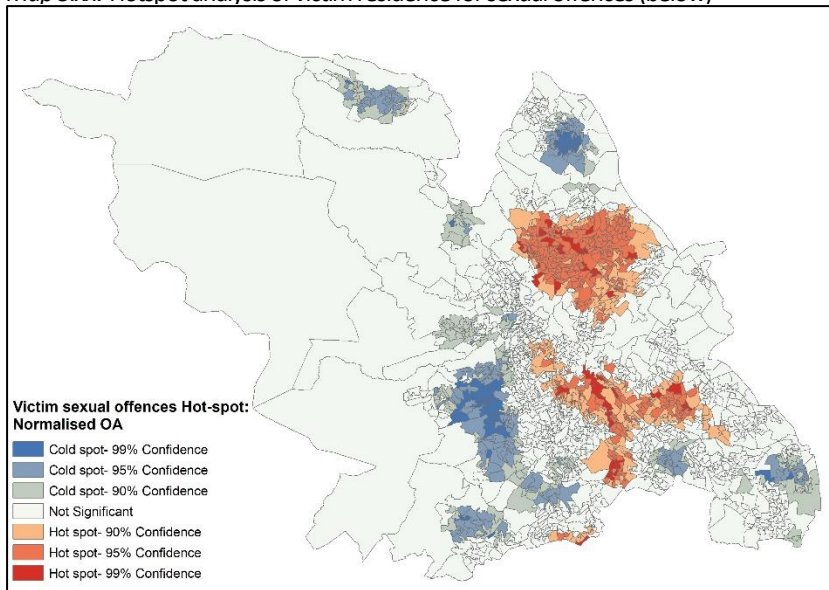
Examining the micro-level variability of the spatial concentration of victim and suspect residence addresses far exceeded the 5% threshold suggested by Weisburd (2015). Indeed, 20% of all recorded victims' addresses (n=8,899; N=43,082), and 30% of all recorded suspects' addresses (n=19,630; N=64,023), accounted for half of the overall instances of both categories. In other words, over the four years of data, a proportion larger than what Weisburd (2015) defines as high-density hotspots, suffered from repeated victimisation, and offending. This variability and clustering are well expressed through Output-area level data as emphasised by *Maps 5.xxi- 5.xxviii*. More notably, at a general level, analysis and mapping of normalised hot-spot data, when compared to the visual representation of social inequalities across Sheffield appeared to suggest an overarching relationship between crime, incidents and inequalities.

Examining this observations more closely, matched by pairs, *Maps 5.xxi* and *5.xxii* report results for burglary, *Maps 5.xxiii* and *5.xxvi* report sexual offences data, and finally, *Maps 5.xxv and 5.xxvi* report data on violent crime. The first map within each pair (i.e. that to the left of the page) reports data for victim residence, with the other reporting data for suspects' residence. Not following this pairing pattern, *Maps 5.xxvii* and *5.xxviii* both report on suspect residence data, with the first referring to drug offences and the second theft offences. Recalling how these data only represents police-recording of suspect and victim addresses, the data simultaneously provides significant data by which to understand police-based understanding of the geography of crime in Sheffield. As will be noted, it consistently provided data which could also be misleading, due to inconsistencies, errors, and missing information from the recording of data. At a glance, and consistent with aforementioned point-data analysis for victim and suspect, data clustered appeared to be more spatially heterogeneous than with crime and incident data, with statistically significant hotspots affecting geographically smaller and more concentrated areas. However, when comparing statistically significant cold-spots, it can be seen that these tended to concentrate in the same south-westerly areas of Sheffield.



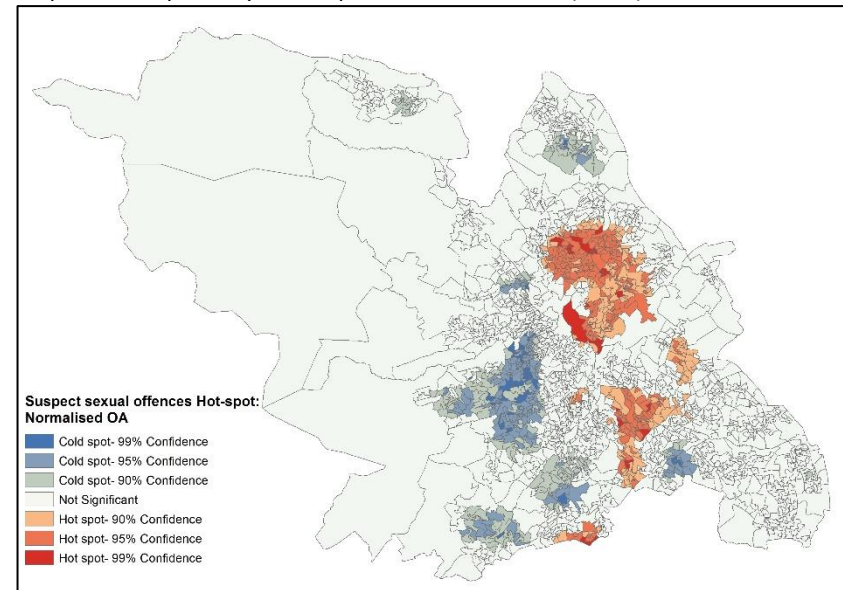
Map 5.xxiii: Hotspot analysis of victim residence for burglary offences (above)

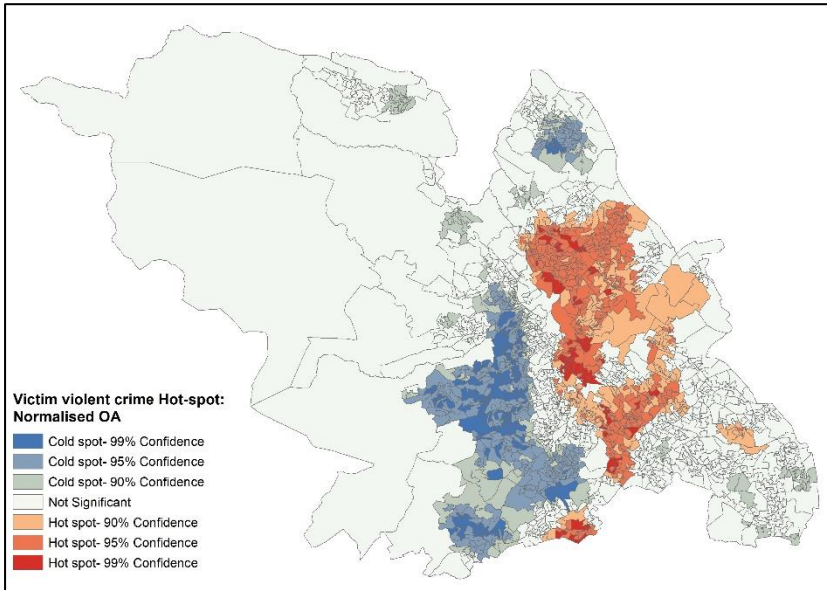
Map 5.xx: Hotspot analysis of victim residence for sexual offences (below)



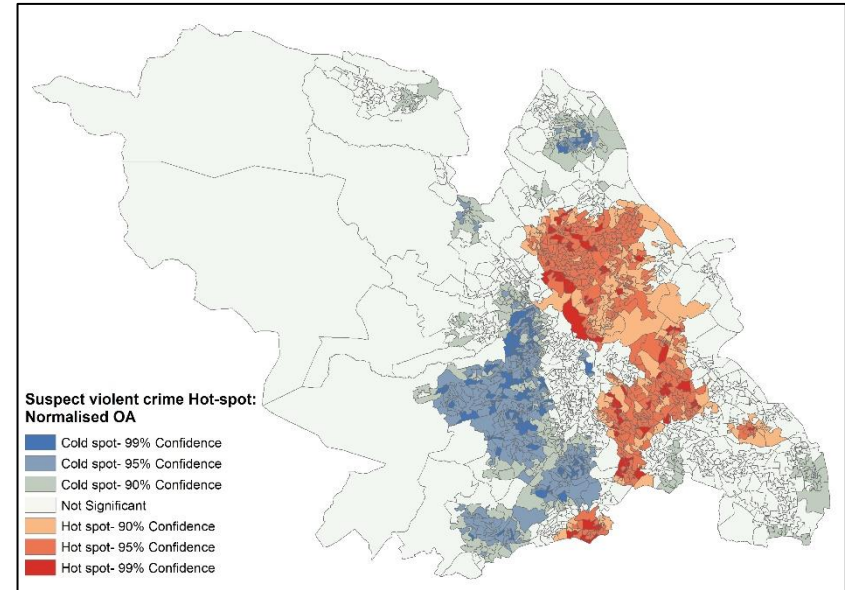
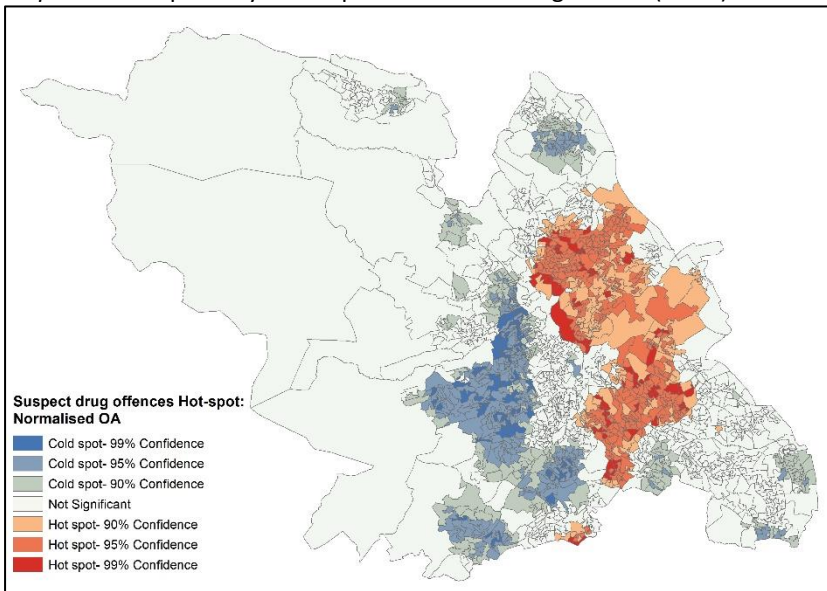
Map 5.xxi: Hotspot analysis of suspect residence for burglary (above)

Map 5.xxi: Hotspot analysis of suspect for sexual offences (below)

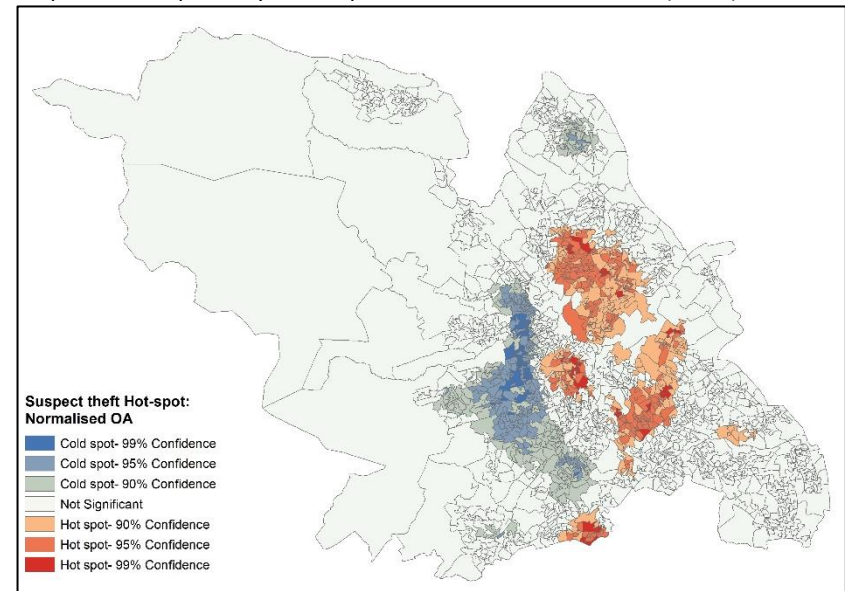




Map 5.xxiv: Hotspot analysis of victim residence for violent offences (above)
 Map 5.xxvii: Hotspot analysis of suspect residence for drug offences (below)



Map 5.xxv: Hotspot analysis of suspect residence for violent offences (above)
 Map 5.xxvi: Hotspot analysis of suspect residence for theft offences (below)



Paying closer attention to the data, an exception to this trend were all the recorded locations for the residences of drug offences suspects. Notwithstanding the previously noted fact that police recorded data only includes suspect data for this offence, the data suggests that statistically significant clusters extended beyond the previously analysed clustering of recorded drug crime offences. This police data driven perspective implies that the evidence-based perspectives adopted by South Yorkshire Police relied on these data to inform policing and detecting of drug crime, even when this definition could be objectively contested.

The spatial variation of rates across micro aggregation-geographies, and the concentration of victim and suspect resident data across predominantly socio-economically deprived residential areas underscored the importance of relating these factors to housing geographies at the micro-level. However, this would concern the need to explore whether these spatial inequalities could be attributed to whether suspect offenders and victims were involved in crime and incidents closer to their homes in ways not pursuable by this analysis. Nonetheless, as examined in distance-from-crime literature, given that a 'spatial buffer' exists between crime-offender-victim locations, with distances between where a crime was committed and where offenders and victim reside varying in function of the offence (Rengert, 2002), distance-from crime analysis was thought of an adequate method to provide the best measure of approximation. Indeed, any differences/similarities in the 'geometry' of this conceptual victim-suspect-crime polygon could, accordingly, support the further analysis of spatial inequalities. Importantly, distance-from-crime analysis of victim and suspect data relates more directly to the work of Baldwin *et al.* (1976), which focused on offender's distance-from-crime to measure variability across tenures. It follows, that whilst some areas (and thus tenures) may appear more criminogenic because of higher rates of crime and incident, others may be because of higher rates of victim or suspect residence. Their variability across space, and how this is measured, can result in significantly heterogeneous definitions of problems, which depend on the measure chosen. Paying closer attention to the patterns of crime, suspect, and victim rates and their definitions, even where these appear to be homogeneous would, therefore, produce a more nuanced understanding of the ecology of crime at the city-level.

5.3. Relating housing tenure to the geography of crime

The ability to aggregate and analyse data at the Output-Area level, constitutes the primary tool through which criminological understandings of the relations and spatial patterning of crime, incidents, victim residence, offender residence and housing can be operated. A Spearman's Rho (ρ) correlation was chosen in this research given the non-linear, monotonic distribution of the large pool of point crime, incident, victim, and suspect data (Schober *et al.*, 2018). Correlation analysis was used to evidence the direction and strength of the relationship between different tenures and different types of crime data. From the results of the correlation analysis reported in *Table 5.xiii*, it is possible to observe how tenure data seems to unequally relate across different types of crime and incidents.

Table 5.xiii: Spearman's correlation: 2012-2018 Crime data by tenure

		Owner occupied	Social Housing	Private Rented Sector
Crime	<i>rs</i>	-.44**	.54**	.27**
	<i>p</i>	.000	.000	.000
Burglary	<i>rs</i>	-.091**	.129**	.263**
	<i>p</i>	.000	.000	.000
Drugs	<i>rs</i>	-.390**	.496**	.182**
	<i>p</i>	.000	.000	.000
Sexual	<i>rs</i>	-.418**	.475**	.202**
	<i>p</i>	.000	.000	.000
Violent	<i>rs</i>	-.492**	.663**	.168**
	<i>p</i>	.000	.000	.000
Incident	<i>rs</i>	-.46**	.667**	.169**
	<i>p</i>	.000	.000	.000
Anti-Social behaviour	<i>rs</i>	-.44**	.59**	.19**
	<i>p</i>	.000	.000	.000
Public Order	<i>rs</i>	-.46**	.63**	.21**
	<i>p</i>	.000	.000	.000

******. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: SYP (2019); Census (2011)

All correlations produced results that were statistically significant. Assessing the direction, and strength of each correlation based on Cohen's (1988) study of correlations, a negative, moderate association can be noticed across all types of offences and incidents when related

to areas of predominant home-ownership occupation. In contrast, as extracted a positive association can be noted between all offence and incident types and areas predominantly occupied by social and private-rented sector tenures.

Across all different offence and incident types, the likelihood of crime taking place in an area of social housing directly related to the proportion of social housing in the same area. The largest positive association was measured for social housing, for Drug offences ($r = .73$, $p = .000$; $d > .50$) with public order incidents also being classed in this group ($r = .77$, $p = .000$; $d > .50$). This result, consistent with previous data, suggests that higher incidence of crime correlated with higher proportion of social housing; a finding that substantiates why larger hotspots of the same offences tended to cluster across the north-east of Sheffield. Considering the stronger association between all crime and social housing, the extent to which this relationship was affected, could be determined by the greater concentration of social housing coinciding with police priority areas. However, as explored further in Chapter Six, this could also be dependent on the policing and police's perception of these areas.

A similar, positive, but less strong association was computed in relation to crime and incidents taking place in areas where private-rented sector was the predominant tenure. Most notably, this applied to the correlation between burglary offences and areas of private-rented housing. Albeit the correlation coefficient remained low (Cohen, 1988)—meaning the likelihood private-rented housing and burglary were related was weak— these data were consistent with the result of spatial mapping for these offences, indicating higher levels of estimated victimisation around the city-centre in areas of [rented] student housing. This finding was also particularly significant as it identified a pattern of crime which was unlikely to be affected by other kinds of offending taking place in the same area. This in turn meant, in a practical manner, that student and other private-renters in these areas were more likely to be victimised than residents of other tenures and localities in Sheffield.

Finally, all correlations were between owner-occupation and crime were inversely proportional. In other words, as the proportion of owner-occupied housing increased, crime became increasingly less correlated, with incident being extremely unlikely (1 in 100 chances). Reinforcing the socio-economic patterns discussed in Chapter Four, this suggests that social

housing is a more criminogenic tenure than others, and that a relationship between the geographical distribution of inequalities held true also for crime.

Applying the same analysis to suspect residence data (Table 5.iv) showed an even higher degree of spatial relations.

Table 5.xiv: Spearman's correlation: 2012-2018 suspect home address data by tenure of output areas (n=1817)

Suspect Home Address	Owner Occupied	Social Housing	Private Rented Housing
<i>r_s</i>	-.41**	.72*	-.003**
<i>p</i>	0	0	0

** . Correlation is significant at p=0.01
 * . Correlation is significant at p=0.05

The strongest positive association (Cohen, 1988), significant at a confidence interval of 95%, was between recorded suspect residence and social housing tenures ($r = .72$, $p = .05$; $d > .50$). This extremely high degree of correlation supports the hypothesis that offenders predominantly reside in social housing tenures. In contrast, and as for crime and incident data, a medium negative association was found between suspect residence and areas of predominant owner-occupied housing ($r = -.41$, $p = .01$; $d > .50$). A similar, and negative association was measured for private-rented housing ($r = -.003$, $p = .01$; $d > .50$).

Comparing these findings for victim data, as reported in *Table 5.xv*, reinforced the belief that victimisation was unlikely to take place in areas of predominant owner-occupied housing ($r = -.45$, $p = .01$; $d > .50$). It also further reinforced the assumption that the same would be strongly and positively associate with social housing ($r = .68$, $p = .01$; $d > .50$). Opposite to the suspect data but consistent with the crime and incident data, a (small) positive association, related victimisation with private rented housing ($r = .15$, $p = .01$; $d > .50$). Upon further investigation, it was not possible to find consistent and reliable results across the individual offence subsection, because of challenges with the heterogeneity of data. Nonetheless, it was possible to establish a negative association (of varying degrees) between offender residence rates and owner-occupied housing, and a positive relationship (of varying degrees) between offender residence rates and social housing.

Table 5.xv: Spearman's correlation: 2012-2018 victim home address data by tenure of output areas (n=1817)

Victim Home Address		Owner Occupied	Social Housing	Private Rented Housing
	<i>rs</i>	-.45**	.68**	.16**
	<i>p</i>	0	0	0

** . Correlation is significant at p=0.01
 * . Correlation is significant at p=0.05

Altogether, correlation data reported three consistent results between police-recorded data and tenure. There were strong positive associations with social housing; positive, but modest, degrees of association with private-rented housing; and negative, moderate, relations with owner-occupied housing. These data confirmed the findings discussed in the previous section of this chapter, about the existing relationship between the geography of housing tenures and that of crime and incidents, further supporting the significance of the ecology of housing. Specifically, if both victims and offenders resided in the same areas or travelled less/more compared to the findings of Baldwin *et al.* (1976), this could change the way in which the definition of problem areas, and the presumed effect of housing on the ecology of crime.

Table 5.xvi reports the average straight-line distance between a presumed suspect's home, and the site where an offence or incidents had taken place. Consistently with the findings from Ackerman and Rossmo (2005), the average distance between the residence of an offender committing acquisitive crime —3.6km burglary; 3.3km robbery; 3.5km theft— was greater than for those committing sexual and violent crimes —2.2km sexual offences; 2.3km violence against person. The inability to differentiate between the distance travelled by offenders to purchase drugs, compared to drug dealing, alongside the lack of identifiable victims across the drug crime offence type, meant it was not possible to further examine the distance travelled by these offenders, despite literature suggesting that those dealing drugs (tentatively identified as drug offenders) travel further than those purchasing them (victims) (Rengert *et al.*, 2005; Akerman and Rossmo, 2015).

Table 5.xvi: Distance travelled between suspect residence and crime location (kilometres)

Home Office Group	Home Office Class Description	Mean	Std. Deviation	Maximum
Arson and criminal damage	Criminal damage - arson / threat / equip	2.2	2.9	17.7
	Criminal damage - dwelling	2.4	3.1	20.4
	Criminal damage - motor vehicle	2.5	2.8	17.1
	Criminal damage - other	2.2	3.0	18.6
	Criminal damage - other building	2.8	2.8	18.6
Burglary	Burglary in a dwelling	3.6	3.3	20.8
	Burglary in other building	3.3	3.1	20.2
Drug offences	Drugs	2.4	2.9	25.5
Forgery	Forgery	1.6	2.8	11.2
	Fraud and forgery	3.1	3.3	18.5
Other crime	Other notifiable offences	2.5	3.1	20.7
Robbery	Robbery - business	3.3	3.1	17.4
	Robbery - personal	3.1	2.8	18.6
Sexual offences	Sexual offences	2.2	2.9	20.7
	Rape incidents	1.7	3.1	9.9
Theft	Theft and handling stolen goods	3.5	3.0	21.8
	Total offences against vehicles	3.4	3.1	19.3
Violence against the person	Violence against the person	2.3	3.0	25.5

Source: South Yorkshire Police (2019); Office for National Statistics (2011)

Analysis, at the Output Area level, suggested that the distances travelled by offenders varied in keeping with the proportion of different tenure types of neighbourhoods. As summarised in Table 5.xvii, suspects living in owner occupier and private rented housing were less likely to have to travel far from where they offended. However, as noted by the small correlation coefficient, these were not very strong associations. On the other hand, suspects living in social housing were more likely to travel further afield to offend ($r = .65, p = .0; d > .50$).

Table 5.xvii: Spearman's correlation: 2012-2018 distance travelled from suspect's home address by tenure of output areas (n=1817)

Suspect Home Address		Owner Occupied	Social Housing	Private Rented Housing
	<i>rs</i>	-.11**	.65**	-.082**
	<i>p</i>	0	0	0

** . Correlation is significant at $p=0.01$
* . Correlation is significant at $p=0.05$

The distance travelled of offenders from social housing seemed to suggest how suspects living in social housing areas tended to travel outside their neighbourhood and travel greater distances than their counterparts in other tenure areas. This could, however, more broadly reflect the overall proportion of suspects known to police within different areas; an issue addressed in greater detail in Chapter Six. Moreover, this hypothesis would need to be validated by one further essential detail: the location where the suspect started their journey-to-crime. Clarifying how not all offenders necessarily leave their homes to commit an offence, and how they may be anywhere else in a city before they decide to commit an offence, is an issue that has been raised in existing literature and is particularly consistent for offences which may be classed as 'spontaneous' or 'opportunistic' (Rengert, 2004).

Differently from the data discussed in *The Urban Criminal*, suspects living in areas of predominantly social housing tenure appeared to be more mobile than those living in other areas of the city. Reasons for this difference could not be firmly established. Nonetheless, both the suspect and victim samples included a greater variety of offence, than the predominantly acquisitive sample utilised by Baldwin and colleagues. Similarly, aside from the sample from Baldwin *et al.* (1976) specifically focussing on juvenile than the present study, (meaning that older offenders could rely on the ability to drive to the place where they offended), the increased suspects' and victim's ability to travel further today than 1976, could also likely impact the social mobility hypothesis from *The Urban Criminal*. This implies that variables like social class explored in Baldwin from the work of Robinson (1950), would not be directly comparable, which, given the substantial drawbacks discussed in *The Urban Criminal* regarding the operationalisation of these variables, they were not included in the present analysis.

Finally, with reference to the distance-decay hypothesis, very few studies have been able to gain access to victims' home addresses to study their distance-from-crime. One such study suggested that approximately three-quarters of all crimes occurred within a 15-minute-walk [a.k.a. approximately 1 mile, or about 3 Km] from victims' homes, with just over a quarter (26.9%) occurring beyond that buffer area (Hodgkinson and Tilley, 2007). More specifically, the authors also suggested that similar patterns existed across victims and offenders, insofar that acquisitive crimes are likely to occur further away from the home of a victim compared

to sexual crimes, although offenders are expected to travel further. These expectations were confirmed by police-recorded crime for Sheffield, reported in *Table 5.xviii*, as all mean distances across offences were found to be within this buffer, with the exception of Theft and Forgery offences where, on average, victims appeared to travel further away. Thinking about where most of these crimes may actually have taken place, this finding is not implausible when considering how both of these offences would likely take place away from a victim's home.

Table 5.xviii: Crime location distance from victim's residence (kilometres)

Home Office Group	Home Office Class Description	Mean	Std. Deviation	Max
Arson and criminal damage	Criminal damage - arson / threat / equip	2.0	3.4	13.8
	Criminal damage - dwelling	2.2	3.6	18.1
	Criminal damage - motor vehicle	2.2	4.0	20.3
	Criminal damage - other	2.7	4.8	14.5
Burglary	Burglary in a dwelling	2.0	4.0	18.8
	Burglary in other building	1.8	4.1	12.88
Forgery	Forgery	3.5	7.7	28.8
Other	Other notifiable offences	2.4	5.1	20.69
Robbery	Robbery - business	3.3	18.5	10.6
	Robbery - personal	1.6	7.2	22.8
	Theft from person	3.9	5.6	13.9
Sexual	Rape incidents	1.3	3.1	9.7
	Sexual offences	1.9	7.2	17.42
Theft	Theft and handling stolen goods	1.5	4.6	23.7
	Total offences against vehicles	2.2	5.6	22.12
Violence against the person	Violence against the person	1.9	4.6	23.52

Source: South Yorkshire Police (2019); Office for National Statistics (2011)

Returning to present-day suspects living in areas of social housing, travelling afield than offenders in Baldwin *et al.*, (1976), the findings from this study show how victims broadly remained within close proximity from their homes. This, again, emphasises the significance of the relation between key aspects of crime such as victimisation, and the wider social ecology of housing. Table 5.xix summarises this best, demonstrating how across all measures of crime a significant proportion of victimisation takes place in close proximity to where victims live.

Table 5.xix: Descriptive analysis of housing data (SCC) and crime data (SYP).

Ward Name	SCC Housing rank	Crime Count rank	Victim Residence Rank	Suspect Residence Rank
Firth Park	1	5	1	2
Southey	2	4	2	3
Beauchief	3	13	10	7
Gleadless Valley	4	9	4	6
Arbourthorne	5	10	5	4
Burngreave	6	1	3	1

Summarily drawing from the findings from distance-from-crime analysis, evidence from present-day Sheffield not only emphasises how the largest proportion of victim rates and suspect rates are still associated to areas with greater concentrations of social housing. It also shows how, with the exception for those offences which take place in the city centre, the majority of offences also take place in close proximity to victims and offenders homes. Therefore, questions about social housing and its presumed criminogeneity may be warranted. However, whereas social housing may be tentatively appraised as more problematic, these data do also emphasises the importance of further understanding the systematic function and effect which housing may have with respect to crime across Sheffield. With this, questions about how problems are defined from an institutional perspective are also relevant given that a number of the crime and incident hotspots across the city coincided with residential areas.

5.4. Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to establish whether and how the spatial distribution of crime could be linked to housing. Using police-recorded data from South Yorkshire Police, and housing data from the 2011 Census and the local authority, this chapter offered an up-to-date quantitative appraisal of the prevalence and distribution of crimes, incidents, victims, and suspects across Sheffield.

At the macro-level, Sheffield appears to follow broad national trends, showing an overall decrease in the volume of recorded offences, alongside the predominance of less serious acquisitive crime offences, and public safety and anti-social behaviour incidents, being the

headline crime data for the city. From a spatial perspective, a substantial portion of violent offences appeared to occur within the centre of Sheffield, whilst the north-east of the city appeared to disproportionately concentrate greater rates of crime, incident, as well as rates of victim and suspect residence. With crime clustering around a selected number of residential areas, analysis shifted to considering the issue and possible effects of tenure. Social housing most strongly positively correlates to higher proportions of crime, incidents, suspect residence, and victim residence. All police-recorded data indicated a negative correlation with owner-occupation. More mixed results emerge for Private-rented tenures, which seem to positively relate to some categories of police-recorded data, particularly burglary.

Spatial patterning appeared to mirror the observations in *The Urban Criminal*, and the spatial inequalities discussed in Chapter Four, emphasising the relationship between social elements of urban life – such as the concentration of socio-economic disadvantage— and how these are reproduced to tenure, to understand where crime takes place. Finding higher localised rates of victims and suspects and correlating these with greater proportion of victimisation or offending, like for *The Urban Criminal*, could only approximately indicate where patterns changed at the tenure-level. Therefore, with reference to the ecology of crime in Sheffield, the conclusion drawn is that none of the data conclusively explains causation.

Statistically, the degree of and variance of police-recorded data in the function of tenure establishes a degree of correlation between different crime variables and tenure. Though calculating rates of crime proportionally to local populations constitutes a better account of local variance of crime, incident, suspect, and victim data, the nature and distribution of the data in different areas did not accurately resonate with rates of crime on the resident population within each area. Rather, as per the example of the city centre, it might also be attributed to other environmental crime-attracting features. In other words, and consistent with the existing criminological evidence concerning the journey to crime— and how offending rates varied compared to the rate of victims and suspects residing in the same areas— the findings supported the notion that offenders could travel away from their home (or other location) to commit crimes.

Moreover, even rates of victimisation or offending could only partially, and arguably inaccurately, describe the picture of crime in Sheffield. This issue was also discussed by Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) with relation to acquisitive crime and the prevalence of commercial and residential districts in different parts of Sheffield. Acknowledging this limitation (amongst others), emphasised the unreliability of any claim to causally explain crime. However, and differently from Baldwin *et al.*'s. (1976), interpretation, the knowledge that victims or suspects resided in areas where one tenure (social housing) was predominant over others, was still significant.

The findings discussed in this chapter emphasise the need to build on the conceptualisation of housing as explored in Rex (1968), Pahl (1970), and Baldwin (1976), with respect to the need to address gaps in criminological knowledge. Indeed, as for most criminological analysis of spatial patterns at the city-level, this study was not able to directly assess whether tenure, as the key variable under consideration, truly affected the lives and trajectories of crime, incident, suspects, and victims in Sheffield. Nevertheless, these data still significantly deepen our understanding of ecologies of crime across the city, due to the benefit of employing GIS data analysis. First, maps of crime concentration visually highlight the tangible relationship between higher proportions of police-recorded data and police-defined problem areas. Furthermore, when considering the spatial analysis of crime, incidents, as well as victim and offender residence alongside the stark material divisions and geography of housing in Sheffield identified in the previous chapter, these provide a very tangible and accessible assessment of how these may relate to the construction of problems and problem areas. The next chapter begins delving into these associations further, as it explores institutional definitions of problems and problem areas, to understand how these are constructed.

6. UNDERSTANDING SHEFFIELD'S CRIME PROBLEMS

This chapter explores the meaning of problems and problem areas from an institutional perspective and addresses how they relate to the unequal spatial concentration of crime, and the geographies of housing. Building on the knowledge that critical appraisals of administrative approaches do not normally feature much quantitative and criminological analysis (Young, 2011), the chapter is concerned with how institutional knowledge relates to the quantitative dimensions of crime explored in Chapter Five. From this perspective, the chapter is concerned with the concept of urban managerialism (Pahl, 1970), specifically the impact that state agencies have on the conceptual definition, as well as operational management, of city-level issues. Applied to the case study of Sheffield, the theoretical framework of urban managerialism is used in this chapter to unpack what institutions believe problems to be, and consequently how and where they identify problem areas.

This focus on institutions, and how they operate, relates to the thesis' overarching second research question: How are urban problem areas constructed given changing social and tenurial forces? This chapter, specifically explores three aspects of this question, namely:

- I. How are problems and problem areas defined and operationalised within Sheffield's Community Safety Partnership?
- II. Do institutions within Sheffield's Community Safety Partnership understand crime and housing to be related?
- III. How does the definition of problem areas relate to the wider social realities and area-based stigma issues at the city level?

The chapter begins with an overarching analysis of the Sheffield's Safer and Sustainable Community Safety Partnerships [Community Partnership, hereafter] goals. It then considers how the Community Partnership framework applies to Sheffield, and how its management structure may shape narratives concerning problems by identifying what problems may be and how these relate to the geography of problem areas, before thereafter exploring the relationship between crime and housing management.

Overall, the chapter finds how a selected number of urban managers have a disproportionate influence in setting Community Partnership objectives and operations, and in defining what problems are. These institutions not only relate housing and crime, but their conceptualisation of problems link the two, and shape their operationalisation and actions. Community Partnership objectives clearly link crime to housing, whilst its functioning closely relates to the administration and management of social housing; a tenure which is believed to be more criminogenic than others. Most significantly the concept of a ‘hierarchy of tenure’ emerges from this thesis’ analysis of Sheffield, and shows how a disproportional amount of attention, resources, and processes are set up to prioritise social housing over other tenures. Emphasising how practitioners’ knowledge about other housing tenures, as well as the power they exert over them is limited, the chapter concludes with some preliminary reflections on the likely harms and implications that these empirical realities have with respect to the ecology of crime in Sheffield.

6.1. Nature of problems and the geography of problem areas

To help with an initial understanding of the functioning of the Community Partnership, and its operational structure (see *Table 3.i*), a series of key documents were used to identify its key goals in Sheffield. These revealed that, at the time of the research, four priorities existed on the agenda of the Community Partnership (SSCP, 2018):

- (i) [Tackling] The rising profile of Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery offences.
- (ii) Focussing on the occurrence of hate crime against the most vulnerable.
- (iii) Dealing with gang and youth violence.
- (iv) The continued commitment to tackling domestic abuse and violence against women and girls.

Aligned with the legislative goals set out in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and subsequent amendments, these priorities sought to represent issues that concerned both community safety and cohesion, whilst also being a benchmark for crime priorities, the prevention of anti-social-behaviour, and the effects of drug and alcohol misuse (SSCP, 2018). Further to identifying these objectives, the partnership also contextualised these priorities with respect to areas of Sheffield, thereby providing some interpretation of their perceived effects of Sheffield’s social, economic, and geographical landscapes (as highlighted in Chapter Four).

More importantly, however, from a housing perspective the four Community Partnership priorities respectively provided insight into private-rented-housing (the first two), social housing (the third), and cross-tenurial housing (the fourth).

Looking jointly at issues of Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery offences, documentary evidence suggested that these were concentrated around the city centre, and disproportionately individuals who resided in privately-rented housing. Importantly, the document singled out three specific streets to the south of the city centre: London Road, Abbeydale Road, and Chesterfield Road (Safer & Sustainable Communities Partnership Board, 2019). These same three streets, at the time of research, were also the only ones in Sheffield subject to a selective licencing scheme with the Community Partnership taking the view that safer and more transparent conditions and policing of these areas needed to be enforced, to ensure *'properties [were] safe and well managed'* (SCC, 2021). Discussions with Community Partnership managers helped to clarify the link between private renting regulatory schemes and the two specific offences to the wider contexts of community issue of safety, and serious and organised crime:

...I think our concern is [that we are] finding there is a big issue in Sheffield with private landlords, and that's is [with the few] rogue landlord and the gangmasters... [specifically] there's work there [in the private rented sector] because of having responsibilities for community safety, and [those] include human trafficking and modern slavery... [as that's] where we think human trafficking is a bigger issue than we are seeing... but there is also exploitation for sex purposes and labour... and I think that's an area for gangmasters, as that can be linked to car washes and the Vietnamese growing cannabis.... [lastly] I think there is an area of rogue landlords that is fraught with issues for me where we've got people obtaining [right-to-buy] council houses by fraudulent means, or subletting. For instance, we recently found a flat rented to two/three students, 400£ each, so she was getting 1200£ per month. (Housing & Neighbourhood manager, Community Partnership)

As the Interviewee working as a manager within the Community Partnership noted, tenants in privately rented tenancies were thought to be more likely than those in other tenures to be subject to a range of possible offences, and vulnerabilities. By mentioning the issue of a few 'rogue landlords', their comments clearly identify the source of these vulnerabilities, whilst also implicitly suggesting the presumed effectiveness of prevention and policing strategies amongst these tenures. On the one hand, from an institutional perspective, the recognition of the relatively unregulated and precarious nature of the private-rented sector, especially at the cheaper end of this market, appears to contribute to the creation of dangerous living conditions for tenants. Specifically, landlords were thought to wield a

disproportionate amount of power over their tenants, with the latter being afraid of repercussions if they complain about their poor living conditions (Lister, 2007). From this perspective, documentary and interview evidence as supported by police-led research at the national level (Crocker *et al.*, 2017), foresaw provisions under the Housing Act 2004 as the solution to address the policing and regulation of poor housing standards. With respect to the privately rented sector, this concerned selective licensing initiatives in particular, as local-authority managed zoning approaches to designate and tackle specific issues such as maintenance of housing standards (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2015). However, from this perspective, conversations with practitioners also emphasised how the compulsory application of regulatory frameworks would still be fallible:

Anyone can become a landlord. They don't have to put the name down anywhere. They don't have to register anywhere. They don't have to show that they're competent... We are doing a big licencing scheme at the moment... [targeting addresses where we know there are] people living above restaurants and takeaways, [who] may not be in the country legally, and may have been trafficked for the purpose of working, and then living in bad conditions in the flats above...However, accreditation by its nature is voluntary. Bad landlords [irrespective of whether we impose accreditations] are still going to be there hiding away... A lot of people see it that we should have an accreditation scheme, because it shows the good landlords. But they already show themselves, and [we, instead, should] want to spend time on focusing on the bad qualities. (PRS housing manager, City Council)

Referring to the efficacy of selective licencing and compulsory accreditation schemes being applied to all landlords, the local authority's manager for private-rented sector regulation summarised how these sought to tackle the worst housing conditions, including crime, often only where a report upon the issue existed. However, noting how the market-driven exploitation of housing as a business contrasted the optional requirement for most private landlords to collaborate with the local authority on matters of tenancy regulation, these policies were not always conducive to maintaining oversight of the living conditions of people in this tenure. This can be seen to support pervasive knowledge about potential vulnerabilities linked to living conditions, which have been emphasised by existing studies (Hoff and McGauran, 2015). Stressing the importance of acknowledging the complexities of the policing of private-rented tenures, both sources of data also agreed on these being partnership-level issues. However, beyond the efficacy of strategies used to detect and prevent crime, Community Partnership objectives also appeared to suggest how crime was perceived to have significant impacts on life within communities took shape. Recognising how offending taking place within the private rented was an issue of community cohesion, Community Partnership

priorities directly alluded to the fragmented nature of life within the private-rented housing as an obstacle to more 'cohesive communities' (SCC, 2018). Implicitly, as matters of community cohesion, tenurial-specific mechanisms such as the perceptible limited and short-lasting interaction and integration of private renters within their local communities, were therefore interpreted as obstacles to achieving effective crime detection and reduction.

The second problem defined by the Community Partnership, was the geography of hate crime. Whilst reportedly related to an increase in the number of incidents recorded of this offence against student and resident recently migrated populations, it was suggested that this offence was primarily focused on those living in close proximity to the city Centre, and more specifically to those who lived within Chinese communities (SSCP, 2018). According to documentary evidence this crime was thought to affect both temporary and permanent Chinese residents who were renting or owning properties in close proximity to the city centre. Unsubstantiated by crime or incident data, this issue was thought to relate to rising community tension issues, and frequent manifestations of hate linked to political and social change in the UK (namely, at the time of research, around Brexit). However, issues of hate crime did not formally emerge in any conversations with practitioners as a discrete issue. Rather, this was only informally discussed with respect to police concerns reportedly linked to escalating instances of neighbourhood disputes, as well as anti-social behaviour incidents taking place around commercial premises in the city centre. In this respect, the Partnership sought to develop better engagement strategies with Asian communities and greater policing of these areas, both as part of crime detection and prevention strategies, as well as for reassurance purposes.²²

Indeed, the third Community Partnership priority, youth crime and gangs, was described by documentary evidence as mirroring recorded instances of Anti-Social Behaviour; these were particularly clustered in areas of high-density social housing to the north (Firth Park Ward) and east (Manor Ward) of Sheffield (SSCP, 2018). In this sense, as supported by a wealth of evidence concerning young people's involvement in gang crime more generally, youth

²² This was discussed, outside of the interview setting, with a City Centre Police Sergeant.

offending was considered within the wider context of serious and organised crime (Smith, 2010; Stone, 2018; Williams and Finlay, 2019). Relating to patterns of drugs and firearm offences, the involvement of young people in serious offences was referred to as Child Criminal Exploitation (SSCP, 2018). Child Criminal Exploitation referred to coercion or 'consensual arrangements', in which children committed offences on behalf of adult offenders. Children's vulnerability and suggestibility was thought to develop starting from lower-level anti-social behaviour and escalating with greater involvement in offending and serious criminal behaviours, as children were thought to be groomed into a criminal career.

Implicitly referring to the politicisation of these issues, and the transient nature of community-based funding and strategies, Community Partnership priorities aimed at youth offending and gang crime failed to capture how these were thought to be more deeply related to violence across Sheffield. Specifically, a key issue emerging with respect to the definition of this priority, was the realisation of how not all data concerning the Community Partnership's concerns were publicly shared or emphasised in documentary evidence discussed in a conversation with the Community Partnership manager for crime prevention:

...[in setting the Community Partnership priorities] I suppose the Council had some influence over that, and [it is affected by how] in terms funding, it is often the Council that provides funding for organisations, as in that the Council can set the priorities drawing from national priorities... but I also think, for political reasons, they kept [youth] violen[ce] and knife crime off that list... although these are big sensitive issues for the local authority... (Senior manager, Community Partnership)

Extrapolated from a wider discussion concerning the locations, and potential effect partnership activities could have to tackle issues, beyond whether the immediate operationalisation of issues of youth crime and gang membership included clearer allusions to knife crime issues, the underlying discussion concerns how the politics of social control and politicisation of these offences applied to the geography of crime at the city-level. As previously noted within Chapters Four and Five, areas within the north and east of the city which were formerly known for large mono-tenure social housing estates (namely the Burngreave, Firth Park, Shire green and the Manor Wards) appeared to receive particular police-led attention and funding. Within this there was an indirect but explicit link to young people growing up within areas of high-concentration social housing.

However, in associating youth crime to anti-social behaviour, practitioners related their understanding of the kind of lives young people were likely to conduct in residential areas in north-east Sheffield, to the causal mechanism leading them to commit crime as noted in a conversation with a Housing Association manager in the Manor Area (east Sheffield):

In some areas, there's an age-old stigma attached to them. Low Manor, in particular was exceptionally bad... it was almost a no-go area. Over time [with intensive demolition and tenancy management] it became a place where... if you've got family in the area, you're comfortable with it. [However] I wouldn't say that... it's still an area where people are not afraid to go out at night. There are all sorts of issues around and youth crime, youth nuisance and lack of all the facilities for young people that... [if you drive down] Prince of Wales [road] at night... and there'd be a gang of fifteen lads, all with balaclavas on walking across the road... [it creates] the perception that there's going to be crime. (Housing Association Manager, east of Sheffield)

Hinting at the underlying professional interpretation of how problem areas generated crime in a causal manner, the quote identifies social exclusion and longstanding stigmatisation as key issues concerning the origins of youth crime. Specifically, the housing association manager refers to how people conducted their lives, and how this related to relative measures of socio-economic deprivation and lack of community organisation. These factors contributed both to the extent of anti-social behaviour in these areas, especially as these locations were also identified as hotspots for interpersonal violence and incidents as reported by data analysed in Chapter Five, as well as the stigma these deprived areas were both worse and more dangerous. However, the localised condition of deprivation and its abject relation to the politics of social control across Sheffield also played a part in characterising anti-social behaviour incidents and their origins, as emerging from conversations with interviewees. As noted by a police officer working in north-east Sheffield:

... [ASB] in Fir Vale is so much about community cohesion, but my view a lot actually it's the press interest and the way the residents have dealt with it. Yes, litter is a massive thing. Yes, people hang around a lot more on street corners. But when they are, all they are doing is talking. They're not committing criminal damage. They are not stealing things. They're not taking drugs. They're not getting drunk. They're stood in groups talking because that's their culture... Take the litter out of it, and actually, what they do is not anti-social, it's social. It's just a different way of socialising the what the UK used to, but they don't see that... if it weren't Roma-Slovak [individuals], would they be shouting as loudly about it? (Police Sergeant, north-east Sheffield)

In this example, anti-social behaviour in areas to the north-east of the city was closely associated to localities with a greater proportion and concentration of Roma-Slovak communities, with these latter though to be the central issue. Specifically, whilst proximity to high-density social housing was still an objectively documentable factor, politically-motivated

and socially constructed definitions of deprivation more clearly emerged. Commonly, narratives in these areas emphasised how cultural practices of congregating in public and displaying social tendencies within these communities were associated to the perception of gang crime and violent crime, and anti-social behaviour more generally, due to their perceived norm defiance. Narratives of blame and ‘failed integration’, in turn increased the stigmatisation and othering of minorities and already marginalised Roma-Slovak residents. However, this did not take place to extent such as to constitute an expression of hate from a Community Partnership perspective, and such as that organisations recognised the underlying victimisation of these communities to the same extent as Asian populations in the city centre. Rather, youth offending priorities, applied to underly the limited extent of service provision to the socially rented proportion of residents, and thus portrayed as exacerbated by the new communities which ‘chose’ to reside in the area.

Finally, the knowledge that domestic abuse and violence against women represented an inter-tenurial issue constituted a different kind of problem. On the one hand, despite being better ‘advertised’ than previous priorities due to partnership goals aligning with national policing strategies and targets (Crawford, 2006b), evidence from the Community Partnership seemed to emphasise the lack of visibility and under-reporting of these offences (Sheffield Domestic Abuse Coordination Team, 2022). Making domestic violence and violence against women a recognisably universal and objectively hard problem to police, the universal lack of tenurial focus (especially when compared to other offences) appeared to be significant from the perspective of the Community Partnership responses to these issues. As discussed in greater detail below, the lack of control which Community Partnership members could exert over owner-occupied and privately rented housing tenures, outside of responsive policing, translated into a lack of ownership and lack of adequate preventative responses. By contrast Community Partnership activities within social housing, were instead primarily concerned with responding to issues of tenancy management, as discussed in further detail in the next chapter, with reference to priority housing allocations.

Altogether, these [first set of] priorities, and their relation to housing, are summarised in *Table 6.i*. Here, summarily, the empirical evidence from interviews appears to confirm the beliefs that crime and housing were not only related, but also creating the issues prioritised

by the Community Partnership. However, perspectives from practitioners also highlight a number of discrepancies.

<p>Human Trafficking & Modern Slavery</p>	<p>Hate crime</p>	<p>Gang and youth violence</p>	<p>Domestic abuse and violence against women</p>
<p>Private-rented housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of regulation - 'Hidden' crimes - Relation to cultural issues - Increased vulnerability and unknown extent of issue and victimisation - Perceived connection with Serious and organised crime 		<p>Social housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Connections with deprivation and policing of behaviour - Police-led punitivism rather than community-led intervention - Stigmatisation of socio-economic and cultural vulnerabilities 	<p>Multi-tenure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unknown extent - Generalised issue

Table 6.i: Summary of themes of Community Partnership priorities identified in documentary evidence.

At the forefront of this, interviewees from different backgrounds discussed divides between Partnership-level views as representing 'ideal' views of how issues were conceptualised and tackled, and how individuals responsible for the management of these priorities 'actually' perceived and acted. In particular, debates including whether and to what extent narratives about crime and anti-social behaviour were led by misconceptions of their social causes, rather than being guided by empirical data appeared to be a significant issue. Significantly, and as explored in the next section, beneath empirical and conceptual discrepancies as to what constituted a problems and problem areas, were wider issues brought about by power imbalances within the Community Partnership. Suggesting that the bureaucratic administration of duties and accountabilities could function with reference to the role played by different Community Partnership institutions and their relative responsibilities, provided a significant starting point for further enquiries. Indeed, as demonstrated in Hancock (2001),

this knowledge emphasises the need to further unpack the processes of knowledge production.

Altogether, this could be hypothesised as having an effect on the geographically unequal administration of problems and problem areas in ways not captured in the quantitative police-recorded data, nor in the preliminary analysis of Community Partnership priorities. Specifically, not only power imbalances elaborate on the definition of problems and problem areas examining the based on '*who decides*', but more importantly '*what they decide*', and by proxy what affects their decisions (Merryfield, 2014).

6.2. Power struggles: who actually decides?

As introduced in Chapter Two and Three, Community Safety Partnerships have, since their inception under sections 5-7 the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, been situated at the heart of the city-level governance of crime and anti-social behaviour. Partnerships are intended to recognise the plurality of issues generating crime, and to employ a plural, partnership-based approach to deal with the same (Pearson *et al.*, 1992). However, dictated by the responsibilities and accountabilities of the local authority and police under the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, both the local authority and the police hold disproportionate amounts of power in defining what issues were tackled, where, and how. Thus, whereas documents pertaining the to the organisation of Sheffield Community Partnership provide an overall assessment of crime problems and identified a number of discrete problems areas, a closer investigation of how the Community Partnership worked emphasised how this knowledge did not reflect the empirical realities that emerged through the data collected during the fieldwork undertaken for this study.

Issues concerning the power differential based on the statutory responsibilities within the Community Partnership had the most tangible impact on perception and delivery of community services for grassroots organisations, such as local resident associations. As one interviewee noted:

...we're involved with most of the community partnerships... If it's supported by the Council, then you'll find that most Tenant and Resident Associations are involved with them... [however] I think sometimes these things are just set up because they have to have a box ticked on the form somewhere to get their funding... we have some good projects that come out of Manor & Castle, [but that's] probably because we've been here that long now

that [individuals within services] they just go, “yes, we will take a referral” ... but it is getting harder, and again, it's down to losing groups because they've got no funding. (TARA representative, east Sheffield)

Coming from one of the volunteers supporting the management of a local tenants and residents association, this comment can be seen to highlight a number of practical issues, identifying some of the real-world limitations of joint working. Primarily, these issues were articulated as frustrations in the way that community-based projects and priorities were hard to champion as worthwhile endeavours for the Community Partnership to undertake. Most community organisations, like Tenants and Residents Associations felt left out and ignored by what the quote describes as ‘tick-box exercises’, wherein only some very selected activities (with no clear indication, on their end, as to what constituted qualifying criteria) were being brought forward. These perceptions had tangible impacts with respect to the relationship communities sought to develop with the Community Partnership, who they often felt was not being collaborative and transparent. In turn, this also affected the kind of problems reported to the Community Partnership. In most instances, problems related to visible crimes and offending such as anti-social behaviour, littering, or drug dealing. However, intertwined with the issues of funding, a different narrative emerged, emphasising different kinds of community support activities promoted by these groups. Specifically, with reference to the type of support their Tenants and Residents Association found themselves providing on a more regular basis, one interviewee noted:

... I've got, families that rely on food banks... we keep little stock of stuff in the cupboard. I find that if somebody comes in and says: “I've got nothing to feed my kids tonight”, we'd find them something so they could make a meal for the kids that night... (TARA chair, east Sheffield)

Not directly relating to crime, the limited funding provided by the Community Partnership through the local authority, failed to address some of the predominant but underlying problems experienced in the area. In a similar fashion to priority areas for policing, statutory responsibilities and accountabilities from the local authority also dictated how funding was allocated. This was especially important to understand in a context of financial and political austerity. As explained by community groups, the perception was that funding was used as leverage by the city-level government, with local authority administering revenue from tax accounts as well as that originating at the national level. The remainder was sourced and allocated by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (also paid largely by taxes).

From this perspective, although local community groups could draw grants from the Office for Police Commissioner, most of the initiatives initiated within community groups during the course of the research, instead draw on grants accessed either directly through the local authority, or from Government. These revenues of funding, other than securing activities to tackle community problems, were also key to maintaining engagement for communities. Food poverty, however, was just one aspect of these problems, as noted in an interview by a representative from a Tenants and Residents Association in north Sheffield:

The TARA... provides adult learning sessions. Just this morning in they did a computer course, but we [also] have English and Maths [classes] here. There is about, on average, the footfall of 100 people through the front door. Not all from this area, they come from different areas to use the facilities here. This room is [also] the room we use for the pilot brunch sessions... but that was through specific funding we've got, it's not something we could afford to carry on, because we haven't, you know, just can't cover down costs money... (TARA chair, north Sheffield)

The host of supporting activities organised by local community groups for local communities, indeed depended on funding from the local authority or government grants. These could also be secured through third-sector partners, such as charities and non-for-profit organisations, working alongside the main organisation of the Community Partnership. Activities within communities, as outlined in further detail in the next section, appeared to be not only beneficial for tackling issues communities thought were important to them. Indeed, these were also key to tackle some of the key priorities of the Community Partnership highlighted above as, for example, discussed in a conversation with a representative from a housing association in north Sheffield:

About 15 years ago, there was a thing called "Positive Futures". And it was run by several different football clubs... The schools opened up their football pitches free for the kids. And there were people just watching, some playing, [and] it meant that [young people] had somewhere to go home. There wasn't hanging on the roads anyway. And it was very clear there were no drugs, there were no fights, there were no gangs... and for us it worked really, really well... [especially as] at one point, they were looking for volunteers for local like grassroots football to start building that....[getting the community to] recognis[e] what the problem was, and working as a whole the police, schools, [and] the council coming in and saying: "Okay, what do you want them?" and finding somewhere to go and something to do, as you then start getting more engagement from different people and cultures. (Housing Association manager, north Sheffield).

Activities in communities, like in this case football for young people, were seen as the starting point for further community engagement, which was otherwise not achievable by means of policing individual issues or specific tenures. The amount of engagement provided by

members of the Community Partnership, whether monetary or in the form of practical support, appeared to be a key steppingstone to ensure crime could be prevented. For local communities and third-sector organisation, it also provided essential opportunities to showcase the work they did and reach out to those not likely to engage with them.

In one more extreme example, the opposite appeared to be true. Where community groups, felt significant barriers were put up in the way, by means of lengthy administrative processes or funding limitations, or where the trust was lost with respect to the perceived effectiveness of the Community Partnership, groups could disengage with official processes altogether. As explained by the chairperson of Tenants and Resident Association in east Sheffield:

I am the chair of the TARA... but that's one of my roles, as [instead I also help running the] Link Community that we have, separate from the TARA. We're a separate body altogether with a different management team, different constitution. So sometimes it's difficult because we do work together; but we then do work separately. The Link plays a bigger part and the community than a TARA... as a TARA, we're restricted as to what we could spend funding on, restricted to the area that we kind of work and. As the Link we have become a light finder, not only for this community, but for the wider community. We have people come in from across Sheffield, to use facilities here and stuff. We couldn't have done that as a tenants association to sell a different. (TARA/Community group activist, east Sheffield)

Discussing the issue of funding, and the limitations to what community groups integrated within the structure of the Community Partnership could do, activities oriented at people within their communities were re-identified at the core of what these organisations perceived their role to be. This reinforced the belief that these activities identified what problems they believed should be prioritised. Implicitly this could also mean that residents within social housing, as the primary beneficiaries of these activities, could therefore be used to identify problem areas. However, most conversations with community groups instead suggested that the wider community was to benefit from their work, thus including residents of other tenures. Extending the definition and geography of problems across Sheffield to include all tenures, these narratives emphasised concerns with institutional operationalisations of problems and problem areas, discussed in the next sections. However, more immediately, they also highlighted how the lack of involvement with the Community Partnership, could also affect the reporting of crime, as also discussed with the same interviewee:

Lot[s] of people just don't report [crime] anymore. They'll come in [to the TARA] and go: "This just happened last night", and I'll go: "is it being reported?", [and the answer is] no, it's not. They just don't, [as] I think a lot of people too, have faith in [the] police... [however, what is] very worrying, [was] a fellow coming here saying there's a group about 18- 19

fellows who are starting vigilante group. They came in here to ask for our advice... and I says: "go off and speaking to police about it, before you go off and do anything", but we're getting together on a neighbourhood site on Facebook and talking about doing the same thing, I think because [of] just in sheer desperation. (TARA chair activist, east Sheffield)

Although the above constituted an extreme example, where local residents²³ sought to resolve crime problems without the support of the local authority or police, narratives of collaboration with Community Partnership members across all local community groups were concerned with local residents failing to report crime to the police. Ultimately, if local people failed to report crimes or incidents taking place in the local area, this emphasised how well the Community Partnership was aware of ongoing problems in the community, and whether they'd therefore be able to act accordingly when setting their priorities.

Another aspect relating to how Community Partnership priorities were being set, and the nature of interaction between the local authority or the police with third-sector organisations, also introduced concerns with respect to the formality and infrequency of the contacts these developed. Reflecting on how police set priorities and strategies without support from local partners, an interviewee noted:

... I remember talking to a colleague who'd been to police station... and on the wall, they've got all these pictures of criminals... and she was sat there thinking "I know this, I know him, I know him...". And it's always, young people we have seen growing up... and for me, that's my biggest frustration is, you know, we should be treated as the trusted partner [by police], but we are not... And I accept that there's issues of confidentiality, but there are protocols you could put in place. But actually, unless we've got this communication, then this issue is not going to change, as there is little we can do. (Third-sector organisation manager, east Sheffield)

This comment exemplifies the view of partners, that police-led initiatives (and a number of crime-targeting interventions within the Community Partnership) were often considered to be exclusionary rather than inclusive. In the eyes of community groups, as the comments by interviewees in third-sector organisations expressed how their exclusion harmed the tackling of pressing Community Partnership priorities. Police-led initiatives neglected opportunities for charities to make meaningful but impact. In a similar fashion to what Baldwin *et al.*, (1976)

²³ Anecdotally, from subsequent remarks from the interviewee, most of the local residents involved with setting up this 'vigilante' neighbourhood watch group were thought to be primarily people who had bought a home in the local area (owner occupiers), concerned with a drug users allocated social housing in the area.

refer to as the 'provision of social facilities hypothesis', Partnership mechanisms in the eyes of community organisations excluded their voices from raising concerns about how the Partnership delivered community cohesion strategies. Specifically with reference to issues like anti-social behaviour, community partners felt frustrated at the notion that local organisations wanted to get involved with delivering priorities set by the police. Emphasising the more mundane aspects of delivering services in the communities they referred to those difficult to assess aspects of creating communities, in which they felt they could make the greatest contributions, especially from a preventative and community-building perspective (Manor & Castle Development Trust, 2022). However, the perceived distance in the hierarchical structure of the Community Partnership, alongside the operational protocols of interacting with Institutions, reinforced the existence of a barrier between different partners.

A different perspective as why referrals and support from the Community Partnership was not administered in ways that local communities and third-sector organisation felt adequate, emerged from discussions with the local authority's housing managers. They referred to a divide in the nature and composition of community representatives; as exemplified in this quote by an interviewee from the local authority's Housing offices in the north of Sheffield who noted that:

...a number of communities, not all will get on with each other, and our Tenants and Resident Associations tend to be made up of British elderly ladies... so they are not really... they are lovely people, but they're not representative of what goes on in the rest of the community, so there's a bit of a reality check sometimes about when we are dealing with TARAs as they are not the voice of the community, and particularly so in Burngreave... and that's an issue for one of the most deprived wards in the city, with the highest murder rate in the city... how do we engage with a big community, many of which mistrust the public sector and they don't want to engage with us or the police, who instead are very happy to tell us we are not doing a very good job. (Local Authority's housing manager, north-east Sheffield)

By offering the characterisation of a 'minor community partner', the practitioner's wording provides further evidence of the processes of professional knowledge-building for institutions. A number of substantive issues can be seen. First, a presumed lack of diversity amongst [some, at least] community-based representatives embedded in the Community Partnership. Indeed, membership of a Tenants and Residents Associations was conditional on

social-housing renting status (SCC, 2022a).²⁴ Tenants and Residents Associations were the only means by which members of the public could participate in the Community Partnerships other than by contacting local government representatives and/or statutory services, or by attending the annual public meetings of the Community Partnership (SSCP,2018). The second issue highlighted is the reluctance of some communities to engage in partnership activities. Funding acted as a gate-keeping measure. In order to receive funding, local resident communities needed to engage with Community Partnership structures. Failing to do so appeared to further entrench the unequal allocation of resources, and in turn, affect the apparent geography of problem. Lastly, the comment also provides an insight into the housing professional's characterisation of the problem affecting the local area. Remembering Burngreave as a locality in north-east Sheffield, the practitioner highlights that elements of deprivation and high levels of serious offences underline (and make worse) the lack of engagement.

More generally, these themes held, with reference to the managerialism framework, significant conceptual and theoretical value for this research. The power differential and issues with engagement between all members of the Community Partnership engaged was thought to have an influence in shaping the spatial and administrative conceptualisation of problems. Indeed, overall, this narrative consolidated the perspective that institutional knowledge constituted a solid base of evidence base on which the Community Partnership could make reliable decision with respect to problems and problem areas, as explored in the following section.

6.3. Problems and problem areas: Operational theories from police and local authority

Following the principles of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, and how the Community Safety Partnership operated in Sheffield, two teams appeared to be central to the administration of these four priorities discussed in the first section of the chapter. These were the local

²⁴ A [one] notable exception observed during the course of the research was the Park Hill Tenants and Residents Association, with a predominant number of members—including an interviewee—who either owned or rented housing within the formerly council-owned estate.

authority's Safer Neighbourhood Services team [hear after, Council ASB team],²⁵ and the police's Neighbourhood Policing Teams. The Council ASB team, as well as serving as a specialist referral service for any serious anti-social behaviour and city-level community safety issue, also in practice coordinated many of the Community Partnership initiatives in Sheffield. These roles were reflected in its core structure (as illustrated in *Figure 6.i*).

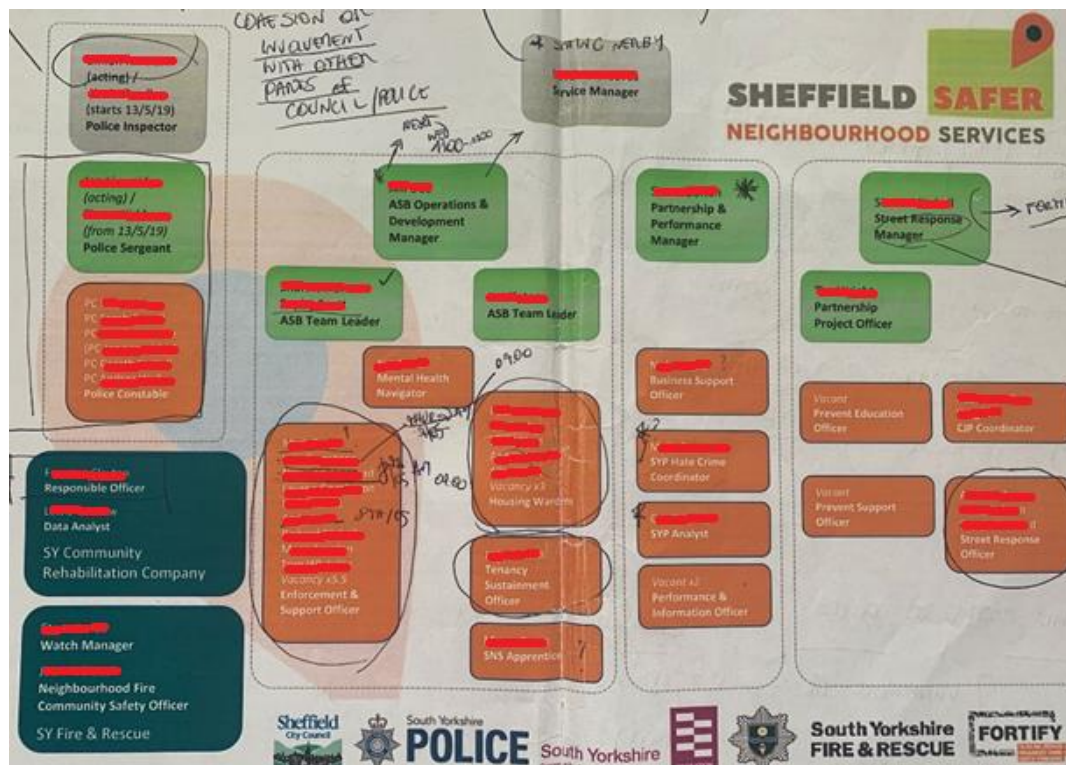


Figure 6.i: Roles of the Sheffield's Safer Neighbourhood Services Team [i.e., ASB Team]

As the team's duties related directly not only to the management of the Partnership, but also to dealing with disputes within social housing, their role likely influenced their understanding of problem and problem areas. They saw these as often being directly related to housing, and most specifically to social housing tenures. Specifically, even where legalistic definition of problems for Community Partnership could be drawn from the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act

²⁵ Technically, as explained below, this should also include one further branch of the local authority, that Neighbourhood Housing teams. However, these latter, are explored in further detail in the next chapter, due to their close proximity to other social housing providers and their duties with respect to social housing management.

and ASB Crime and Policing Act 2014, teams within the local authority relied predominantly on non-criminal legislations to regulate housing and public spaces, as well as tackling and regulating behaviour. A tenure-specific example of this can be seen in the legal contracts of social housing tenants:

You, your household and visitors must not do anything which is illegal, dangerous or which would cause nuisance, annoyance, harassment, alarm or distress to other people. This condition applies within the boundary of and in the locality of your property (Sheffield City Council Housing services, 2020:1)

This definition was important for a number of reasons. First, as discussed by Lister (2006) with reference to the conditions of tenancy agreements, these contractual terms formalised the relationship between landlord and tenant and legitimised legal action against breaches of tenancies. In particular, as noted in the wording of the agreement, regulated behaviour not only applied to the property subjected to the agreement itself, but also the neighbouring areas, in what Lister (2006) describes as ‘good neighbour agreements’ which intend to create the premise for community respect and pro-social cohesive agreements. These conditions, as noted in the wording of the agreement, also applied to other parties living in the property, as well as visitors. Furthermore, alongside sub-clauses referring to the obligations of tenants to make timely payments of their rental agreements and make reasonable efforts to maintain properties and report emerging issues, regulated behaviour particularly emphasised instances of anti-social behaviour over other potential problems. Closely mirroring the most frequently occurring instances of anti-social-behaviour and public safety categories (‘nuisance’, ‘personal’, ‘civil dispute’ and ‘domestic non-crime’) recorded by South Yorkshire Police – as introduced in Chapter 5, this definitional overlap, was also significant to defining professional perceptions of problems. As discussed below, reinforcing the quantitative assessment of the greater proportion of this offence occurring within social housing, professional opinions strongly associated social housing to these types of offences, because of the people and contexts specific to this tenure.

A similar focus to the above was also reflected from a police’s perspective. Re-introduced in 2017, neighbourhood-based policing teams were the counterpart to the local’s authority ASB team, and were tasked with prioritising crime and ASB prevention, protecting vulnerable individuals, and deliver policing fairly to improve trust and confidence within local communities. Their views on how their work contributed to Community Partnership

objectives and applied to policing in Sheffield was most clearly expressed by a police Sergeant who considered the relationship between crime, community safety, and the duties of frontline teams seeking to tackle these issues within local communities. He noted:

... [without Neighbourhood Policing Teams] demand coming through, about the local policing problems didn't get dealt with. We were responding to what was coming in through on the radio... [because of that] it was later identified there is now a huge gap now because we haven't been looking after anti-social behaviour, these problems with the community weren't being properly dealt with as effectively as they should be or could be, and hence the reintroduction of the neighbourhood policing teams...[now] I understand the Chief Constable is looking to increase the size of the neighbourhood teams because he feels that's the way forward in order to reduce the amount of demand coming through.... He makes the analogy about water coming into a lift, he wants to cut down that, because before when we were all response, we were up to here [mimics above the head] by just having response trying to deal with it. Whereas by introducing a bit of neighbourhood policing, hopefully, what's coming through is that the volume is reduced, and slowly but surely go[ing] down. (Police Sargent, north Sheffield)

This perspective described neighbourhood policing as substantial to addressing the limitations of responsive policing and situating the work of neighbourhood policing teams. However, in doing so, it also starts to unpack the implicit link between their understandings of the origins of problems and problem areas, and the practices adopted as a result of that. The comment specifically identifies anti-social behaviour as the root causes of escalating crime problems. In this sense, demand for policing activities is recognised to not solely originate from volume of reactive crime-related activities but rather as a consequence of policing not addressing anti-social behaviour.

As identified in Chapter Five some of the priority areas for neighbourhood policing in Sheffield were predominantly residential areas located in the city's north-east. With priority areas being predominantly those with, or in close proximity to, those areas with the highest concentrations of social housing the first explicit association is that social housing, generated higher levels of recorded crime and incidents. However, the belief that greater police presence and intervention was needed in these areas, also implicitly begun to reveal South Yorkshire's Police levels of confidence in other organisations. Specifically, with police's problem-oriented solutions historically failing to recognise the role played by non-punitive approaches and criminalising measures to address behaviour management at the community level (Weinborn *et al.*, 2017), this approach appeared to fail to recognise the presence and role of the local authority or housing associations as a social landlord who could likely intervene to deal with neighbourly disputes. Characterising anti-social behaviour as a path to

criminal offending, in a sense mirroring the Broken Windows' thesis (Wilson and Kelling, 1982), this approach to dealing with ASB without recognising the more holistic range of actions to address crime and anti-social behaviour, also reflected the wider strategies, resources, and knowledge of the wider Community Partnership, and how other organisations employed their resources. Finally, with respect to the priority to deliver 'fair' policing, this approach to dealing with ASB directly, also questioned how the tactics employed by the police could be the result of lack of legitimacy and therefore the need to maintain order through deterrence (Tankebe, 2014).

Police perspectives on these issues could indeed be contrasted with those of the local authority. Both appeared to be founded on causal explanations of crime, akin to elements of behaviourist approaches to the development of learning with respect to the relative disorganisation and deprivation conceptualised as integral of housing geographies (Andersen, 2008). Police officers however paid greater attention to their beliefs surrounding the behavioural and situational causes of crime, as expressed by police inspector in the east of Sheffield:

There are communities and families [in social housing] who have grown up without much in terms of employment, tends to be a little bit of...deprivation, if you like. Not particularly high earning, education levels... You go down there and there might be twenty kids sat around, just not doing anything. Having no purpose, not using the time positively. I would say that there's more of those in council estates, than there probably is in the private estates. (Police office, north-east Sheffield)

The relationship with relative deprivation, economic instability was often related to the presumed trajectories shared by many social housing tenures. Likewise, so were the identifiable elements of deviant behaviours being transmitted across different generations, also highlighted the not subtle allusion at the process of social learning and cultural transmission. Implying that young people growing up in these environments where therefore more likely to develop criminal behaviours, was implicitly met with the assumption that interventions from the Community Partnership needed to intervene early in the life of children. Intervention, as mentioned with respect to the operationalisation of anti-social behaviour priorities, as noted later in the same conversation, would prevent the escalation of these issue into serious offending:

Lack of respect for property and the area and neighbours. Increased drug and alcohol use. More mental health issues. More children dropping out of school. Lack of education. Broken

families. Children being allowed to roam the streets. Lower tolerance to nuisance, noise, violence, rubbish. People not working and a sense of entitlement - everybody needs to work or to have a purpose. (Housing Manager, east Sheffield)

However, and contradictorily, within the same narrative as to how lack of structured livelihood and 'idle hands' contributed to the development of deviant behaviour, police officers also noted how these circumstances would also contribute to the development of vulnerabilities. These vulnerabilities, such as those noted by the police inspector, however, were not appraised against the same standards of those expressed with reference to victims of crime. Rather, lack of structured livelihoods, often implicitly referring how life in the [historic] past provided more disciplined outlook on life, contributed to the making of intolerant, and 'entitled' individuals. Nonetheless, as also noted by Hancock (2001) with reference to institutional responses to disorganisation often choosing approaches closer to 'zero tolerance', the overarching narratives of police officers alluded at the need to use punitive measures rather than supporting. These latter, as exemplified by an interview with a local housing association in the north of Sheffield, were instead more regularly present in conversations with housing providers:

I think is something for the whole of that particular neighbourhood... where you'd probably find [the] most concentrated local authority council estate...[it] is concentrated to particular areas of deprivation, where you've got a history of families that potentially generations and that that causes this sort of ongoing issue... And these people have got mental health issues. So, you know, you can speak to the GP, social services, go through all the support mechanism you possibly can. But then when it comes to a point of they won't engage. [At that point] there's nothing more we can do, we've got a difficult decision to make now as to where we go with that one. (Housing Association employee, north Sheffield)

Although the same underlying mechanism of disorganisation and deprivation were also echoed by housing professionals, they were more likely to both frame the struggles experienced by individual in a less judgmental way than police officers. The underlying influence of their role also appeared to affect this. Housing professionals seemed more likely to display empathy and more regularly refer to the need to support not punish individuals, at least with respect to some instances of deviant behaviour. In this context, as underlined in a conversation with a Community Partnership manager, the causes for deviancy and crime were related to the wider social context, and a more complex causal network, than simple behaviour:

There is no there's no easy answer simple solutions... there's bigger things than that sit behind it [how we understand problems]. For me... [it is like] trying to find a cure for diseases. Because there's lots of different things. So there's societal issues, there might be behavioural things with the psychology [of individuals], as in is it actually a medical issue, in terms of behaviour in terms of mental health... there [might then be an] addiction to drugs [and possibly crime to fund that]. At which point what do you try and prevent? It is a huge question. I certainly don't have the answer to that. (Fortify lead, SNS)

More in line with a fully social conception of crime as expressed in Taylor *et al.*, (1973), the overarching conceptualisation of the causes of problems is expressed in terms of layered number of issues. More importantly, what is also emphasised, is the underlying inability of the practitioner to be able to know, and tackle, all of the combined problems at once, and in isolation from other practitioners. Ultimately, however, these views whilst more frequent amongst housing professionals, were still isolated and more likely to be expressed in conversations with senior Community Partnership managers or housing associations. Whilst unconfirmed, these patterns in narratives could also more simply reflect the overall impact that greater oversight and responsibilities for provision of service delivery could afford individual practitioners. Indeed, ultimately, these perspectives were not reflected neither in the ways that problems and problems area were identified. Rather, more universally, interaction with practitioners closer to frontline service delivery, appeared to confirm how professional experiences not only exposed practitioners to the 'true extent' of problems, but also allowed them to gather a geographically based understanding of problem areas.

For police officers, the central assumption on which this claim was based was the nature of repeated calls to neighbourhoods and specific addresses. This perspective was also seen as central to their belief that they could empirically understand how different problems emerged, providing an individual-centred response to different crime problems. These views were summarised by a police inspector in north Sheffield. He noted that:

... I think, anecdotally, [ASB offenders] they are mid to late teens age. They are the sort of 'nothing to do' types, you know...they have nothing to keep themselves mentally focused, so I think...like when I was growing up, you know, I'd be going to youth clubs, scouts and there'd be stuff to do to fill my time, when not doing homework and other things... you know... friends playing on consoles and stuff.... So, I think it's a lack of... they have no opportunity to do elsewhere... so idle hands, lead them to [getting bored and committing crime and ASB]. [And, even if it is] 1 or 2 percent of those 100,000 people in my patch that are offenders... because they do their offending in public, the perception [of crime in the area] is higher; the impact that they have it is higher, because it is not something that is happening within their homes...all of them had issues around their upbringing, their parenting abilities... broken families... so that what we use the phrase ACEs— adverse childhood experiences—... where they grow up seeing dad beating mum and grow up

thinking that violence is acceptable and normal, and will go on to offend in a similar way... almost as a self-fulfilling prophecy. (Police Inspector, north Sheffield)

Considering why young offenders engaged in low-level ASB in the first instance helped to summarise the police-based perspective of offending across different ages and crimes. From developmental perspectives to techniques of neutralisation and self-fulfilling hypotheses (Farrington and Welsh, 2007), the context of upbringing and the conditions of families (and adults) and in particular their financial and social arrangements translated into the belief that a different culture exists which perceives offending (across the range) as an acceptable option to 'occupy time'.

Two issues in particular highlight how officers' suggestions that their understanding of crime problems was disorganisation-based rather than evidence-based. Firstly, it was reactive: the location and frequency of incidents they attended together with their acquired knowledge of local areas, allowed them to understand crime problems. Their interpretation, therefore, narrowly depended on professional perspectives about problem areas. Secondly, conversations with officers suggested that this approach was deductive and deterministic, because – whilst the occurrence of offences varied based on the nature of each crime committed – their underlying understanding of crime problems was based on issues of adverse childhood experiences, and otherwise linked to social or economic deprivation.

Police's understanding of anti-social behaviour added to the above, further localising their perceived knowledge about spatial clustering of incidents and offences, across specific spatial locations and individuals. According to this, the police's problem-oriented approaches relied on volume and demand to identify who/where the problem was, and from there assess the risk posed by the individual (or group) to the community, and act to reduce the risk. Within discussions with police, officers and managers alike noted how they were able to closely summarise what constituted 'priority areas' based on the criteria listed in the official documents cited above. Consistently, they emphasised the role played by ever-developing intelligence reports, including daily and weekly THRIVE [Threat, Harm, Risk, Investigations, Vulnerability of victim, Engagement level required] briefs, and monthly crime statistical reports of trends. Based on risk averseness, and the belief other Community Partnership organisation were averse to informed approaches to risk-taking, was a key issue emerging from conversations with police managers. Based on their professional opinions, police

intelligence gathering, informed evidence-based approaches and empirical generalisations often relating crime directly to housing and housing conditions. One particular discussion addressed this very explicitly with a police Interviewee noting:

... Antisocial behaviour [as other crimes] tends to be focused on what you call council housing estates areas tends to be where.... [however] Now, there isn't a POP plan for example for Beighton [south-east Sheffield], but we know there is a risk that we might need one if we don't carry out some activity down there. So we don't; just because we haven't got a POP plan it doesn't mean that we don't give some attention to that area when is required.... However, I think the Council, the housing and all the offices within Council, they probably deliberate over things more than we do. We're quick, we react a lot quicker. The police are used to deal with things pretty much 'there an then, or [at least] more quickly and soon.. whereas the council will be more cautious about taking action. They will probably want to compile far more evidence. They will be more risk averse. To, let's say seeking tenancy eviction on someone, whereas police were a bit quicker and a bit more confident about maybe taking someone to court about things. That's what we do all the time. We are also well equipped to deal with risk... Council officers [often] haven't...they are clerical workers generally. (Police inspector, south-east Sheffield)

Such perceptions originated from officers' experiences of dealing with incidents in their local areas, even where they were not captured by evidential data. The substantive belief that officers held with reference to formal and informal priorities, and their tendency to concentrate around areas of social housing, was deliberately derived from the aforementioned theoretical conceptualisations regarding the causes of crime. Many examples of these beliefs, and how problems and problem areas related to social housing emerged from interviews:

Often, known offenders are housed in an area which would only bring trouble to that community. The council may be blissfully unaware that they are rehousing a previous burglar who has a particular M.O for their offences, close to an area where this would be an easy target for their style. Drug dealers often moved in to flats, predominantly occupied by elderly residents. (Police officer, east Sheffield)

I would say that the placement of families, problem individuals, and so on that can be the biggest problem... [for example] We just had a vulnerable drug user who was placed in a small flat complex with elderly people. And so we had drug dealers turning up...people intimidating, causing trouble. This was council housing, [so]they went through the choice-based-letting... it could be the only place they've got available. And the impact on the other residents was massive. (Police officer, east Sheffield)

Universally, as part of these narratives the underlying behaviourist traits of rationalised causes of crime are still evident. In the minds of police officers, the knowledge that tenants in social housing were the problem, qualified the police to define and react to social housing being problem areas. An important aspect of these narratives, however, was the degree of blame also attributed to housing providers for creating these problems. Specifically, housing

officers (with no specific identifiable distinction between those working for the local authority or a housing association), were characterised as either unwilling or unable to deal with the allocation of problem individuals, thus contributing to the establishment of problem areas. Only in very few instances, the mechanism of social housing allocation through the process of 'Choice-Based-Letting' (an issue discussed in further detail in Chapter Seven), was considered by officers to contribute to this indirectly. As a further dimension to these beliefs, police officers also regularly articulated how they believed this impacted on their role and the police's use of resources, as best summarised by responses from other police officers:

In the past offenders have been placed in flat complexes alongside elderly persons to see if this could help them change. This often proves ineffective, and neighbours often became victims. Not enough is done to tackle the drug problem, it needs too many resources, the problem has been let to grow too big and there is no longer enough officers to deal with it. (PCSO, city centre).

Often, social housing [providers] will expect the police to take action against an individual, or at least wait for the police to make a charge or an arrest, when they should in fact be taking action themselves against people's tenancy with the information and knowledge they already have. It does not always need police involvement for them to take action, yet this seems to be the case more and more. Housing [providers] need to take more responsibility for their tenants at times. (Police officer, south Sheffield).

These narratives consistently portray the police as being in disadvantaged position, having to deal with established issues with limited resources. On the surface this immediately related to the ongoing issue of policing communities, which as otherwise discussed by existing literature, concerns the role, effectiveness, and the need to reform the delivery of policing to reflect the needs of communities (Parsons, 2021). In this sense, not always officers discussed or reflected on how lack of officers and/or their inability to deal with problems affected communities; rather, they reflected on how the police as an institution was affected by these. However, contrasting opinions from police officers, also emphasised an ideological distinction between those believing the police needed to intervene to deal with housing issues, because or instead of their perception of housing providers' work, and those who did not.

Time spent alongside officers did aid in qualifying what may have led to this significant distinction between those believing that immediate response to crime, anti-social behaviours, and incivilities benefitted these areas. Specifically, a plausible explanation of this phenomena appeared to be related to how intelligence gathering in the community relied almost

exclusively on Police Community Support Officers [PCSOs], with police officers almost exclusively being involved with community relations when carrying out arrests or reactive policing. As also explored in policing research, the role of PCSOs was recognised as beneficial, especially because – as a result of them lacking the powers of a regular police officer – they had the ability to build different relationships with local communities, as individuals may be more likely to approach them and report incidents, crime, and other information (O’Neill, 2014). However, as explained by one police Inspector, it emerged that SYP had been conducting a review to remove the role of PCSOs altogether, as they lacked policing powers, and the alternative of ‘upskilling them’ was seen as an effective strategy to cope with demand more effectively. With community policing revolving around the concept of intelligence building within communities, the inability of officers to be in the community would affect the ways in which the police learn about local problems beyond their connections to social housing through the work of other members of the Community Partnership. In turn this appeared, as previously explored, to alter their perception of problems and definition of problem areas, emphasising concerns for social over other housing tenures, despite these being already inaccessible to most policing strategies.

The ways in which the council’s ASB officers worked, and the ways their work reflected on the conceptualisation of problems as observed through the research, appeared to follow the same principles of disorganisation as the police perspectives. As already mentioned, the operationalisation of problems, these also appeared to be more directly determined by the spaces and geographies that were most present in their work. Close collaboration with police, however constituted a distinctive meaning in this context. Firstly, this referred to the processes by which the team physically operated alongside South Yorkshire Police, and other partner agencies. Whilst a number of the comments offered by interviews reaffirmed this relationship, the comments by a manager within the local authority may be seen as particularly enlightening. As the interviewee noted:

... we had a really big ASB case on the Manor [east of Sheffield, predominantly social housing in the area], and ourselves and the police were trying everything. This lady had quite an unusual name; so we’re taking about it in the office, confidentially, and the probation worker who sat next to us goes “did you say such and such... yeah, she is known to us”, and we found out she was on a lifetime licence, which meant if she committed any ASB she could be recalled. Now, in the normal scheme of things we would have never turn that up. (Police Sargent, SNS team)

Explaining how the practical arrangement of the team sharing the same office space with probation practitioners, evidenced the value of institutional knowledge co-produced alongside partner agencies, as well as through informal means. This reality implicitly confirmed the value of partnership working. However, the degree to which this appeared to affect the work of the team could not be understated. This was confirmed on a daily basis via the time that the author spent sitting in the offices of the team in central Sheffield. Every time a team member had a query about an ongoing case, they would promptly seek to either collectively discuss a plan of action or seek further information from the other partner agencies in the room. Overhearing these conversations suggested how a degree of these instances appeared to refer, similarly, to police-based views, to priority localities or individuals, with these being defined by the volume of incidents occurring at one specific location. This was most directly expressed by a manager of Community Partnership suggesting that:

There are certainly specific areas where we get more cases [than] others. I am deliberately using the words “we get more cases from”, rather than there is more antisocial behaviour there, because that's there's a factual difference. There's got to be some correlation, and you'd hope that the areas we get the most cases from are the areas where it's the biggest problems... but there's another factor there, which is about staff confidence and ability to deal with cases. (Community Partnership Lead, SNS team)

The way in which working conditions expressed links to the geography of problem areas as well as discussing the nature and presentation of problems, was the Council's' ASB team identity being shaped by their working conditions managing incivilities and ASB. Specifically, during the course of the research, supervised access to the database containing ongoing cases referred to the Council's' ASB team was allowed so that the author might read a sample of documents and gain a better insight into the nature of these problems. Whilst these materials are examined in further detail in Chapters Seven, they are pertinent to mention here because they appeared to be behavioural in nature (e.g., low-tolerance for noise; unusual habits; mental-health issues; learning difficulties) and were regularly thought to be exacerbated by material and contextual conditions (e.g., substance abuse/dependency; financial shortcomings; estranged from family and other social contacts). These operational narratives, whilst as discussed above with reference a more wholistic appraisal of issues, ultimately should also be recognised as not solely the by-product of nuanced understandings of problems in problem areas. Rather they could also be considered the by-product- just as with

the case of police’s perception- of conditioning from daily encounters and operationally grounded theoretical conceptions of disorganisation.

Indeed, embedded within each narrative explanation of problem and problem areas, only the slightest degree of awareness for the social construction of these terms was displayed. However, in the most self-evident example one interviewee stated:

...I think ASB is a fairly meaningless term... It's just [a reference to] chaotic [lifestyles]. You have got people who may have underlying problems, or they may just be bad people whose behaviour impacts on other people... (Operational Manager, SNS)

As suggested by the interviewee, problems were considered not just as an issue of serious crime—despite the team dealing disproportionately with the most serious instances of anti-social behaviour— but predominantly affected by social housing tenures. As previously suggested, and consistent with the idea of disorganisation, underlying problems concerning disruptive behaviours constituted a conceptual approximation of chaotic conditions. Aiding to surmise how these knowledge ultimately contributed to the realities explored through interview and observations of practitioners’ practice, the definition of problems and problem areas were operationally summarised as in *Table 6.ii*.

Definitions of problem and problem area from practice	
<p>‘Theoretical’ understandings of crime & housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conceptualising offending: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Social disorganisation o Social learning o Opportunistic o Rational actor - Links crime-housing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Deprivation o Disorganisation o Social mobility o Evidence-based 	<p>Professional and organisational practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Legislation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o 1998 Crime & Disorder Act o 2014 Crime & Policing Act - Demand and priority: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Organisational culture and knowledge o Localised individual-level problem o Tenure-related concentration

Table 6.ii: Empirical framework defining problems and problem areas for housing and police practitioners

Practitioner's definitions and understandings of problem and problem areas disproportionately linked the nature of problems to social housing tenures, through disorganisation-based conceptualisations. Through so doing the impression that this tenure was more criminogenic than others was, once more, reinforced. The perspective utilised asserted that their conceptualisation of problems was ultimately evidence-based and derived by practice-based knowledge. However, a substantial gap between how Community Partnership priorities were set, and how these have been appraised to relate to occupational knowledge, still appear to emerge. Two aspects concerning these gaps, which are however not fully examined in detail in this thesis, were the underlying links and influence exerted by political imperatives and media perceptions on the work of Community Partnership agencies and their objectives. Implicitly, these were thought to have an influence on the construction of problems and problem areas.

On the one hand, the political nature of Community Partnership objectives could be understood to designate these as measures of localised key performance indicators. Particularly, with respect to the role played by the Office of the Crime and Police Commissioner, Community Partnership targets of local offences could be linked to the national policing and Home Office agenda sharing targets for the prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour and the protection of vulnerable individuals and victims of crime (South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner 2021, 2022). Similarly, these also provided measures to establish the Local Authority's progress in the delivery of 'Neighborhoods that are clean, green, safe and thriving' (Sheffield City Council, 2021a: 5).

Concurrently, as examined with respect to the perceived disconnect between these macro-level objectives and the micro-level needs of communities, the actions, and priorities of Community Partnership agencies, could be attributed to the influence of social and local media on the demands of local communities. Indeed, as seen with instances where Roma and Slovak communities in the north of Sheffield were demonised in local news' reporting, these narratives deepened community divides by introducing non-evidence-based narratives and links concerning the constructions and response of communities to anti-social behaviour in their local areas. Despite some anecdotal recognition among the Local Authority's representatives that these narratives often represented the experiences of the more vocal

residents—as per the commentary above, referring to the operation of Tenants and Residents Associations—the prioritisation of their concerns could be presumed to still produce some attrition and attention in the agendas of locally-elected representatives who ultimately relied on local votes. Ultimately, however, given the thesis’ specific interest in the way institutions operationally and conceptually relate the construction of problems and problem areas to notions of housing to crime, the overarching political framework within which these are situated is not further developed in the thesis. Nonetheless, these remain key areas for further exploration, to deepen our critical understanding of macro-level politics on micro- and meso-level practices. In particular this concerned the significant, and disproportionate, awareness for problems developing in social housing over other tenures, an issue to which the chapter now turns to.

6.4. Housing hierarchies: unequal geographies of tenure

A central concern with respect to how research participants agreed on how data and experience pointed them towards problem areas without discrimination, and in turn how this confirmed their beliefs concerning problem areas was not unproblematic. Indeed, whether knowingly or unknowingly, the fact that practitioners were disproportionately more likely to be aware of what happened in social housing, rather than other tenures appeared to further (and not always justifiably) stigmatise this tenure type and its residents. As discussed in Chapter Two, the issue of undue stigma and problematisation of certain kinds of people, is extensively identified within academic literature that discusses the vulnerabilities of the urban poor (Powell and Robinson, 2019) as much as it is with reference to the ‘over-policing and under-protection’ of minority communities (Bradford, 2014). The central aspects surrounding these debates is that the work of State institutions is likely to inadequately and inconsistently police or regulate different parts of society, often disproportionately harming those in minoritized and othered communities.

For Sheffield, it appeared that operational practices across the Community Partnership not only rationalised social housing as more criminogenic than other tenures, but also disproportionately targeted this tenure. Implicitly, as in without the critical understanding of practitioners, or explicitly, where practitioners recognised this to be happening. This process created what this thesis coins as a ‘hierarchy of tenure’. The term ‘hierarchy of tenure’

referred to how, conceptually, different tenures influenced the definitions of what constituted either a problem or a problem area and, in turn, practically how this affected the unequal distribution of resources to tackle these problems. At the top of this hierarchy was social housing, followed by the private-rented sector, and owner-occupied tenancies. The degree of resources allocated to the three tenure types declined in keeping with their place within the hierarchy. This issue first emerged in a discussion with a Partnership Manager who, in their role of coordinating the activities of the Community Partnership across Sheffield reflected on the limitation of the work the Council's ASB team. They stated that:

... Now on the housing side this structure is supposed to, and this is the wrong term, but [we are meant to be] 'tenure blind'. It is not supposed to matter whether you pay, whether you are one of our tenants, if you if you're private [renter] or if you're an owner, occupier. [Making an example] if I am an owner occupier and I caused a lot of anguish, and you complain...this team is supposed to be dealing with it; but it does not, and it cannot. In Council Housing we have the advantage of having an Area Housing team with housing officers as a filter that can deal with a number of things. But [what about] with when you deal with private renters? When do you find out about owner occupiers? At the time of crisis. When they ring police about it, and even then, they'd probably be ringing police for years, but that's nothing to look at. So they are...they are hurt because of that. One of the issues is I will do this because we're a political organisation, is that we really like to show how things are without actually demonstrate it...So we go: this is this is the X team... this is the X protocol that is being followed... so you can trust us... But what the actual reality is, it is quite fractured. (Fortify lead, SNS)

A number of substantive points were raised by this interviewee. The key issue here is expressed by the term 'tenure blind'. Referring to the range of formally organised of partnership-related services to the community, to the implied level of knowledge which tenants may have of avenues to seek support, to the presumed level of attention that reports on incivilities would have on different agencies. On the whole, housing tenure can be understood to have a deeper and divisive function with respect to the work of organisations as it shapes the work and the activities of the Community Partnership. Social housing tenants could benefit from disproportionate provision and access to Partnership services. Conversely, as per the exemplifying examples of someone renting or owning their own homes, the practitioner suggested how the only recourse for residents of those tenures, would be through police. Operationally this was reflected by the reality that social housing had both the local authority as a social landlord as well as a Community Partnership member, as an institution to which tenants could refer concerns and problems. This condition was instead not replicated for other tenures, as these were either managed by private landlords, or self-sufficient in the case of owner occupiers. Ultimately, the reason for this set-up was the

nationally recognised lack of political, financial and legislative investment towards the protection of private renters and home-owners (Moore, 2017).

An important caveat to the observation that the practices of housing practitioners tended to focus disproportionately on social housing, was that most practitioners were still aware of the particular socio-economic realities of different housing tenures. However, whilst emphasising greater degrees of criminogeneity for neighbourhoods with higher proportions of social housing, a housing manager commenting on the content of a ward-level meeting – where different stakeholders would meet to discuss local problems—, stated:

...if you were to have that meeting in some more affluent areas of Sheffield, then yes...then all of a sudden, the Council representative would have little influence... but in an area like this, which is something like 80% Council tenancies, there is a good chance that people we are taking about live in one of our properties. Here we become a major stakeholder as their landlord... [the same applies] if their behaviour is impacting one of our tenants... (Local Authority Housing Manager, east of Sheffield)

These comments suggest that the practitioner recognised how the geography of problems is un-equal, thereby supporting previous statements regarding the belief that the construction of problems and problem individuals were associated with deprivation and that more of these people tended to cluster within social housing. Social housing has held a longstanding role as a safety net for disadvantaged individuals who often have multiple problems which affect them, and result in their being financially unable to participate in the struggle of choosing to live elsewhere (Fitzpatrick and Pawson, 2007). Over time, especially as condition of welfare conditionality worsen, financial resources have existed as a barrier keeping many from even thinking about housing within the private-rented-sector (Richardson, 2020). Specifically, whilst '*discretionary housing payment[s]*' and other fiscal relieves do exist (Department for Work and Pensions, 2021), soaring costs of housing and of living, continue to make housing affordability a challenge for many (Osborne, 2021; Osborne and Kirk, 2021).²⁶ The housing manager also suggested that the reality of the operationalisation of problems relied on the intelligence gathered by the Council and how, in turn, this related to the proportion of social

²⁶ The core of this research, of course refers to a pre-covid context; thus, it does not account the most recent developments from the spring-summer of 2022, where worsening conditions have been accentuated by European conflicts and the soaring rates of inflation.

housing present in one given area. This implied how unlikely the Partnership was to be aware of issues affecting areas with less social housing, as well as issues happening within other tenures.

The amount of awareness that Community Partnership practitioners held with respect to social housing was also linked to the knowledge that these tenants would likely be more aware of how to report complaints to their landlord. Similarly, they would also be more likely to know how their landlord was able to intervene only for tenancy issues and disputes occurring between social housing tenants. Altogether, these practitioners-recognised the power embedded in the relationship between the work of the local authority and the Community Partnership. Furthermore, when a problem was caused to a social housing tenant by an individual living outside social housing tenancies, this constituted an obstacle to the local authority being able to manage the case directly. Instead the council had to rely on its position as a stakeholder in the Community Partnership to deal with these matters ²⁷. As explored in further detail in Chapter Seven, the vast majority of social housing tenancies were provided either directly by the local authority, or from a housing association on behalf of the local authority. This meant that most social tenants undersigned the same tenancy agreement and agreed intentionally, as further explained in Chapter Seven to abide by the same tenancy conditions. In all these instances, the local authority investigate and deal with complaints and allegations of criminal or anti-social behaviour provided that they were made against a social housing tenant.²⁸ However, in all instances where the subject of a complaint resided in a different tenure, the response varied significantly; from the local authority not being able to act or mediate disputes, to being involved as part of the Community Partnership to deal with issues of social order and anti-social-behaviour. Overall, the number of complaints and cases that the Partnership managed outside the normal social housing v. social housing tenant were

²⁷ A notable exception to this: amongst other powers acquired by Local Authorities under the 1998 ASB Act, for complaints within the 'general vicinity' of social housing properties, the Act allowed them to intervene in these cases, as per instance of noise complaints under the environmental protection framework, as better elaborated in Flint (2006b)

²⁸ A slightly different process applied to social tenancies managed directly by social housing associations [HAs], as explored in chapter seven; indeed, to a certain degree, how HAs chose to deal with issues was related to their business model and operational structure. Thus, whilst the outcome would broadly be the same, different organisation's staffing and processes would vary the practice of how 'problems' would be dealt with.

so negligible that no housing practitioners interviewed over the course of this research were able to recollect a recent case that they would remember, that did not involve some degree of police intervention to investigate a criminal matter. This, however, did not mean that problems did not exist outside of social housing, but rather that the local authority, in spite of its statutory obligations to wider communities, was ill-equipped to deal with them.

More subtly, the implication that affluent areas had smaller portions of social housing also hinted at the importance of housing allocation practices— discussed in greater detail Chapter Seven. Often, properties within those areas tended to be the most desirable and harder for most social housing tenants to obtain. Some housing and police practitioners were able to reflect on the wider effects of trends in the housing market as constitutive of their critical perspectives. As a Community Partnership housing officer noted:

Obviously, council housing is getting less and less, and since the government introduced right to buy, all the good stuff gets sold, our better stock is sold, which leaves us with some of our poorer stock or in areas of large estates... where high levels of deprivation maybe people can't afford to buy. We [as the Council] have to take [any] people, so I'll agree with that often, a lot of the tenants or a lot of people that may be involved in antisocial behaviour, or crime may be resident in some of our properties.... I don't mean anybody...we've got lots of properties where you can just walk in and because we, we have [properties] which are called "first come first serve". I also think we have the issue of multi-generational families. You know, certainly as a housing officer in the past, I go into families and who I know who were sort of dealing with crime or involved with antisocial behaviour, and there's children, and you think... in about 10 years, I will be talking to that child, and, you know, you can see the way they're going to go [in the sense they might commit crime]... I still think we've got lots of people don't value having a Council tenancy, I think we still may be last resort accommodation, you know... (Housing and Neighbourhood Manager, Community Partnership)

Although still evocative of principles of disorganisation and other stigmatising social theories, the practitioner's comments summarise a number of important viewpoints that were shared by other interviewees. As previously considered, contextual and environmental factors linked to individual's and families' circumstances are thought to reflect on their inherent and potential criminogeneity. In the case of social housing tenures and their relationship to in Sheffield, is expressed through the idea of multi-generational deviance. At the same time, multi-generational occupation of social housing had a positive impact for housing practitioners with regards to their acquiring a working understanding and knowledge about crime and low-levels of engagement; even when social tenants eventually decided to own their homes. Importantly, however, this problematisation needs to be coupled with the reality that market housing did not apply to this tenure in the same way than they did to

others (Taylor, 2017). However, as also previously mentioned, but discussed in further detail in Chapter Seven, a certain degree of choice did seem to apply to the allocation of housing in Sheffield. Therefore, the residualisation of possible housing choices, could hypothetically affect the unequal concentration of problems in specific areas of the city. Specifically, not only is these phenomena could be thought to generate problem areas by means of problem individuals [and families] being concentrated there, but it is also seen to potentially impact upon the reputation of the quality of life and housing within this type of tenure. The typification of problem tenants by housing practitioners, and this understanding of housing realities, whilst reinforcing the belief that action within social housing to regulate behaviour was necessary, reinforced the stereotyping of problems in more harmful ways.

Moreover, the disproportionate focus on social housing and services' understanding of problem constructed social housing as the key to defining problem areas and problem tenants. To an extent that one could question the extent to which they were aware of how housing and crime were related more widely. Alternatively, this could also refer to how practitioners were able to understand and be receptive to the experiences and realities of households in the privately-rented and owner-occupied spheres. This was confirmed by statements that linked the conceptualisation of problems with practice-based knowledge. Specifically, as a source of evidence, their comments suggested that a well-defined relationship between crime and housing did exist. However, these 'evidence-based' approaches to interpreting crime problems consistently relied on disorganisation-based narratives. This conceptual approach normalised the association between incivilities, anti-social behaviour, and social housing. Supporting the notion that this tenure was more problematic than others, it re-iterated the aforementioned notions of greater degrees of criminogeneity being caused as a consequence of the presence of problem tenants in problem areas. Accordingly, when asked to reflect on private-rented housing and owner-occupied housing, and how problems and problem areas related to these different tenures, perceptions about the character of tenants and owners alongside the regulatory frameworks which regulate and police these tenures, constituted the main two themes that emerged from discussions. One of the police's perspectives on their operational use of housing to understand urban problems exemplified this, as noted by a police officer when referring to the policing of private tenants. He noted that:

We have less power/authority over private rented sector, we can usually lean on council/social housing to work together on enforcement of their tenants and can threaten with repossession etc. However, we have very little influence over private landlords as it entirely depends on how willing they are to work with Police, most just seem interested in getting their rent on time rather than conduct of their tenants so long as they are not damaging the property (Neighbourhoods Police officer, north-east Sheffield)

This comment presents two issues. First, it highlights the difficulties relating to the regulation of private-rented tenures compared to social housing. It emphasises the reliance of police officers on the work of other partnership agencies, in this instance the local authority, to respond to and tackle problems within housing. Referring to housing-led initiatives, it also emphasises the criminalisation of anti-social behaviour and the disproportionate power that can be exerted on social housing tenants. By, for instance, applying housing legislation through civil processes— closely relating to Crawford’s (2006b) argument concerning how the state has expanded and ‘smartly’ re-shaped punitivism. Conversely, the absence of the same measures for private-rented housing not only indicate further barriers to policing, but also relate to how to deal with issues within private-rented sectors landlords and how they need to reply rely predominantly on the police for any matter not regulated by a contract. The second issue that emerges, is the police’s perspective on landlords, and especially the re-occurrence of the term rogue landlord; a term previously introduced by a housing manger with reference to dealing with issues of Modern Slavery and Hate crimes, when he referred to the problems that non-engaging landlords presented to the detection, prevention, and policing of these issues. Indeed, landlords failing to engage with any degree of self-regulation, or engagement with policing or Community Partnership activities can, with [almost total] impunity, victimise their tenants. In this sense, unless tenants reach out, police and housing practitioners are very unlikely to learn of the problems that tenants may t be experiencing. No further interview or survey responses dealt with the problem of vulnerable tenants within the PRS in further detail or reflected on the likely under-reporting of tenant’s exploitations or upon crime against tenants. One officer, even stated that PRS tenants were usually the ones causing problems for the police as they were less tolerant than social housing residents for noise and ASB, stating:

Generally, in social housing, it is hard for tenants to be evicted, whilst in private rented they can be evicted a lot quicker. Generally, [this also means] that private rented tenants generally pay more for their rent, so aren't as tolerant of anti-social behaviour (Neighbourhoods Police officer, north of Sheffield)

Basing this on the rationale that they paid more than social housing for rent and therefore were more likely to involve the police in dealing with disputes. Similarly, contradicting generally accepted academic wisdom, officers identified ‘bad landlords’ as those for whom the police held no details or could not contact when, for instance, there was issues of tenants misbehaving (Lister, 2006); further, they cited a lack of interest by landlords to deal with problems when tenants kept up with their rent payments. Likewise, whilst acknowledging that it was much easier to obtain evictions through engaged private landlords than social landlords, officers also raised issues concerning the lack of comparable enforcement powers that they could adopt through partners— like closure orders, and community protection notices— for social housing. A very similar narrative also emerged with respect to owner-occupiers who not only seemed out of reach for police in terms of intelligence gathering ahead of any problem emerging, but also appeared to be harder to reach outside of punitive sanctions.

... if you decided to commit crime, I think it’s fair to say you wouldn’t just phone us and say what is going on... and unless I have gone to do a check on intelligence passed on by I neighbour I wouldn’t know... [and the same is with PRS as] I don’t think the tenants let their landlord know they are having problems with neighbours... and I think with the time it takes for them to get sorted... at that point the tenant will just move further down the road to a new house, because there are so many empty properties it is so easy for them to just move... and we never become aware of it... (Police Sargent, North East)

As evidence in the police officer’s comments, he illustrates a similar perspective to the points made above and replies on comparisons with social housing to suggest how owner-occupied tenures are objectively harder to police. Community relations, as broadly defined in the partnership objectives of Community safety responsibilities, and considerable tensions between neighbours seem to be instances where issues would be referred to the attention of the police; not before. The comments made above by the police officer, however added one further dimension often discussed with reference to processes which undermine any crime prevention (and from this perspective the problem-oriented-policing strategy adopted by Neighbourhood Policing Teams) was that displacement. The officer’s narrative highlights a two-fold drawback from the marketisation of housing and the issue of choice: displacement. On the one hand, and with relevance to policing perspectives, it suggests that it a tenant subject to police action were to move elsewhere from where they caused a problem whilst the issues would cease to exist in one neighbourhood, they would likely re-appear elsewhere.

On the other hand, and with greater implication for those without resources, the comments by the policeman also suggest that tenants could move away from a problem and relocate elsewhere. Of course, this would not be applicable to those without the resources or capacity to express such a housing choice. Furthermore, hinting towards the issues of reputations highlighted in the work of Baldwin *et al.* (1976), this would implicate the matter of reputations and desirability. Thus, the harm created by the stigmatisation of neighbourhoods, and those unable to move elsewhere, comparative to those who could, echoed issues approached through empirical data in Chapter Four.

A very important aspect which emerged from the interviews as well as discussions around whether knowledge and the extent to which the lack of contact with tenures other than social housing could affect perceptions and behaviour of practitioners, was how these could holistically constrain how problems were dealt with in other tenures. As a further police respondent noted:

... No one has powers to change how these people live as they are just left to manage on their own due to lack of social care and amenities. (PCSO, north-west Sheffield)

Referring to both private-rented sector and owner occupiers, the officer emphasised their inherent vulnerabilities and their need to rely on themselves to manage their problems. This perspective resonated with other informal conversations held with the police where the expression akin to '[needing] *to kick their door in*' to learn what was taking place in privately rented or owned property frequently emerged. This perspective suggested that unless crime was being committed inside of their home, it would be extremely hard for the police or the local authority to tackle the root problem that could cause issues to expand beyond the home. The comment from the officer also emphasised how these issues needed to be considered in light of the withdrawal of social welfare. Corroborating this narrative, a Community Partnership manager also noted:

The PRS team was always sat in another part of the Council...Council Housing is funded by the Housing Revenue Account, and the Private Rented Team are funded by the general fund that comes in from Council Tax.. but ideologically, my teams keep their ears to the ground, and through speaking with our tenants they'll learn about what is happening next door, but often waiting for tenants to tell us there is an issue... we do have licencing areas, and we've got houses of multiple occupation and all student accommodation... [Otherwise] that's another [aspect] that we're reactive for... we don't have the resources to be proactive... people have to ring saying their landlord is saying something (Housing services Lead, Local Authority)

With two distinct revenues of funding, the Council's ASB team and Private-rented-Sector teams had operationally been separated under different branches of the local authority. Further to this the local authority ability to rely on social housing tenants to be key in the process of gathering intelligence about neighbouring residents, did not apply to private-rented housing. Overall, this suggested how only some of the legal provision pertaining to licencing of private housing, could allow the local authority to intervene and deal with issues of housing as matters of community safety within this tenure.

This comment also offered an insight into how housing provisions could be used to discover issues of anti-social behaviour and crime with respect to any harm to tenants and/or landlords. This, however, was both incidental and limited. Indeed, from a tenant-protection perspective, discovering or dealing with issues of crime and anti-social behaviour was the by-product of the housing team having to conduct compliance checks with reference to issues of housing standards. Concerns of housing standards referred to areas where private-rented housing was subject to pro-active licencing checks by the local authority, thus, severely limiting the number of properties actively included. With reference to the issues of proactivity in areas others than those actively regulated by the local authority, the comments of the housing manager also indicate the need for the local authority's team responsible for private rented housing, to be notified by tenants about ongoing issues before they are able to look into them and attempt to resolve matters. From discussions with private-housing practitioners within the local authority, it also became clear that a lot of the work carried out by the team consisted of 'in-house' services that the public could not access directly, and that the referral of local cases to the team by tenants was extremely rare. Specifically, the examples offered by practitioners to explain this, were issues pertaining to the Environmental Protection team, and regarded issues of littering or complains about excessive noise where a tenant or a neighbour (as the complainant) approached the local authority directly.

The existence of staff seeking to support and police the private rented sector was also co-located within the local authority, meant that narratives and discourses surrounding the nature of problems within the private rented sector also closely mirrored those for social housing. This was of particular importance, as staff in these team prior to the most recent restructuring of the local authority's structure used to work in the same teams. This meant

longstanding members of the team, at the time of the research mostly in managerial positions, likely held similar opinions due to training and on-the-job experience. These narratives indeed appeared to be similarly related to issues of socio-economic deprivation, but presented additional challenges, as summarised by the comments of the housing manager responsible for the regulation of the private rented sector. She noted that:

... the work we are doing what we call the East patch [in Sheffield, which concerns us for] the high proportion [of] private rented properties in that area... it's an area of housing market weakness in that area, as property prices lower demand. Now, this is an interesting one, because demand is still high because he's cheap. [The problem is that] people still go live there, but basically the people that are, are at the poor end of society...and so we spend a lot of time in the city in those areas because we know that they, they have more problems than any other area in the city... (Private-rented housing lead, Local Authority)

The need for, and availability of, affordable housing linked to the conception of problems, thus deviancy. These are related by the interviewee as matters affecting the regulatory frameworks which practitioners would adopt to support better communities. However, the emphasis of her comments rests on the rationalisation that knowing that a lack of consistent and enforceable guidelines to regulate the quality of tenures affects the proportion of time spent in one area, is inevitably related to the extent to which problems were thought to develop. This comment relied on notions of self-sufficiency and proactiveness on the part of tenants, owners, and landlords; as further explained within reports compiled by the council's Private Housing Standard's Office (Sheffield City Council, 2018). The document explores the need to focus policing efforts around Private Rented Sector accommodation and how this was substantiated by a focus on health and safety, and the maintenance of standards; these are only loosely related to community safety by means of anti-social behaviour. However, relating the concept of active and responsible citizenship, the Partnership's perceptions and attitudes towards homeownership and private renters translated into policies and practices that adopted a notion of self-sufficiency with respect to dealing with problems. As very few tactics applied to regulating aspects of home ownership, and most private-rented solutions, these forms of tenancy were believed to be not only less problematic than social housing but to actively deter crime and deviancy outside instances of deprivation and social disorganisation. In other words, where issues of housing affordability were thought not to limit housing choices, it was thought to be unlikely that many community problems would emerge, and if they did, the local authority saw these disputes as matters that private individuals would

resolve between themselves—and likely through civil, not criminal processes - thereby not involving Community Partnership organisations.

6.5. Problems and problem areas: Some preliminary conclusions

This chapter set out to address the thesis' second research question, which explored how the conceptualisation of problems and problem areas in Sheffield related to institutional definitions of crime and housing problems. The constructivist position underpinning this enquiry, sought to expand the formulation of bad estates in Baldwin *et al.*'s (1976) work which exclusively relied on official statistics to determine what problems and problem areas were in Sheffield. As also drawn from the limitations of Baldwin *et al.*, (1976), evidence and knowledge stemming from operational practices are used to develop conceptual stereotypes which related housing and crime in ways that disproportionately stigmatised social housing.

This chapter frames these concerns in relation Pahl's (1970) ideas about urban managerialism, suggesting the perspective that state agents at the city-level hold a position of power with respect to the definition of problems, and which is then reflected in their practice; thus, the overarching objective of the chapter provides what Taylor *et al.*, (1973) defines as a sociological appraisal of crime, recognising the harmful influence of institutional practice in shaping crime problems. Whilst heeding Pahl's advice not to reify bureaucratic structures or any super-imposed analytical ones (1970), knowledge about the organisation of the Community Partnership shaped narratives concerning problems. This was reflected by the relative compartmentalisation and power imbalances between organisations which were created by the legislative framework of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act. In Sheffield, this formally positioned the local authority and the police as responsible for the organisation of Community Partnership.

However, as explored in Hancock (2001), how power is administered and how decisions are made in the context of Community Safety Partnerships, is not often manifest in linear or clear ways. This is because the inclusion, participation, and power attributed to 'minor' partners (often local communities or charitable sector), and their impact on influencing pervasive narratives about problems and problem areas within the community is limited (Fleming and Rhodes, 2005; Crawford and Evans, 2017).

Having identified local authority and police practitioners at the centre of power relations within Sheffield’s Community Safety Partnership, qualitative empirical data from interviews and other interactions is used to answer empirical questions (identifying the definition of problems, and the geography problem areas), and produce a theoretical framework as to how daily practices and actions from these institutions can be used to construct this framework (as summarised in *Table 6.iii*).

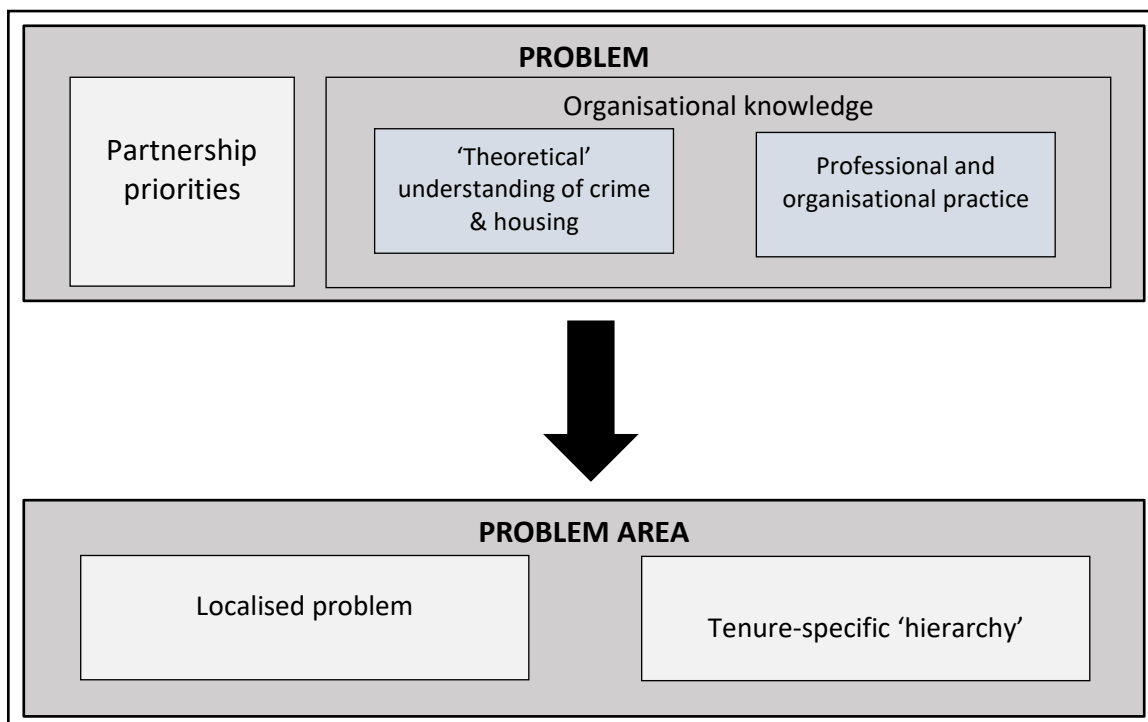


Table 6.iii: Overarching framework defining problem and problem areas for housing and police practitioners

With respect to defining crime problems and problem areas, empirical evidence from fieldwork uncovers three conflicting narratives. First, a number of partnership priorities pertaining to the formal role of the Community Partnership and its statutory obligations under the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act, identified discrete locations and crime problems across Sheffield. These translated to the Partnership needing to identify and tackle priority issues of community safety. This in turn led to them appointing the police and the local authority as the main organisations responsible and accountable for making decisions and setting objectives over other community-based organisations. Housing and crime were clearly identified as being causally related and focused the Community Partnership’s responsibilities to geographically constrained areas.

However, power imbalances in the Partnership were also identified as constraining alternative interpretations of problems and their prospective solutions, especially with respect to minor community-based partners. Police and local authority-specific organisational knowledge appeared to constitute the next two most substantial aspects of defining problems. On the one hand, theoretical understandings of the causes of crime, and how crime and housing related to one another, constituted a baseline knowledge on which Community Partnership activities were formed. Professionals drew linkages between the concept of criminogeneity and disorganised living conditions, which were strongly related to the material inequalities associated with an individual's reliance on social housing. The thesis' more cautious and critical approach to understanding crime problems also reflects on how Community Partnership's assumptions about the ecology and geography of crime were informed predominantly by their main partners perspectives (as otherwise also confirmed by existing discourses, see for example Hancock, 2001; Flint, 2006b; Squires, 2017).

A new perspective emerged which characterised Partnership-based approaches. The same spatial inequalities used in the definition of problems suggested not only how knowledge about problems and problem areas depended on [variable] levels of partnership participation, but also membership. These defined the extent to which a 'hierarchy of tenure' appeared to exist. The concept of this hierarchy of tenures, evidenced the presumed criminogeneity of social housing over other tenures, and the extent to which practitioners were able to articulate the existence of problem and problem areas across other tenures still relied on disorganisation-based perspectives. As a novel contribution to evidence, these disparities created by state agencies highlighted how interactions with these other tenures from key decision-making Partnership stakeholders were almost non-existent. In conclusion, the extent to which definitions of problems and problem areas may only represent a fragmented section of a wider, and often unacknowledged, managerialist construction of problems. Accordingly, studying causal processes, under the guise of being able to scientifically study social phenomena such as crime and housing in a systematic way, fails to acknowledge the harms of institutional practices on the lives of people through. This is most clearly evidenced with the over-policing and under-protecting vulnerabilities where there is a direct duty of the State, as per the case of social housing. However, it is urgent to re-address the

disproportionate engagement, and thus policing and stigmatisation, of social housing compared to other tenures.

These inequalities also begin to explore how practitioners' understandings have shaped the lives and experiences of those who live in different tenures across Sheffield, and thus the third research question, which is concerned with tenure-level changes and their influence on researchers' understanding of crime at the city-level. With respect to privately renting tenants or owner occupiers, proactive rule-following is labelled as responsible citizenship and used as a model to set expectations for others. However, statutory limitations and the responsibilities that state agencies hold with respect to their communities in these tenancies, noted how exploitation occurring in these contexts, as well as failure to behave pro-socially, are either ignored or punitively dealt with. The relevance of this to social housing, is further explored in Chapter Seven, where the direct administration of crime through and within social housing is examined. Chapter Eight, then holistically summarises how this understanding contributes to the formulation of the thesis' 'New Urban Criminal' understanding of the administration of crime and social order at the urban level.

7. Social Housing: Tenure and Crime Management

This chapter addresses the second and third research questions, which are concerned first with the spatial distribution of crime, and second, with how this relates to the designation of certain housing tenures as problem areas in light of city-level changes in tenurial distribution. The chapter first addresses the ecology of crime in Sheffield and its relationship to housing management policies and practices, specifically those of social housing. Then, this chapter considers and analyses the role of social housing allocation and housing management, as these processes play an important role in shaping perceptions of local criminality.

Criminology conceptualises social disorganisation as related to the ecology of crime, wherein it is presumed that individuals have agency in making choices such as where they might live. This understanding is echoed in *The Urban Criminal* (Baldwin *et al.*, 1976) which also explored whether housing allocations in Sheffield may have 'knowingly' or 'unknowingly' regulated the distribution of crime across the city by pushing problem tenants into problem areas. However, whilst Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) disregarded the role of housing allocation practices, and instead paid closer attention to the impact of desirability and reputation, this chapter considers their relevance. As will be seen, social housing allocation and management remove agency and choice from individuals. Analysing how institutions regulate the allocation of those in social housing, commonly identified by professionals as part of the urban crime problem, is expected to reveal their impact on the ecology of crime at the city level.

Starting from the same conceptual premise, as Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) this chapter therefore considers two main issues. First, it looks at the operation of housing allocation, and whether those most likely to be classed as problem tenants, and relying on social housing, could express housing choices through the allocation of social housing. Second this chapter expands on this by turning to the effects and use of tenure management as a tool to administer crime control. Altogether, this chapter brings an increased emphasis on social housing and the embedded power exerted by institutions within this tenure, which, in turn, affects the distribution of crime in Sheffield.

7.1. Updating the segregation hypothesis

As explored in chapter two, Baldwin *et al.*'s (1976) dismissal of the 'intentional segregation' hypothesis—namely that, as in Morris (1957), the local authority explicitly sought to segregate criminogenic populations in some housing estates—, rested on their interpretation of housing allocation policies in Sheffield. Considering how housing policies applied to Sheffield Baldwin *et al.*, (1976:175) they accept that, '*in Sheffield, the official statement of the [housing] department's aims stresses the freedom that is given to prospective tenants to choose any estates they wish*'. Qualifying this statement with their analysis they, in turn, suggest how housing allocation may have only had an 'unintended effect', based on their interpretation that housing affordability acted as the main 'filtering mechanism' within contemporary housing policies Baldwin *et al.*, (1976). In other words, tenants could not seek to be housed, or re-housed, if the cost of the housing sought (or to be occupied) was greater than their means to live within the same. Thus, while housing allocations could happen with a degree of choice retained by individuals, the only real limitation to where people could live, was assessed as the location where affordable and available housing was across the city (Baldwin *et al.*, 1976).

The recognition that Baldwin *et al.*'s (1976) work only limitedly appraised the extent and effect of 'liberal' housing allocation practices, is significant to understanding the construction of crime problems, and where, why and, how issues of housing allocation may contribute to the same problems that it seeks to tackle. Today, policies seek to fulfil the local authority's legal obligations to provide affordable housing with respect to the 1996 Housing Act. Looking at this specific legislation, whilst its wider purpose was to regulate the work of social landlords more generally, part six of the Act (ss.159-174) outlines statutory obligations to set and manage social housing allocations. Part Six sets broad eligibility criteria (s.160) and outlines provisions for operating a 'housing register' (ss.161-165). It also sets out the need to regulate 'applications to housing' and allocation schemes (ss.166-174), which under the Act require housing allocation schemes to transparently determine housing 'priorities'.

Though amended by subsequent legislations, specifically the amendments introduced by the 2002 Homelessness Act and the 2011 Localism Act (Wilson, 2022), or superseded by judicial precedent, the Act set the minimum regulatory threshold that local authorities must follow

with respect to lawfully allocating housing to individuals applying to be homed (or re-homed) within social housing. As Wilson argues, these legislations have however afforded local authorities a '*good deal of discretion in the relation to their allocation policies*' (2022:1). Indeed, the aforementioned need to manage housing priorities by operating a housing register relates to the underlying purpose of legislation to identify schemes to manage access to available housing stock. In a practical sense, this pertains to allowing criteria and priorities which regulate the procedures enshrined within each allocation scheme. Ultimately, however, these are set locally by individual Local Authorities. Thus, analysis of the legal obligations of each Local Authority under the 1996 Housing Act provides a reading tool into key assumptions made by local institutions concerning local populations accessing social housing. In particular, whilst policies may not explicitly relate to specific crime and disorder issues, nor are likely to directly express the intention to segregate problem individuals into problem areas, by dictating who may live where, they nevertheless provide a strong connection to how different problem areas may or may not be affected by housing. For instance, this refers to the existence of harmful narratives and practices relating the reputation of social housing, and its status as a site of concentrated deprivation (Hancock and Mooney, 2013).

From the perspective of the limited analysis provided in *The Urban Criminal* (Baldwin *et al.*, 1976) and with ambiguous policy terms defining the role of local authorities in setting parameters for housing allocation, a number of issues arise that are related to housing allocation and management are of relevance to the ecology of crime. First, the question of how and whether policies that actively or indirectly seek to undermine segregation currently exist in Sheffield, and what other housing effects may affect the ecology of urban crime across the city. As examined in Kullberg (2002) with reference to choice-based-lettings in the Netherlands, issues relating to how successful applications and sustainable tenancies were assessed, suggest that there are a number of unintended ways through which housing management could contribute to the ecology of crime. Specifically, offering choice in a residualised sector, irrespective of increased tenant's agency in the process of housing selection, further imbalances the power afforded to institutions to affect the administration of choice (Kullberg, 2002). As a result, institutional processes hold vulnerable individuals accountable for the shortcomings created by the deprivation in which they lived. Kullberg

(2002), with reference to the UK, notes that the role of residualisation of housing, and how vulnerable tenants would be unable to wait for better quality properties, translates into a further loss of bargaining power on the part of tenants. Accordingly, vulnerable tenants are victimised by the State, and still segregated in problem areas.

Re-examining Baldwin *et al.*'s (1976) perspective on the issue of housing choices and acknowledging the detrimental effects of increasing the polarisation of estates, what may contribute to the reputation and institutional perceptions that surrounded 'dump estates' remains substantial (as explored in Chapter Four). It accordingly justifies re-exploring whether and how social housing management in Sheffield utilises housing allocations to deal with the concentration of problem tenants in problem areas. Analysing housing management practices, therefore, becomes key to understanding the ecology of crime. It is relevant to understand how management practices influenced social housing tenures and their structures, issues which will be dealt with in the second section of the chapter looking at Sheffield's Housing Plus strategy.

7.2. Choice-based-letting in Sheffield today

Present-day social housing allocation practices in Sheffield, similar to what Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) report, are underpinned by the local authority operating a 'Choice-Based-Letting' scheme (Sheffield City Council Housing Services, 2020). This scheme seeks to fulfil the local authority's legal requirements, with Sheffield City Council claiming to aim for '*fairly, transparently and legally*' balancing business needs whilst giving prospective tenants '*as much choice as possible*' in deciding where they want to live (Sheffield City Council, 2016:6). The backbone of choice-based letting processes rests on the operation of a housing register, which provides applicants with available properties on a weekly-basis (SCC Housing Services, 2020:5). However, from a procedural perspective, prospective tenant's ability to be [re-] housed, depends on the ability to successfully sign-up to the housing register, in order to be then allowed to bid on suitable properties as advertised by the local authority (SCC Housing Services, 2020).

Accordingly, pathways into housing for prospective applicants under the Choice-Based-letting scheme varied significantly based on individual tenants' circumstances. Indeed, whilst prospective tenants as young as 16 years old could apply to be included in the Sheffield

housing register (although not being allowed to actually bid for properties, they accrue waiting-based seniority on the register), this allocation policy seeks to account for a wide spectrum of prospective applicants (SCC Housing Services, 2020). With tenants' needs ranging from lone tenants with different levels of support, to multi-generational families seeking housing through the local authority, choice of properties ranged from vacant social housing properties to private properties, as well as 'mutual exchanges' properties (SCC Housing Services, 2020).²⁹ Ultimately, if successful at the bidding stage (but pending further checks pertaining to personal records), successful bidders are then allowed to visit the property and eventually sign a contract for it (SCC Housing Services, 2020:5). However, at this stage, any issues pertaining to the tenant, would transition from the process of housing allocation to that of housing management. In return, as discussed in the next section, from matters of choice-based letting, these would transition to the application of 'Housing Plus' management strategies.

In Sheffield, 'need' and 'priority' are the most significant criteria with regard to how housing is allocated. As applications to join the housing register are received, Sheffield Council operationalises different levels of need through the information provided in each application and uses this to sort individuals across four distinct housing bands. Information within the applications includes a range of personal details including an individual's personal, social, and medical health, alongside information about their financial situation, and current housing arrangements, focussing specifically on adverse information, including any history of rent arrears, financial issues, and crime or anti-social behaviour. Housing applications also scrutinise the details of any co-applicant or dependent household member wishing to live with them; cumulatively, these assorted details affect the application's sorting (SCC Housing Services, 2020). Assuming that an application does qualify for housing, different aspects of the individual's or family's circumstances are then used to determine how urgently bidders

²⁹ This chapter focusses on the most predominant property type, social-rented properties, drawing into the distinctions between properties not regulated by Choice-Based-Letting schemes (namely those rented by Housing Associations or private owners) in the latter part of this section.

required re-housing, grading them in decreasing order of need from 'A' to 'E' (SCC Housing Services, 2020).

Priority status is awarded on the basis of need as assessed through the information provided on the given application, in effect shortening the waiting time between bidding for a property or registering for social housing and being allocated a property. Band 'A' to 'C' applicants are identified as those with immediate need for housing and thus have their waiting time between placing bids on properties and receiving 'suitable' offers of accommodations reduced significantly (SCC Housing Services, 2020). Band 'D' applicants, also known as 'general needs' applicants, instead, do not hold any specific priority. Housing bids from applicants in this group are sorted on the basis of their accrued seniority, computed from their length of registration (from when they first registered on the Local Authority's housing register, to their bid for the current property) with bids prioritised accordingly. Lastly, band 'E' status – anecdotally applied only to a minority of applications— is awarded to individuals lacking any local connections (whether through family, work, or existing/prior residence in Sheffield), and is also applied to cases of existing history of norm-breaking behaviours, particularly ASB and crime (SCC Housing Services, 2020).

Generally, these policy allocation criteria do not appear to explicitly segregate problem individuals in problem areas. Rather, they seek to determine the status of 'qualifying person[s]' as set out in the 1996 Housing Act. For example, histories of persistent rent arrears, property damage, or where applicants had disclosed false information as part of their application could preclude applicants from joining the housing register, or automatically awarded them 'band E' status (SCC Housing Services 2020:13). However, as set up – and allowed by legislation—these criteria also enable the local authority to discretionarily decide how applications to housing registers are to be managed, thereby allowing them to discriminate based on their understanding of personal circumstances, and also enabling the local authority to effectively affect where people could live in Sheffield. Even if indirectly, as discussed in Manley and van Ham (2011), criteria for allocation under Choice-based-letting still depends on the location of properties, pushing socio-economically vulnerable individuals to live in more deprived areas because of lack of choice. In Sheffield, differently from the model developed by Manley and van Ham (2011), these mechanisms operate through the

administration of anti-social and criminal behaviour. From policy, a record of known anti-social or criminal behaviour problems, obtaining or using their socially rented property '*for illegal or immoral purposes*', or presenting be a '*threat to the neighbourhood*' would either disqualify or limit individual choices when being housed or re-housed by the local authority (SCC Housing Services, 2020:14).

From this perspective, the use of Choice-based lettings to administer housing allocation in a [business-oriented] effective manner, could negatively impact the degree of choice afforded to applicants, also discussed by Galbraith, (2017). In this sense, those who meet 'acceptable behaviour' standards are allowed to register and be awarded housing according to their needs. Conversely, being found in breach of the acceptable behaviour standards not only could result in the potential loss of housing, if awarded, but also removal from the housing register (SCC Housing Services, 2020). This not only applied to applicants or existing tenants, but also to relatives residing in the same property, or joint applicants, bringing the issue of how these policies were interpreted by housing officers, and how these made housing decisions for tenants more complex. As noted by a housing policy manager administering the choice based letting process:

...when somebody is joining the housing register we obviously ask them to provide identification, so that is proof of ID, proof of address...if they are not a council tenant, because council tenants we are [already] their landlord, we effectively need to know about a person...[so, if] they are either a private rented tenant or from a housing association, we ask them to fill in what's called a reference form. That would be their landlord that fills in the reference form. Obviously, if it is highlighted that an applicant has got substantial amounts of arrears, for example, our allocations policy states that if you owe housing debt, that includes obviously outside [of the social housing setting] you are not entitled to join the register... however [on a case-by-case basis] we would take into consideration and apply the exact same policy as if it was one of our old council tenant. (Housing policy manager, Local Authority)

These comments summarise and discuss what the interviewee described as a 'transparent' application of the policy to the issue of housing allocations. Emphasising how individuals with complicated histories— in the recorded comments above, referring to the example of substantial debt— might have negatively affected their chances of joining the register, the comments highlight two important issues. First, the comment draws attention to the distinction between 'known individuals' applying for housing, and 'outsiders' for whom the local authority holds no information or knowledge. Discretionary decisions in the case of the former would indeed allow a housing practitioner to make an informed decision based on the

housing history of an applicant, whereas in the latter no details or information relating to their history could affect or mitigate the decision-making process. As later discussed with the housing manager, a number of options would be available to cases such as the one described above. Specifically, tenants could either be awarded: (i) a priority status, because of the financial vulnerability caused by existing rent arrears; (ii) 'band D' status, if disregarding previous housing debt and award the case a; (iii) limit the tenant/applicant's ability to bid for housing, if housing debt was to be taken into consideration (equivalent to 'band E' status); (iv) tenants being altogether precluded from joining the housing register and bidding for any housing, due to the rent-arrears accumulating being a disqualifying criteria.

Wilson's work (2022) is useful to discuss how processes of allocation reflect the flexibility set out in the 1996 Housing Act and how it relates to the extenuating circumstances which applicants may present when applying for housing. In Sheffield, evidence of this can be seen in the comments made in the conversation above, where dialogues by a housing policy manager in the local authority emphasise how each one of the cases was reviewed individually. In policy, for example, re-homing homeless individuals (under the 2002 Homelessness Act), constitutes one of those hardship categories which are an extenuating circumstance to the local authority otherwise classing prospective tenants as 'band E' applicants or rejecting them altogether (SCC Housing Services, 2020).

Practitioners often informally discussed how the perceived causes of homelessness, including instances of previous offending or anti-social behaviour, or a change in household conditions or size, often allowed practitioners to have some contact with and knowledge of prospective tenants. Therefore, by means of them being in contact with the wider network of the Community Safety Partnership, staff from the local authority not only possessed background information about each applicant but were also likely to have a history of already being responsible for housing or re-housing them. Another important factor to account for, is the reality that priority requests were most regularly received and awarded to either existing tenants or individuals where the council needs to discharge its full homelessness duties under the 1996 Housing Act (SCC Homelessness Prevention Strategy, 2017). In such instances, the balance between the amount of information held by housing practitioners about the issues prospective tenants could cause, would be waived in favour of tenants, allowing them the

opportunity to be rehomed. The circumstances where the process of discretionary decisions appeared to be most relevant were with respect to reconciling practitioners' and policy notions of victimhood aligned with the need to recognise the circumstances of individuals in each situation and fulfil statutory duties.

It follows, that not only could the information collected via applications to join the housing register significantly affect their housing outcomes, but so could organisational understandings of risk and harm, in both cost and risk effective ways. Indeed, secondly, practitioner-based assessments of individuals' conditions regularly take place, and this was specified in the city's own housing policy (SCC Housing Services 2020). Discretionary decisions by housing officers were key to the realities of those problem individuals seeking social housing accommodation through the Choice-based-letting scheme. Acting as leeway between policy-mandated need to exclude individuals from being allocated housing and recognising the need to provide housing even to the more problematic individuals, discretionary decisions appeared to provide housing practitioners some scope for their professional consideration to weigh the value and importance of evidence provided. As noted in another discussion with a Community Partnership manager discussing the role of housing allocation with respect to crime prevention, they stated:

I suppose, for us, you know, prevention is something that's important to us, but prevention plays out in... how we manage our housing stock, it might be the allocations policy. [However] where people have committed antisocial behaviour in the past, either preventing them from getting council housing again [could be a solution]. But again, they still got to live somewhere. [Not housing them may mean] they may go out and causing problems elsewhere. (Operational Manager, SNS)

Social housing in these terms is recognised as playing an essential crime prevention role. Allocating social housing would not only prevent someone from being homeless, but also allocate them in a supported and, most importantly, policed housing environment. In cases of serious concerns with crime and anti-social behaviour, the ability to qualify for housing not implicitly depended on practitioner-based notions of victimisation and offending, and their ability to see how their actions could affect both housing and crime outcomes. In the context of disorganisation-based conceptualisations of victimisation and offending —as examined in Chapter Six — the policy artifact referring to tenants not thought of as actively seeking to better their circumstances could notionally harm tenants perceived as offenders, not victims. These issues were, however, more clearly discussed with respect to the management of

tenures (examined in the next section), as no interactions with housing practitioners during the course of the fieldwork could more explicitly confirm this relationship.

When looking at the qualifying criteria for housing as well as priority, policy language implicitly defines and constructs assumptions around the ability to qualify and hold a tenancy with someone's offending status. For example, the only exception from being disqualified from housing or allocated housing on the basis of discretionary decisions was when an individual disclosed a history of offending applied to convicted offenders needing re-housing after release from prison; however, even here, a history of ASB or property-related convictions seemed to count as disqualifying criteria (SCC Housing Services, 2020). Thus, whilst housing policy appeared to fairly allocate available housing to individuals according to their priority, how practitioners interpreted evidence and accordingly made discretionary decisions affected the sorting of individuals on the housing register, and thus across Sheffield. Specifically, notions or pre-conceptions held by housing practitioners concerning both why individuals or areas might have been problematic, could have a significant impact on the likelihood housing would be awarded, and the kinds of support received. As one interviewee noted:

What you've got to understand is this: the onus for making someone intentionally homeless is not... it's not the applicants problem to prove they were not ... it is the local authority's role to prove they were... and that is a challenge... the number of times we've had evictions in the past where people have been evicted. [One example, we evict a couple] but the wife turns out to be the main [tenant]... [their] business went south, and they accumulated arrears. [They get evicted] but all of a sudden, the wife turned up as homeless, saying that she'd been beaten. She got a council house... and guess what? he turns up!?! they disappeared off with the bailiff and the debtors chasing them... and, yeah, they turned up in a council house. But that's the system, but we couldn't prove all of that [despite knowing it], and all you've got is the duty that the law places on you to provide. (Local Authority Housing officer, east of Sheffield).

Multiple different personal circumstances presented to housing officers complexities and issues that not only required evaluation, but also affected the outcomes of applications. Alongside each prospective tenants' housing need could be other issues, including, as per the case above, likely domestic violence. In the case above, whilst the issue of arrears seemed to originate from issues outside the remit of the housing department, and beyond the individual's choice, the effects clearly impacted on their ability to be homed, and eventually led to their homelessness. The practitioner's understanding and judgment of the situation, expressed here in the term intentionally homeless exemplified some of their scepticism with

respect to the alleged history of abuse suffered by the applicant. Nevertheless, the extent of statutory duties was brought to the forefront of the discussion because of their applicant victim's status. Despite the combined history of rent arrears and presumed criminal action, the local authority had to house the tenant, as doing otherwise would risk putting the applicant at further risk of homeless and further abuse.

Choice-based-letting, as noted in conversations with housing practitioners, did appear to cause issues with respect to housing allocation processes. For example, as discussed with a Housing Association manager:

Back in the day before Choice-Based lettings... When you had more control over the allocation, yes, you could almost say.... I'm not going to put that person in that area, because I know that that's just going to increase their capacity to sustain their tendency. So if we knew someone had maybe drug and alcohol misuse issues, you wouldn't put them in an area where you're experiencing gang violence or things like that. And I think this time, it's harder, because they're able to choose their own property... [and] as much as you do have some powers to refuse, there's so much now that we have to do in terms of value for money about metrics in terms of our costings and revenue loss. We can't just say, well actually is not in a very desirable area, is not a very desirable person; if they don't go there, no one will (Housing Association representative, east Sheffield)

Referring to the large portion of social housing administered through Choice-based-letting, this form of housing allocation did not resolve the unintended segregation of tenants. This latter not only depended on the overall housing availability, but also on how prospective tenants sought to express choice through bidding on their most desirable options. However, the underlying narrative emerging from the discussion is one of social housing needing to provide a number of services for its tenants. In particular, practitioners identified housing as needing to contribute to address underlying problems, such as drug abuse. However, fulfilling housing needed to also be operated in a cost-effective manner. Preventing loss of revenue, was indeed another overarching concern for some housing providers, particularly Housing Associations. Differently from local authority's housing management, managing housing as a business priority in turn shaped their responses and attitudes to anti-social behaviour and offending, and how they responded to the development of problems.

The management of each organisation's housing practices, and their organisational objectives, appeared to substantially shape their letting policies and approaches to 'filtering' prospective tenants. For instance, some housing associations sought to universally apply a more generic and undifferentiated approach to lettings, following the allocations practices of

the local authority. One example of this was South Yorkshire Housing which aims to '*provid[e] long-term stability within communities*', and which meant they were accepting any tenants based on their priority. Other Housing Associations however applied more restrictive selecting criteria through local lettings policies, instead of adopting the same rules set by the local authorities' policy. *Table 7.i* directly compares a local letting policy developed and applied by one of the larger housing associations, to that of the local authority.

As can be seen from *Table 7.i*, both local lettings policies identify two different issues and approaches to dealing with the provision of housing based on local needs. The first, identifies the key issues as that of increasing tenants' diversity in a newly redeveloped area. In its writing of local problems, the idea of 'mixed allocation' is, however, centred around the assumption that the 'right kind of tenant' ought to be introduced to the area. Highlighting the socio-economically deprived conditions of the area as generating negative reputations of housing, Diversification, to this extent, is seen as a tool to offset the high incidence of mono-tenure and single socio-economic housing class residing in the area. The selective use of housing allocation in this case also presented as a tool to address income-oriented outcomes for investment in the area, namely the ability to maintain longer tenancies and minimise re-housing costs.

Policy	Applied to	Aims	Issues identified	Allocation criteria
Housing Association's Local letting policy	A neighbourhood of 165 newly built homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable lettings for new built homes for low-income households • Achieving 'balance' of new tenancies if a 'mixed and sustainable' community • Making the local area an 'attractive and desirable place to live' • To protect the capital investment made by the housing association in the area through the delivery of sustainable tenancies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of community diversity • Nationally established reputation of the local area as 'bad neighbourhood' • Deprivation assessed as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ x2 average of lone parent households ○ x2 average job seeker allowance claimants ○ 43% households with children in poverty ○ 38% out of work status households ○ 44% economically active 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50% to priority-based scheme from Local Authority • 50% priority to working households, volunteers, and carers
Local Authority's Local letting policy	Mixed Properties on 9 adjacent streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Authority taking responsibility of a 'problem area' to resolve ongoing 'challenges' • Increase availability of affordable housing in the area for eligible applicants • Rehoming local residents to the local homes, through priority allocation, under new tenancy conditions. • Improvements to lead to creating a more sustainable and safer community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbourhood challenges originating from [implied] poor tenancy management • Lack of 'decent standards' of housing • Lack of 'community cohesion' • Anti-social behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority to existing residents ahead of other applicants who live elsewhere • Others can express interest, but will only be considered afterwards

Table 7.i: Empirical framework defining problems and problem areas for housing and police practitioners

The second example of local lettings policy employed by the local authority concerned the takeover and conversion of another small neighbourhood from privately rented housing to social housing. Related to another notoriously deprived and high-incidence crime area, and with the perceived anti-social behaviour of tenants and the adverse reputation of the area being highlighted as key issues, this second approach sought to re-shape the area through tenure management practices. However, in doing so the policy emphasises how existing tenants would maintain preferential access to properties in the locality over tenants from other areas. The intended outcome of ensuring decent housing standards would be attained by the local authority taking over the management of these properties and their tenants, a move which was aimed at improving existing communities. Taking a behavioural approach to attributing the lack of enforced standards as the origin of problems, the takeover from the local authority to enforce housing standards is described as a tool to provide the same tenants the ability to 'care about their community'. This evidently differs from the more independent approach taken by the Housing Association which was intended to diversify its tenant base and to promote the regeneration and financial sustainability of socio-economically deprived and stigmatised areas.

Commenting further on such differences, an interviewee employed as a local housing manager working for the local authority in east Sheffield noted:

If you want to be a social landlord, you need to take responsibility for [tenants]. There are vulnerable people out there, there is people with dependencies, if you don't want to deal with those people you shouldn't do this type of work. So [the local Housing Association's] approach may be great at promoting their service. But [they] also want to be picky. It's a nice idea. I fully empathise with [them] but that shouldn't be the focus. The challenge here is that they change how they operate at executive management level, whereas we are trying to be more present [in supporting our tenants]. We seem to be pouring more into supporting our tenants, they seem to be drawing back as a business model to drive efficiencies. But what I think this has proven, is that you still need that community base. (Local Authority's Housing manager, North)

The position and approach in this interview in many ways exemplified the attitude of social housing providers working for the local authority. Their approach to providing social housing appeared, to an extent, different in focus from those of some of the larger Housing Associations in Sheffield. Whilst, as previously discussed, elements of cost and the social effectiveness of housing allocation were referenced as worth considering, how these operated were seemingly more in line with their statutory duties of providing housing to all

applicants. However, even when presuming that all the applications and processes of housing allocations uniformly followed the policies discussed above, and that tenants were freely allowed to choose where they lived, the application of policies remained conditional on the material conditions of the [limited] housing-stock available. Ultimately, only a portion of the socially rented housing transferred to housing associations as part of stock-transfer initiatives after the disbanding of ALMOs in 2008 (see Chapter Four), are subject to the same obligations set out in the 1996 Housing Act. Access to properties directly let by Housing Associations could vary quite significantly across different organisations. These latter, therefore, would be regulated by a range of factors including the overarching purpose and ethos of each organisation.

Taking evidence from how housing allocations policies operated, it is clear that the policies were designed to directly regulate the behaviour and bidding patterns of those on the housing register. Indirectly affecting the social ecology of housing in Sheffield, an initial set of limitations referred to individuals' ability to bid for properties. The policies were also influential on how social housing tenants were housed, and to promoting 'sustainable tenancies'. Thus, whilst in the first instance the first set of limitations filtered tenants into housing and, through so doing, limited their choices and agency, the latter both implied that a decision for the suitability of housing could arbitrarily be made on an assessment of individual's circumstances and that it was also dependant on the perceived reputation of an area and its existing tenants.

These issues are important to note because they did not reflect some of the additional pressures built into the system of housing allocations, where social housing providers needed to balance individual's choices against the number of bids for each property, and the overall number of housing applications received. As noted by interviewee working for a housing association:

The issue here is that we only have the stock we have. And they only become available when [properties] become available. So, from the individual's perspective, if they're hanging onto relatively okay priority, we need to [address those] ones that are on the highest priority, [for example those] in emergency accommodation. [However, high priority individuals] don't necessarily get to turn down opportunities... [if] an appropriate housing was available in [their] generic area that you said you need to live. That's it. You don't bid on [other] properties, or you turn those properties down, [otherwise] we will actually remove your priority [status]. (Housing association, central/west of Sheffield)

The process being described here rationalises that being able to bid on all social housing properties managed by the choice-based-letting system did not equate to the ability to receive universal access to all properties advertised. Priority applications still had a greater likelihood of receiving a suitable offer compared to band 'D' or 'E' applicants. However, this process fails to comment on why prospective tenants may choose not to accept an offer. Instead, it emphasises how tenants are thought to predominantly rely on the portion of socially rented housing in Sheffield that is either managed by the local-authority or sold and made available through housing associations.³⁰

Considering the overall distribution of the social housing stock with respect to where prospective tenants could actually live in Sheffield, the material availability of properties suggested that higher concentrations of social housing were found in areas positively correlating to higher deprivation scores (see Chapter Four), higher levels of crime, and greater proportions of both victims and suspects of crime residing in them (see Chapter Five). Furthermore, the analysis of vacancy rates also appeared to indicate how only the highest and lowest priority individuals were promptly reallocated into more deprived and higher concentration of crime areas, and consistently, produced the shortest length of tenancies (see Chapter 4).

The sourcing and allocation of adequate housing solutions, as discussed with a housing practitioner from a Housing Association was also far from straightforward:

And a lot of our tenants don't have that choice. We've actually got a lot of single people but we've not got that many one bedroom flats. We've got quite a lot of elderly people have been tenant's for donkey's years as well as new ones. We've also got a lot of families. A lot of them work, but work in minimum wage or part time, a lot on zero[hrs] contracts as well. So that has a real impact on their ability to pay if they've got a property that's bigger than [what] they need. At the same time, we've got we've got tiny weenie two beds, and the second bedroom is about that big and we'd like those to single people. We can't anymore because the single people that area attracts tend to be unemployed, and they can't afford the bedroom tax. So, this is sad, but people have a choice of where they want to live; that's the big difference. They can put down as many areas that they want to live in. As they want,

³⁰ Excluding any reference to the range of housing options which included financial support to maintain, purchase or rent a house from private developers or landlords, as landlords appeared to have a large degree of control as to the conditions of tenancies, and the selection of prospective tenants (Sheffield City Council Housing Services, 2020),

and with choice-based lettings, they can bid for whatever they want. (Housing association, south of Sheffield)

To address housing needs, and manage problems through housing, depended on many issues; namely: the location and availability of housing, the extent of need and problems of applicants forced them to apply without accounting for choice, as well as the ultimate priorities and conceptualisations of problems by institutions. The impact of a lack of suitable housing within that managed socially, meant that needs of prospective applicants wouldn't be met. This implied (as discussed in Chapters Four and Six), that more tenants previously relying on social housing would therefore have to rely on other forms of housing, which in turn affected the ecology of crime in unmeasured ways.

With respect to available housing, outside of the portion of housing available for bidding on the housing register, prospective tenants could find a range of other social housing solutions including direct lets from housing associations, direct home swaps, and financial incentives to encourage shared ownerships and or buy [or retain] their own homes (SCC Housing Services, 2020). In addition to the above, a number of more generic policy conditions also limited applicants' housing choices. First, applicants in bands 'D' and 'E' had to wait longer than priority applicants in bands 'A', 'B' and, 'C' (SCC Housing Services, 2020:33). An automatic two-year 'cooldown period' also applied to all recent 'successful' housing allocations, preventing applicants who had recently accepted a re-housing offer and had been successfully allocated a home from reapplying within this period (SCC Housing Services, 2020:24). Whilst this could be over-ridden by the emergence of priority conditions, refusal to be homed [more than three times] within 'suitable' offers for housing, also constitutes a criterion for applicants and tenants to be re-assessed as having a lower need or to be struck off the housing register (SCC Housing Services, 2020:23).

Borrowing from Baldwin *et al.*'s (1976) notion of 'dump estates', these housing allocation mechanisms can be thought of as explanatory as to the higher incidences of offending and victimisation present in high density social housing areas. Although with additional consideration as to the greater levels of social and geographical housing heterogeneity in present-day Sheffield, dissolving mono-tenurial estates, the ability of people to wait for the right housing vacancy commensurate to their needs and vulnerabilities affected where they could live. Further to this, taking into consideration the location of most social housing, and

pressures on housing providers to fill empty properties in a sustainable manner, those unable to wait would ultimately be segregated in the more deprived and least desirable areas of Sheffield. Having considered the potential effect of housing allocation policies, the chapter now shifts to consider how tenants' lives were regulated within social housing, and how the sole availability of housing can impact offers made to social housing tenants.

7.3. Housing management: dealing with crime and anti-social behaviour

Following successful housing applications, the next most significant aspects of the delivery of housing in Sheffield are tenure management practices which are applied to adequately homed tenants. As stipulated by Sheffield City Council, conditions and responsibilities outlined in tenancy agreements are predominantly directed at housing management issues more generally. However, they also include specific clauses banning '*nuisance, annoyance, harassment, alarm or distress to other people*', as well as '*violence and involvement in criminal activities*' such as the supply or distribution of stolen articles and drugs '*...within the boundary of and in the locality of your property*' (SCC Housing & Neighbourhood Services, no date: 10).

As expected of tenancy agreements, these prescriptions set social, behavioural, and financial standards which individuals should abide by whilst residing in social-housing properties (Lister, 2006). However, these conditions can also be seen to intrinsically blur the boundaries between civil and contractual matters of behaviour and tenancy control Flint (2006b) and Lister (2006). Implicitly, these practices which blend criminal and civil regulations, affirm the misguided assertion that social landlords can holistically regulate behaviour without further stigmatising those at the receiving end of interventions (Hunter and Nixon, 2001). Nonetheless, these semi-criminalising policies constitute key parts of what Braithwaite (2002) defines as the 'regulatory pyramid'. In this framework, regulations such as tenancy agreements can be thought of as tool to passively persuade most tenants into compliance; conversely, other operational practices, can be understood to escalate degrees of active responses for those who do not comply (Braithwaite, 2002).

Drawing from the concept of responsive regulation, Braithwaite also loosely categorises institutional response as either dialogic (trying to educate any non-compliance) or punitive (punishing for failing to abide with regulations) and suggests how institutions can choose from

an extensive range of actions to regulate behaviour. Applying these notions of 'dialogic' and 'punitive' actions to the power wielded by urban managers, further unpacks the degree of agency and free-thinking attributed to individuals (for example, whether or not they are thought to act rationally or not), and thus allows us to interpret the intentions and underlying understanding of institutions.

Presuming that, as dictated by the Choice-based-letting allocation policy and supported by housing practitioners, problem individuals chose to reside in problem areas, how institutions responded to these occurrences and the problems they generated would be of relevance. Conceptually, on the one hand, if dialogic solutions would be sought, this would re-address the imbalance caused by the implied relationship between social housing, and the greater occurrence of crime and disorganisation. In practice, this would also emphasise how state agencies may constructively resolve problems in problem areas, without further stigmatising those normally classed as problem populations. Conversely, if institutions only engaged with punitive actions, the opposite would be achieved. This framework also fits with the foregrounding notion of urban managerialism (Pahl, 1970), which is theoretically well suited to unpacking how institutional understandings of issues such as crime problems, translate to institutional responses, such as the administration of crime and housing through tenancy agreements and management practices.

These regulations create, accordingly, a number of issues to explore with reference to the impact of social landlord's responsibilities and actions across Sheffield. At opposite ends of the regulatory pyramid, any breaches of the tenancy conditions stipulated above, could be dealt with by either dialogic approaches, embodied by the Housing Plus approach adopted by the local authority for day-to-day management of housing or, conversely, by punitive interventions as provided by the work of the Safer Neighbourhood Services team.

Whilst varying on a project-to-project basis, Housing Plus, seeks to establish a more sustainable approach to tenure management. Found at the core of the ideal of creating sustainable communities, this approach aims to bring about the better integration of the provision of physical housing with social support initiatives at the neighbourhood-level to mitigate or resolve problems before they can escalate (Evans, 1998). In Sheffield, Housing Plus translates to housing officers providing a local-level tenancy management and support

across delimited housing patches [100-250 properties on average]. Within their housing patches, housing officers aim to promote tenant-centred ownership of tenancy management and provide responsive first-line support for a range of tenancy-related issues (SCC Housing & Neighbourhood Services, no date).³¹ Administratively, this model seeks to enable local housing officers to establish and cultivate relationships with local tenants, as well as monitoring their needs. In practical terms this is agreements being signed, and by carrying out annual visits to tenants and properties achieved through the processes of introducing tenants to neighbourhoods ahead of tenancy (SCC Housing & Neighbourhood Services, no date).

Such regulation, as demonstrated in *Figure 7.i* followed a three-stage approach to dealing with problems within social housing tenures. Looking at the overall structure, from the ‘assessment stage’ to the ‘legal action stage’ this approach starts with dialogic interventions, progressively building to punitive resolutions. However, to understand the nature of problems, and the way tenancy management contributed to the dealing with problem areas, mainly the first part linked to the delivery of Housing Plus. As a result, this stage is of the most relevance to this study.

This stage encompasses a multi-step assessment of the presenting complaint at the local level. If assessed to be of sufficient severity, the problem would then undergo an ‘ASB investigation stage’, with individual cases being referred to the central Safer Neighbourhood Services team for re-assessment, and further investigation. Lastly, where required, policy

³¹ As an important anecdote, at the earliest stages of research another housing delivery and management strategy was identified in the pilot of the ‘Housing First’ model. Whilst applying predominantly to addressing the needs of individuals currently homeless or at risk of—, this was supposed to address housing needs as a priority, and then build around these all services (e.g. employment, and/or further social support), as a follow-up. Unfortunately, as there was no evidence or data, it was discontinued due to high costs and the inability to secure the required number of tenancies in a cost-effective matter, as well as the overall lack of engagement from service users (<https://democracy.sheffield.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?Id=2225>; <https://democracy.sheffield.gov.uk/documents/s33995/Housing%20First%20Pilot%20Contract.pdf>). Whilst documents appear uncritical of the lack of reciprocal investment required for successfully running the project, research interviews reported the alleged undermining of systematic analysis and assessment of the potential impact and benefits of the program was undertaken, favouring a more simplistic cost-benefit analysis. As discussed, these terms also appeared as likely to the application of HP models, and therefore were suspected to be more endemic to the wider management of social housing resources at the local level, with little critical oversight of how policies and practices were delivered.

dictates that cases proceed to the final 'legal action stage', where the local authority collates and compiles evidence to formally prosecute tenants in either a civil or criminal court.

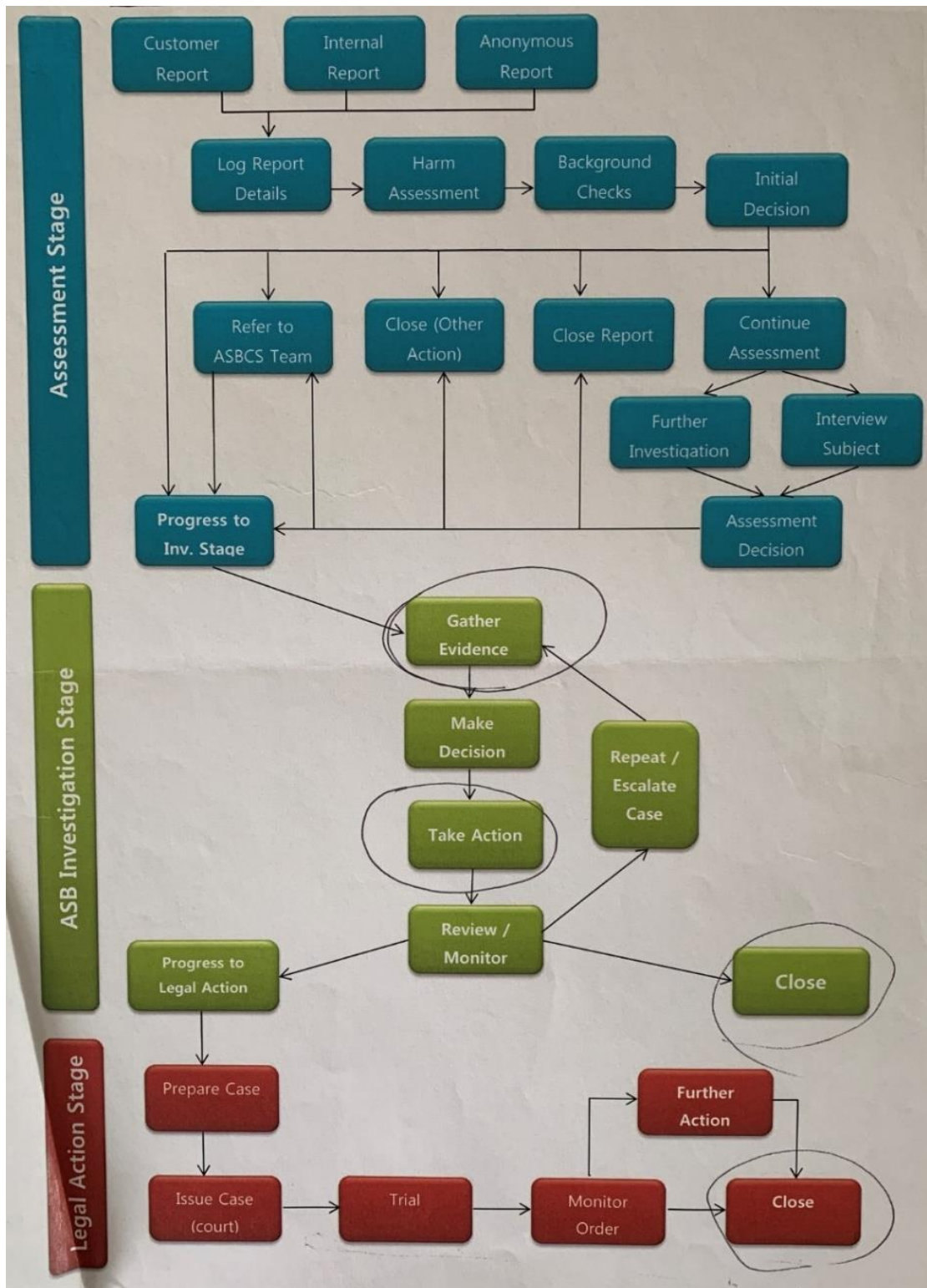


Figure 7.i: Local Authority's process for dealing with problems in social housing.

As revealed through field observations undertaken for this study, this stage predominantly consisted of local housing officers carrying out yearly visits, as well as follow-ups from existing and ongoing problems. Acknowledging the limitations of the observational work undertaken (which was predominantly carried out within the north of Sheffield),³² these visits did result in witnessing encounters of low-severity issues. Low severity issues predominantly consisted of incivilities, such as neighbour disputes, which were perceived to be something that should be dealt with at a local level. An example that emerged from a witnessed visit to a tenant's home in the Pitsmoor area involved an elderly and disabled tenant who was unable to tend to the upkeep of their garden. The visit had occurred because of the housing officer's receiving a complaint about this tenant, who had recently been resettled into the property. During the visit, the officer assesses the issue and extent of the overgrown state of the tenant's garden, and the circumstances that lead to it. Considering how mobility issues, and the steep gradient of the garden caused the tenant to be unable to take care of the garden, the housing officer arranged for visits from the Local Authority, who would periodically upkeep the garden. At the same time, they attempted to address the matter of the complaint by discussing the visits and its outcomes with the complainant.

Whilst the case constituted a breach of tenancy, it was not misconstrued as a significant anti-social behaviour issue. Accordingly, it was dealt with in a dialogic, non-punitive fashion. Instead, and here a parallel can be drawn with Taylor *et al's.*, (1973) social constructions of crime problems, the local housing officer provided a constructive solution to the issue. The example demonstrated an instance of Housing Plus as a pro-active housing management strategy, which is capable of identifying and pursuing positive resolutions to existing issues, it is aimed at educating tenants and addressing issues before intra-neighbourhood problems can escalate. However, whilst the Housing Plus approach extended the powers of the local authority as the social landlord for the area to deal with community cohesion issues (Flint,

³² Six of these visits took place within the north of Sheffield (Burngreave, Pitsmoor, Crabtree, Shirecliffe, Southey), with one within the East of Sheffield (Manor and Castle). These do not count further 9 attempted visits (5 and 4, respectively in each area), which were not successful as tenants were not present at their property at the time of the visit, despite each appointment having been pre-scheduled between the housing officer and the tenant. All visits (n=15) were carried out with a total of three housing officers.

2006b), it also emphasised the importance of discretion and decision-taking at the practitioner's end, and highlighted the different approaches pursued by different social housing providers practices.

Whilst housing officers had the ability to make a discretionary decision, their judgement and decision-making appeared to be susceptible to pre-conceptions and stereotypes, resulting in the inconsistent application of housing management practices. For example, this was best represented with respect to the annual visits witnessed during the course of the fieldwork. In the process of getting to each property, each housing officer briefed the researcher with background information concerning the overarching nature, origin, and progress of the reasons why each visit was being carried out. These narratives specifically reflected housing officer's beliefs and asserted how their knowledge of the local area and the tenant, allowed them to construct an informed opinion of the circumstances surrounding the visit and its outcomes. In particular, these narratives appeared to allow them, even before entering properties, to predict what they were going to find in the given properties, the likely interactions with tenants, and the visits' expected outcomes.

In the context of annual visits, this appeared not to contribute significantly to negative outcomes for tenants. Each visit was carried out following a semi-structured format— even where no concurrent or extemporaneous (within the same day) notetaking was observed. Upon entering the premises, officers firstly inspected the status of the property with a fault-finding perspective so as to ensure no unreported damage had taken place; a line of enquiry with each tenant then followed to establish whether there were any outstanding or emerging issues that the tenants had experienced. However, inspections of the property status, and subsequent enquiries to tenants, seemed designed to confirm their (preconceived) mental picture, rather than either necessarily exploring in any great depth any newly emerging issues, or allowing the tenants to elaborate upon how they personally related to the problems experienced. Whilst this approach could have originated from the frequency of their visits to tenants' properties, and the likely similarities between the [socio-economic] conditions of tenants, officers' assessments seemingly also displayed a degree of pre-conception and dismissiveness when tenants discussed their hardships. In turn, as noted in Evans (1998) with

respect to the wider application of Housing Plus strategies, these findings reflect the practical gap between the aspirations of policies and their practical applications.

Moreover, the existence of these pre-conceptions was also witnessed more generally by the author when observing the working days of the local housing officers. Narratives of places, people, and their history were interwoven with the different tasks and problems that housing officers were allocated to in their housing patches. An example of this emerged whilst shadowing an officer in the Burngreave area who was allocated to an estate (Spittle Hill) in the north of Sheffield. Whilst on the way to an annual visit, a man emerged from the bushes on the far side of a public park. The housing officer was not only able to identify the man but also started recalling the history of rough sleeping that had been taking place in the far side of the same park for quite some time. The conversation then moved on to discussing matters of housing in the area, and how the character of the place allowed these instances to take place almost unchallenged. With the housing officer also expressing reservations with regards to the benefit of extremely diverse communities living in the same place, the ability for local residents to cohesively organise and be responsible for dealing with anti-social behaviour, appeared undermined by diversity and deprivation in the locality as per the previously explored notion of social disorganisation.

Examples like these ones appeared to indicate housing officers believed their approaches to be appreciative of the holistic nature of local problems. In turn, this translated to their beliefs that Housing Plus, particularly their presence in neighbourhoods, allowed them to non-coercively address the needs of residents, and increase the reporting of problems. As a result of these strategies, housing officers believed their work contributed to the perception that communities were safe. Combating existing stereotypes about social housing, they believed their work enabled community cohesion to take place. However, as noted with reference to the operation of institutional management of housing and community-based issues in Evans (1998) and more recently Crawford (2006), this was not by any means an assumption to be taken for granted. For instance, this was best exemplified by a discussion with a Housing Association manager in east Sheffield, recollecting how:

Some years ago, a Black African family in temporary accommodation were sent a letter saying they were being allocated a four-bedroom house [with our Housing Association]. You can understand that family's excitement. And so, they went to view the property on a

Saturday, unaccompanied by a member of staff. Our viewing was planned for the [following] Tuesday. [However] they rang off on the Monday to say they have been to look at the property, and some people came from neighbouring properties and intimidated them and told them they wouldn't like living there. They felt that was because of the colour of their skin...[in the process of dealing with the issue] when I came to speak with my team, [all of whom] had transferred from the local authority [to working with us], they said [that was normal for the area], and that they had always....thought they were protecting ethnic minority applicants by not putting them in Wyburn. So I made it very clear that the next person going into that house would be a black family, and that we needed to demonstrate to the public, to that community, that our housing is for everyone. (Housing Association employee, west Sheffield)

This narrative provided emphasises a number of aspects key to understanding how the work of housing providers intersects with the management of crime and social relations in problem areas. The first point of interest is that the community issue that the housing association is attempting to address, is one of intolerance or racism. As an example of one of the perceived traits that are used to define problem areas, as seen in Chapter Six and the issue of hate crime in the city centre, this is a trait that cannot be accurately measured using police statistics. Indeed, as in the quote above, no report to the police appeared to have been made; thus, when the housing practitioner attributed the neighbour's reaction to a problem area, this is the product of first-hand data collection on the part of practitioners. To put it another way, anecdotal data and personal experience are used to identify areas as either problematic or racially charged.

The second point is the prioritising of the perceived health of the community and how to fix it, over the preferences and experience of the prospective tenants. There are two contrasting opinions which appear to reflect the same issues emphasised above, with respect to the differences between some housing association's approaches to local lettings policies and the local authority's solution. The first considers how some of the practitioners, i.e. those identified as formerly working for the local authority, appear to believe that maintaining social cohesion and homogeneity is paramount. The second, instead considers how others, such as the interviewee, believed that desegregation is necessary even if potentially disruptive.

In the first instance, most officers would not normally challenge the underlying racism in the area. Rather, they would work under a Housing Plus framework towards establishing better community relations until the prospective tenant wanted to be re-homed outside the neighbourhood. Should that not happen, as only minority residents would face racism, local

officers would likely exploit their visible presence in the neighbourhood (as discussed in, Crawford 2006b, 2006a), to deal with the emerging problems. However, this would be dependent on the practice of the institution providing housing, which in the narrative above referred specifically to a housing association which strongly emphasised the will to promote socio-economic, cultural, and demographic diversity in social housing.

In the second instance, however, an underlying aspect of dealing with the problem is the further removal of the agency of future tenants. As for the tenants in the example, many of those relying on social housing did so because of need, or inability to find other sources of housing. In return, whilst seemingly proactive, the decision to push for desegregation even where prospective minority tenants may not wish to live in intolerant or racist neighbourhoods is undermined. However, in return, this attitude and approach to dealing with problems also represents the general tendency of institutions to deal with problems prescriptively as a matter of procedure, resources, and results (Crawford, 2006b).

The relatively limited pro-activeness of social housing providers, and the mechanical application of processes and practices as stipulated in policy, was indeed often identified by residents as an issue that increasingly harmed the relationship between communities and Community Partnership institutions. Particularly within housing managed by the local authority, evidence from conversations with Tenants and Residents Associations evidenced this to be a two-fold issue. First, as noted below, this drew on the understanding that reports of problems would need to be investigated by the local authority following a mechanical and lengthy process:

I think there is probably a lot going [on], but doesn't get reported. And, with anti-social behaviour, I think people are frustrated that they report something, and nothing seems to get done. The Council says, well, you've got to keep the diary for so long, and then we'll have a word with him. And then it's taking so long.... But when you, like family, at the end of it dealing with it, you know, [it is a priority]...but it's them and the police as well as because [they have other priorities and agendas]. (TARA chair, central/south Sheffield)

Ultimately mirroring the underlying process summarised by in *Figure 7.i* (above), the length of time required for tenants to see any tangible results emerge from their complaints, appeared to influence the overarching reporting of problems. This in turn, appears to discourage tenants' willingness to report daily issues which, in turn, harms the same

bureaucratic process underpinning the work of the housing officers. As the interviewee also noted:

Some years ago, there was a family living on [the estate], and people was reporting that their children was being neglected... They'd have a visit from their [housing] officer and their downstairs' [floor] was immaculate. Everything in its place. State of the art television and all things like that. Kids went to school one day and there was a dinner lady who was very concerned for these children. They smelt and everything. So again, the council [officer] made a visit, but this time, they went upstairs. The upstairs was a shambles... There was dirt all over, I'm talking about toilet dirt... all over the floor, it stunk... but downstairs was immaculate. [The father] got took away... he got locked up, he were put in prison. The mother they moved her [and the children]. But people around here found out where she lived, so they bombarded her house with stones, because of what they've done to these two children. They moved her again, and me and my wife knew where they moved to, but we didn't say anything about it because the same thing happened again. So this is what I'm saying is the Housing Plus officers. They are going [around for their inspections] but they are not getting the full [picture]... they are not looking [for issues]...(TARA member, north Sheffield)

The comments here reflect on some of the ineffectiveness of Housing Plus approaches in dealing with problems. Drawing from the issue of child neglect within the social housing tenancy, the reliance on the process of being present in the community and carrying out a summary visit of the property, is described as harmful to the appraisal of situations and the resultant interventions enacted to resolve situations. This was because the apparent superficial investigation of issues, demonstrates how the impact of problems occurring in tenant-managed spaces could both easily be overlooked, as well as undermined. Implicitly similar to the practice witnessed during the course of the research, this was because the process described in *Figure 7.i*, was undertaken either via pro-forma (as per the diary sheet mentioned by the interviewee), but also in a manner that confirmed existing bias rather than through a more thorough fact-finding approach.

When discussing how other tenants on the estate believed the mother being re-homed resulted in the neglect of her children –even though not convicted of the offence, unlike the father of the children– interviewees remarked on an important divide between perceptions and knowledge of residents of social housing, and institutional notions of problems within the tenure. As also discussed in Chapter Six, this contributed to the belief that institutions were not invested in dealing with issues from a community perspective. Additionally, the example also implicitly emphasises how maintaining 'safe and sustainable communities' was achieved in a procedurally cost-effective manner. Deviating from the process, or extending visits, would result in additional staffing pressures emerging, an issue often discussed by housing officers

when discussing the limited extent of deeper involvements in their work with local communities. This narrative echoes the same business-oriented narratives of housing allocations embedded in the bidding process for new properties where the prioritisation of resources appears to greatly outweigh the needs of communities.

Having explored how perceptions that problem tenants exist within social housing develop, it is now possible to turn to examination of how such beliefs exacerbate community relations to the extent that minor problems appear to have a greater impact on a neighbourhood and estate. The following observations emerged from independently³³ exploring a large housing estate in east Sheffield.³⁴ When meeting tenants on their estate, and discussing how they perceived problems to develop and be dealt within their local areas, most commented on how they felt unsupported by the local authority [as their landlord] in dealing with issues concerning the maintenance and upkeep of the buildings, the profile of new tenants being re-settled on the estate, as well issues of general safety within the estate. Tenants particularly emphasised how they felt afraid about meeting in the evening or leaving their properties because of concerns relating to anti-social behaviour.³⁵ These concerns extended to the perceived heterogeneity of the estate, with blame for local problems being attributed to new younger tenants arriving in the local area. Furthermore, residents actively complained about how, having reported their concerns to their housing officer several times, they were completely ignored and how, as a result, they believed that no action had been taken to address their concerns about personal safety.

³³ The unaccompanied visit of the neighbourhood took place, before and after interviews with the local Tenants and Residents Association group – without the assistance of tenants or social landlords.

³⁴ Notably, all attendees to the TARA meeting appeared to be white, British, and older than 70 years of age, and reportedly representative of the local community.

³⁵ In this instance concerns related to the anti-social use of motorbikes by teenagers making other residents feeling too afraid to leave their homes at night.

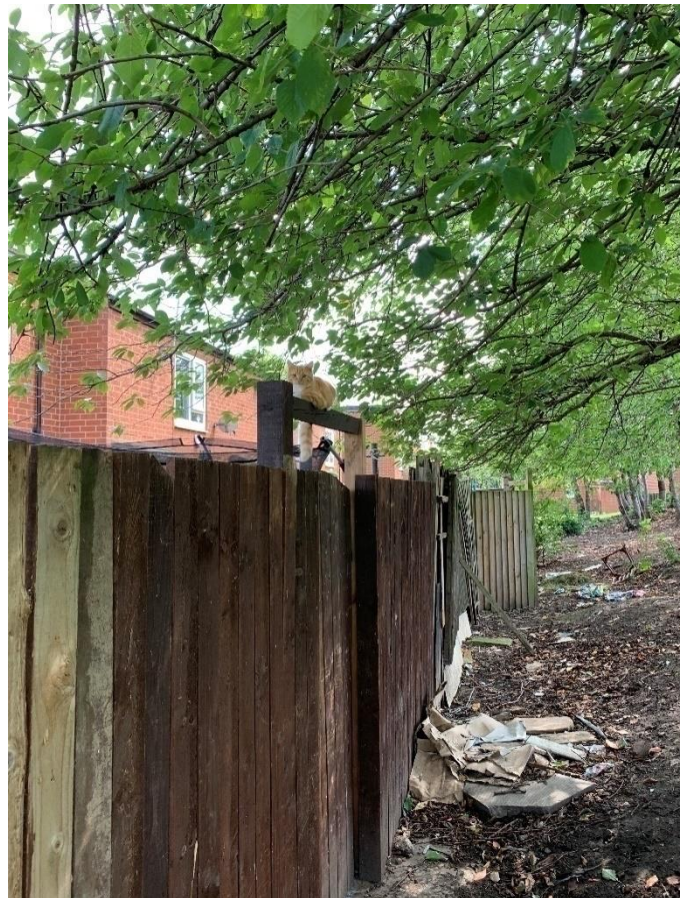
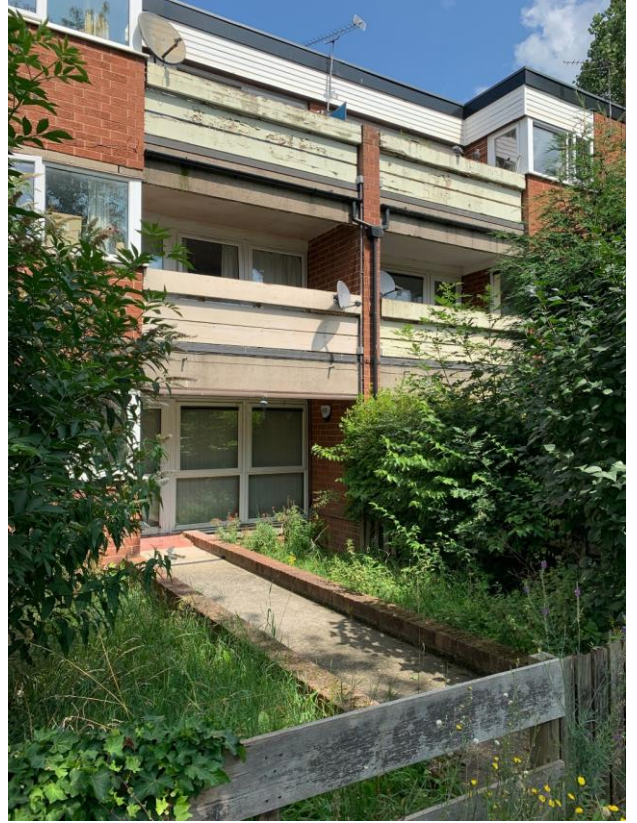


Figure 7.ii: Collection of pictures from visit to Darnall estate (Summer 2019)

A number of visual cues across the estate appeared to reinforce tenant's 'broken-windows' (Wilson and Kelling, 1982) perceptions of how a lack of physical care for their estate might translate in the area attracting more crime. Properties across the estate—as per images in *Figure 7.ii*—show overgrown gardens and properties which appeared to be uninhabited. The lack of care also extended to refuse being discarded around common areas, particularly the more secluded parts, which shows litter collected behind deteriorated fencing panels in front of the Tenants and Residents Association building. This image also shows some of the safety measures present on some of the lower floors of some buildings—such as metal cages around the outdoor lights, and metal shutters along with signs of a previous attempt to vandalise the building by setting fire to it. All can be seen to illustrate and expand a visual manifestation of anti-social behaviour being carried out at the site.

Walking around the estate later in the afternoon, after a normal school day, no visible or audible group of younger people congregating around the estate was noticed. Furthermore, given that the type of littering consisted of predominantly discarded boxes and broken furniture, and the location of littering around common areas in the proximity of properties, any physical signs of anti-social behaviour, appeared to more likely relate to local residents in certain properties behaving more anti-socially than others, rather than to groups of young people causing disruption. Ultimately, compared to most estates and areas in Sheffield visited as part of the research, these physical cues of decay did not appear to be uncharacteristic nor unusual. Drawing on the notions of broken windows (Wilson and Kelling, 1982) it was possible to presume how older tenants, particularly as their age increased their perceived vulnerability, might consider these visual cues of incivilities as something to be afraid of. Taken alongside how intra-estate conversations in the Tenants and Residents Association meeting also heavily discussed the negative connotation of physical disorder and the innate fear it caused residents, it was also possible to deduce how these heightened existing preconceptions and construction of crime talk (Girling *et al.*, 2000) within the estate.

Altogether, these narratives emphasised the divide between institutional and community-based conceptions of problems and problem areas (discussed in Chapter Six). They also drew attention to how, differently from the conceptualisation of problem areas based on the residence of offenders in Baldwin *et al.*, (1976), the influence of institutional interventions

could also have a relative weight in the definition of problem areas. Specifically, as the upkeep of properties fell on the local authority as the social landlord, and duties of community engagement on the Community Partnership, the alleged lack of interest from institutions to engage with these issues could be seen as heightening fears. However, as discussed in Girling *et al.*, (2000), engagement of institutions in these matters could also have the effect of heightening fear, symbolising they also believed underlying problems needed to be tackled.

Since a meeting with the patch's housing officers was not possible, addressing how perceived lack of action, or the discretion exercised by housing officers when not seen as acting on tenants' concerns, was not possible. Instead, subsequent follow-ups with police officers responsible for the areas appeared to shed some more light on the extent to which institutions were aware of these issues (and their associated complaints). However, as the comments from a police inspector suggest, community concerns appeared not to be appraised as a threat to the safety of the community:

In Darnall, our main focus for ASB is Main Road, they also got ASB on Station Road. So, they've got two little projects there, and the ASB is for different reasons. One of them [Main Rd.] is like a shopping precinct where people are intoxicated and standing around drinking on the streets. As you can imagine that it's intimidating to some people, and so we then get calls about drunkenness and so on. And the way that we've resolved that, or some of the methods are by enforcement— that's arresting people— if their behaviour is that extreme. [However] It could be by dispersing them away from the area. So, it can employ certain powers to get people on- call section 35 dispersal. That's the legislation that we apply, it's basically these powers [under the ASB Crime and Policing Act 2014]: Civil injunctions, Criminal Behaviour Orders, Dispersal Powers, Community protection Notice... Some of them are joint powers, but they're not just for the police, as the local authority can apply those powers as well. So, it's, it's and so... the streets drinking in Darnall, we might decide to create a location-based restriction on people that are there... So, this is sort of wide, holistic if you like. [But] Darnall isn't a council estate. It's a busy place... there might be private property... if you look at the map... we've got ASB and crime in other parts, and we do work to catch around those areas as well...we might get information about some drug dealing, for instance, from an address outside the pop plan areas. We'll still deal with it. You know, still deliver the right response to that. Because, you know, people know us, and they expect us to deliver what they want in terms of policing. (Police Inspector, east Sheffield)

The comments help to reveal the police's perspective as to why this type of solution is deemed correct, even though it may not be what the public expected. However, this also closely related to the perception that problems in the local area transcended the boundaries of the block of housing which the residents identified as their estate. Instead, these could concern the multi-tenurial and mixed-communities character of the wider area, which was also described by the police officer as the cause of diverse and layered problems and

challenges. The lack of formal Community Partnership involvement with these mixed-tenure communities, and the complaints from local communities (although in the case of Sheffield, referring only to elderly social housing residents), could be thought as mirroring the same trends discussed by Hancock (2001) with respect to institutional activities of multi-tenurial neighbourhoods. To a similar extent, this also appeared to apply to the manner through which (problem-oriented policing) the Community Partnership, dealt with problems in the local community, without being more acutely aware of the needs of the community.

The fieldwork examined the impact of the circumstances surrounding the rise of tenure heterogeneity within formerly large mono-tenurial estates. These circumstances could indeed produce sets of intra-estate relationships, nuanced when compared to the work of Baldwin *et al.*, (1976), but similar to those explored in mixed communities (Hancock, 2001), where tenure heterogeneity itself causes issues to Community Safety approaches to problems. In Sheffield, the Community Partnership's concerns reflected the negative influence on the oversight of social housing in these areas. For example, for one of the estates in the centre of Sheffield a private tenants' campaign organisation appeared to be very active in the local area. The presence of private residents and representative groups was, however, described by the local authority managers as causing problems, as they noted how:

We are depending on people coming towards there's a lobbying organisation called Acorn. We don't have a good relationship with them. I haven't spoken to them directly, but my officers have.... anyway, they've got a permanent office in Sheffield, so we met with them, and we as the local authority we are the only person that could enforce... it is our statutory responsibility... and we're said we are happy to work with [them] if [they] pass us details on we all want to work together. I think that was about two years ago. So far, they've passed us no cases. None. Instead, they put t-shirts on the stand and shout at landlords... It really, really, doesn't help. When we were consulted on our selected licence scheme in London Rd., Abbeydale Rd., and Chester Rd. where we turned up some of the worst standards in the city. They came along, but we nearly had them fighting with the private landlords... and then in publicity put out saying that they say they forced the council to that... (Housing & Neighbourhood manager, Local Authority)

Tenure heterogeneity within this former housing estate, was brought by the mixture of socially owned and managed properties alongside privately-owned [through right to buy] and privately let [through Buy-to-let]. The perceived [micro-] localised complexity of problems, in turn, was exemplified by instances where the Local Authority's power as a landlord to tackle upkeep of properties and behavioural standards, would intersect with their wider

responsibilities from a community safety perspective. Managing anti-social behaviour attributed to private tenants, especially where they did not engage with community-based processes, was later referred to as only being possible via expensive and lengthy legal procedures. This, in the opinion of the local authority's managers, appeared to undermine wider community cohesion.

However, housing officers also noted neighbourhood-level cohesion as a key part of administering social housing through Sheffield's Housing Plus approach. This related to a number of other significant assumptions. Indeed, frequently, officers referred to how socio-economic hardship could translate into housing problems. As a solution to these, referrals to other organisations were seen as the solution, alongside any relevant engagement with inter-neighbour mediation. Within mixed-tenure developments, as examined in Chapter Six, the powers and influence of the local authority and the police were limited. Therefore, despite previously discussed legislative powers extending beyond properties managed by the local authority, disputes and problems occurring outside of social tenures would still be reported and problematic to social housing tenants. As in the context of the Darnall estate, these could also explain why reporting social housing tenants could feel the pressures of problems not being dealt with as expeditiously as they expected.

A further example of how the local authority's perception of problem individuals reflected on their actions across different housing areas was provided by the case of an estate in the north of Sheffield which neighbours the Fir Vale and Firth Park areas. Initially stumbled upon by accident³⁶, an unaccompanied visit to the area revealed what appeared to be minor issues linked to identifiable properties (as per the Darnall examples) as shown in *Figure 7.iii*. Alongside similar cues of neglect in the form of overgrown gardens, also seen in the Darnall estate albeit to a greater extent, as other areas of Sheffield, signs of incivilities included littering both in private and more secluded public areas.

³⁶ Initially, visits to the neighbourhood were arranged as part of fieldwork after getting in touch with the local TARA. Subsequent interactions with the local housing offices revealed this to be an area of interest for the Local Authority, who were the largest social housing provider in the area— a neighbourhood, itself, predominantly occupied by this tenancy.

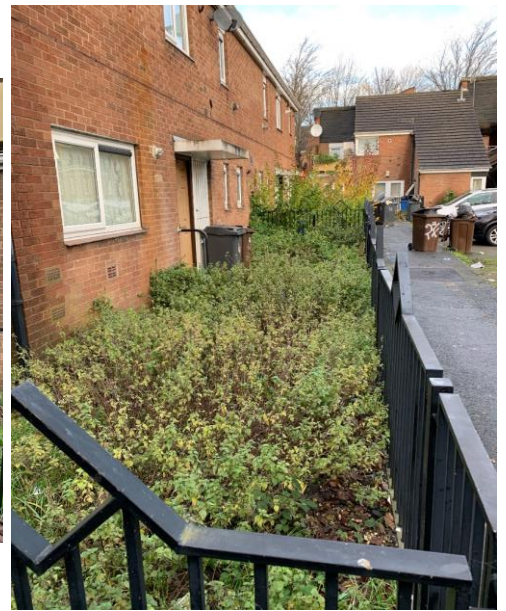


Figure 7.iii: Collection of pictures from visit to Wensley estate (Summer 2019)

As evidenced by the pictures, and later discussed by local tenants, instances of anti-social behaviour in the area also involved the use of offroad motor vehicles in the playgrounds and adjacent woods. Described as pervasive and impactful by tenants, these had resulted in the community organising litter-picking activities and developing plans, alongside the local authority, to make the park more accessible and friendly to the families with younger children. However, as mentioned by the local authority's housing officer when introducing the researcher to the area, the narrative provided was not one of community organisation.

At the time of the research, this neighbourhood, had been subject for approximately six to nine months of more intense management from the Community Partnership, following a serious incident relating to a tenant threatening others with a knife. Whilst local representatives of the Tenants and Residents Association explained this as an isolated incident, for the local authority this was an example of where a more focussed crackdown on slipping standards of tenancy upkeep, and lack of community cohesion was needed.

With housing officers classing problem individuals, such as those involved in anti-social behaviour or criminal behaviours, as integral to the development of negative perceptions of the area by other social tenants, the feeling that they ultimately believed them to belong to an underclass, was manifested through the use of community-wide tenant-targeting measures. This term, underclass, however, extended from the tenure-centred construction of social and cultural traits defined in Morris (1957). Mirroring Murray's (2005) definition, the notion of underclass appeared to conceptually lean towards the need for institutions to step in to deal with the moral deficiencies of communities. In practice, as observed during the fieldwork, this included both dialogic and punitive solutions. For example, the local authority promoted funding for a community support officer, who aimed at establishing practical means to support the community, by identifying and applying for community funding. At the same time, through policing, it also targeted offending and anti-social behaviour. Ultimately, however, the Community Partnership's emphasis on the importance of these interventions, also appeared to undermine the degree of social organisation taking place in the local area. This was best exemplified by the association that the local authority and police representatives made during informal conversation, with respect to the physical proximity of this area to areas where Roma-Slovak communities also resided.

These comments, not only emphasised incompatibility between different styles of life, but also echoed implicitly a narrative of acceptance, as also discussed earlier in the chapter, with reference to housing practitioners' different opinions when dealing with, or challenging, intolerance to diversity. By proxy, these attitudes also reinforced the association between notions of underclass, and the criminal and deviant behaviours considered in Chapters Four and Five, which police and the local authority did not contribute to dispelling. Allowing communities to resolve problems, by promoting pro-social behaviours through constructive [non-punitive] interventions was not sufficient. Instead, they required housing officers to make referrals to external providers, referrals through Community Partnership mechanisms, and ensured specialist support was received by individual tenants. Furthermore, by directing referrals through the tenants, this also meant the local authority implicitly kept a measure of tenant-engagement with the process. In return, with the lack of tenants' engagement or commitment to resolving problems, resolutions quickly tipped in favour of a more business-minded approach to dealing with issues.

This more business-minded approach involved (as per Figure 7.i) second- and third-stage interventions, with specific cases being referred to the Safer Neighbourhood Services Team. As summarised by Figure 7.iii, a photo taken of a banner in the offices of the Safer Neighbourhood Services team, identified the range of punitive actions which could be undertaken to counter serious problems emerging with the community.

NEW POWERS

Issued by the Court to deal with individuals

		The test	Details	Penalties on breach
Part 1	Civil Injunction Issued by the court to stop a person committing ASB	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Behaviour likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress (non-housing); or Conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance (housing); and Just and convenient to grant the injunction to prevent ASB. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Applied for by council, police and others but not social landlords (2) Applied for by the police, councils and social landlords Issued by the court Prohibitions and positive requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breach is not a criminal offence Over 18s: Unlimited fine or up to 2 years in prison Under 18s: Supervision or activity requirement, detention, as a last resort, of up to 3 months for 14-17 year olds
Part 2	Criminal Behaviour Order Issued by a criminal court after a person is found guilty of an offence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Causing harassment, alarm or distress; and Help in preventing the offender from engaging in such behaviour by addressing the underlying issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applied for by the prosecution at the request of council or police Issued by the court Prohibitions and positive requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breach is criminal offence Adults: Summary conviction - up to 6 months in prison and/or a fine. Conviction on indictment - up to 5 years in prison and/or a fine. Under-18s: 2-year Detention and Training Order.

Used by the police to move problem groups or individuals on

		The test	Details	Penalty on breach
Part 3	Dispersal Power Requires a person committing, or likely to commit ASB to leave an area for up to 48 hrs. (<i>Immediate</i>)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Causing those in the locality harassment, alarm or distress (or crime and disorder); and Direction necessary to remove or reduce the likelihood of the ASB. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can determine the time, area and even the route to leave Can confiscate items used Requires sign off by Inspector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breach is a criminal offence Failure to move on - up to £2,500 fine and/or up to 3 months in prison Failure to hand over items - up to £500 fine

Issued by councils, the police and social landlords to deal with problem places

		The test	Details	Penalty on breach
Part 4, Ch 1	Community Protection Notice Stops a person, business or organisation committing ASB which spoils the community's quality of life (<i>Immediate</i>)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> A detrimental effect, of a persistent or continuing nature, on the quality of life of those in the locality; and The conduct is unreasonable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written by council or police officer or landlord Requirement to stop things, do things or take reasonable steps Can include undertaking remedial action or seizing items 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breach is a criminal offence A fixed penalty notice of up to £100 A fine of up to £2,500, or £20,000 for businesses.
Part 4, Ch 2	Public Spaces Protection Order Stops people committing ASB in a particular public place	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> A detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality; and Persistent or continuing nature, unreasonable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restrictions set by the council Consultation with those affected Can be enforced by the police 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breach is a criminal offence A fixed penalty notice of up to £100 A maximum penalty of a £1,000 fine or a fixed penalty notice.
Part 4, Ch 3	Closure Power This would allow the police or local council to close premises where ASB was being committed, or was likely to be committed. (<i>Immediate</i>)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Nuisance to the public; or Disorder near those premises; and Necessary to prevent the nuisance or disorder from continuing, recurring or occurring. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notice up to 48 hrs out of court - cannot stop owner accessing property Order up to 6 months agreed by court - can restrict all access. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breach is a criminal offence Notice: Up to 3 months in prison Order: Up to 6 months in prison Both: Unlimited fine for residential and non-residential premises.

Figure 7.iv: Picture of summary of powers under the 2014 ASB Act

These related to the Anti-social behaviour and Crime Act 2014, and the process of escalation linked to any previous attempts to dialogically reinforce contractual obligations and pro-social behaviours in the community. Indeed, a number of tenancy-specific mechanisms would also be regularly used by the housing providers to manage crime and anti-social behaviour (as previously hinted in chapter four).

These included: notice seeking possession, closure orders and evictions, and integrating the new powers of the 2014 Act. As housing-specific mechanisms, these applied to instances of crime and anti-social behaviour, as breaches of tenancy conditions, or criteria which would disqualify individuals from applying for social housing. Specific examples from housing officers' diaries were confidentially shared, exemplifying the process of case escalation, and the use of punitive action enforced under ASB legislation. From these documents, it is possible to understand two key aspects of these processes. First, how housing-specific and anti-social behaviour specific mechanisms appeared to function sequentially. On the one hand, instances of notices seeking possession and evictions appeared to relate to the more devolved processes of housing administration from the perspective of local housing offices. Instead, once specific anti-social behaviour or crime-related action was identified and implemented, individual cases were escalated to the attention of partnership-level agencies, where these began to be related to wider issues of community cohesion, community safety, or anti-social behaviour, and thus were dealt with through the powers outlined in the 2014 ASB Act. This suggests an increasingly punitive approach was applied to the widened scope of housing providers discussed in Flint (2006), extending to how housing management could more coercively be used to manage the behaviour of already victimised or vulnerable problem tenants (Heap et al., 2022).

Drawing on what is discussed in Crawford (2006b) in terms of the expanding powers of Community Partnerships, these new powers coercively or punitively dealt with non-normative behaviour, blurring the boundaries between social tenancies and the wider neighbourhood. With problems predominantly concerning matters of inter-neighbourhood disputes, punitive responses, as in Lister (2006), are seen as blurring of the boundaries

between issues of behaviour management, and conceptions of lack of pro-social and active citizenship in social housing. Classing non-compliance, or the re-emergence of problems with more serious issues requiring further punitive responses, this approach was embedded in housing officers' understanding that certain aspects/individuals in their tenures, were not resolvable. This caused significant stigmatising bias against individuals with complicated histories, and also contributed to adopting measures which sought to punish or displace problem tenants (as seen in the earlier section of the Chapter).

At the same time, these examples also reminded how intervention for the Community Partnership contributed to the exacerbation of minor disagreements between neighbours. As previously discussed in Chapters Six, this erroneously contributed to the impression that social housing constituted a more problematic tenure. From a Community Partnership perspective, this remained true especially as police were often involved in the processes of investigation when the local authority's Anti-Social-Behaviour team dealt with escalating issues of anti-social behaviour. Accordingly, this could contribute to the legitimisation of institutional expectations that social housing would be more criminogenic than other tenures, with its tenants unable to organise as communities. Conversely, if Housing Plus approaches were able to encourage tenants to reflect on—or modify their behaviour— so as to prevent problems from escalating, the circular thinking surrounding the apparent criminogeneity of social housing could be disrupted.

7.4. Conclusion

This chapter has sought to address the second and third research questions, by examining present-day housing allocation and management practices in Sheffield and examine in closer detail how these may contribute to creating problem areas. Drawing from the thesis' third research question, namely, how changing tenure structures affect patterns of crime, disorder, and social harm in the city, this chapter emphasises the impact institutional power has on the organisation of problem areas. Subsequently, addressing the second research question, it sought to examine how policies and practices in social housing may have evolved to reflect

social and tenurial changes which have affected social housing, as they emerged from present-day Sheffield.

The starting point for the work in this chapter was the understanding developed in *The Urban Criminal* (Baldwin et al., 1976) surrounding the segregation hypothesis developed in Morris (1957). The question Baldwin et al., (1976) sought to address through the analysis of quantitative data, was whether their contemporary housing allocations practices in Sheffield may have 'knowingly' or 'unknowingly' regulated the distribution of crime across the city by pushing problem tenants into problem areas of the city. In their limited analysis, they concluded that policies 'unknowingly' by limiting the availability of housing for problem tenants, choosing to instead focus on the reputation and how individuals could express housing choice. This chapter, altogether, challenges this reductive conclusion, and the assumption that policies not segregating tenants only have implicitly minimal consequences, which are overshadowed by individual agency. Consequently, it expands analysis towards the role of housing allocation and housing management, for their effect on problems and problem areas, making a number of modest contributions to existing knowledge.

First, even as present-day choice-based-lettings appeared to afford tenants a degree of agency and the power to choose where they may live, the disproportionate power wielded by institutions through housing allocation and management re-balanced the disorganisation-oriented assumption underlying that individual's choices and strongly affected the urban-crime equation. Overall, no evidence of intentional segregation was explicitly found within Sheffield's Council Choice-based-letting framework. However, as in *The Urban Criminal*, and other more recent criminological studies (Manley and van Ham, 2011) a number of filters did exist which reasserted the role of institutions in 'unknowingly' limiting individuals' agency. For example, the application of priority- or seniority-based mechanisms to allocate housing for the majority of applicants [namely those in bands 'A' and 'D'] and restrictions and discretion applying to individuals with offending histories [unless homeless], meant that most housing preferences could likely be disregarded. As substantiated by data concerning the relationship between social housing and the institutional management of priority with

respect to housing availability, vulnerability (equating to priority allocation) strongly related to the inability to express 'true' housing choices. Thus, lack of consideration of the effects of institutional influence on the allocations of housing meant that the organisation was unable to adequately recognise the harm and power inequality embedded in their allocation policies. Implicitly removing choice from social housing applications, vulnerable individuals, or individuals with histories of offending were ultimately likely to experience indirect segregation in the least desirable areas of Sheffield (building on the quantitative data presented in Chapter Four).

Second, with respect to the specific effect of housing management practices, examples from this study's fieldwork emphasised the role of housing practitioners in further problematising issues arising within social housing. Often resolving to procedural application of Housing Plus management practices, the combined emphasis on de-escalating incivilities and neighbourly disputes (whilst maintaining a punitive outlook for significant problems) appeared to ascribe to the same deviancy amplifications suggested in by Baldwin et al., (1976). Harming the reputation of social housing tenants, neglectful approaches to problem tenants also further undermined tenants' willingness to report the issues they experienced and made them believe that they were more likely to be victimised than those in other tenures. Linking these empirical realities within communities to the already existing limitations in the existing trust and engagement between communities and Community Partnership initiatives examined in Chapter Six, this further evidenced the disconnect between policies and practices originally discussed by Galbraith (2017). This, as a whole, meant that not only were the problems reported by communities not the same as those prioritised by the Community Partnership, but with housing practitioners unable to challenge their perception of disorganisation which guided their rationalisation of problems in these communities, deviance from what they believed could be self-enforceable individual and community behaviour standards, translated to the application of punitive measures instead of dialogic solution to minor problems. Overall, this not only contributed to the pre-conceptions that social housing was more disorganised, but also justified the policing and punishing of social housing tenants.

When taken altogether, these findings and their implications, are very significant for our understanding of problems and problem areas at the city level because they highlight that whilst allocation practices may not knowingly attempt to funnel problem tenants into problem areas, housing allocation processes do nevertheless severely limit the ability of prospective tenants to choose where to live. This may not sound ground-breaking, however, when placed in contrast with local authorities who claim to allow tenants 'Choice-Based-Letting' it is significant that, in practice, the allocation of housing is limited. Tenure structures and institutional decisions are seen to influence patterns of crime, disorder, and social harm as these are distributed across the city. Further undermining a systemically natural understanding of city-level ecologies of crime, the construction of problems and problem areas are clearly affected by the residualisation of social housing across the city. Specifically, tenants had their choices limited by their histories, both with crime and with renting, wherein existing inequalities could become compounded by bureaucratic systems of housing allocation as well as the perceptions of practitioners on the reliability or trustworthiness of tenants. The next chapter now turns to evaluate how the perceived criminogeneity of social housing, and institutional stigmatisation of this tenure, influences the persistent problematisation of social housing and its residents.

8. TOWARDS A NEW 'URBAN CRIMINAL'

Crime, housing, urban change, and power inequalities present significant challenges to criminological analysis. This is because of the complex and plural ways these factors collectively come together to generate the empirical social realities studied by criminologists. Not offering clear answers as to why, how, and where urban crime happens, most criminological analysis has been concerned with providing empirical and theoretical explanations of urban crime from which practical applications for managing cities and urban crime can be drawn. The systemic role housing plays in organising life at the city-level, and how it expresses social change and power inequalities from which criminological analysis draws, has been superseded by the role housing plays in determining what city spaces criminology should focus its attention upon.

The core aim of this thesis has therefore deviated from core criminological interests and narratives. It empirically engages with the role of housing in the distribution of, and responses to, urban crime. With the broad aim of exploring the connections between housing, crime, and power at the city level, the main focus of the work has been on the roles of housing, and tenure in generating and defining urban crime problems and problem areas. Particular attention has been paid to housing tenures, and their role in the administration of the geography of problems and problem areas. Through the work of urban managers, this thesis contributes to moving beyond disorganisation-based understandings of urban crime and renew the need to appraise institutional operationalisation of the relationship between crime, social problems, and problem areas, more critically.

The city of Sheffield has been a particularly useful analytic. Sheffield has experienced many of the same socio-political and administrative shifts as other cities in the UK, as well as Europe and some of the Global North. In this respect Sheffield is emblematic of wider urban processes prevalent across city contexts. In addition to that, previous work has focused on the city with regard to the role of housing and the ecology of urban crime: *The Urban Criminal*. That text is

one of very few British studies of urban crime and housing. It offers a systemic approach to understanding the role of housing and its contribution to the understanding of the ecology of crime. That is, where, why, and how crime is distributed across a city needs to be connected to the kind of social conditions and demographic clustering that result from the operation of housing systems. Baldwin *et al.* (1976) drew attention to the idea that the older estates were bad places. However, their work neglected the role that institutions play in shaping how urban crime problems are defined in specific neighbourhoods and places and the role that housing tenure plays. This research gap provided the basis for the three primary questions addressed by this thesis:

1. How are patterns of crime and offending distributed in the city?
2. How are urban problem areas constructed given changing social and tenurial forces?
3. How are changing tenure structures, and their spatial distribution, influencing patterns of crime, disorder, and social harm in the city?

To answer these research questions, the thesis adopted a mixed-methods approach tailored toward concerns about the lack of existent critical analysis on the definition of problems and problem areas: the role and influence that institutions play in the administration of crime and housing at the city level. The research contributes to both criminological and housing studies knowledge and integrates these fields.

8.1 Crime, housing, and tenure

Answering the first research question, the first set of empirical findings considered the quantitative understanding of the relation between housing and crime. Empirical data on police-recorded crime and incidents supported the understanding that the spatial distribution of crime was unequal (Chapter Five). The distribution of crime across Sheffield also followed the geography of housing, as: (i) owner-occupied housing remained relatively crime free; (ii) social housing remained strongly correlated to crime; (iii) a positive statistical correlation, albeit to a lesser extent than social housing, existed between all police data sets and the private rented sector.

Despite the findings following known criminological patterns concerning the unequal spatial distribution of crime (Wikström, 1991a; Weisburd, 2015; Brantingham *et al.*, 2010), their importance is further underlined with respect to the findings discussed by *The Urban Criminal* (Baldwin *et al.*, 1976). Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) considered the greater criminogeneity of social housing, and the spatial concentration of offender rates within this tenure, as well as the same generalised trends which extend to other tenures. The apparent confirmation of trends by this study to those explored in Baldwin *et al.*, (1976), does not imply a direct causal link between crime and housing, such that it can be argued that housing conditions directly cause crime. Rather, more generally, it refers back to an understanding of social classes (Robinson, 1950) and the material constraints and inequalities experienced by individuals across different tenures and classes (Powell and Robinson, 2019).

From this perspective, the city of Sheffield, like many other cities across the UK, displays multiple forms of social, economic, political, and cultural organisation, and been shaped over many decades, all of which are implicitly manifested in the social structures of the city (Chapter Four). At a geographical level, these are materialised as inequalities and social divisions across a north-east to south-west axis, mirroring the organisation of the city from its industrial past (Hunt, 1956). For example, greater levels of poverty and deprivation are concentrated in the north-east of the city alongside greater degrees of social and cultural diversity. These socio-economically deprived and heterogeneous conditions are associated with social housing more strongly than other tenures. These trends also mirror the disproportionate distribution of more precarious forms of housing in the north-east versus the relative affluence of the south-west, as with greater proportion of owner-occupier housing in the south-west, which were also relatively crime, offender, and victim free areas.

By re-centring housing as the building block for criminological analysis of the urban condition, the research has connected changes in housing conditions to the ecology of crime and social harm. These findings suggest that social housing may be a more disorganised tenure due to its residualised concentration in the most socio-economically deprived areas of the city on the one hand. However, on the other, its more ready availability to more vulnerable tenants

also emphasised how different tenures could afford their residents varying degrees of material and social protection from crime and social harms. Specifically, the implication that greater levels of offending could exist in social housing areas, not only showed how relative deprivation could create greater opportunities for crime, but moreover, how more victims and offenders were more likely to be living in deprived conditions. Conversely, the lack of victimisation and offending in areas of greater proportion of owner-occupier housing emphasised the ability of wealthier individuals to shield themselves from crime. This also meant that these areas were inaccessible to those without the wealth to access them who, because of that, irrespective of whether they would be more likely to offend, were stigmatised as their circumstances meant they did not have as much agency in choosing where to live.

However, moving beyond these criminological categorisations concerning the likely causes and concentration of crime through space, and the findings concerning the impact of inequalities on the ecology of the city also considered by urban studies scholarship, this thesis related these findings to processes of housing availability and management, particularly with respect to social housing. Answering the second research question more directly, the key element of this work has been to consider the question of how key institutions conceptualise the problem of crime and the geography of problem areas. Chapter Six focused on the work of these institutions in managing both crime and housing in the city, through the concept of urban managerialism (Merryfield, 2014). Identifying problems through the baseline operating framework of the Community Safety Partnership, we have seen how practitioners identified problem tenants and how this identification was closely linked to understandings of social housing as a problematic housing solution. Also important was the belief that concerted action within social housing estates was necessary to regulate behaviour. To the detriment of social housing tenants, we have also seen how social housing was presumed to be productive of crime in general and that it consequently was allocated more attention and resources. This tenure-based hierarchy of resource allocation, as discussed below, also significantly contributed to acknowledging how the work of institutions fails to critically address the limitations embedded in their practice. With more transitional forms of rental or

owner occupation came an almost complete lack of awareness for problems which might develop in these tenures.

At the heart of these findings was a regular divide, between strategies to deal with problems and problem areas based in legislation, and the more informal day-to-day practices involving criminal justice, social care, housing, and third-sector organisations in Sheffield. Whilst organisations within the Community Safety Partnerships should, at least in theory, collectively work towards identifying problems and devising strategies to tackle them, interviews with some partnership members highlighted how these processes predominantly revolved around the roles of the police and the local authority. As the main agencies responsible and accountable for delivering community safety objectives, their work disproportionately identified problem areas as social housing tenancies—echoing findings already identified in key studies of Community Safety Partnerships (see, for example, Crawford 1996a; Hancock, 2001).

The dual role of the local authority, doing both Community Partnership work as well as that of a social landlord, appeared to substantially contribute to the circular definition of problems. Here, the local authority appeared to be in a position in which it was intrinsically more likely to be aware of problems within social housing, as both the social landlord and a member of the Community Partnership, as well as being tasked to deal with problems and problem areas. These beliefs were strengthened by its close relationship with South Yorkshire Police. In particular this was observed to take place in the Council's Anti-social behaviour Team, whose task was that of leading the Community Partnership in resolving significant Community Safety issues but who were also expected to manage the most relevant anti-social behaviour cases in social housing managed by the local authorities. The resulting increased focus and the consequent greater number of problems practitioners dealt with in social housing, appeared to solidify institutionally-held beliefs that a greater number of problems emerged from within this tenure.

The shortcomings of institutional perspectives on the nature of problems and the geography of problem areas generated two, more subtle conclusions. The first focussed on the

relationship between the organisation of Community Partnership work, with respect to different tenures. From an analytical perspective, the existent hierarchy of tenure, meant that no data, other than police data was available to Community Partnership institutions. Furthermore, in practice, very limited processes within the Community Partnership, outside policing and the administration of selective licencing, allowed them to gather data and knowledge about owner occupied and private rented tenures. As a result, this translated to an almost complete lack of awareness and ability to reflect on systemic housing processes, other than disorganisation, for their effect on the ecology of crime. We therefore can see that failing to engage with this knowledge contributed to unmeasurable effects on the 'true' geography and ecology of crime. Only the most senior members of the Community Partnership or those tasked with delivering services to these tenures occasionally challenged the uncritical stereotyping of problems emerging from social housing. The resulting operational institutional framework accepted the lack of data and knowledge about tenures outside social housing as evidence that these did not constitute a problem.

The second conclusion related to the relationship between social housing allocation processes and tenure management strategies. Baldwin *et al.*, (1976:175) hastily dismissed the notion of institutional segregation of social housing tenants in problem areas developed by Morris (1975), claiming that the practices of contemporary housing providers allowed tenants to '*choose any estates they wish[ed]*'. However, as examined in Morris (1957), choices in social housing could not be affected by the same market-driven practices applying to other tenures. Although present-day allocation practices in Sheffield, namely 'Choice-based-letting', fulfilled the requirements of relevant legislation, the policies of the local authority were far from having no effect on where people were allocated, or from being transparent about it.

Housing need and priority as articulated by Choice-based-lettings in Sheffield meant that individual tenants would not likely be allowed access to any properties across the city. However, individual policy stipulations concerning the different needs of prospective tenants and how these were articulated in allocation policies, appeared to be only one side of the

issue. Even Choice-based-letting allocations are known to ultimately restrict the options for those relying on social housing to only available properties, wherever these may be (Manley and van Ham, 2011; Galbraith, 2017). On the other side, practitioner's understanding of their local areas and interactions with tenants implicitly, and arguably unknown to them, ultimately related to understandings of disorganisation. These understandings, considered alongside the reality that most social housing was available in the most undesirable locations across Sheffield, reasserts the extent to which 'unknowing' and unbreakable segregation of social housing tenants has taken place in Sheffield.

Linking these findings back to the work of Baldwin *et al.*, (1976) and Pahl (1970), the overarching lack of institutional knowledge, and how this impacted institutional definitions of problems and problem areas, related to their managerialist construction of problems. The assertion that institutions knew what problems and problem areas would be, and the belief that this was correct, were so strongly held that contradicting evidence was ignored or misunderstood. As supported by local community groups and third-sector organisations—including Housing Associations Community Partnership leaders— did not appear to understand or approach problems and problem areas because they were seen to emerge from 'minor partner's perspectives'.

In particular, these beliefs emerged from their impressions of problems and problem areas. Whereas social housing undoubtedly housed individuals with complicated histories or vulnerabilities, including victimisation and offending, Community Partnership leaders did not appear to be receptive of the social nature, and arguably 'trivial' origins, of what they perceived to be crime, community-cohesion [or, rather, lack thereof], and anti-social behaviour issues. As a result, the understanding, organisation, and management of social housing focussed disproportionately on illegal and anti-social concerns, without fulfilling community support functions. In turn, this reinforced the assumption that both their work and data pointed them in the direction of social housing—as otherwise also implicitly triangulated by quantitative analysis carried out in Chapter Five— resulting in the over-policing and under-protection of social housing area tenants and residents.

These conclusions highlight how the ill-informed basis of institutional practices could be generative of harms to the lives of people in the affected areas. Over-policing and under-protecting vulnerabilities, under the guise of empirically driven knowledge, could be linked to the duties of the State. This happened irrespective of how these actions may not have addressed underlying issues; but rather, perpetuated harmful (and arguably not evidence-based) preconceptions and stereotypes. Conversely, where statutory duties limit the responsibilities that organisations hold for their communities (as per the case of privately renting tenants or owner-occupiers), proactive rule-following by tenants was labelled as responsible citizenship and used as a model to set expectations for others.

Reinforcing the understanding that criminogeneity of social housing was constructed and influenced by a complex agglomeration of city-level processes and institutional influence, reveals how more nuanced conceptualisations of crime and the relation to social housing are still neglected, as well as those outside of social housing are almost completely absent from criminological discourse. This thesis agrees with Sampson's (2012) critique of disorganisation, which argues that observable conditions and trajectories of city spaces are not solely driven by readable features and characteristics of areas and the responses these elicit. They are also driven by underlying aspects of governance, whether legislative, political, market-driven, or by other factors.

Importantly, this means that there are different ways to interpret the connections between housing, crime, and disorder in the city; an example of which are questions of power and knowledge production as issues of social justice (Girling *et al.*, 2000; Wacquant, 2008; Young, 2011; Merrifield, 2014). Drawing from Girling *et al.*'s (2000:161) characterisation of institutions as 'administrators', issues of measurements of social conditions are of primary importance as they may reveal key information to their manifestation; conversely, to the 'citizen' a closer analysis of how these conditions affect their lives, and what can be done to promote their perspective to institutions so that they may act on their concerns, is instead of upmost importance.

The relative positionality of different actors in the urban landscape (from individuals to institutions) can be used to examine their relative influence with respect to how we understand urban problems in the context of changing tenure structures. Institutions define crime problems and problem areas based on their understanding of evidence; residents can legitimise these through responding to the wider causes of crime (Taylor *et al.*, 1973) through how they respond, interact, and support institutions. However, the power inequalities intrinsic in this relationship, if unchallenged, legitimise the taken-for-granted and arguably apparent causal patterns which are used to describe the effect of human interactions and behaviour, and how these appear to relate to crime. Urban life, including crime, needs to be connected to a number of factors, which are nonetheless not equal nor always comparable in effect. This final issue should lead us to consider that inequalities suffered by problem populations in problem areas are often justified by assertions that institutions are not mandated to act beyond existing legislative frameworks. Indeed, when thinking about the issue of urban crime Atkinson and Millington (2019) also reflect on the role of housing as a force which produces and replicates social disparities at the city level. Particularly, they note that:

To think about the governance of crime in urban settings is necessarily to engage with a spatial as well as social or political framing of the problem of crime and how such risks are managed through housing (Atkinson and Millington, 2019: 246)

Specifically, they highlight how the simplistic view of housing, and the city, as the place where crime happens undermines the connection between the social realities apparent in every city context, and the intersection with the governance of urban spaces (Atkinson and Millington, 2019). The work criminology has done to advance our understanding has proceeded in isolation from the underlying urban processes which contribute to the manifestation of unequal social conditions. It is to a reframing of these issues that this conclusion now turns.

8.2 Research limitations and future directions for urban crime studies

Drawing on the findings and limitations of this thesis, a number of issues could usefully or be better explored by future scholarship.

Three overarching questions emerge from the analysis but remain unanswered by how the research was able to empirically and practically approach owner occupied and private-rented tenures. First is the question of how the increasing necessity of individuals to find homes through the private rented sector affects the ecology of crime in cities. Secondly, and particularly with reference to the lower end of the private rented sector and owner-occupied housing in the more deprived areas of cities, is the question of how precarious and unregulated tenancies may contribute to unseen risks and harm for vulnerable tenants. Finally, with owner-occupation continuing to be financially harder to achieve, whilst also remaining qualitatively harder to police, what kind of crimes occur and what harms are unique within this tenure type remain still unknown. These questions relate to questions of housing, and the inherit relationship that exists between how housing is organised, and the ecology of crime at the city level. It is clear that different kinds of harm exist within the home; public, institutional, and academic knowledge are however still blindsided by the relative privacy, and, to some extent, rightful lack of policing of the home (Atkinson and Blandy, 2016; Ferrazzi and Atkinson, forthcoming). These issues are recognisably multi-faceted. They also reflect that the continued stigmatisation of social housing, and the associated greater incidence of punitive actions that institutions take against this these tenures and their residents are also worth examining further. Answering these questions will involve devising research methodologies better able to capture those who, similarly to Ramsay and Pett's (2003) definition, are 'hard-to-reach, and hard-to-help'. Namely, these populations are residents of owner-occupation and private-rented tenures, but more specifically, those living in the more precarious and deprived conditions. Not only are they the furthest away from the work of institutions, but they are also disproportionately more likely to suffer from this distancing.

On an empirical and conceptual level, this thesis does not dispute the finding that insitutions may see social housing as a more criminogenic tenure than others. However, looking at issues of urban crime and how these issues are constructed in popular narratives (Girling *et al.*, 2000), the work presented here firmly rejects that enough has been done to challenge existing stereotypes and labels. Returning to the proposition that housing can be understood as a conceptual key to unpack and focus on the social inequalities of the city (Atkinson and

Millington, 2019), this thesis has discussed examples of how it can be applied to engage in a more social exploration of crime and its causes. The emphasis placed on this interpretation of the relationship between crime and housing has been that of exploring the sociological connection between the work of criminal justice institutions and criminology (Taylor *et al.*, 1973; Young, 1987). Moving towards a more holistic re-orientation of institutional understanding of urban crime problems, this thesis fundamentally reinforces how greater focus and awareness as to the processes shaping housing systems can significantly influence what we understand and perceive about crime through the role of housing tenure.

In many ways the social and housing conditions of Sheffield stand-in for what has happened across the UK more generally. As the administration of social control often continues to be based around socio-economic deprivation, the generalisations that the geographies and population make-up of social housing unhelpfully align social and criminal justice towards this tenure. What this thesis leaves is a closer analysis of conditions within social housing from the perspective of tenants, and the same concerns and perspective regarding the study of victimisation and isolation which take place across owner-occupied housing and the private rented sector. In a post-pandemic Sheffield, and at a time of further political and economic instability, it is nonetheless clear that further attention needs to be given to the effects of local government rationalisation of service provision, which will take place at the likely expense of investment into social care and housing (Williams, 2022). From this perspective, future research should build on the work already presented here and engage with a wider array of practitioners. For example, those responsible for re-housing offenders after release from prison, those working alongside victims of crime, as well as those helping resolve local problems within their respective local communities. This would reveal more information about the construction of problem areas by providing more perspectives and further avenues for researcher intervention in correcting misapprehensions.

This thesis has nonetheless offered some reflections on methodological approaches to urban crime research. The approach of the thesis is starkly in contrast to longstanding criminological assertions that it is possible to causally explain urban crime based on quantitative

generalisations of individual-level social conditions. A systemic approach to exploring urban crime through housing (concerned with how institutions understand, approach, and relate crime and housing problems) focuses on placing a greater emphasis on the historic, spatial, and processual relevance of housing tenure. This has allowed for empirically connecting how institutions can shape tenure structures and the management of people across space, with the potential to influence patterns of crime, disorder, and social harm. With respect to how housing systems may express inequalities and divisions, questions of research methods only emphasise the need to bring analysis closer to the ground and explore the complexities and diversities of the city context for criminologist.

Notwithstanding that significant attention has been paid here to the functioning and administration of social housing, it is clearer how focusing on tenures and their systemic functioning produce imbalances. These place greater emphasis on how the geographical distribution of crime, offending, and victimisation across the city, are underpinned by the administration of criminal and social justice throughout Sheffield. In this sense, this case study draws further attention to the uncritical appraisal of quantitative inferences as to causal relationships between variables like crime and housing. As discussed in Young (2011), the disassociation between the complexity of empirical realities where data is generated, and the clinical detachment of statistical analysis, may undermine the importance of studying the complex non-causal relationships which exist in the social world. Limitations in the generic aims of the research, and the empirically broad approach to the Sheffield case study, with data lacking richer perspectives both within State institutions as well as outside of them, hold back the power of its analysis and findings.

A potential solution, as suggested in Atkinson and Millington (2019), would be to be able to investigate what happens in cities on a micro-level similar to that of Booth's analysis of London. Studies of individual homes and their residents, especially if applied to current criminal practices, do however constitute a danger of empirical generalisation being based on existing notions of disorganisation and crime causation. Failing to recognise the heterogeneity of micro-level conditions within tenures, also likely holds back our understanding of issues of

urban crime. The work carried out in this thesis, however, also offers a significant alternative to this on distinct analytical, methodological and methods issues.

First, from an analytical perspective, this thesis demonstrates the importance of meso-level analysis, as macro-level studies of crime examine the effect of global phenomena, and micro-level studies examine the conditions of individuals. By contrast, meso-level analysis, promotes the need for better crime and social data gathering and integration with relation to social processes and geographies at the city level. This thesis deals with the conceptual understanding and construction of urban crime, and how this relates to systemic conditions at the city level through the lens of housing. Whilst housing remains a specific area of interest for this thesis, the analytical contribution this thesis makes with respect to wider criminological studies is the means to draw attention away from reifying micro-level analysis, namely the construction of street-level hot-spot understandings of crime, and instead advocates for concern with the wider unanswered questions of how the systemic conditions and the organisation of cities can affect and shape the social ecologies of crime in cities. Housing still provides a substantive reading key to interpret wider issues regarding the systemic inequalities which operate at the city-level (see, for example Burgum and Higgins, 2022). Therefore, future studies may wish to adopt the same focus, to further unpack the nuances of how political, societal, and institutional imperatives apply to the ways we understand urban problems. Whilst other significant issues, such as widening health, wealth, and social disparities, may also be identified as the conceptual basis for future studies, city-level analysis and its fundamentally systemic inter-connection to other levels of analysis still remains.

From a methodological perspective, this thesis has also sought to draw attention to how criminology fails to systemically and reflexively think about the how institutions construct local knowledge of crime and perpetuate urban inequalities (Hogg, 1998; Girling et al., 2000; Wacquant, 2009). It has been of crucial importance to address outstanding gaps in the literature. We need to understand how tenures function, and in return, to recognise also that many institutions continue to fail to comprehend their role in shaping knowledge of urban

crime. This has been possible given the overarching interpretivist ontologies and epistemological constructivist imperatives adopted by the thesis, which align with the notion that social theory needs to be at the forefront of academic thinking (Taylor et al., 1973). Undoubtedly, given the political and academic popularisation of causal and inferential analysis, this may remain an under-developed area of criminological enquiry.

However, the thesis' methods contributions may also provide an example to quantitative researchers of the benefits of integrating these perspectives. Drawing on the theoretical and philosophical imperatives of even the most advanced notions of experimental knowledge production (see, for example, Sherman 2009), the commonalities between these distinct approaches, aim to direct future research to better our use of positionality with respect to the subjects and objects of research. Whilst both qualitative and quantitative paradigms have discrete limitations, mixed methods research not only can abridge them, but also surpass them. Whilst quantitative and qualitative imperatives can provide perspectives and evidence on issues concerning the relationship between individual and contextual factors and contextualise them with respect to institutional narratives, being able to physically relate these across space provides further nuance as to the underlying relationship that can emerge. Ultimately, reflecting on how historically significant studies like Baldwin et al., 1976's *The Urban Criminal* are recognised and reappraised in light of ever evolving challenges for criminal justice (see, for example Squires 2017), combining these mixed-methods and methodological research imperatives to more critically reframe continuously developing issues such as urban crime, will remain something future studies will want to continue considering and enhancing, with this thesis serving as figurative proving ground.

8.3 Conclusion

The work presented in this thesis has drawn attention to an underdeveloped area of criminological knowledge, reconciling the study of urban crime problems with the functioning of housing. Focussing predominantly on social housing in Sheffield, and how problem

areas are defined, it has drawn on historical and processual sensibilities to establish how the *ecology of crime* at the city level has evolved over the past half-century. After finding that despite significant social-political, economic, and housing changes, the degree to which crime is disproportionately associated with social housing is unchanged, it has delved deeper into institutional definitions and operationalisations of crime.

With deprivation and disorganisation continuing to lead in conceptual frameworks regarding how *problem areas* are produced, the functioning of housing systems has been shown to affect both where people live and how they are perceived. The work presented here, as also suggested in Atkinson and Millington (2019), helps reinforce the message that to understand urban crime is to understand the city and to understand the city a significant starting point is still housing. As much of the work of institutions is still focused on social housing tenures, the thesis has highlighted how they are blind to what happens in other tenures. This greater awareness of crime in social housing reproduces a circular way of thinking, through which harm in other tenures is ignored. It is also the case, however, that institutions continue to also be blind to how systemic processes of housing administration, including those regulating where people live, are influenced by the work of institutions. As a process, this causes further harm to vulnerable individuals, particularly where there is practitioner-based acceptance that crime and social housing will always go hand in hand, as is evidenced by a very acute lack of appreciation as to the ways housing has systemic effects on the social ecology of crime at the city level.

The emphasis in this study has been on the need to examine the role of housing systems and tenures to help us to read the social geography of inequalities within cities, with future studies needing to find an expanded knowledge regarding tenures other than social housing. Moving towards a more fully social theory of urban crime (Taylor *et al.*, 1973), this thesis supports the need to examine the wider role and power of criminal and social justice institutions more closely. Institutional administration of problems, such as crime and housing, disproportionately weighs preconceived definitions of disorder and crime, and how these intersect with housing. In conceptualising problems and operationally shaping problem areas,

the role institutions play is more significant than is often acknowledged in criminological scholarship. This element in our understanding of urban crime should be better reflected in future work on these complex issues.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Template for interviews with members of Council (non-housing):

- Could you tell me more about what your role entails?
 - Who you work with? What is it about?
- Projects currently running in Sheffield? – *what is going on which relates to crime/housing*
 - For example; housing renewal plan; what does it entail locally?
 - What is the role of the council?
 - What other organisations are you involved with?
- Are there areas of Sheffield have historically been seen as problematic?
 - Why is this?
 - Any differences between them?
 - What is the basis of this kind of reputation?
 - Where does housing fit into this?
- How do you provide services to them? How do you protect them from being doubly victimised or further isolated?
 - Are people being moved around? To what effect?
- How has housing changed the city; such as areas of concentrated poverty and public housing, and the rise of private renting?
 - Have these influenced the reputation/crime of problematic areas?
- Are there any particular crime types that concern you/your work in Sheffield?
 - Where/which/why?
- Is there any data/documents that you think you could share with me that would be beneficial to my understanding of what is going on in Sheffield now?
- Who would you recommend I speak to next?

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS TO BE TAILORED TO CONVERSATION/ORGANISATION.

Template for interviews Police:

- How long have you worked in Sheffield/this area?
- How would you describe the area you work in?
 - How do you organise/get organised with your team?
- How would you normally learn about problems
 - what/where/who/why?
- Housing types- perceptions/impressions
 - Agency/choice?
- Should the police spend more time in certain areas yes/no? why?
 - Do you think housing affects crime (understanding/reporting/tenure differences)?
- Relationship with partners- which ones/relationship/activities (impact of tenure)?
- Any supplementary information/documents/opinions?

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS TO BE TAILORED TO CONVERSATION/ORGANISATION.

Template for interviews with Housing Associations/Local Authority (housing-focussed):

- What is your role?
- What's the structure of your HA/Team?
 - Who normally deals with ASB/Crime complaints?
- What is your current housing stock?
 - Who do you house? - allocation policies?
 - Where?
 - Why?
- What is the HA's relationship with Police/Council/Tenants/HAs/TARAs?
 - Are there any other organisations dealing with Crime/ASB that you normally work with?
- What are the Crime/ASB issues in your stock/neighbourhood?
 - Where are they?
 - Why is that?
 - How do you feel about this?
 - Do you think the areas where your stock is are affected by other pre-existing issues?
- Is housing relevant to Crime/ASB fighting/prevention?
 - What measures do you adopt to prevent/deter/fight Crime/ASB?
 - Are they effective?
 - Are they 'good'?
 - Are there any consequences to these?
- Cue to tools: e.g. Public Space Protection Orders; evictions and other civil/criminal actions
 - How do these affect the work you do?
- Is there any data about your stock (locations; numbers; allocation policies) you could Share with me?
- Is there anyone else in your HA/SCC that you think could help my work?

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS TO BE TAILORED TO CONVERSATION/ORGANISATION.

Template for interviews with TARAs/ Charity orgs:

- How long have you lived/worked in the Area?
 - Can you tell me more about your role within the TARA/organisation?
- How do you learn about local issues?
 - What do you normally do once you learn about these issues?
 - How do you liaise & report issues to police/council/other agencies?
 - What do you think are likely to be the cause [who causes] most of the recurring issues?
- How would you describe the relationship between the TARA and these other organisations?
 - Why does this happen?
 - How does the community respond?
- Do you think there is a relationship between housing and crime?
- Should/Do Police and Council get involved with all of these issues?
- Do you have any maps/information/documents that you think could help me?
 - Is there anyone else in the TARA that you'd recommend I talk to?

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS TO BE TAILORED TO CONVERSATION/ORGANISATION.

Appendix B

Participant Information Sheet

Research project title: Cities and crime: understanding ‘problem areas’.

This briefing provides you with information about this research project, to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read carefully the following information, to allow you to make an informed decision as to whether or not to participate. Please ask any questions, or clarifications. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

What is the project’s purpose?

There are many ways in which ‘problem areas’ are identified nowadays. Most often this is done by looking at issues of crime, deprivation, and the reputation, of specific areas. For example, social housing is often thought to be particularly problematic, producing a lot of crime or criminals. This PhD wants to explore the link between how cities are organised and crime, hoping to bring more clarity about where ‘problems areas’ are, as well as how do we actually know whether they are a ‘problem’.

Why have you been chosen?

Many studies around this topic rely exclusively on official statistics. This study wants to also include the knowledge and opinions of many practitioners dealing with ‘problem areas’ on a daily basis. As such, I am trying to talk to police officers, council officers, representatives from neighbourhood and tenants associations, and many other professions, which deal with issues of housing or crime.

Do you have to take part?

No, you are not forced to take part, it is completely voluntary. You can withdraw from the research at any time. You will receive a copy of this information sheet, and if we go ahead a copy of a signed consent form. Should you wish to withdraw from the study, contact me quoting the alphanumeric code which you will find at the top of your consent form.

What will happen to you if you take part? What do you have to do?

This interview is essentially a conversation about your job. It should last approximately 45 minutes, and we will talk about what areas you think are ‘problematic’ and why you think that. There are no right and wrong answers.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

There are no disadvantages or risks from you taking part in this research. The time you are spending doing this interview has already been agreed with your organisation. Should you wish for this interview to be carried out elsewhere, or if you are experiencing any issues, let me know as soon as you can, so that we can address these issues together.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

I cannot promise you any direct benefits from your participation, other than knowing you are helping me complete my PhD. The hoped outcome of this project is to attempt changing the ways we approach ‘problem areas’, to try and improve how we understand and engage with real-life issues.

Will taking part in this project be kept confidential?

All the information collected during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential and will only be accessible to the members of the research team. You will not be able to be identified in any reports or publications, unless you explicitly consent to that. If you agree to us sharing the information you provide with other researchers (e.g. by making it available in a data archive) then your personal details will not be included unless you explicitly request this.

No personal data will be recorded or processed at any stage of the research, unless you explicitly consent to it. A pseudonym will be used instead.

If you disclose information about criminal activities which poses a real risk to someone or to public safety, I might be obliged to report to the relevant authorities.

Are you recorded, and how will the recorded media be used?

The audio recordings from your activities made during this research will be used only for analysis. No other use will be made with them without your written permission, and no one outside the project will be allowed access to the original recordings. Once data is transcribed and anonymised, the content will be stored in the University and the White Rose Partnership databases, for future researchers to access. I will ask you for your explicit consent for your data to be shared this way.

What will happen to the data collected, and the results of the research project?

The data collected today will be coded and analysed by me, and the results included in my PhD. On completion of my degree, this is likely to be added to the university repository and the White Rose online databases, and available for you to access freely. Only anonymised data will ever be shared with anyone other than me. Due to the nature of this research it is very likely this data will be used in future research projects or publications. I will ask you for your explicit consent for your data to be shared this way.

Who is organising and funding the research?

This research is organised by the University of Sheffield, and it is funded by the ESRC through the White Rose Doctoral Research Partnership.

Who is the Data Controller?

The University of Sheffield will act as the Data Controller for the Study. This means that the University is responsible for looking after your information and using it properly.

Who has ethically reviewed the project?

This project has been ethically approved via the University of Sheffield's Ethics Review Procedure, as administered by the department of Urban Studies and Planning.

What is something goes wrong and I wish to complain about the research?

In the first instance, please get in touch with me to discuss any issues. However, should you feel like the complaint has not been handled to your satisfaction you can also contact my Supervisor (Prof. Rowland Atkinson at Rowland.Atkinson@sheffield.ac.uk) or the Head of Department (Prof. Malcom Tait, M.tait@sheffield.ac.uk). If the complaint relates to how your data has been handled, information about how to raise a complaint can be found in the University's Privacy notice: <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/govern/data-protection/privacy/general>.

Participant Consent Form

Your reference:

<i>Please tick the appropriate boxes</i>	Yes	No
Taking Part in the Project		
I have read and understood the project information sheet, or the project has been fully explained to me. (If you will answer No to this question please do not proceed with this consent form until you are fully aware of what your participation in the project will mean.)		
I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project.		
I agree to take part in the project. I understand that taking part in the project will include being interviewed.		
I consent to this interview being recorded.		
I understand that my taking part is voluntary and that I can withdraw from the study at any time, before January 2020; I do not have to give any reasons for why I no longer want to take part and there will be no adverse consequences if I choose to withdraw.		
How my information will be used during and after the project		
I understand my personal details such as name, phone number, address and email address etc. will not be revealed to people outside the project.		
I understand and agree that my words may be quoted in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs. I understand that I will not be named in these outputs unless I specifically request this.		
I understand and agree that other authorised researchers will have access to this data only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the information as requested in this form.		
I understand and agree that other authorised researchers may use my data in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs, only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the information as requested in this form.		
I give permission for the transcript of this interview that I provide to be deposited anonymously in the University of Sheffield and the White Rose Doctoral Research Partnership depositories, so it can be used for future research and learning.		
So that the information you provide can be used legally by the researchers		
I agree to assign the copyright I hold in any materials generated as part of this project to The University of Sheffield.		

Name of participant [printed]

Signature

Date

Name of Researcher

Signature

Date

Dario Ferrazzi

Project contact details for further information:

Should you have any problem or questions about this research project you can contact me directly, or alternatively contact my Supervisor (Prof. Rowland Atkinson at Rowland.Atkinson@sheffield.ac.uk) or the Head of Department (Prof. Malcom Tait, M.tait@sheffield.ac.uk).

Appendix C

DATA LICENSING:

All tables figures and figures within this thesis, unless stated otherwise, are designed and created by the author. There are five types of data used within this study:

1. 2011 Census data.

Geographic and demographic data from the 2011 Census is used under the Open Government Licence [OGL] (OGL, 2014).

2. Ordnance Survey Open Data

Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2022 is used under the Open Government Licence [OGL] (OGL, 2014).

3. Consumer Data Research Centre Open Data

Consumer Data Research Centre © 2022 data is used under the Open Government Licence [OGL] (OGL, 2014).

4. South Yorkshire Police crime and incident data.

Original data set provided by South Yorkshire Police used in this study is private and confidential. Disclosure may occur, subject to the Data Protection Act 2018, and in line with the Data Processing Contract (April 2019).

5. Sheffield City Council housing data.

Original data set provided by Sheffield City Council used in this study is private and confidential. Disclosure may occur, subject to the Data Protection Act 2018, and in line with the Data Processing Contract (June 2019).